

The Importance of Common Knowledge in Postwar Reconstruction

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This paper applies a game theoretic argument to the situation of postwar reconstruction. It is argued that widespread coordination characterizes successful postwar efforts. Critical to this outcome is common knowledge among citizens, which allows them to coordinate their activities on conjectures that align with the aims of reconstruction. Here, the nature of common knowledge in the postwar context and its importance in coordinating citizens on reconstruction efforts is analyzed. Historical evidence from German and Japanese cinema and media, effective mechanisms for transmitting common knowledge, serve to illuminate and support these claims. The main conclusion is that common knowledge generation is key to achieving a successful outcome in the postwar situation.

Keywords: collective action, postwar reconstruction, common knowledge, culture, ritual, cinema, media

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1. Introduction

Since World War II, the United States has been involved in eight post conflict, nation-building missions. Reconstructions, both past and present, stand among the most difficult policy achievements. The success of these efforts, defined as the existence of a self-sustaining liberal democracy, has been mixed. Japan and Germany are clear cases of success while efforts in Somalia and Haiti have failed.¹ It is too early to conclude whether the efforts in Afghanistan and Iraq will be successful. Despite the varied success of these efforts, one thing is clear - the institutions necessary for liberal democracy cannot be manufactured with ease. The question then becomes: how can success in postwar reconstruction efforts be achieved? This question is extremely relevant as the U.S. is currently leading two major nation-building efforts in Afghanistan and Iraq.

There is little dispute among historians and policy makers regarding the outcomes of previous reconstruction efforts. However, there is a lack of consensus regarding what

¹ Efforts in Bosnia and Kosovo have had limited success; both are far from being self-sustaining democracies. In Bosnia, the violence has ended but order is maintained by the presence of international troops and civilians. Likewise, in Kosovo, major conflict has ended and positive GDP growth has occurred although it relies heavily on continued foreign assistance.

factors contributed to these outcomes. In the cases of Japan and Germany, the following explanations have been offered to explain their successful reconstructions:

1. Unilateral control of efforts in Japan by the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers, General Douglas MacArthur, resulted in a successful reconstruction because efforts were centralized (Dobbins et al. 2003: 162-4).
2. The reconstruction of Germany were successful because the United States effectively accommodated the interests of the other occupying forces (Great Britain, France, Russia) while consulting with those countries that would be directly impacted by the political and economic status of Germany (Belgium, the Netherlands, Holland and Luxembourg) (Dobbins et al. 2003: 162-4).
3. The Marshall Plan was a significant factor in West European postwar recovery (Dobbins et al. 2003: 19).
4. The populations in Japan and Germany were ethnically homogeneous while the populations in Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, Kosovo and Afghanistan are ethnically divided (Dobbins et al. 2003: 161).
5. The prewar level of economic development in Germany and Japan was relatively high compared to other cases of reconstruction (Dower 2003).
6. The level of effort – foreign aid, manpower and time – was greater in Japan and Germany relative to the other cases of reconstruction (Dobbins et al. 2003: 149-152; 156-160).
7. The populations of Japan and Germany had been thoroughly devastated and therefore raised little resistance to reconstruction efforts (Dower 2003).

However, one or all of these factors cannot single-handedly serve as a suitable explanation of the success of Germany and Japan. For instance, the first and second hypotheses oppose each other with a unilateral approach in the one (Japan) and a multilateral approach in the other (Germany). Moreover, initial troop levels as well as total foreign assistance over the first two years were both higher in Germany relative to troops and aid to Japan (Dobbins et al. 2003: 150, 156-7).² Additionally, the significance of the Marshall Plan in West Europe's recovery has been called into question (Milward 1984). While there was an absence of ethnic and religious heterogeneity in Japan was not completely homogeneous. Political alliances

² This is true in the case of both total aid and per capita aid.

spanned from conservative to Communist. While these factors may explain part of the reason for Germany and Japan's success, they fail to offer a complete story.

Despite the fact that economics can assist in adjudicating between these aforementioned factors, economists have written little on this topic (Carbonnier 1995). Lake and Harrison (1990) stress the importance of relying on local planning and initiative. FitzGerald and Stewart (1997) discuss the importance of political science, anthropology and economics in understanding post conflict reconstruction. Stewart, et al., (1997) discuss the difficulty in the economic modeling of war-affected countries. These writings, however, have not generated many specific insights into which factors influence a successful reconstruction. Dobbins et al. (2003) provides a study of the "controllable" factors in the eight post-World War II reconstruction efforts. Among their findings are that successful reconstruction is positively influenced by the level of foreign aid, the size of military and police forces and the length of military presence. While this study identifies key factors, it fails to address the issue of effective allocation. In other words, while the total amount of these factors may indeed be important, their allocation is also critical.

What this previous literature overlooks is that in order to achieve a self-sustaining liberal order, the populace must coordinate around a set of conjectures that align with the aims of reconstruction. From this standpoint reconstruction must be indigenous in that the population must voluntarily accept its aims. If the population fails to do so, the order cannot be self-sustaining over the long run. The core thesis of this paper is that a successful postwar reconstruction is characterized by widespread coordination around conjectures aligning with the aims of reconstruction. This outcome requires the existence of common knowledge, enabling citizens to coordinate their activities on good conjectures. Mechanisms that allow for the development and dissemination of common knowledge are therefore critical to a successful reconstruction. We look at historical evidence from cinema and

media in pre and postwar Germany and Japan to gain insight into examples of the type of mechanisms that facilitate the generation of common knowledge.

2. The Nature of Common Knowledge in Postwar Reconstruction

Assuming we are in a situation where all parties can gain by coordinating their activities, the issue arises of how to overcome the coordination “problem.” David Hume recognized this in his classic example of several individuals rowing a boat, each individual wanting to coordinate his actions with that of the other rowers (1739: 315). Once conflict has ended, the coordination “problem” can be illustrated by the standard coordination game depicted in Figure 1, where a is a positive number and players must choose between good and bad conjectures³:

		Player 2	
		Good Conjectures	Bad Conjectures
Player 1	Good Conjectures	a, a	$0, 0$
	Bad Conjectures	$0, 0$	$-a, -a$

Figure 1: The Coordination Game

Coordinating on healthy and constructive conjectures yields positive payoffs to both parties, as illustrated by the upper left corner payoff. Both Germany and Japan serve to illustrate this case. It is also possible, however, that individuals may coordinate on destructive conjectures, which yield negative payoffs, as illustrated by the lower right corner. A suitable example of the latter case is Stalin’s reconstruction of East Germany. Given this, we seek to understand how individuals overcome the coordination problem and coordinate their

³ When we talk about “good” and “bad” conjectures we refer to those activities either increasing or decreasing social wealth as measured in dollars. While certain individuals may benefit from “bad” norms, social wealth generally does not. It is assumed that one of the aims of reconstruction efforts is to increase social wealth.

activities on good or bad conjectures. Framing the postwar situation as a coordination game offers insight into the various historical explanations for the success of Germany and Japan considered above. To the extent that these factors were effective, they assisted in coordinating individuals on a certain set of conjectures.

In order for individual members of the populace to coordinate their activities they must share common knowledge along several margins. Two margins of importance are the expectations of the populace and the political order. Shared knowledge of expectations will dictate how the populace responds to the reconstruction process while common knowledge regarding the political order will influence the support and success or failure of the new political institutions.

Another margin of critical importance is *mētis*. A concept passed down from the ancient Greeks, *mētis* is characterized by local knowledge of “how to get things done” resulting from practical experience. It includes skills, culture, norms, and conventions that are shaped by the experiences of the individual. By its very nature, *mētis* cannot be written down as a systematic set of instructions. Thus, the nature, stock and magnitude of prewar *mētis* that survives into the postwar period will serve to coordinate individuals on one set of conjectures or another.

Assuming there is some prewar stock of *mētis*, there are two related issues of importance. First, if the stock of *mētis* aligns with the underlying aims of reconstruction, it will aid in the reconstruction process. Second, the greater the number of people connected to the stock of *mētis*, the easier it will be to have a self-sustaining social order. In other words, if the surviving stock of *mētis* conforms with the aims of the reconstruction and is common knowledge, it will greatly ease the reconstruction process.

To provide an example in the context of reconstruction, one can envision “spoilers” who pursue their own course of action independent of what others do. There are others,

“moderates”, who are willing to pursue a certain course of action they perceive as reasonable only if others will pursue that course of action as well. Finally, there are “followers” who will pursue the course of action that a majority of other individuals are pursuing. The key to a successful reconstruction is to overcome the problems raised by spoilers who attempt to make bad conjectures focal. In other words, while spoilers want to coordinate the populace (moderates and followers) on bad conjectures, occupying forces must ensure that enough citizens coordinate their activities on good conjectures that dovetail with the underlying aims of the reconstruction.

Common knowledge is the key to overcoming the coordination problem outlined above. The key characteristic of common knowledge is that it is “public” – those who are exposed to it know that others are exposed to the same information or knowledge (Chwe 1998:48-50; 2001: 13-16). Advertisements, commercials, rituals and ceremonies all serve as concrete examples of sources of common knowledge. It is important to note that sources of common knowledge do not have to be free of charge. Rather, the key is that the recipient knows that others have access to the same information. For instance, individual consumers purchase cable television or magazine or newspaper subscriptions. Through these forms of purchased media, they have access to various advertisements which serve as common knowledge. It is common knowledge because viewers or readers *know* that many others are viewing the same information.

To better understand the importance of common knowledge, consider a reconstruction that has turned into a game of cooperation and coordination. In such a world, individuals would search for cooperative solutions and a new and beneficial political order. The overall task of reconstruction will be eased greatly if individuals can coordinate with others on a self-enforcing equilibrium. Common knowledge allows them to do so because large numbers of individuals can coordinate more easily on matters that are

relatively obvious. From that standpoint, common knowledge makes coordination on a certain course of action focal.

The issue of causality must also be addressed: do external influences such as cinema, media, advertisements, rituals, etc. create new common knowledge or do they reflect the existing stock of common knowledge? Admittedly, measuring the magnitude and direction of causation in changes in common knowledge is difficult. Although we primarily emphasize the role of cinema and media in generating common knowledge, there are clearly other factors that may influence common knowledge including education, family and social structures and internal influences such as individual tastes and preferences (see Lieberman 2000: 42, 92-3, 112-3). Despite these difficulties, we can nonetheless posit some relationship between the causality of common knowledge mechanisms and the stock of common knowledge.

Continuing with the examples of cinema and media, individuals enter the cinema or engage with media sources with some given stock of knowledge. Moreover, those that create and develop these mediums also have some stock of common knowledge. Given this, these mediums can be seen as working in both directions. That is, they serve to both reinforce some aspects of common knowledge and also mutate and add to the stock of common knowledge, forming a new, unique stock of shared knowledge. Thus, the arrow of causality points in both directions. An example will serve to illuminate this claim.

Chwe identifies the Super Bowl as one of the best generators of common knowledge in the United States given that it is both extremely popular and an annual event (1998: 50-1; 2001: 45). While viewers have a given stock of common knowledge prior to viewing Super Bowl advertisements, that stock of knowledge is mutated when new products are introduced – for example, the Macintosh in 1984 or the Discover Card in 1986. At the same time, these advertisements can be seen as reflecting and reinforcing more general categories of common

knowledge such as computers, credit cards, etc. The mechanisms of common knowledge serve the dual purpose of reflecting some aspects of common knowledge while mutating other aspects. The effectiveness of various common knowledge mechanisms, such as Super Bowl advertisements, in shaping the stock of common knowledge can be judged by the number of people it reaches and the amount of resources individuals are willing to invest either to use them or to control them. Examples would range from the cost of a Super Bowl commercial, adjusted for the number of viewers, to the efforts and resources invested by political regimes in gaining control of these mechanisms.

It must also be noted that common knowledge in itself does not guarantee successful reconstruction, as illustrated by the Stalinist reconstruction of Eastern Germany. Stalin was able to create common knowledge, via the threat of force, which made bad conjectures focal. Given this realization, the key issue becomes the best means for developing common knowledge around good conjectures. Intuitively, many of the mechanisms which served to disseminate common knowledge in the prewar period will also be effective in the postwar setting. Indigenously established mechanisms will be perceived as more legitimate and will therefore be more effective, than those imposed exogenously. As we will see, maintaining indigenously established means of developing and disseminating common knowledge greatly assists the reconstruction process.

The mechanisms that transfer common knowledge will differ from place to place depending on many issues, including the prewar level of economic development. By considering the nature of common knowledge in the cases of Germany and Japan - clear cases of successful reconstructions - we can gain insight into the types of mechanisms that effectively facilitate its development and dissemination.

3. Common Knowledge in the Reconstruction of Germany and Japan

One finds historical support for the role of common knowledge in previous reconstruction efforts. Specifically, the role of cinema and media in postwar Germany and Japan illustrates the importance of common knowledge in the reconstruction process. We focus on cinema and media because they were well-established and low cost methods of developing common knowledge in Germany and Japan. There are two key indicators that establish German and Japanese cinema and media as effective common knowledge mechanisms in both pre and postwar periods. The first is attendance and circulation figures. Although reliable statistics are sporadic, those available show rising attendance and circulation over time implying an increasing reach of information.⁴ The second is the amount of resources invested by those in positions of political power to influence and control these industries.

In addition to illuminating the historical occurrences in Japan and Germany, this analysis also provides insight into how such knowledge can be developed in current and future reconstruction efforts. Admittedly, the histories of both the cinema and media in Germany and Japan are complex and this paper does not cover all the related intricacies. The following discussion is meant to be suggestive rather than exhaustive. The aim is to highlight the main occurrences in order to illuminate the primary claims made in this paper.

3.1 Cinema in Germany

German cinema can be traced to the early twentieth century, beginning with showings in the back rooms of pubs and shops, as well as at traveling fairs and circuses. The popularity of film quickly spread and the showings shifted from such informal accommodations to dedicated theaters. By 1910, there were an estimated 2,500 to 3,000 theaters in Germany

⁴ It should be noted that while attendance and circulation figures are a suitable indicator of the general popularity of cinema and media, they fail to capture the full impact on common knowledge as they do not include the impact of such things as word of mouth from those attending cinema and reading or listening to media and discussing it with others who had not.

with 350 concentrated in Berlin.⁵ The rapid expansion of the film industry meant that even in its early years, cinema served as a source of common knowledge among the populace. The largest cinemas seated up to 1,000 customers. As of World War I, one-third of the population attended the cinema each week (Fehrenbach 1995: 14, 16). By 1914, the cinema had become a reliable source of news, international fashion and consumer trends (Fehrenbach 1995: 14, 16).

The effectiveness of cinema as a means of generating common knowledge is evident in the responses of intellectuals and state officials. We would only expect these individuals to exert effort criticizing the cinema if it was indeed reaching a large number of people. As it turns out, the extensive popularity of the cinema met great resistance from both cultural elites and government officials. In a 1912 memo, the Prussian minister of culture compared popular cinema to “trashy pulp fiction and pornography” and postulated that cinema was having a negative impact on the young, “eroding...their ability to contemplate great works of art” (quoted in Stark 1982: 132). His comments exemplify the typical response of state officials to the success of cinema. Whatever the motivations of these critics, one thing is clear - the cinema had reached a level of development where it could shape and influence cultural norms and was viewed as a threat to the status quo.

To further understand the social change brought about by cinema, one can also consider the reforms promoted by critics. These efforts called for state intervention to regulate those aspects of the cinema industry perceived as “negative.” After much lobbying for nationalized standards, the German courts determined that film control should remain a largely local issue. Within these guidelines, influenced by the intellectual elite and state officials, the individual states created film control offices in their state capitals. The rules

⁵ The population in Germany in 1910 was approximately 64.9 million. The source of all German population figures throughout the subsections on German film and media is the Utrecht University Library and are available at: <http://www.library.uu.nl/wesp/populstat/Europe/germanyc.htm>

varied from state to state. Some required adults to accompany younger viewers to movies; others censored content (Fehrenbach 1995: 19-21; Hake 2002: 22).

These efforts did have some effect as filmmakers, attempting to make their films more “respectable,” shifted their target audience from the working-class to the mainstream. As the German film historian, Heide Fehrenbach, notes, the filmmaking culture was “transformed, liberated from its restricted, class based exhibition space to forge a ‘universalized, homogenized mass culture’” (1995: 22). In fact, beginning in 1913, more and more newspapers began dedicating space to film reviews and criticism, further illustrating mainstream acceptance of cinema (see Wollenberg 1972: 10 and Hake 1993).

In sum, there were two major occurrences related to German cinema in the pre-World War I period. The first was the development and expansion of the industry. The second was state intervention in the industry, prompted by state officials and critics who realized the ability of cinema to affect the stock of common knowledge in a manner they did not desire. Both of these trends would continue for the next several decades.

World War I led to a decisive change in state intervention in the cinema industry. There was less concerns with the moral aspect of films. Instead, state officials wanted to use the cinema to increase nationalism. In a 1917 memo to the War Ministry, General Lunderdorf, an officer in Germany’s high command, implicitly confirmed cinema as a powerful generator of common knowledge when he wrote: “Our victory absolutely depends on using films to exert the greatest possible persuasion wherever people can still be won over to the German cause” (quoted in Stark 1982: 161-2).

As a result of this realization by state officials of the potential for cinema to influence support for the war, the Photo and Film Office was created in 1917. This office was responsible for developing and producing newsreels on the war effort, which were distributed both at home and abroad. The Photo and Film Office also established nine

hundred “soldier cinemas.” The aim of the soldier cinemas was to promote viewings by the members of the army on the western and eastern fronts (Fehrenbach 1995: 19-21; Stark 1982: 161-2). A large part of this propaganda movement relied on stories and images – some true, others fictitious – to evoke emotion from the viewer in support of the German cause (Hake 2002: 23).

One difficulty for German state officials was the small percentage of domestic films that made up the total German film market. In 1914, films produced domestically represented only 15% of the total German film market. In contrast, French productions represented 30% of the market, American films claimed 25% and Italian films held 20% of the total market (Fehrenbach 1995: 24). This presented a problem because the government could not directly control the content of foreign films. Initially, at the outset of World War I, officials banned foreign movies covering certain topics such as espionage or treason. By 1915, the regulations had become much more strict and all foreign films were banned.

It is important to realize the extent to which the state controlled all aspects of the film industry and attempted to maintain the popularity of the medium. Government leaders insisted that propaganda films be well written and technically adept. Further, every half hour of “enlightenment” was followed by a half hour of “harmless entertainment” to avoid overkill of the propaganda message (Fehrenbach 1995: 26). Plans for a privately owned but government “influenced” film company ceased with the end of the war in 1918.

With the conclusion of the war, Germany’s film industry expanded rapidly. The number of film production companies increased from 11 in 1911 to 131 in 1918, and the number of cinemas increased from approximately 2,300 in 1918 to 5,078 in 1929.⁶

Internationally, Germany ranked third in 1927 with 241 films as compared to 742 in the U.S., 407 in Japan, 141 in Russia and 74 in France (Fehrenbach 1995: 27; Hake 2002: 47;

⁶ From 1918 to 1929, the German population increased from 64.6 million to 64.7 million, an increase of .27%. The increase in movie theaters in the same period represents an increase of 121%.

Wollenberg 1972: 11-17, 24, 37). The removal of the stringent film laws enacted prior to World War I was partly responsible for this expansion. The new republican constitution allowed for freedom of speech and the removal of censorship laws. The result was a drastic increase in the production of domestic films.

As in the prewar period, critics feared that cinema was causing the morals and culture of the German populace to erode. In 1920, under the building pressure of critics, a censorship law (*Reichslichtspielgesetz*) was passed requiring that two film boards review all films prior to public distribution. As part of this law, the film industry was again opened to foreign films, although these films also had to be reviewed.

In the 1920s, Hollywood films constituted one-third of all feature films shown in Germany. American films and culture became popular among a large portion of the German population and were viewed positively by many critics as well. There is a relevant connection to be drawn here between the German experience with American culture and film in this period and the Allied occupation some twenty plus years later that aimed to impose these views.⁷ American values and culture was not alien to many Germans and, to some extent, the German culture in the pre-Nazi period had absorbed many of these values communicated to them through American films.⁸

Despite lobbying on the part of critics and officials to increase censorship, the German cinema industry continued to develop. By 1933, German films dominated the domestic market, and a national cinema industry and identity was well established (Fehrenbach 1995: 41). The period of the Weimar Republic (1918-1933) was a critical time in the development of the cinema. Many of the stringent laws and regulations imposed

⁷ For but one example of the popularity of American film, see Saunders 1987, which focuses on American comedies in the Weimar Republic.

⁸ Hake contends that during the Weimar Republic period, "The influence of American culture on modern mass culture was visible in all areas of everyday life, from fashion styles and consumption patterns to the dramatic changes in social and sexual roles..." (2002: 45).

during World War I were lifted. Of course relaxing these laws did not mean that the opposition to the film industry – both domestic and foreign – was eased. The opposition to a deregulated market in film would continue until Hitler's rise to power.

Upon Hitler's rise to chancellor in 1933, he named Joseph Goebbels the head of the newly formed Ministry for Public Enlightenment.⁹ The amount of effort and resources dedicated to controlling film, radio and press by this Ministry is staggering. In July 1933, Goebbels established the Reich Film Chamber responsible for reviewing all film treatments, production personnel and final film productions before release. A formal censorship law, passed in 1934, mandated that each film receive a grade determined by their political, artistic and educational value. In 1935, screen licenses for all films made prior to 1933 were revoked. Despite these regulations, the German film industry produced 1,000 films between 1933 and 1945. As Hake points out: "These numbers suggest...that films were considered an important part of everyday life, propagating National Socialist ideas...along the lines defined by the regime" (2002: 59).¹⁰

Although the film industry was not officially nationalized until 1942, the Nazis had great influence over the entire industry. Perhaps the greatest instrument of control was the Nazi operated Filmkreditbank, which provided credit to German film producers. By 1935, Filmkreditbank had financed approximately 70% of all German films (Fehrenbach 1995: 43; Hake 2002: 63). By 1942, the Nazi regime controlled over 8,400 cinemas across Europe, and their films reached over 1 billion total viewers (Fehrenbach 1995: 43; Welch 1983: 12-14; Wollenberg 1972: 36-8). This translates into 13.8 viewings per person for the year.¹¹ Other notable aspects of the Nazi propaganda program were the *Filmvolkstag* (People's Film Day)

⁹ For a comprehensive analysis of the Nazi rise to power and eventual fall, see Shirer 1960.

¹⁰ It should be noted that television was not a major medium of information and entertainment at this time. Public television was experimentally introduced in Germany in 1935 on a very limited scale. The price of a television set was too high for most and even those who did have one didn't receive good reception (Hake 2002: 80; Uriccho 1992.).

¹¹ The German population as of 1942 was 72.62 million.

and the Youth Film Hours. On those days deemed “Film People’s Day,” viewers could attend cinemas at discounted rates. Youth Film Hours targeted children and reached 11 million youth viewers in the 1942-3 year. The Nazi controlled German film industry was successful. In 1933, 245 million tickets (3.7 per German citizen) were sold, in 1936 the number rose to 362 million (5.4 per German citizen) and in 1938 a total of 440 million tickets (6.5 per German citizen) were sold (Hake 2001: 72; 2002: 64-5).¹²

It is important to note that, despite Nazi censorship laws, American films were still shown in Germany through 1940 and film magazines at this time provided articles on such Hollywood stars as Katharine Hepburn, Myrna Loy, Claudette Colbert and Gary Cooper. Berlin cinemas ran week-long special programs focusing on these same actors. The presence of American films in the 1920s and 1930s provided Germans with a view of the world beyond Germany, and this exposure to American cinema planted the seeds of the American culture that was imposed during the American Occupation.

In the immediate post-WWII period, the four powers that occupied Germany realized the central role that mass media – print, radio and film – played in German society. The military seized these industries as well as the complementary industries that supported them. Production in these industries was suspended. Initially, the U.S. Information Control Division (ICD) released films aimed at reeducation, with topics including Nazi death camps (*Todesmühlen* (Death Mills), 1945), other Nazi atrocities and war tribunals. Many of these films and documentaries were mandatory and Germans were required to have their ration cards stamped at the theater (Fehrenbach 1995: 55-6, Hake 2002: 87-8).

The U.S. plan for the cinema industry required complete restructuring because it was ultimately to be based on open markets and competition without state control. In July of 1945, the occupying forces allowed twenty theaters to open. Soon thereafter, a policy of

¹² The German population figures for these years were: 1933: 66.03 million, 1936: 67.35 million, 1938: 68.07 million.

opening 250 cinemas per month in the U.S. zone began. The films shown were imports from Hollywood that conveyed messages of the American life and democratic institutions (Hake 2002: 88).

In November of 1945, the production of domestic German films resumed. Domestic producers were required to get licensing from the ICD. In order to receive a license, films were required to communicate a message consistent with the end goals of reconstruction. The licensing process was slow, as the ICD reviewed the background of those involved in the filmmaking process – producers, directors, actors, etc. Due to competition for film-related resources from the Soviet zone, a new program for encouraging native film production and making the film industry self-sustaining was undertaken in July of 1946. These programs were critical in allowing indigenous agents to be involved in the film making process and to utilize the existing stock of *mētis*. Film attendance increased throughout the occupation. In 1946, total attendance was 300 million, or 4.4 films per citizen, and in 1947 it was 459.6 million or 6.8 films per citizen.¹³

With the creation of Bizonia (the merger of the U.S. and Great Britain zones) in January of 1947 and the extension of the Marshall Plan to all the Western zones of Germany in 1948, the three occupying nations had to reach an agreement on the policy for the film industry. After a series of negotiations, the three occupying powers agreed to a model very much in line with the original goals of the U.S.

Around the same time, negotiations began with those in the film industry. A film producers' association was created and the preliminary aspects of a voluntary censorship code were developed by the film industry in 1949 under the umbrella trade organization the Spitzenorganisation der Filmwirtschaft e.V. (SPIO). In mid-July of 1949, occupation laws were lifted and the self-sustaining German film industry began (Fehrenbach 1995: 58-63).

¹³ Source of total film attendance: SPIO.

Throughout the rest of the occupation, German film would play a key role in developing common knowledge among the populace. This knowledge was important in achieving both the immediate goals of reconstruction and the longer-term goals of establishing an independent culture and national identity. As Hake writes: “In the Western zone, the cinema after 1945 emerged as the driving force behind the ongoing self-transformation of postwar culture and society” (Hake 2002: 104).

In 1948, 443 million Germans (6.6 films per citizen) attended the movies and in 1949 attendance increased to 467.2 (6.9 films per citizen).¹⁴ The postwar films served to give widespread legitimacy to the new political and social order and also helped define the break from Germany’s past. Films dealt with a wide range of topics from anti-Semitism – *Affäre Blum* (*The Blum Affair*, 1948), *Morituri* (1948) and *Der Ruf* (*The Appointment*, 1949) – to pacifism – *Die Brücke* (*The Bridge*, 1959) – to military life – *Hunde, wollt ihr ewig leben* (*Dogs, Do you Want to Live Forever*, 1959) – to the role of women in society – *Die Sünderin* (*The Sinner*, 1951), *Mädchen hinter Gittern* (*Girl Behind Bars*, 1949), *Liebe kann wie Giftsein* (*Love Can Be Like Poison*, 1958) and *Anders als du und ich* (*Different From You and Me*, 1957).¹⁵

In the context of the situation illustrated in Figure 1, the Allied forces attempted to create a common knowledge that made liberal democratic institutions focal. The mechanism for creating and dispersing this common knowledge was the cinema industry which was a well developed and embedded part of the lives of German citizens. In the early stages of the reconstruction, there was strict control of the industry with mandatory film showings. Over time, the Allied forces began licensing indigenous directors and producers, which allowed for the creation of a self-sustaining order and national identity.

¹⁴ Source of total film attendance: SPIO.

¹⁵ For more on social relationships, national identity and specific films in the post-war period, see Fehrenbach 1995: 93-101.

The U.S occupation forces were able to effectively use an indigenous mechanism to generate common knowledge. The cinema had an established history and was well embedded in the lives of German citizens both before and after World War II. In the Western zone, 3,000 theaters were operating by 1950 (up from 1,000 in 1945), with an attendance of 487.4 million (7.1 films per citizen). In 1951, attendance increased to 554.8 million (8.1 films per citizen) and in 1952 it reached 614.5 million (8.88 films per citizen). An attendance record was reached in 1956 with total attendance at 817.5 million (11.6 films per citizen).¹⁶ While the reconstruction of the cinema industry did not always run smoothly or as quickly as would have been ideal, it clearly played a major role in the overall reconstruction process. The cinema was an indigenous mechanism allowing for the creation of common knowledge, which enabled coordination on healthy conjectures (the upper left payoff of Figure 1) and dovetailed with the ends of U.S. reconstruction.

3.2 Media in Germany

The history of media in Germany can be traced back to the seventeenth century. Censorship, political control and the fragmentation of German states prevented the printed media from developing on a larger scale until the mid-1850s. The boom in mass media in the late nineteenth century has been attributed to German unification, increased literacy, and advances in technology resulting in lower costs (Humphreys 1990: 13-4).

In 1874, Bismarck's government enacted the *Reichspressegesetz* (Imperial Press Law). The *Reichspressegesetz* created a national press law and removed some censorship laws and state licensing requirements. However, media policy under Bismarck was hardly liberal. For example, an "Anti-Socialist Law," which banned the publication of socialist ideas, was enacted in 1878. This law, which was lifted in 1890, illustrates that, while censorship laws

¹⁶ Source of total film attendance: SPIO.

were eased under Bismarck, they were far from absent.¹⁷ The important point is that under Bismarck, media in Germany started to develop into a commercial industry. Increased circulation led to increased advertising, and it provided a solid foundation of funding for the publishers (Humphreys 1990: 14-5; Sanford 1976: 10).

During the Weimar Republic, from 1918 to 1933, the media continued to develop newspapers that supported different political and religious viewpoints. In 1920, approximately 600 papers supported the Catholic Center Party. The socialist and communist press, supporting the Social Democrats, produced approximately 200 papers (Humphreys 1990: 16). In order to gain market share and meet consumer demand, news coverage by these papers expanded. For instance, the Social Democrats found that they could broaden their customer base by including sports, photos, entertainment and business sections in their publications.

Radio also became an established means of communication under the Weimar Republic. Radio had been used within the government during World War I and commenced broadcasting on a national scale in the 1920s. As such, the advent of broadcasting in Germany was mainly government driven, but the Weimar Constitution did not address broadcasting. As a result it was governed by a complex set of state regulations and contracts between the central and regional governments. Throughout the Weimar period, radio was viewed more suitably as a tool of public administration rather than a commercial industry (Humphreys 1990: 125-6). Despite state control of radio, it was a well-established means of common knowledge generation.

¹⁷ It should be noted that freedom of the press was not well established in the Republic's Constitution. For instance, the "Law of Defence of the Republic", passed in 1922, gave political agents the ability to censor the press when deemed necessary. This law was actually utilized through emergency decrees in 1931-2 and can be seen as the beginning of a major decline in what had been a relatively free press. This decline would continue under the Nazi regime (Humphreys 1990: 21).

In addition to the diversity of media coverage, another characteristic of the Weimar period was the consolidation and concentration of the media industry. Alfred Hugenberg, a staunch conservative industrialist, created the first German multimedia empire. Hugenberg's influence and operations were vast and included an advertising firm, Ala, which controlled a large share of the commercial advertising market, various news agencies, a syndicate, Wipro, which supplied news and information to other press agencies and a cinema news company, Wochenschau-Produktion Deauligfilm. Hugenberg's media outlets had a large political and cultural influence, and he willingly used his control over various media outlets for political ends. From 1920 onwards, he was a leading figure in the extreme right-wing nationalist German National People's Party. In the early 1930s, Hugenberg and the German National People's Party supported Hitler. They were a major reason for his control of a parliamentary majority, resulting in his eventual election as chancellor in January of 1933.¹⁸

The Nazi regime effectively used the press as a mechanism for the dispersion of propaganda. This becomes clear when considering the change in circulation of Nazi publications over time. In 1927, there were three Nazi daily newspapers with a total daily subscription of 17,800 (.3 per 1,000 citizens). By 1929, the number of dailies had increased to ten with an increased circulation of 72,590 (1.1 per 1,000 citizens). In 1930, there were nineteen dailies with a circulation of 253,925 (3.9 per 1,000 citizens), and there were 59 dailies with a circulation of 782,121 (11.9 per 1,000 citizens) by 1932.¹⁹ After the Nazi regime assumed power in 1933, we see a significant increase in both the number of daily publications and circulation. In 1934, there were approximately 97 daily Nazi newspapers

¹⁸ It should be noted that the Nazi press was relatively weak prior to Hitler's rise to power. As Hale, discussing the Nazi press during the Weimar republic notes, "millions of copies were printed for which there were no subscribers or street sales, but which were distributed for purposes of political propaganda" (Hale 1964: 59-60). In 1930, the Nazi press was in financial trouble and "if Hitler had not come to power in 1933, the party press would have withered and disappeared quite as rapidly as it had blossomed" (Hale 1964: 59-60).

¹⁹ From the period 1927 to 1932 the total population increased from 63.25 million to 65.72 million, an increase of 3.9%. The total daily circulation of daily Nazi papers in the same period was 4,294%.

with a circulation of 3.4 million (50.8 per 1,000 citizens). By 1939, these numbers had doubled to a daily circulation over six million (97 per 1,000 citizens) (Hale 1964: 59).

As with the German cinema, the German media was an effective mechanism for developing and disseminating common knowledge. The resources used by the Nazi's to control it illustrate this. Soon after assuming power in 1933, the Nazis enacted the "Emergency Decree for the Protection of State and Nation" which laid the foundation for state control of the media. This decree defined specific requirements for journalists, and it placed controls on the work of editors and journalists. "The Reich Press Law" of October 4, 1933, identified journalism as a "public vocation" and further specified the requirements for this career. With these new regulations, editors and journalists became tools of the state (Hale 1964: 83; Humphreys 1990: 21-2; Shirer 1960: 245).

The previously discussed Ministry for Public Enlightenment, under the direction of Joseph Goebbels, impacted German media as well as German cinema. In addition to cinema, the Ministry controlled the radio, press, theater, literature and advertising. Initially, the Nazi regime did not seize control of all media outlets. Instead of direct control, a form of indirect control via the Ministry was established in the form of "partnerships" between these independent papers and the Nazi papers. Each morning the editors of the daily newspapers in Berlin would meet at the Ministry. Here, Goebbels or his aides would tell the editors what news was to be reported and which news events were not to be reported. He also specified appropriate editorial topics. In addition to this physical meeting, written directives were issued. For newspapers published outside Berlin, this directive was sent via telegram (Shirer 1960: 245).

The Nazis also closely controlled radio. In fact, radio was at the center of Goebbels' program of shaping public opinion. The radio was used to disseminate the various pronouncements and achievements of the regime. As with print media, specific guidelines

were established. The guidelines defined who could participate in broadcasting (Humphreys 1990: 124-128; Sanford 1976: 67-70; Shirer 1960: 247-8). To understand the reach of radio in Germany, consider that between May of 1932 and May of 1939, the number of listeners more than tripled from 4.17 million to 12.5 million (Uricchio 1992: 192, fn 6).²⁰

With the onset of World War II, the Nazi state strengthened its control of the media to an even greater extent. Private newspapers, which were deemed a potential threat, were closed. By 1943, approximately 1,000 publishers had been shut down by the Nazi regime. Others, although not closed, were either purchased or confiscated via force and incorporated into the state-run media network. By 1945, approximately 82.5% of the total circulation capacity in Germany was under Nazi control (Humphreys 1990: 23).

As with the cinema, the Allied forces realized the importance of media – both print and broadcast - in the lives of Germans. On November 24, 1944, the Allied forces drafted a detailed plan for taking over control of the press and broadcasting industries following Germany's surrender. Under Law No. 191, issued on May 12, 1945, all public communication was banned. Every broadcast, publication or performance had to be approved and licensed by the occupation forces. While the licensing process was organized, the occupying forces issued their own newspapers in their respective zones – the *Neue Zeitung* (the U.S. zone), *Die Welt* (British zone), the *Nouvelles de France* (French zone) and the *Tägliche Rundschau* (Soviet zone). The U.S. also created a decentralized broadcasting structure with several broadcasting stations in their zone, including Radio Bremen, Radio Frankfurt (which later became *Hessischer Rundfunk*), Radio Stuttgart (which later became South German Broadcasting Service, (*Süddeutscher Rundfunk*)) and Radio Munich (*Radio München*). The British developed a single corporation – the North West German Broadcasting Service (*Nordwestdeutscher Rundfunk*) for their zone as did the French – the South West German

²⁰ This is a 200% increase in number of listeners. In the same period, the total German population increased approximately 6% from 65.72 million to 69.62 million.

Broadcasting Service (*Südwestdeutscher Rundfunk*), which was later renamed South West Broadcasters (*Südwestfunk*).

The end goals of the Allied occupation regarding the print media and broadcasting media were fundamentally different. Initially, the broadcasting system was to be based on the British model of public service broadcasting under which broadcasting organizations were neither privately nor publicly held, but rather were “public service” bodies or corporations under public law. After discussion and compromises between the Allied forces, a regional, decentralized system was developed. By contrast, at the outset of the occupation, the ultimate goal of print media policy was the return of the press to complete private ownership via an Allied run and controlled licensing process (Humphreys 1990: 26-7, 128-9).

The license process involved careful screening by the Allied forces of the end goals of those to be involved in the media endeavor. Only those deemed to be committed to democratic ideals were granted licenses and there was continued oversight of the licensed activities. Between July 1945 and September 1949, a total of 169 papers were licensed in Germany, 58 of which were in the U.S. zone (Humphreys 1990: 36). The newspaper in the U.S. zone employed German journalists and German speaking émigrés who understood German culture and how to communicate the U.S. message to the German populace.

In her comprehensive historical analysis of the *Neue Zeitung*, Gienow-Hect (1999) advances a thesis countering the common argument of cultural imperialism on the part of the U.S. She argues that the employment of indigenous actors (i.e., German journalists) in the U.S. zone created a paper that played a key role in the successful reconstruction. This is due to the fact that German journalists served as the most effective transmitters of the U.S. message given their understanding of the German culture. A similar approach was taken in broadcasting. By the end of 1947, all stations except the North West German Broadcasting

Service in Britain's zone were under the supervision and operation of "reliable and Anti-Fascist" German journalists (Humphreys 1990: 131).

With the defeat of the Nazi regime, the goals of the occupying forces included reeducation and democratization. This required coordinating the populace on a new set of conjectures as compared to those previously held. The media was a key generator of common knowledge that made the new, healthy conjectures focal. It also required that these mechanisms eventually be turned over completely to indigenous actors if the end goal of a self-sustaining order was to be achieved. As the process of reconstruction took place and new political and social institutions began to evolve, the strict licensing regulations were slowly removed in a series of laws through 1949.

On September 21, 1949, Law No.5 Concerning the Press, Broadcasting, and Other Organs of Reporting and Entertainment was enacted. This law enabled every German citizen who was not identified as a threat to produce any publication or article without the approval of the occupying forces. The first post-WWII German paper published by Germans was the *Frankfurter Rundschau*, a bi-weekly of four pages with an initial circulation of a half million. As Julian Bach, a media correspondent who experienced the occupation in person wrote: "it is something more than just a bi-weekly dispenser of news...it is a symbol...it represents their first taste of news, printed openly by Germans in Germany and untainted by Nazi propaganda..."(1946: 221-3). The number of papers in the U.S. zone quickly increased from 187 in September 1949, when licensing was still in effect, to 527 by the end of 1949 with a total circulation of approximately 4.6 million (67.57 per 1,000 citizens) (Humphreys 1990: 41). The process of turning over control of the means of common knowledge dissemination to indigenous and private individuals had begun.

As in the case of cinema, the Allied forces recognized the importance of both print and broadcasting media as key mechanisms for the generation of common knowledge. They

identified an indigenous ritual deeply imbedded in the lives and culture of the German citizens. Moreover, they incorporated indigenous agents, making these transmission tools more effective.

3.3 Cinema in Japan

The advent of film in Japan can be traced back to 1896 with the development of the Edison Kinetoscope. A little over a year later, projectors were introduced, which allowed films to be shown on a screen. Newsreels were first produced in 1900 and in 1903, the first theater devoted entirely to film was constructed in Tokyo. In 1912, the first major film company, *Nikkatsu*, was established. This marked the beginning of mass production by the Japanese film industry. Film was aimed at entertaining the masses and drew on traditional drama and literature for material, especially from *kabuki* (traditional theater) and *kodan* (historical tales). Even in its earliest stages of development, the Japanese cinema reached several classes within the general populace. Showings in Tokyo offered seating sections for the “upper-class,” “middle class” and general admission. Students and military personnel were charged half price for tickets. By 1926, film attendance in Japan totaled 153.7 million people (2.5 films per citizen) (Anderson and Richie 1982: 22; High 1984; Kasza 1993: 54; Sato 1982: 7).²¹

Government censorship impacted the cinema industry from its beginnings. In the early period of Japanese cinema, any image that reflected badly on the royal family was banned. In 1908, a French film entitled *The Reign of Louis XVI* (*Le Règn de Louis XVI*) was banned because of a scene in which citizens attacked the royal palace. The Film Control Regulations (*Eiga torishimari kisoku*) were adopted in 1917 and enforced by the local governments of the Home Ministry until 1925. These regulations were enforced largely through business licensing at the local level.

²¹ The source of all Japanese population figures throughout the subsections on Japanese film and media is the Utrecht University Library and are available at: <http://www.library.uu.nl/wesp/populstat/Asia/japanc.htm>

Over time, film laws shifted from decentralized control to more centralized control. In 1925, the first national censorship law – Censorship Regulation of Moving Pictures – was enacted. This law required domestic films, along with “explanatory scripts,” to be submitted for government approval. Films believed to “desecrate” the imperial family, or “harm the dignity” of the nation could be censored.²² An important part of this law was that it deemed films to be “entertainment” rather than “speech” or “publication”. This allowed the Home Ministry to circumvent the constitution, which allowed for free speech. Although the Home Ministry controlled the regulation of the film industry, it consulted often with the military and Ministry of Education for input on which films were acceptable.

Even with the new law, the production of films was still high – 15,348 films were inspected in 1926; 16,101 were inspected in 1927; 18,893 were inspected in 1929 and 18,436 were inspected in 1932 (Kasza 1993: 54, 59).²³ The national film policy was paternalistic in nature, and it sought to shape the moral, political and social views of the populace. Reviewing films against a strict set of guidelines allowed the government to filter the content of the films viewed by the Japanese people. The fact that each and every film was reviewed against a strict set of guidelines supports the claim that the cinema was an established means of developing common knowledge among the Japanese populace.

In 1935, the Japanese government imposed import restrictions on foreign films. Foreign films, including American films, were still shown but were reviewed for content and censored prior to being shown in theaters. In 1941, after Pearl Harbor, all American films were banned from entering Japan and those already in the country were confiscated. While American films were quickly removed from the Japanese mainstream, the populace had exposure to American culture and film in the pre-1941 period. The exposure of the

²² For more specifics on these censorship guidelines as well as statistics on the number of films edited by censors, see Kasza 1993: 58-71.

²³ These figures include both Japanese and imported films, films submitted for the first time, resubmitted films and prints of previously submitted films.

Japanese populace to American culture was significant. The fact that the American culture and institutions were not alien to the Japanese populace can be seen as assisting the reconstruction efforts of the occupying forces.

The 1925 national Film Law was superseded in 1939 with a more comprehensive film law. Under this law, all producers, distributors and theater operators had to be licensed by the government. In addition, the law encouraged and required showings of films “useful to the national education” (Hirano 1992: 13-6). As of 1940, the total number of theaters in Japan was 2,363 and film attendance in Japan totaled 440 million people, the equivalent of 6.1 films per citizen (Freiburg, 1987; Kasza 1988: 232).²⁴

In 1942, the government established the Film Corporation to monopolize the government distribution and showing of films.²⁵ From this time through the American occupation in 1945, the military aspects of Japanese film became the main focus of censorship. Any scene that was deemed to suggest anti-war sentiments was removed. For instance, the families of soldiers leaving for war had to be presented as proud with no hint of sadness; scenes portraying the enemies in a positive light were also removed. Western music and scenes with birthday parties were removed because they were considered to be “Anglo-American.” As in Germany, the Home Ministry set aside one day a month where admission was free to certain members of the general populace.

In 1940, the Office of Public Information was created. This signaled a policy shift away from the prevention of negative themes to the promotion of definite themes for movies. Specifically, the Office of Public Information created a list of approved “national-policy themes” that filmmakers were to follow (Anderson and Richie 1982: 129-134; Hirano 1992: 24-5).

²⁴ Japanese population in 1940 was 71.9 million.

²⁵ When created in 1942, the Film Corporation was initially called the “Film Distribution Corporation.” The name change took place in 1945.

Prior to Japan's surrender, the United States spent a great deal of time studying and developing plans for the Japanese cinema.²⁶ This further confirms the cinema's importance in common knowledge creation. For example, The Department of War invested great resources in studying Japanese films in order to understand the culture.²⁷ One of the resulting reports, "Japanese Films: A Psychological Warfare," produced by the Research and Analysis Branch of the Office of Strategic Management, analyzed the various aspects of twentieth century Japanese films – specifically, the underlying themes and cinematic techniques. The report concluded that Japanese films were effective as a means of disseminating "nationally controlled propaganda" (Hirano 1992: 25-6). In short, the analysis by the U.S., which took place prior to the war's conclusion, indicated the critical role that cinema would play in the postwar situation in both eliminating "militaristic ideology" and disseminating democratic ideas (Hirano 1992: 127, Dower 1999: 75).

At the conclusion of World War II, film – and more generally mass media – became a major part of the reconstruction efforts of the U.S. occupying forces. The occupying forces quickly took control of the industry and assigned responsibility to the Information Dissemination Section (IDS) - which would later become the Civil Information and Education Section (CIE) - and the Civil Censorship Detachment (CCD). The goal was to expedite the process of establishing a society with free speech and religious worship as well as to disseminate democratic ideals and principles.

For the first week after the occupation, the theaters were closed. Soon thereafter a government directive was issued calling for the opening of theaters showing approved films. The occupying forces called a two-day meeting of the top Japanese film executives, producers, directors and wartime film bureaucrats from September 20-22, 1945 at the IDS. Here, key members of the Japanese film industry were told that the occupying forces wanted

²⁶ For a comprehensive work on the entire U.S. occupation of Japan, see Dower 1999.

²⁷ For one of the resulting studies on Japanese culture, see Benedict 1946.

their assistance in reconstructing Japan in a positive manner. They reviewed a list of desirable subjects and topics that were consistent with the aims of the reconstruction. The occupying forces realized that working with indigenous agents who had a deep understanding of both the Japanese film industry and *mētis* was key to achieving success.

The occupying government lifted the strict Film Law on October 16, 1945 and issued directives calling for freedom of speech and press. The occupying forces also implemented its own system of censorship through the CIE. In addition to CIE censorship, the procedures included a review of all films by military censors. These directives declared that the Film Corporation would cease operations in December so that a self-sustaining, competitive film industry could develop. Each film company had a distinct liaison section established to interact with the censors to ensure that films met the occupation guidelines.

Although these directives placed clear limits on what Japanese filmmakers could produce, films covering a wide range of topics were released.²⁸ Topics covered included wartime militarism – *Machi no ninkimono* (*Popular Man in Town*, 1946) and *Inochi aur kagiri* (*As Long as I Live*, 1946), women’s liberation – *Hatachi no seishun* (*Twenty-Year-Old Youth*, 1946) and sexual expression – *Aruyo no seppun* (*Certain Night’s Kiss*, 1946) and *Yoru no onna-tachi* (*Women of the Night*, 1948) (Hirano 1992: 148-175). The occupying forces clearly respected the opinions of the Japanese filmmakers at this time. While they enforced the directives regarding the cinema, the occupying forces gave filmmakers the opportunity to re-write and submit multiple versions of scripts and discuss issues with censors. This process, while not free from censorship, allowed ample room for the opinion and influence of indigenous agents from the film industry. This enabled the development of a self-sustaining industry as well as the development of a national identity which would later lead to a self-sustaining order at the conclusion of the occupation in 1952.

²⁸ For a complete list of banned and recommended subjects as well as an analysis of banned films, see Hirano 1992.

The double censorship – CIE and military – ended in June of 1949 with the establishment of the Film Ethics Regulation Control Committee. The Committee was established as an entity to deal with censorship that was independent of both American and Japanese political bodies. At the same time, pre-production approval was ended. While strict censorship was removed, final CIE approval on all finished films was still required through the end of the official occupation on April 28, 1952.

As this subsection suggests, Japanese cinema clearly played an important role in the reconstruction of Japan. Despite the film laws established throughout the occupation, approximately 1,000 films were made in Japan between September 1945 and April 1952 (Hirano 1992: 11; Dower 1999: 426). To put this number in its proper context, it must be remembered that in addition to the occupation film laws, there was also physical destruction from the war itself. This destruction clearly affected the operation of the film industry.

The occupying forces effectively used an indigenous mechanism of common knowledge development and transmission to coordinate the populace around the aims of the reconstruction. Moreover, they included the indigenous agents – producers, directors and executives – making the cinema even more effective in achieving their goals of a self-sustaining national identity and social order.

3.4 Media in Japan

The earliest newspapers in Japan appeared in the 1860s. These papers served mainly to convey information regarding commerce. By the late 1860s, the *Chūgai Shinbun* had an unprecedented daily circulation of 1,500 (De Lange: 1998: 28). By the turn of the century, Japan's press was developing rapidly. Papers began publishing information about foreign countries, including Britain, the United States and Russia as well as stories and news translated from foreign newspapers. Even in its earliest development, the press was

recognized by the government as a means of disseminating common knowledge. A letter from the Meiji government in 1871 to the publishers of newspapers stated, “Newspaper publishers should make it their purpose to develop the knowledge of the people” (De Lange 199: 34).²⁹ During rebellions in 1876 and 1877, the government instituted emergency police controls over all reporting.

By the early 1900s, the popularity of newspapers in Japan had increased dramatically. Between 1894 and 1904 the daily circulation of the *Hōchi Shinbun* had doubled to 40,000. The daily circulation of the *Tokyo Asabi Shinbun* had increased from 20,000 to 75,000 and the *Osaka Mainichi Shinbun* had reached a daily circulation of 90,000. The top selling national paper, the *Yorozu Chōbō*, had a daily circulation of over 140,000 (3 per 1,000 citizens) (De Lange: 1998: 93).

The media was a critical means for the development and transmission of information in Japan’s wars with China and Russia. In 1894, the public had rallied behind the government’s war effort against China, and the media supplied their demand for information. Approximately 130 reporters from more than sixty newspapers accompanied Japanese troops and reported their experiences (De Lange 1998: 109). Ten years later, the press served as the main avenue for public discourse on the Russo-Japanese War. In the prewar period, different papers took various stances ranging from a clearly pro-war stance (*Osaka Asabi Shinbun*, *Tokyo Asabi Shinbun* and the *Jibi Shinpō*) to pacifism (*Mainichi Shinbun* and *Yorozu Chōbō*). As public opinion shifted in support of the war, most papers followed suit and rallied behind the war effort.

In both wars, the government enacted censorship laws to monitor the press. The close monitoring of the press would remain in effect until the U.S. occupation. The Japanese government’s goal was to utilize the media in coordinating the populace around the

²⁹ For more on the press during the Meiji era (1868 – 1912), see Huffman 1997.

war efforts. As considered above, the resources invested by the government serve to confirm the influence of Japanese media as an effective mechanism of common knowledge generation.

Despite the limits on expression, the press continued to remain popular among the Japanese populace. By the mid 1920s, major daily newspapers with nation-wide distribution had combined circulation of between 1 and 1.5 million, or between 16.7 and 25.1 per 1,000 people (Hanazono 1934: 93; Hane 2001: 240, Kasza 1993: 28).³⁰ In the late 1930s, the Japanese government centralized the press by passing a law that allowed it to control financial and material resources, prices and labor. This empowered the government to centralize the media and control the flow of information both in and out of the country (De Lange 1998: 148-9).³¹

In the pre-World War II period and throughout World War II, the press was used as a propaganda tool by the Japanese government. In 1937, the “National Spiritual Mobilization Movement” (*Kokumin Seishin Sōdōin Undō*) was launched, focusing on state ideology and worship of the emperor. Writers and editors were invited to the Cabinet Information Division for “cordial meetings” (*kondankai*) where they were encouraged to play an active role in the movement. Even with these controls, the total number of periodicals increased from 813 dailies and 3,980 total papers in 1918 to 1,330 dailies and 11,118 total papers in 1932 (Kasza 1993: 32).³²

In addition to the press, radio was also a well-established means of disseminating common knowledge in the prewar and wartime period. Between 1926, when the national radio monopoly *Nihon Hoso Kyokai* (NHK) was created, and 1932, the number of NHK branch stations increased from three to nineteen and the number of radios increased from

³⁰ The population in Japan as of 1925 was 59.7 million.

³¹ For statistics on the number of individuals prosecuted under these laws, see Kasza 1993: 30.

³² This represents a 39% increase in dailies and a 179% in the total number of papers. In this same period the Japanese population increased from 56 million to 66.3 million, an increase of 18%.

361,066 to over 1.4 million.³³ The entire broadcast structure in Japan was controlled extensively by NHK. Pre-broadcast censorship was imposed in 1924 and remained in place until the Allied occupation. Political criticism was forbidden – governments could broadcast policy but no opposing views were allowed. An intricate set of telephones and telegraph machinery was put in place connecting each individual regional Ministry to the Communications Ministry so that controls on radio could be implemented quickly and efficiently (Kasza 1993: 88-91).

Perhaps the best example of broadcasting as a means of common knowledge dissemination is the first radio message directly from Emperor Hirohito to the Japanese populace on August 15, 1945, to announce that Japan had lost the war. Millions of Japanese citizens gathered around radios to hear the address and the message was simultaneously broadcast to those Japanese overseas by short-wave radio. Radio announcers quickly summarized the address in everyday language so that all could comprehend. Newspapers rushed to print special editions incorporating the text of the emperor's message and commentary (Dower 1999: 34-6).

Similar to the case of Japanese cinema, the U.S. realized the power of media and radio as a means of common knowledge in Japan, and they invested resources during the war to understand both the magnitude and operation of these mechanisms. In 1944, a subcommittee of the State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee analyzed strategies for dealing with Japanese mass media after the war. The resulting paper from that investigation, "Control of the Media of Public Information and Expression in Japan" suggested that all media activities should initially be suspended and brought under the control of the military. These recommendations were never realized. At the Potsdam conference, the form of occupation agreed upon was to undertake and administer policies through the office of the

³³ Adjusting for population growth, this translates into an increase from 6 radios per 1,000 citizens in 1926 to 21.1 radios per 1,000 citizens in 1932.

Japanese government. The mass media, in this context, was to support the execution of occupation policies.

Soon after the occupation began, McArthur issued a Press Code consisting of ten Articles outlining a free press. Among the directives was to publish truthful news and refrain from publishing news that would disturb the public order or cause distrust. It also stipulated that the promotion of the aims of the reconstruction would require “minimum control and censorship” of the press, radio and film (De Lange 1998: 167-9; Dower 1999: 75, 406-7). The implementation and enforcement of these directives fell under the control of the CIE and CCD. Censorship by the occupying forces occurred from September 1945 through September 1949 and continued in reduced form until Japan achieved its sovereignty. The indigenous populace was able to engage in media activities but *all* articles were to be reviewed by the occupying forces prior to publication to ensure that they met the requirements set forth in the Press Code. By the third year of occupation, while censoring still occurred, the major papers had developed a sense of what they could and could not publish to the point where official censorship was minimal (Brines 1948: 246-249). The CIE also controlled the distribution network of papers which served as an extra check on the information which was distributed.

Over this four-year period, the censorship examiners reviewed approximately 26,000 issues of newspapers, 3,800 news-agency publications, 23,000 radio transcripts, 5,700 printed bulletins, 4,000 magazine issues, and 1,800 books and pamphlets (Dower 1999: 407). Occupation control of the media also involved the purging of members of the press – a total of 350 were banned from the media (De Lange 1998: 168). The aim of these purges was to ensure that spoilers were prevented from utilizing mechanisms for the distribution of common knowledge for aims contradictory to those of the reconstruction.

The press grew rapidly even with the censorship framework in place. By 1948, there were 126 papers throughout the country. The top paper in Tokyo had a daily circulation of 1.5 million - 18.7 per 1,000 citizens. Total circulation of all newspaper was 18 million – the equivalent of 224.7 per 1,000 citizens or one copy per 4.5 people. This number increased steadily and by December 1949, total daily newspaper circulation in Japan was approximately 27.9 million copies a day – one copy per 2.9 people. Magazines covering a wide range of topics supplemented daily newspapers. By the end of 1949, the total circulation of non-daily periodicals was approximately 55 million or one paper per 1.5 people (Brines 1948: 249; Lewe van Aduard 1954: 39-40).

On April 28, 1952, the Peace Treaty went into effect and the Allied occupation formally ended. With the departure of the occupying forces, all the regulations previously enforced by the Allies via the Press Code ended. The centrally controlled distribution of newspapers also came to an end. Clearly, censorship of the media played a role in the reconstruction of Japan. However, the media industry maintained its indigenous nature and was allowed, to a large extent, to freely serve as a mechanism for generating common knowledge during the reconstruction period.

4. Conclusion: Lessons for the Present and Future

The historical examples of Germany and Japan are clear cases of successful U.S. led reconstruction. As these cases illustrate, successful reconstruction must come from within. In this regard, occupying forces in postwar settings should make it a goal to identify prewar mechanisms for developing and transmitting common knowledge and attempt to maintain and utilize the same mechanisms in the postwar setting. This will ease the process of coordinating the populace around healthy conjectures.

Admittedly, Germany and Japan had reached a relatively high level of economic development prior to the U.S. occupation. This is even more evident when we compare the economic and social development of Germany and Japan to that of Kosovo, Bosnia, Somalia, Haiti, and Afghanistan. Higher levels of development usually mean that more established, large-scale industries (media, cinema, etc.) which effectively generate common knowledge exist. These mechanisms will be well recognized and relatively low cost.

In most countries where nation building has been attempted, some semblance of media exists, whether it is radio, television, press or cinema. For example, Iraq had a cinema and media industry completely controlled by the Hussein regime. Occupying forces are attempting to follow a strategy similar to that used in Germany and Japan. Under the occupation, restrictions on foreign films have been lifted and all types of films are shown. A recent survey of urban Iraqis shows that 93% own a television. Further, 62% rely on local Iraqi television for acquiring news and information while 26% rely on foreign television. In contrast, only 5% of those polled rely on Iraqi newspapers and 2% on radio.³⁴ This reliance on television will be a key to the ultimate success or failure of the reconstruction effort.³⁵

Moreover, just because the media industry is lacking in underdeveloped countries does not mean media cannot play a role in generating common knowledge. Opening borders to international media and foreign direct investment in the media industry can have beneficial effects on development. International media sources have established credibility and reputations and foreign direct investment can overcome the problems relating to a lack of funding, reliance on the state and a lack of well-trained journalists and managers (Coyne

³⁴ Source of survey data: <http://www.rnw.nl/realradio/features/html/iraq031001.html>

³⁵ For a criticism of the U.S. for failing to use television as an effective mechanism for the development and transmittal of common knowledge in Iraq, see "Iraq's Television: A Chance Missed", *The Economist*, December 13th, 2003: 42:43.

and Leeson 2004). This strategy has been employed in Afghanistan, where there is a lack of post conflict infrastructure.³⁶

Another underlying theme throughout this paper has been the issue of censorship. Censorship of both cinema and media took place in Germany and Japan in both the prewar and occupation periods. Extreme caution must be used in censoring means of common knowledge generation. With advances in technological capabilities available at decreasing costs, it is now possible to receive news and information from around the world. As these capabilities continue to progress and the costs of obtaining information continue to fall, it will become increasingly difficult to control content. Where the populace is able to receive external information in addition to that provided by the occupying forces, attempts to control content by the occupying forces will serve to discredit their efforts.

As mentioned above, cinema and media are not the only means of developing and disseminating common knowledge. Other rituals that are part of the prewar *metis* are additional means of generating common knowledge. These rituals enable the strengthening and development of *metis*, leading to social cohesion and cooperation. In this context, rituals and ceremonies serve to coordinate and legitimate individuals toward a common set of goals.

To provide a concrete example, consider the *Obon* observances in Japan. This annual traditional event involves festive dances accompanying the return of the souls of the dead. The occupying forces allowed such traditional ceremonies to take place in the postwar period.³⁷ One can see similar traditions in the present situation in Iraq. For example, the game of *mahabis* was extremely popular in the prewar setting including a nationally televised

³⁶ Several foreign radio stations have been key in disseminating information to those in Afghanistan including: BBC Services in Pashto, originating from London (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/pashto/index.shtml>); Deutsche Welle, originating from Germany and broadcast in three languages (<http://www.dwelle.de/dari/audio.html>); Pashto Service (<http://www.dwelle.de/pashto/audio.html>) and Persian service (<http://www2.dw-world.de/persian/>)

³⁷ Many of the *Obon* celebrations were voluntarily combined with a show of appreciation for the occupying forces, further strengthening and legitimizing the support of the populace around the general aims of the reconstruction (Dower 1999: 76).

tournament.³⁸ Although no national tournament has been scheduled in the postwar period, the tradition has continued with players from neighboring villages meeting to play. This has served to strengthen and cultivate *mētis* in the postwar period. Rituals such as *mababis* serve to coordinate individuals around healthy conjectures of group and social interaction, key ingredients to a successful reconstruction. Such rituals, like the Super Bowl in the United States, serve as common knowledge in that they mass legitimize certain social norms and *mētis*.

As economics and history teach us, common knowledge is critical to a successful reconstruction. Realizing this, it is critical for occupying forces to undertake efforts to identify indigenous mechanisms for developing common knowledge. In addition to identification, maintaining the indigenous nature of these mechanisms is key to their effectiveness. Undertaking these steps is crucial to achieving a self-sustaining liberal democracy.

³⁸ *Mababis* is usually played outside with the goal being to find the hidden *mababis* (a signet ring). Two teams, each numbering from 50 to 250, are seated in rows facing each other. The team leader (*sheikh*) starts an inning, his hands covered by a blanket, walking in front of his own team and stopping at each player. When he is done all players remain seated with their fists closed and in their laps with only one player holding the ring. The rival *sheikh* then approaches and can eliminate any number of players with only one chance to pick the player holding the ring. If he fails to choose correctly his team loses a point and the *mababis* stays with the winning team for another round. The first team to lose twenty points loses the contest. For more on *mababis*, see “The Ancient Art of Deception”, *The Economist*, November 29th – December 5th, 2003: 43.

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