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Now, many Japanese people are under certain illusions. Let me introduce some representative examples.

First, Equality.

People start from different places: the country, region, or family into which they are born. In reality, achieving equal opportunity is extremely difficult.

When the ideal of equality exists only as an abstract notion, without the effort to make it real, feelings of resentment arise, followed by the anger of ressentiment and possibly a drive toward revolution. The important point is that equality as a fact is nothing more than a wish for equality. We must recognize that believing such a wish can actually come true is an illusion.

Next, Popular Sovereignty.

Sovereignty is not simply the power of a ruler. The word lord or master is also used to signify authority, as in landlord or head of household. But in the context of sovereignty, it can also mean God. God's authority implies absolute power, infallibility, and creativity—in other words, the ideal of never being wrong. Obviously, such a thing does not exist among human beings.

Popular sovereignty ends up creating the illusion of I am absolutely right. When this illusion intensifies, it becomes We are absolutely right, leading to intolerance of different perspectives, and even to surveillance, suppression, or persecution. The infighting of far-left groups, or the purges and thought-control by communists, are clear manifestations of this illusion.

And then, Waste Separation.

At convenience stores, trash bins are labeled with separate slots for paper and vinyl/plastic. But this separation at the opening is not for different disposal paths. Behind the lid, a single bag waits to collect all the waste.

Many people have probably wondered, Why are the slots separate? It's because paper and plastic trash ultimately go into the same bag—they are burned together.

Next, Recycling.

Imagine a toy box filled with about 1,000 marbles. Now imagine overturning that box and scattering all the marbles across the floor. Then imagine picking up the marbles one by one and putting them back in the box. The effort to scatter them and the effort to gather them again are obviously very different. Scattering marbles represents consumption. Collecting them back into the box represents recycling. Which action consumes more energy?

Once someone falls into these illusions, it is hard to dispel them, even when presented with the truth. Some people even get angry when confronted with reality. And if adults remain deluded, they may pass those illusions on to children. That is truly frightening.

Here are some ways to avoid or remove illusions:

- Do not swallow whole what TV, newspapers, or schools tell you. Always cultivate the habit of asking, "Is that really true?"
- TV and newspapers, in fact, play the role of planting illusions in people's minds.
- Don't just react to images or videos—read carefully and think deeply.
- Always take a breath and give yourself time to think things through.
- Be skeptical of pretty words. Those who deceive often cloak themselves in fine-sounding ideals.
- When you hear, "Everyone says so," or "Everyone is doing it," let that be your cue to doubt.

Let us work together to remove illusions. I will do my best too.
So that we do not leave behind a tragic society for our children.

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Author

kazuotsubaki

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