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FACULTY OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES

ANNALS OF “DIMITRIE CANTEMIR” CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

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[1] Some of the papers included in the current volume are based on presentations given at the 7th international conference *JAPAN: PRE-MODERN, MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY. A RETURN TRIP FROM THE EAST TO THE WEST. LEARNING IN, ABOUT AND FROM JAPAN*, 2-4 September 2019, "Dimitrie Cantemir" Christian University, Bucharest.

RECURRENT ELEMENTS IN JAPANESE ADVERTISING DISCOURSE
CASE STUDY: *KAWAII*

Oana-Maria BÎRLEA[1]

Abstract: *This paper proposes an interdisciplinary approach to advertisements as a type of discourse by focusing on recurrent elements and cultural context. From the vast categorization of discourses, advertising discourse differentiates itself through its indispensable function: persuasion. Considering that advertising can both shape and mirror society, we believe that the analysis of visual metaphors and language of ads can offer valuable insight into understanding worldviews. A thorough investigation of the phenomenon requires the analysis of the words of advertisements in context and the intended receiver, thus Hofstede's (1991, 2001, 2003, 2010) cultural dimensions will be the basis of this study. We aim to reveal some of the most significant aspects prevalent in Japanese advertising discourse by analyzing three non-commercial print advertisements created for Tokyo Metro after 2000. Starting from the premise that the lack of common cultural knowledge impedes interpretation, we will look at two Japanese cultural keywords,* amae *and* kawaii*, which we consider to be essential in understanding the Japanese set of values and worldview. Through the analysis conveyed, we expose the role of* cute kyara *('cute characters') and* kawaii *('cute') signs in Japanese advertising discourse construction.*

Keywords: *Japanese advertising discourse, media studies, kawaii, amae, cultural semiotics*

1. Preliminaries

Discourse covers all forms of communication and argues that communication shapes the world. When people communicate, they draw from assumptions and generally accepted knowledge to make statements that will create meaning to others. We use the term "assumptions" according to Sperber & Wilson (1996: 2), that is, "thoughts treated by the individual as representations of the actual world". In communication, assumptions are reinforced or challenged. The visual set-up of an event like the World Expo is a reflection of natural-seeming assumptions and also a reinforcement. For example, the statements made in 2015 (Milano, Italy) through the Japan Pavilion's architecture, exhibits, placement communicate a plausible

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vision of what the world is like and what Japan's place should be in this context. The key elements were "harmonious diversity and "tradition-modernity fusion". Hello Kitty, ambassador of *kawaii* culture, depicted in a cute red kimono, was used on small handbooks on Japanese traditional food (*washoku*) and related concepts (*umami* - "the fifth taste"), sending a message of openness to the coexistence between tradition and modernity. This strategy was developed to sustain the idea of the uniqueness of the Japanese culture in the context of globalization.

A sign in the "Kawaii: Introduction to Japan's Cute Culture" exhibit in Epcot theme park indicates that: "After World War II, Japan's youth flocked to cute items as a diversion from wartime life. Emerging anime and manga artists drew inspiration from an influx of western culture, and soon Japanese pop art had a new, cuter style". The exhibits present Mt. Fuji, Godzilla, traditional food and clothing through *kawaii* aesthetics and characters, intending to reveal the "uniqueness" of this pop-culture on the world stage. Ads reflect worldviews, attitudes and beliefs through language and visuals. Moreover, the social and historical context must be taken into account because it has a great influence on discourse construction. Adstry to "sell" a very specific idea of a society, in this case, Japan as a pacifist nation in which "cuteness" is prevalent. From "officially cute" used by the government (*kawaii* ambassadors) to "*kawaii* at work" or "*kawaii* cleaning and cuisine", this reinterpretation of reality facilitates communication and human interaction by providing a "playful escape". The social-economic-political background of the 70s has shaped the younger generation's sensibility who did not relate anymore to the traditional aesthetics and values and powered the search of a more "personal", "humane", representative culture. This movement resulted in a fondness for anything small, vulnerable, embellished and childish and gained popularity rapidly (Kinsella 1995: 226). Although *kawaii* culture has its roots in ancient Shintō traditions (promoting simplicity and harmony) and the first mentions of the concept appear in the Heian period writings (Oosawa & Yamada 2017: 166), it has emerged as a revolutionary form of expression in the decades following World War II (cf. Kinsella 1995). Traces of "traditional" *kawaii* culture can be seen in elegant *haiku* poems, *geisha* garments that embrace a delicate charm. From a rebellious refusal to embrace the responsibilities of adulthood, cute design dominates now Japanese culture and it has become one of the most prominent cultural exports to the world. The primary function of *kawaii* is to reconfigure the use and appearance of any mundane object into an object of affection and desire.

Doi's (1981) experiments and research on Japanese nature and sensibility has established a new paradigm for understanding cultural differences and human behavior: “[...] the existence of an everyday word for passive love - *amae* - was an indicator of the nature of Japanese society and culture” (Doi 1981: 21). This concept of “need-love” (*amae*) encompasses the Japanese worldview and social interactions and it represents a key factor in understanding “beneath surface” differences. Starting from the idea exposed above, according to which “the typical psychology of a given nation can be learned through familiarity with its native language” (Doi 1981: 15) and implicitly through its rituals and traditions, we would add, this paper intends to expose the constituent signs of three Japanese non-commercial print advertisements.

2. Rhetoric in Advertising

The choice of words and visual signs are essential in the way an advert is interpreted by the viewer. It is often the subtle difference between words and meanings that can make a substantial difference. In the context of globalization, the problem of cultural differences in advertising discourse construction has been a key subject due to its implications and impact on the receiver (Calantone et al. 2006; Okazaki et al. 2010, de Mooji 2010). Hofstede (1991) initially developed a set of four cultural dimensions as a way to measure different values and customs and priorities between cultures, to which another two were subsequently added. The model has constituted the basis for analysis in many studies on global branding, advertising and consumer behavior because and it proved to be a valuable instrument for analyzing the concept of “self”, “personality” and “identity”. Emotion intensity, meaning and interpretation vary from culture to culture (de Mooji, Hofstede 2010: 94), thus persuasive techniques also vary accordingly. For example, the Japanese tend to focus more on the eyes, whilst American focus on the mouth (de Mooji, Hofstede 2010: 94) and this difference can be observed especially in the construction of *manga* (Japanese comics) or *anime* (Japanese animation) characters, in social media or other visual arts. According to Hofstede’s cultural dimensions, the way the “self” is perceived differs considerably from one society to another, thus by extrapolating, discourse construction will differ as well. We will briefly explain the particularities of each dimension: “power-distance” is associated with offering “different solutions to the basic problem of human inequality” (Hofstede, 2001: 29), “individualism/ collectivism” describes little or high concern for the group, “masculinity/femininity” scale is related to what is generally perceived as masculine (possession, competition, challenge) or feminine values (co-operation, modesty) (Hofstede 2010: 140), “uncertainty avoidance” describes the extent to which the members of a community cope with unknown situations and lastly, the “long term orientation” dimension is as a matter of “virtue” or “truth” (Hofstede 2010: 253), and in the case of Japan, this can be summed up in terms of “Confucian principles of virtue and western scientific ideals of truth” (Rice 2004: 70). The six indices proposed by this theory circumscribe Japanese society to the following particularities: moderate power-distance (54 score), moderate individualism (46 score), very high masculinity (95 score), very high uncertainty avoidance (92 score), high long term orientation (88 score) and restrained by social norms (42 score). The results of this evaluation can be exemplified through advertisements where often emphasis is put on the group, not the individual, between-group competition, long-lasting relationship building, *amae* (‘dependency’) and harmony. Although by conventions, the Japanese hide their emotions and true feelings (*honne*) and express only universally/socially accepted opinions (*tatemae*), often advertisements appeal to affect words and visuals to create an escape from reality, a return to a childhood free from social constraints. This utopia is constructed around *kawaii* characters and signs, childlike language and behavior (related to “*amae*”) in an attempt to liberate the “self” (*jibun*) even for brief moments.

Childlike behavior is inherent in Japanese society and one key concept for understanding this worldview is *amae*, which means “depending on others”. The manifestations of this life philosophy can be traced by looking at discourse construction, word choice and usage, way of dressing and behavior, etc. Yamaguchi (2004: 30) describes the important aspects of *amae* in terms of: “individuals attempt to control their environment using someone more powerful in the situation than themselves.” *Amae* is a particular way of interacting which has the purpose to reinforce traditional values such as group harmony (*wa*/和), collectivism and commitment. A Japanese will not bluntly refuse an invitation or impose specific requirements but will tend to rely on others to make decisions on his behalf. For example, in a case where there is no possibility of honoring an invitation, the common expression to avoid direct rejection is: “*chotto…*” followed by “*mata kondo*” (‘next time’) to preserve group harmony, *wa*. The ambiguity and hesitation manifested through language and social interactions, extensive vocabulary for describing “indulgence” is a manifestation of *amae* psychology.

Emotional appeal builds credibility and trust and uses logic and reason to persuade the receiver into believing that a particular perspective is believable and true. Aristotle used three terms to explain these rhetorical strategies: *pathos*, *logos* and *ethos*. It is not imperious to appeal to all three in an advertisement. An argument using *pathos* will attempt to evoke an emotional response in the receiver. For example, the following utterance used in a weight-loss ad: "If you don't buy this, you will lose the chance to..." attempts to evoke the anxiety of missing out an important chance, thus persuading the receiver into buying the product. One of the most obvious uses of *pathos* is the claim that a product/service can make the buyer/user more appealing to others. For example, expressions which highlight the benefits (for the user or for someone dear) of buying a particular product: "and it's good for your health, too", "nothing works faster", "only you can help animals in shelters", etc. In a Japanese print advert for headache pills the same strategy is used (the appeal to emotions), but the constructions "*kana*" and "*omottara*" show a brief hesitation in comparison to the previous ones: "*zutsū* ***kana*** *to omottara Naron Ēsu*. *Zutsū o daburu burokku*"/ 頭痛かなと思ったら　ナロンエース。頭痛をダブルブロック("**If you think** you have a headache, Naron Ace. Double blocks headaches"). The Japanese language is a "pro-drop" language (pronouns are often omitted when they are pragmatically or grammatically inferable), but in advertising discourse, there is a tendency to directly implicate the receiver or the group through constructions such as: *anata he*/あなたへ ('for you')*, watashi no*/ 私の ("my~"/"mine"), *minna sama no*/皆様の ('everyone's~'), *watashitachi no mirai*/私たちの未来 ('our future'). In the example above, the pronoun is omitted because it is intended to be regarded as a general statement, whilst in the cases in which pronouns are explicit, the aim is to make the product or service seem a perfect match only for a specific target audience and to suggest exclusiveness.

Traditions and rituals are often suggested in adverts for persuasion motifs because emotions are culture-bound. In a 2018 issue of Nikkei Shinbun just before Valentine's Day, a one-page long advert for the Belgium chocolate maker, Godiva Chocolatier draws attention with the following slogan: *Nihon wa giri choko o yameyō*/ 日本は義理チョコをやめよう。("Japan, stop giving obligation chocolate). The conflict between *giri* ('duty') and *ninjō* ('feeling') has been depicted in Japanese classical theatre *nō* and puppet theatres (*ningyō jōruri*, *bunraku*) as a key concept in understanding the human nature. Strongly related to *amae* (Doi 2005: 48), this dichotomist relationship reflects the universal dilemma, the battle between "mind" and "heart" in the Western system of values. Whilst *giri* is "a bond of moral obligation" (Doi 2005: 49), *ninjō* is "knowing how to *amaeru*" (Doi 2005: 49), to get involved in a "passive object love" (Doi 2005: 48). Gift giving is deeply rooted in Japanese culture and it is not limited to social occasions, but it extends to "social obligations" (*giri*) and it refers to "paying one's debt" to a superior, business partner, etc. The gift *per se* is less important in this "ritual"; the act of giving (as in the Oriental spiritualism) is perceived as essential. In this sense, Godiva Chocolatier's advertisement intends to change behaviors and mindsets by targeting the Japanese sensibility. The soft colors used along with the fine text and the slogan written with bold *kanji* (Chinese ideograms) constitute the premise for a "modern" *giri* and *ninjō* conflict, just like in Chikamatsu's plays in the Edo period. The chocolate brown heart in the upper right corner of the poster and the *kawaii* colors (different shades of pink and yellow) are a trigger for liberation and freedom from centuries-old customs which no longer (or should no more) reflect the contemporary reality. Conventionally, chocolate is a symbol of love and affection (Danesi 2019: 134), but in Japanese culture, it seems to be more related to *giri*, than to *ninjō*. Through this advert, the Belgian chocolatier tries to dismantle the custom of giving "obligation chocolate" to men on Valentine's Day, perceived as a "burden" for Japanese women, although never explicitly and directly expressed, and to institute a new view upon the act of giving chocolate as a form of goodwill to close ones, not to someone to whom you are bind through *giri*. The text of the advert offers (what it wants to be seen as) a sincere explanation over the chocolate giving tradition in Japan: *Barentain dē wa kirai da, to iu jyosei ga imasu. Naze nara, giri choko wo dare ni ageru ka kangaetari, jyunbi o shitari suru no ga Amari ni mo taihen dakara, to iu no desu.* /「バレンタインデーは嫌いだ、という女性がいます。[...] なぜなら、義理チョコを誰にあげるか考えたり、準備をしたりするのが余りにもタイヘンだから、というのです」 (‚Some women dislike Valentine's Day. It's because they have to think about who to give "obligation chocolate" and it's tiresome') and continues with an argument for change: *Somosomo Barentain wa, junsui ni kimochi o tsutaeru hi. Shanai no ningen kankei o chōsei suru hi de wa nai.* /そもそもバレンタインは、純粋に気持ちを伝える日。社内の人間関係を調整する日ではない。('Valentine's Day is supposed to be a day when you tell someone your pure feelings. It's not a day on which you're supposed to do something extra for the sake of smooth relations at work'). The text contains a reflection upon the true meaning of White Day (14th March) and Valentine's Day, thus it is not merely an advert for chocolate. The combination of *kawaii* signs (colors, symbols) with words like "*ima made*" (‚until now'), "*kono jidai nai hō ga ii"* (‚it would be better without it in this era") "*happī*" (‚happy'), or "*tanoshinde hosh*ii" ("enjoy it") convey a message of encouragement for Japanese women to live "jiyū" (‚freely') in these modern times.

An argument using *logos* uses logic and reason to persuade, thus it appeals to statistics, facts, detailed empirical information (e.g. "studies have shown that...."). The emphasis is on what the product does, what it contains, website information (e.g. "visit www.").

The final persuasive technique is referred to as *ethos*, an appeal to credibility. An argument using *ethos* attempts to convince the receiver that the creator of the message can be trusted. In advertising, it is often demonstrated by the use of experts to establish credibility (e.g. "hospital/clinical tested", "doctor recommended"). By using real people, it creates the sense of a real testimony, thus increasing its credibility. In a Japanese advert for antiviral drugs the use of a "real" pharmacist along the text "*Watashi ga mainichi kokoro o komete tsukutte orimasu.*"/私が毎日心を込めて作っております。('I prepare it every day with care') creates the sense of authenticity and builds confidence.

Another technique is using a celebrity with a product/campaign etc. to create a relationship between the two. In the case of the Japanese society, this function is often taken up by *kawaii* mascots and characters which have the necessary qualities to *amaeru* ('to depend and presume upon another's benevolence'), "a principle guiding the emotional life of Japanese people" (Doi 2005: 140). By appealing to the receiver's emotions and affect, they can establish a solid relationship, which in time develops into a lifetime partnership (another key value of the Japanese society). This is the case of Sanrio's characters, which are omnipresent since the second half of the 20th century in advertisements/ campaigns for anything "mundane", "ordinary" like stationaries, pharmaceuticals, transportation operators, beverages, foreign policy strategies, etc. In many Japanese adverts, *kawaii* characters play the role commonly attributed in the West to celebrities and "invite" the receiver to buy a product or to participate in a certain movement and thus, to become a member of a community. For example, Soft Bank, one of Japan's leading phone carriers, has its own mascot, a Japanese Ainu dog, referred to as *otōsan* (‚father') in advertisements. Otōsan plays the role of the father of the Shirato Family in the long-running series of ads. Kai-kun (the dog's real name) participated in several conferences and events and quickly became an icon of the *sumaho ēji* ("smartphone age"). His avatar, his "cutefied" version created according to *kawaii* aesthetics (soft edges, big watery eyes, gentle, non-aggressive traits) has been used in adverts since 2007. The Japanese have grown fond of Otōsan and built a strong virtual relationship with him, thus the beloved dog's passing in 2018 came as a shock to all his fans. The Japanese philosophy of life has nurtured the idea of long-lasting traditions and continuity, therefore the role of the father of the Shirato Family was passed down to his two sons Kaito-kun and Kaiki-kun who have been successfully carrying the *kawaii* role alongside guest-stars such as Justin Bieber and Piko Taro. Through this practice, the company's legacy and values have been reinforced in the eyes of the viewer.

3. Defining *kawaii*

The word *kawaii* can be roughly translated as “cute”, “adorable”, but the real essence of the concept cannot be transposed. The first mentions of the concept appear in Sei Shōnagon’s novel, “Makura no sōshi”, a personal account of the life at the Heian Court. Her list of “beautiful things” (*utsukushii mono*), includes objects and behaviors which are now perceived as *kawaii*. Defined as “anything small” (*nandemo nandemo, chiisai mono wa minna kawairashii*/なんでもなんでも、小さいものはみんなかわいらしい) (Sei 2006, section 144) or anything “childish, innocent and pure” (*kawaii to wa osanakute, muku de, junsuina mono*/かわいいとは幼くて無垢で純粋なもの) (Sei 1977, 181), much of the particularities are still accurate today. Similar to the transformations of the English word “cute” from “acute” (Ngai 2012: 87), “*kawaii*” derives from the word *kawayushi* (*kaohayushi*) (Kinsella 1995: 221-222), “shy”. Its initial meaning contained a pejorative nuance, that of “pitiful”. In time, it has come to bear only positive meanings and gave rise to a popular aesthetics of national importance (cf. Botz-Bornstein 2018: 209). *Kawaii* characters are perceived as descendants of Shintō *kami* (magical spirits believed to inhabit natural forces and inanimate objects) (Altt & Yoda 2007: 12).

Although “cuteness” has been expressed through Japanese literature and art forms, it was only from the second half of the 20th century when *kawaii* gained power over the masses, especially among *shōjo*, teenagers. *Kawaii,* written in *kanji* (Chinese characters), 可愛い, literary means “which can be loved” (Botz-Bornstein 2018: 209). This concept is strongly related to *amae* and Doi’s (1973) case studies reveal that childlike behavior and the intrinsic bond between the “helpless” and the “rescuer” can be perceived as a “cultural specificity” (Botz-Bornstein 2011: 5). When extended to adult behavior and social expectations, it is controlled and often “orchestrated” through media. Overall, it is regarded as affective because it denotes positive connotations and plays an important role in the worldwide success of many products (Ohkura et. al. 2019: 125).

Miki Kato, a Japanese designer and animator, emphasizes the connection between *kawaii* and traditional Japanese aesthetics which can be roughly defined in terms of “simplicity, irregularity, and perishability.” (Eye issue 44, 2002). The artist continues by comparing the Japanese flag, created with simple techniques, representing a red circle on a white background, to *kawaii* mascots or *yuru kyara* also based on minimalist features (specific also to the landscape of Zen gardens) and simple lines (e.g. their face is usually constructed from simple lines and the body from simple shapes). Moreover, a cute, small mascot added to the daily uniform or office suite creates a sense of uniqueness by breaking the barriers of conformity and gives a specific status/personality to the wearer.

The Japanese artist and designer, Masuda Sebastian defines contemporary *kawaii* in terms of a: "personal cosmos filled with the collection of things one madly loves. It is not something fashionable - dressing up for others or trying to be someone else - but rather collecting things because you simply love them." Color-use can excite and make people happy, thus colorful elements are indispensable for a *kawaii* item because of the power they excel. *Kawaii* is a form of sensibility, offering comfort in an alienated world, not a superficial aesthetic similar to the perception of kitsch in the West. The complexity of this concept and aesthetic is mainly due to its connection to the Japanese psychology as pointed out by Doi (1981).

4. *Kawaii* signs in advertising

Kawaii is a multilayered aesthetic and it can be attributed to anything that appears childish, both in terms of an object's graphic simplicity-geometrical and curved shapes and bright colors-and the humorous and/or positive message it conveys. Another feature of *kawaii* is that everything, animate or inanimate, is humanized. The proportion between head and body is extremely distorted and *kawaii* characters usually have the head the same size as the rest of the body, sometimes even larger. Precisely this kind of odd proportions conveys a "need for love" feeling and appeals to the viewer's "duty" of protecting the vulnerable. In advertisements, this inner urge is "manipulated" (not precisely with a pejorative connotation) through *kawaii* signs to serve a specific purpose. In the case of manner/etiquette adverts, cute characters and language have the role to persuade the viewer into adopting a certain behavior, whilst in the case of commercial ads, the purpose is to create a connection with the potential buyer and to build a long-lasting relationship.

Figure 1 represents a 2012 Tokyo Metro *manā kōkok*u/マナー広告 ('manner advert') and its role is to reinforce the importance of etiquette and good manners among commuters. The poster is part of a 12 poster series called *Naze!?*/なぜ！？('Why!?') in which several possible bothersome situations are exemplified with the help of cartoon characters. The bilingual text (Japanese and English) plays a major role in this case

Fig. 1: Tokyo Metro manner poster, 2012
Source: http://www.metrocf.or.jp/manners/poster.html

because it comes to reinforce what the visual signs communicate. The text is written with bold characters, both in Japanese and English: "*Naze ushiro o ki ni shinai no? Mae muki wa ii koto da kedo.* /なぜ後ろを、気にしないの？前向きはいいことだけど。/"Something behind you may need your attention", but in the English version the ironic nuance and wordplay is lost. The Japanese text would literally be translated as: "Why don't you pay attention to the ones behind you? It's good not to look back, but still." In this ad, the text has two (major) functions: it supports the visual message and it highlights a Japanese cultural key-value, caring for the other to preserve group harmony. The message is constructed in informal Japanese, using casual patterns and slangs. Although the adverb "naze" ('why'?) is commonly used in formal speech, the rest of the constructions are casual variations. The primary goal of most slang is to make things easier to communicate. In other words, the goal is to reduce the effort of explaining and to make it seem more approachable. In this sense, too, it follows the general "rules" of *kawaii* culture.

The cartoon teddy bear is the main "actor" of this series and his role is to play the victim so as to stir the viewer's empathy, thus to persuade. Always depicted in uncomfortable situations, Bea-kun ('Mr. Bear') tries through his behavior to *amaeru* the viewer to consider his needs. As mentioned earlier in the paper, all cute characters are personified and depicted with soft edges and vivid colors, but in this case, the use of colors is not according to "traditional" *kawaii* aesthetic. Nevertheless, cuteness is still conveyed due to the depiction of the vulnerable, lacking power Bea-kun knocked over by a commuter rushing to catch the subway. In this poster, the colors have little importance, the emphasis is put on the cartoon characters and the text which combine to create a global message and each one reinforces the other.

Following more or less the same pattern, Figure 2 represents another Tokyo Metro manner poster from 2014 targeting commuter behavior. The poster is part of a 2014 series in which cartoon animals are used to create a parallel Universe. Shull & Wilt (2004) argue that animation and cartoons are not to be perceived as simply funny because of their complex significations. In this case too, the depiction of cartoons instead of real people has a socio-cultural implication. The usage of *kawaii* characters is a form of reinforcement of the pacifist ideology which guides Japanese

Fig. 2: Tokyo Metro manner poster, 2014
Source: http://www.metrocf.or.jp/manners/poster.html

society. The text combines with the image to send a coherent message with cultural implications. The representation of a cute cartoon cat and a wild boar engaged in mundane activities is a strategy to catch the viewer's attention. Both characters are depicted according to *kawaii* aesthetic norms (round, soft edges, naïve looking) and their clumsiness is represented in a way to stir the viewer's attention. In this case too, "the vulnerable" exerts *amaeru* on the viewer to attain his purpose. This is not an ordinary cat, it is Neko-kun (Mr. Cat), an anthropomorphic cat, thus a member of the community who needs to be protected. The appeal to humor is a form of persuasion, thus Neko-kun is depicted on the station's platform right when he is shoved by Mr. Inoshishi (Mr. Wild Boar) and drops the round fish tank in his hands. Besides the two characters, this series has an "authority figure" represented by a little girl, *Miteru-chan*/ミテルちゃん, whose name reinforces the idea of order. "*Miteru*" derives from the infinitive "*miru*" meaning "to look", "to watch", "to observe", but by adding the suffix "*chan*" it represents a "cute authority figure", not a terrifying one. Her cute, fragile, vulnerable look is in contrast with the expected behavior of an authority figure, thus this paradox is the channel through which Miteru-chan can exert *amaeru* on the viewer.

The text of the advert is written entirely in *hiragana* (Japanese syllabary) with vivid colors, contributing to the overall childish aesthetics: "*Mae o minai to abunai yo*"/まえをみないとあぶない。(Watch where you're going'), which literally would translate as "It's/(it can be) dangerous if you don't look ahead". The ending particle, "*yo"* is used to sound more empathic, thus to directly implicate the viewer and the overall casual patterns create a familiar atmosphere, similar to one's *uchi* (one's in-group).

The final example in figure 3 is part of a 2015 Tokyo Metro manner poster series in which *Miteru*-chan plays the main role. Like the previous two analyzed adverts, this poster condemns inappropriate behavior in public transport, in this case, inappropriate seating behavior. According to a survey conducted by The Japan Private Railway Association in 2018, the top five offensive behavior committed at stations or on trains consists of: inappropriate bag placement, talking loudly, inappropriate seating behavior, rude train boarding/disembarking behavior and headphones sound leakage. In order to combat these situations and to reinforce train etiquette, companies appealed to *kawaii*'s capacity to "manipulate" and change behaviors. The advert reproduces a real situation through cartoons so as to avoid confrontation or tension. In this case, the coloristic palette highlights who the "victim" and the "oppressor" are. In Japan, the colors black and white are commonly used for sad occasions and they can also describe if someone is guilty or innocent (Brown & Brown 2006: 59).

In this case, the “victim”, the woman on the left is depicted almost entirely in white, whilst the bad-mannered character is depicted in colors. *Miteru-chan*’s role in these adverts is similar to that of superheroes in stories. On one hand, she has the power to put to an end inappropriate conduct in trains and on the other, her *kawaii*, fragile look is a trigger for strong emotions and empathy from the viewer.

The text is written in *hiragana* in plain style and the English word “bad” positioned right up the Japanese text is meant to emphasize the ideas conveyed: “Bad! *Hitori de futari bun dareka hitori suwarenai*” (‚Do not take up more room than needed’). The message is linked again to the idea of group harmony promoted in collectivist societies, thus the construction “*hitori de*” (‚alone’) is quite sensitive if we consider the basic values which guide the Japanese. The overall idea of the poster is constructed around *kawaii* behavior (Miteru-chan’s face expression), *kawaii* language (simple and casual constructions) and *kawaii* colors (pastels).

Fig. 3: Tokyo Metro manner poster, 2015
http://www.metrocf.or.jp/manners/poster.html

The impact of *kawaii* culture is not limited to local, national areas, but, as Yano (2013) points out, it has gone global (“pink globalization”). Moreover, the Japanese government has used the power of *kawaii* to promote Japanese culture overseas. If at the end of the last century, Godzilla, the mystical character of the seas, played the symbolic role of cultural ambassador, now, real *kawaii* ambassadors represent the vibrant pop culture around the world. In February 2009, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (MOFA) comes with a new promotion tactic concentrated under the aegis of „pop culture diplomacy”, which shows its versatility and accessibility, especially among young generations. In 2012, one year after the tragic nuclear accident at Fukushima Daiichi, MOFA seeks to regain the trust of the world and its citizens by reviving through video materials five key concepts of Japanese culture: "Oishii: The Magnificent Flavors of Tohoku", "Kawaii!: Inside Japanese Pop Culture", "Takumi: Japan's Artisan Tradition", "Omotenashi: Japanese Way of Hospitality" and "Mirai: Technology for a Better Future". By listing *kawaii* along with Japanese traditional arts and crafts, the government has officially recognized the important status of this culture and its role in perpetuating the idea of "unique", "cool Japan".

5. Conclusions

As argued in this paper, *kawaii* culture and aesthetics dominate the creative industry and media because of its capacity to stir the viewer's earnest emotions and sensibility. Its versatile nature makes it adaptable to a wide category of situations and facilitates communication. Moreover, the colors used in representing these characters bear an important signification. The combination is similar to that depicted in Yamato-e paintings or special kimonos (*jūnihito*e) worn only by court-ladies. Masuda's exposure of the famous "Harajuku-girl" sculpture at the Japan Pavilion in Epcot in a miniature Zen garden reflects the "harmonious diversity" encountered in Japanese culture.

When used in advertising, *kawaii* signs work as a persuasion tool because they build a Utopia in which social constraints are suspended even for a brief moment. Due to its deep roots and connections to the "cult of dependence" (*amae*), *kawaii* too represents a form of manipulation or seduction. Japan's tradition of preserving group harmony (*wa*), sensibility towards vulnerable, small things, "need-love" culture have shaped advertising discourse construction, thus often the idea of the "oppressed" and the "oppressor" is depicted through cartoon characters in an accessible, colloquial manner. Similar to the hero/villain relationship perpetuated through stories and fairytales in the West, *kawaii* characters manage to create a submissive relationship with the viewer. The use of culture-specific elements is essential in advertising and in Japan, *kawaii* signs can guarantee not only a successful business, bringing profit and „dependence" on these characters and implicitly, on the promoted services, but can also maintain social order and perpetuate traditional values.

As argued in this paper, *kawaii* can take many forms and its success is not necessarily bound to the popularity of the character (*kyara*), but to the emotions and capacity to convey positive feelings. All elements create a "sweet" dependency and help in persuading the viewer.

Moreover, demands, expectations or any other (imperative) requests are communicated more efficiently and are easily understood when cute characters and informal expressions are used. The omnipresence of *kawaii* signs and symbols in Japanese informative/educational advertisements is due to the capacity to generate positive feelings and trigger an empathetic response, regardless of the viewer's gender or age. The study of *kawaii* signs and symbols can provide essential insights for a deeper understanding of the Japanese worldview, sensibility and attitude.

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THE SPECIFICS OF INTERPRETATION IN JAPANESE: THE PATH FROM CONSECUTIVE TO SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETATION

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Abstract: *The fast development of Japanese-Russian relations accompanied by a large number of events and meetings led to an increase in demand for consecutive and simultaneous interpreters, and hence revealed not only the lack of interpreters of Japanese but also the lack in the methodology of their training at Russian universities. Indeed, simultaneous interpreting has always been considered as a part of post-university education and individual career development. To answer the challenge this paper gives a brief review of exercise types, each aiming to develop a special technique and strategy used in spontaneous interpreting, such generalizing, segmentation, compressing and decompressing. Also, we look into completely opposite approaches from a syntax and word order perspective while interpreting consequently and spontaneously. All the exercises reviewed might be introduced during an intermediate course of Japanese, since they contribute not only to the development of spontaneous interpretation skills but also help students to master consecutive interpretation.*

Keywords: *Japanese-Russian interpreter, simultaneous interpretation, interpreter training, strategies in spontaneous interpreting, simultaneous interpretation techniques*

1. Introduction

At the closing ceremony of the Cross Year of Japan and Russia[2], in June, 2019, the new project, the Year of of Russian-Japanese Inter-Regional and Twin City Exchanges was announced for 2020/21. Looking back to the recent 8 years of Russian-Japanese lateral relations, we may say that they had almost reached their culmination in 2019. These events can be considered an essential step in Russian-Japanese relations, which developed rapidly at the initiative of Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, beginning with the first official visit of the head of the Japanese government to the Russian Federation in April 2013. On April 29, 2019, Moscow hosted negotiations between Shinzo Abe and Vladimir Putin, during which an agreement was reached to accelerate the process of developing a peace treaty conclusion process between the two countries,

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[2] A package of events in politics, economy, science, culture and art, as well as in the sphere of student exchanges, aiming to strengthen the mutual understanding between the peoples of the two countries and to long-term develop good-neighbour ties.

and after that, in 2014, the Japanese side followed up with the proposal of the Eight-Point Cooperation Plan, which laid the groundwork for a huge number of projects in various fields of economics, politics, medicine, culture and sports.

The development of bilateral relations was accompanied by a large number of events and meetings held both at the state and business levels, which, in turn, led to an increase in demand for specialists who possess both consecutive and simultaneous interpreting skills. It was during this period when it became obvious that the problem was not so much in the number of interpreters as in the methodology of their training at Russian universities, more precisely, in the practical absence of such a methodology, particularly in the field of training simultaneous interpreters.

Indeed, simultaneous interpreting has always been considered as a part of post-university education and individual career development.

However, the lack of demand for these services has led to the lack of infrastructure for postgraduate advanced training, which, in turn, led to the question: What can we do at the university level to ensure a "softer" entry of young specialists into the profession in a situation when this is needed?

Since the format of the present article does not allow for the examination of a full range of exercises that contribute to the development of students' skills necessary for simultaneous translation, we will describe the basic principles of compiling such exercises, the tasks that they solve, and the problems and difficulties that young interpreters have to overcome when they switch from consecutive interpreting to simultaneous.

Moreover, since the lexical component of such exercises may vary depending on the field of interpretation, it seems logical to suggest an exercise structure with emphasis on the syntax and principle of semantic equivalence, which can then be filled with the necessary vocabulary. The basic strategies described in the article are derived both from the author's experience and from training materials for Western languages, adopted to peculiarities of Japanese.

2. Japanese-Russian interpreter training in modern Russia

Before entering the practical part, we should mention why some things described here, which might be considered as obvious to interpreters from Western languages, are worth examining when we deal with Japanese. As a matter of fact, we should confirm that from the time of the Soviet Union, there have not been any training courses on Japanese spontaneous interpretation. In the Soviet Union spontaneous interpretation as a special course was taught only in Moscow State

University by Leon Abramovitch Strizhak in 1970-s. Strizhak was one of those who had returned to the Soviet Union after the World War II as a former immigrant in Manchuria, where he had received Japanese language education during his childhood. His course was unique in the Soviet period, and had never been repeated in after-Soviet period in the new Russia. Besides, the economic situation in Russia and the Japanese-Russian relations were not that active to require more specialists in this field [Mazurik: 95]. The situation changed drastically in the beginning of the 21st century, when Russian economy started to grow, and economic relations with Japan became active. This created a need for interpreters both consequent and simultaneous. Many educational institutions had established Japanese language departments, but new institutions and existing ones faced the same problem. Not just spontaneous interpretation training methodology lacked, but even offering proper education to interpreters was a problem. Most of the academic curriculum in the Universities where Japanese Studies Department had existed since Soviet times had a standard structure including Japanese language conversation course, Writing, Reading Japanese newspapers, Readings on Japanese literature (fiction), and History, but interpreting as a professional skill was never even considered as a special course, with some few exceptions.

3. Strategies used in spontaneous interpreting

There is no doubt that the transition to simultaneous translation is based on a fairly large practice of consecutive interpretation. G.E. Miram emphasizes that "a good spontaneous interpreter is created by practice and experience based on individual personal characteristics" [1999:90]. In addition to the experience of the translation activity itself, knowledge and awareness on a wide range of issues in various fields are required to increase the level of accuracy of probabilistic forecasting during translation. A broad outlook for the translator is not just a positive quality, but a professional requirement.

However, we suggested that certain techniques and strategies of simultaneous translation can be mastered already in the course of university language classes, since they are in no way related to the volume of learned vocabulary, and are still useful in consecutive interpretation. The only important point that should be noted is that the principles of simultaneous interpretation will be fundamentally different from those given in the spoken Japanese language classes and in the classes on reading and translating fiction and mass media texts.

That is why it is recommended to begin the study of the strategies of interpretation in intermediate Japanese courses.

To understand the aim of exercises suggested objectives, let us overview the techniques that are used in the work of spontaneous interpreter in relation to the Japanese language.

1. Probabilistic forecasting (or prediction) helps the interpreter to facilitate understanding of speech and "recreate in mind the form of the original statement based on the perception of individual, most informative elements" [Shiryaev: 69]. It is helpful to be able to predict the continuation of the phrase by understanding the topic and the communicative situation, knowing the compatibility of words, which is, owning a certain set of lexical stamps and grammatical constructions, stable expressions, etc. For example, introductory words and phrases that are part of the so-called modal framing structures such as たぶん, かりに, ひょっとすると, ただ, しかし, etc., might be such markers or hints. Hints for prediction are also provided by the initial words of the names of well-known organizations, phraseological units, introductory phrases of the speaker on the debriefing, on the desire to repeat what has been said, etc. In Japanese this is especially true because of the formalization and stereotyping of most official speeches, which are the most common objects of simultaneous interpretation. Most of the greetings, closing words, transitions to a new topic have lexical markers. These are phrases such as まず最初に（第一に）, お忙しい中お集まりいただき, さいごになりますが, as well as various expressions indicating gratitude. All this gives the interpreter a chance to gain time and use it to convey the essence of the utterance.

2. Taking so called expecting pauses is the simplest strategy for obtaining additional context, however, the interpreter should be able to apply it so that listeners are not confused by pauses in the interpretation. Shiryaev [1979: 19-20] uses terms such as "interpretation unit" or "orientation unit", referring to the minimum speech spans of a statement needed by the interpreter to make an interpreting decision. The length of such a unit is, in fact, equal to the length of the interpretation delay in relation to the original. This strategy allows to increase this unit, but this is not the most successful tactic available in the extreme case of a misunderstanding of the main idea and the absence of relying points (hints) for probabilistic forecasting.

3. The strategy of stalling with simultaneous interpretation involves delaying time by filling in a pause with an information that does not carry a semantic load and is not in the original text. This strategy allows you to win time, postpone the interpretation and continue to listen to the source language message, avoiding long pauses. The translator can insert thematic information or introductory words into the target language message, if this does not contradict the general style; add additional

politeness, or use addressive, longer forms with です / ます for prepositions and non-final forms of verbs. At this time, the next segment of speech will be heard, which can help in the interpreting a complicated word or phrase, based on the context. For the Japanese language, this trick is associated with the use of such constructions as なぜかというと, わけでございます, ということに関しましては, etc. Similarly, various types of postpositions may be used instead of case particles.

4. The strategy of generalization allows the interpreter to replace an indefinite or demonstrative pronoun with a compound word or phrase, which reduces the chance of interpretation errors. When making an interpretation decision using context in the following statement, this uncertainty can be compensated for later.

5. The strategy of speech decompression is to expand the text in the target language compared to the original statement. The use of this strategy is objectively associated with differences in the structure of languages, or the inability to choose an equivalent in the target language due to cultural differences, for example, such words and concepts as 先輩, 8 項目協力プラン, センター試験, 就職活動, 成田離婚, 安倍マスク,アベノミックス, etc. In these cases, there is a need for concise explanation with minimal loss of time.

6. The strategy of speech compression is often used when the speech in source language is made in higher speed, or on the other hand when there is shorter equivalent in a target language.

Almost always an interpreter should combine all these strategies during the process of interpreting, but at the stage of training our main goal is to master each of them. That is why every exercise model shown in this article target mastering one particular strategy.

All of these strategies are aimed at overcoming the main difficulty, and the feature characteristic of simultaneous interpretation, which consists in the parallelism of three processes: perception, translation and speaking [Chernov:10]. The mentioned parallelism means that in fact two communicational acts, listening and speaking, are almost concurrent and happening “on the surface,” while the decoding-encoding process is going on “under surface”. Accordingly, in order to teach simultaneous interpretation, it is necessary, first of all, to abandon the basic principle of translating sentences from Japanese, which we teach from the very beginning, - the principle of translation “from the end of the sentence / from the main predicate”.

The study of new vocabulary should also be based on the principles of memorizing not vocabulary units - words, but phrases and contextual expressions, used in each specific field or context.

Dick Fleming in his lectures formulates the “golden rules” of the synchronist (hereinafter the author’s transcription), which are carried out by the above strategies and formed the basis of the proposed exercises [2014]

1. Do not expect, especially if you are a beginner, that you can interpret EVERYTHING. The priority should be quality, not quantity. In other words, everything you say should make sense, should not contradict the meaning of the original statement. Even if you manage to translate only half of the original ideas.
2. Express these ideas clearly and naturally, sentences/ statements should be grammatically and logically completed.
3. Make life easier - speak with short sentences.
4. When you perform exercises, train to speak - find a listener who will listen and evaluate you.

Thus, the main principle that needs to be held is the focus on the audience and ensuring ease of perception and understanding of the speaker’s speech by this audience. It thus becomes obvious that in order to follow the recommendations given above, one should learn such skills as generalizing, segmentation, speech compression and decompression, focusing on and understanding the 3 levels of information in the original speech: the main level (who, when, where, did what) that is a must to interpret, the second level - has no crucial significance for the meaning (mostly adjectives, some conjunctive words), the third level - almost literal interpretation with all hesitation words, interjections etc., interpreted only when the speech rate of the speaker is extremely low and the interpreter does not want to make long pauses.

4. Tasks and examples of exercises for the development of simultaneous interpretation techniques

When designing up exercises for training the skills needed in the work of a simultaneous interpreter, the following goals should be kept in mind:

- developing a culture of auditory sensations, which consists in achieving distinctness and reliability of perception in difficult conditions;
- developing skills in recognizing speech patterns based on the perception of one of the components of a complex speech image;
- developing short-memory skills and the distribution of attention;
- improving the ability of interpreter orientation, and making interpreter decisions different from those in consecutive interpretation;
- mastery of strategies of simultaneous translation.

Since there is already quite extensive theoretical and practical knowledge developed in the field of spontaneous interpretation for Western languages, we did not invent any particular new training scheme, but have analyzed and adapted practical training series "Exercises for the simultaneous interpreter" by Andrei Falaleev and Alyona Malafeeva [2016-2019].

To train the skill of simultaneous perception and speaking, as well as to warm up speech articulators before doing a set of exercises, it is recommended to carry out the so-called shadowing - "shadow repetition" of the speech of the original speech utterance with a minimum time lag [Vasileva:12].

All exercises might be divided into groups depending on what skill they aim to develop and help the students to master.

Generalization is trained by exercises on changing the target word or phrase into a pronoun or generalizing word. For instance, in the following phrase we need to eliminate the underlined phrase by changing it to a pronoun[3].

ロシアがこの地域でより建設的な役割を果たせば、ロシア自身及びアジア太平洋地域双方の利益につながり、日本はロシアがそのような役割を果たされることを期待している。

Translation: If Russia plays a constructive role in the region, this might bring mutual benefit to both Russia and the Asia-Pacific region, and Japan is looking forward to **IT**.

Then we might use the same sentence to try the strategy of compressing the speech that sometimes plays a crucial role in spontaneous interpretation due to very tough time limits. Let us compress both the first and the last part of the sentence above:

Translation: Japan is looking forward to seeing **Russia's constructive role** in Asia-Pacific region profitable for all sides.

Segmentation is mentioned as one of the most commonly used techniques in simultaneous interpretation, with its importance increasing with increasing a speech rate of source language speaker [Chernov:19]. For practicing the segmentation skill and learning to interpret segments of source language speech not from the last predicate but consequently from the beginning to the end, there is a task to translate a phrase in two ways: for consequent interpretation (or translation) and for spontaneous interpretation. For instance:

ビスマルクは統一に反発する可能性のあるフランスを破り、 ドイツ帝国を成立させた。

[3] All translation examples are literal translations from Russian, for a better demonstration of the different structure of translation in each case.

Consequent interpretation: Bismarck, crushed France, which could oppose unity, and created the German Empire.

Spontaneous interpretation: France could be against unity. So Bismarck crushed it and created the German Empire.

Some of skills are needed rather to be coached then explained and analyzed. Most of them relate to interpreter's vocabulary: idioms, phrasal verbs, commonly used expressions.

Exercises such as "Formal Correctness" and "Unexpected Equivalents" are useful for quickly finding translation equivalents, while the exercise "Anatomy" is a lexical training for quick learning idiomatic expressions associated with the use of part names of human body.

Formal correctness means literal translation or translation by special terms, not intended for an audience that may not know them or not even understand them in their native language. In this case, it is necessary to have a certain stock of "blanks" that will help, without losing time and concentration, make the right translation decision in this context. For example, if you translate the phrase リーマンショック widely used in the Japanese media as "Lehman shock" formally it is correct, but for instance Russian listeners will never comprehend the meaning. In fact, one should be aware of the fact that it relates to the economic crisis of 2008, and interpret it so that the audience would understand. As a material for exercises for practicing a quick translation, one can use phrases such as, for example, ドイツ首相 - not the prime minister, but the chancellor in combination with ドイツ (Germany). Or 鉄の女 is an „iron ***lady***" and not a „woman" about the former prime-minister of Great Britain, Margaret Thatcher. バルト三国- is never translated as" the three Baltic countries „, but in Russian we omit the word "three" and interpret this phrase as "the Baltic states".

The exercises are similar in tasks to the automation of the translation of unexpected equivalents, such as: 社会窓 "fly", おいしい仕事 - "profitable work". In these cases, it is possible to complicate the task of students by including in the exercise both phrases for which you can choose the equivalent combination in the target language, and words and phrases that require the most concise, taking into account the time limit, but still an explanation, such as for instance 安倍マスク - free masks for the Japanese population during the pandemic 2020.

Another type of exercise for developing the skill of translating idiomatic expressions, using the names of the anatomical parts of the body, such as face: 顔を出す, 顔がきく, 顔を合わせる, hand - 手を入れる, 手を抜く, etc. A. Falaleev in his collection of exercises calls this series

„Anatomy”. According to the results of the analysis of stable expressions (kanyo: ku) [Moradi: 45] it is this group of words: 目(eye), 手(hand), 口(mouth), 顔(face), 髪(hair), 腹(stomach), 腰(back), 身(body), that make up the vast majority of keywords in fixed expressions. Nevertheless, as practice shows, for a better memorization, it is necessary to work out these expressions by including them in simple sentences with different contexts.

In addition, both when working with consecutive translation and when working with simultaneous translation, the compilation of glossaries is a prerequisite for the growth of skill and knowledge, which determine the value of an interpreter.

There are no universal and relevant dictionaries. Working with any topic is connected with the presence and replenishment of background knowledge - they are the basis of your probabilistic forecasting and the lifeline that will pull you out of a difficult situation. Glossary writing is also another form of instruction in teaching interpretation.

Thus, it becomes obvious that preparation for work with simultaneous interpretation can and should begin already at the stage of university education in senior courses. As part of a short article, we presented only a few exercise options for developing basic interpretation skills. Of course, their range and material can be expanded and adapted to the specific needs of students and the major field of the university.

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THE WORLD OF EURASIA FROM THE JAPANESE PERSPECTIVE: THE ANALYSIS OF THE KUROKI RYO'S NOVEL "A RUNWAY ON THE GREAT SILK ROAD"

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Abstract: *The present paper is an analysis of a novel by the former Japanese top-manager Kuroki Ryo, who was involved in the business activities of a major Japanese trade company in Kyrgyzstan. The Eurasian geopolitical discourse is one of the most urgent fields for political and academic discussion in the post-Cold War decades, and Japan had established specific politics toward the Eurasian region, competing for dominance with Russia, China and other "Great Eurasian Powers". But how do the Japanese view Eurasia? Are there are any specific ideas? This paper is an attempt to identify the idea of Eurasia formed in Japan by the beginning of the 21st century. The main purpose lies in identifying the concept of Eurasia constructed by the novelist Kuroki Ryo in the novel "A Runway on the Great Silk Road". The Japanese concept of Eurasia is based on the original set of ideas toward the culture and history of Eurasian peoples developed among Japanese intellectuals in the 20th -21st centuries. We are trying to show that Kuroki was at the forefront of theoretical understanding of Eurasia in Japan, and even anticipated some ideas. To accomplish this goal, we will identify the ties of this novel with the essays of other Japanese writers of the second half of the 20th century, as well as its correlation with the Eurasian academic and political discourse. We divide the concept of Eurasia in three parts: (1) Geopolitics; (2 History of Eurasia integration; (3). Multiethnicity and cultural diversity. This division comes from Kuroki's texts, and helps provide a complex appreciation of the concept of Eurasia.*

Keywords: *Great Silk Road, Kuroki Ryo, modern Japanese literature, Eurasian concept*

Preliminary remarks

This paper is an analysis of a novel by the former Japanese top manager Kuroki Ryo, who was involved in the business activities of a major Japanese trade company in Kyrgyzstan, a former republic of the USSR. The Eurasian geopolitical discourse is one of the most urgent fields for political and academic discussion in the post-Cold War decades, and Japan had established specific politics toward the Eurasian region, competing with Russia, China and other "Great Eurasian Powers" for dominance in Eurasia. Thanks to the Eurasian diplomatic policy established by Hashimoto Ryutaro (since 1997), and the Central Asian Diplomacy promoted by Koizumi Junichiro (since 2001), Japanese

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foreign policy and economic activities started to expand in the post-Soviet Central Asian states, in Caucasus, Mongolia and other countries of the post-Soviet space (Shushō kantei 1997; Yuasa 2007). Japanese political scientists, economists and historians started to investigate the new situation in Central Asian countries, aiming to implement the results of their research into real politics in the 2000-2000's. The late 1990's and the 2000's became a time for finding a new paradigm of Eurasia from the Japanese perspective.

Here we follow the methodological approach of intellectual history by J. Pocock and Q. Skinner: "Skinner contended that the publication of a text and the utterance of its argument must be treated as an act performed in history, and specifically in the context of some ongoing discourse" (Pocock 2004: 537). Any text is deeply contextualized, being published in a certain historical time and showing widespread or unique ideas characterizing the society where these ideas appeared. We are arguing that Kuroki Ryo pointed out geopolitical ideas concerning Eurasia that were being implemented in the very period when he published his novel, 2005. He depicts Japanese-Eurasian cooperation through the international business activities, and at the same time creates a picture of this cooperation on the map of geopolitical interactions that represent the newborn Eurasia.

The real geopolitical context in which Kuroki Ryo's novel "A Runway on the Great Silk Road" was published was determined by the intensive diplomatic attempts to provide an active policy in Central Asia, when Japan, based on the Eurasian diplomacy of Hashimoto Ryutaro, started to compete with the Russian Eurasian unification project and China's increasing ambitions fueled by its rapid economic rise. In 2005, the Chinese 'One belt, one road' initiative had not been proclaimed yet, therefore the Russian Eurasian Project and the Kazakhstan one, as well the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (established in 2001 and including China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan) were the most influential players on the Eurasian board at the beginning of the 21st century, when Kuroki wrote his novel. The Japanese Eurasian diplomacy was an urgent policy for Japan seeking partners in Asia and Eurasia. Being the loyal ally of the United States and the Western 'free world' after the Second World War, Japanese activities in economics and strategy were directed towards the East and South East Asia (Hatano 2013: 27, 163, 170), however historical issues of Japanese militarism burdened the dialogue with Asian nations. After the collapse of the USSR in 1991, which had been regarded as the main ideological antagonist for Japan (which identified itself as a member of Western world), there appeared numerous new independent states in Eastern

Europe, Caucasus, Central Asia. These countries became a target for the Japanese economic diplomacy in the process of finding friendly states in Eurasia. In the 2000's, Kyrgyzstan together with Uzbekistan act as two of the friendliest countries for Japan in the center of Central Asia. Kuroki Ryo stated that the purpose of his work lies in (1) opening topics essential for the contemporary world society, (2) narrating topics of his own interest, (3) presenting topics necessary for Japan (Academyhills 2017). The pragmatic goal of his novels is to show the Japanese international business activities in Kyrgyzstan within the context of internal politics, culture and history of a country at heart of the Eurasian region.

The present paper is focused on answering the following questions: how do the Japanese view Eurasia? What is the specific ideology associated with it? What place does Japan occupy in interactions with Eurasia? This piece is an attempt to identify the idea of Eurasia at early 21st century constructed by the novelist Kuroki Ryo in "A Runway on the Great Silk Road". This concept is based on a specific set of ideas from the Japanese perspective toward the culture and history of Eurasian peoples. We are trying to show that Kuroki was at the forefront of theoretical understanding of Eurasia in Japan, and even anticipated some ideas. To achieve this goal, we will look into the ties of this novel with the essays of other modern Japanese writers, as well as study the correlation of Kuroki's ideas with academic and political Eurasian discourse. We divide the concept of Eurasia into three parts: (1) Geopolitics; (2) History of Eurasia *integration*; (3) Multiethnicity and cultural diversity. This division comes from Kuroki's texts and helps to provide a complex estimation of the concept of Eurasia.

Kuroki Ryo's novel "A Runway on the Great Silk Road" (original title *Shirukurōdo no kassōro*)[2] was published in 2005, being his sixth novel since 2000, when he had debuted as a writer. It can be included in the business novel or economic novel genre, whose popularity is connected with 'The Financier" and 'The Titan" by Theodore Dreiser, "99 Francs" by Frédéric Beigbeder, or 'The Wolf of Wall Street" by Jordan Ross Belfort. Literature of this sort is classified as non-fiction, and it reflects the ideology of the 20-21st centuries, the formation of the ultra-economic society oriented to market priorities in interpersonal communication and behavior. This literature quite often is based on true stories, and it represents a favorite source for movies, representing great individuals in business, and their motivation. Often the success story or defeat story of any businessman or his business empire becomes a subject of this type of prose. The business novel is a genre of

[2] Unless otherwise indicated, all translations were done by the author. The novel in question has not been translated into English yet.

entertaining literature based on real events focusing on economic deals. Consequently, the texts by Kuroki Ryo constitute a perfect source for the reconstruction of socially and politically important ideas in Japan in connection with Eurasian diplomacy. The Japanese historian of literature Odagiri Hideo noted that "the history of ideas and the history of literature are quite closely connected .... Actually, both of them, the history of ideas and history of literature, have single source - a history of real life" (Sakisaka 1958: 265 - 266). A realistic concept of Eurasia, formed in Japan during the last decades, is the focus of our analysis. At the same time, Japan in the novel acts as an economic superpower able to support market-economy establishment in Central Asian countries.

The novel by Kuroki Ryo, a graduate of Waseda University who worked for many decades in leading Japanese companies and ended his career in one of the subsidiaries of Mitsui Corporation occupying the position of top manager, serves as evidence and reconsideration of Japan's activities in the newborn Eurasian space a decade after the collapse of the USSR, who had dominated the area for seven decades. Kuroki also had graduated from the master course at the American University in Cairo as a specialist in Middle East countries, thus his academic background influenced the contents of the novel, when he describes Turkey, Muslim culture, and religion in Kyrgyzstan. Kuroki tried to be an intellectual writer, who addresses his texts to businessmen, academicians and officials (Zenkoku shoten nettowāku E-HON 2013). That is the reason of the deep educational power of his novel about Eurasia.

1. Geopolitics

In this novel, Kuroki Ryo pays great attention to the description and explanation of subtle geographical and historical life nuances in the former Soviet Union, focusing on the example of Kyrgyzstan and Russia. These explanations constitute a concept of Eurasia and are highly educational. The plot develops in Moscow, Bishkek, and the vicinities of these cities, though the main characters also go to Turkey and Great Britain. The central character is an employee of Toyo Corporation, Ogawa Satoshi, who conducts negotiations on the purchase of four civilian airplanes in Kyrgyzstan. Several options are discussed - Airbus and Boeing which ought to replace the soviet TU-134, and negotiators decided to purchase the Boeing 737-400 necessary for Manas international airport, reconstructed substantially thanks to Japanese financial aid. Ogawa has meetings with management personnel of the airport and the Kyrgyzstan Ministry of Transport during several trips to Bishkek.

At the same time, he travels around the country, communicates with local peoples, depicting for the Japanese reader the reality of Kyrgyzstan everyday life. The action takes place in the first half of the

2000's (more precisely, 2003-2004). The imagined story of these travels is based on Japanese literary tradition of travel notes and *zuihitsu*. Kuroki Ryo quotes travel essays by Inoue Yasushi ('Seiiki monogatari', in English 'Journey Beyond Samarkand' or 'The Tale of Western Regions'), who had visited Eastern Turkestan and Soviet Central Asian republics in 1965 and 1968, and Shiba Ryotaro ('Sōgen no ki', in English 'Steppe Notes'), who had traveled to Mongolia twice in 1974 and 1991 via the Soviet Far East and Siberia. Both novelists had gone together to the Chinese Western Regions (Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region), and published a volume of their dialogues 'Travelling the Western Regions' ('Seiiki wo yuku') in 1977. Kuroki draws on Shiba's and Inoue's vision towards Eurasian geography and ethno-culture features, and he looks deep into the history, ethnicity and traditions of people of Kyrgyzstan. Traditionally, the central idea of Eurasia for Japanese literature and research is the regional concept called 'Seiiki' (or *Saiiki*; in Chinese *Xiyu* or the Western Regions). Eastern and Western Turkestan are the two parts of this area, and Kyrgyzstan is located on their crossroads. Inoue Yasushi in 'Seiiki monogatari' noted that he had a dream to go to the Western Regions, but until the 1960's he had had no such opportunity (the first time he visited Eastern Turkestan was in 1965); he pointed out that traditionally Seiiki was associated with words from ancient Chinese chronicles, and it indicated the multiethnic region in the very west of China (Inoue 1969: 3). He emphasized the fact that the ethnic groups in Western Regions were mainly represented by non-Chinese people with specific cultures and social organization. The main characteristic of their culture consisted in the nomadic lifestyle and economy. Japanese researchers in the 1950 - 1960's used to apply the term 'Western Regions' in cultural and historic studies to the non-Chinese areas of the Great Steppe, Sogdiana, Turkestan, Uighur regions, if they were studying any local cultural phenomenon that had taken place in ancient and medieval times (see Kiriya 1966: 594-595; Oda 1963: 560-561; Sanada 1954: 94-97). 'Seiiki' meant the area used as a membrane for transmitting other cultures into and outside of China and the China-centered world.

Kuroki Ryo shows the diversity of non-Chinese populations of the Eurasian region, and he prefers to use another traditional term for this area - 'the Great Silk Road' - and a relatively newer term - 'Eurasia', showing its interdependence with Russia and Kazakhstan versus the traditional connection with China and the Chinese history of 'Seiiki'. The term 'the Great Silk Road' is another common word in the Japanese academic discourse, used in various fields to define the central kernel of Eurasian communications through the caravan road from the eastern to the western edge of Eurasia. It is understood as a way of economic and cultural exchange, united by the road region. Researchers focus on the study of communication between East and West ('exchange of things between East and West'), on migrations in Inner Asia, on study of Turkic peoples of Central Asia and Chinese Turkestan, on the way to Central Eurasia around the Tian Shan Mountains (see Gotō 1986: 192-195; Kakiage 1982: 234-242; Moriyasu 1997: 436-439). The term 'the Great Silk Road' was adopted for contemporary studies mostly in the field of economics and security (see Len et al. 2008). It follows the Hashimoto Ryutaro Eurasian diplomacy concept, intended to attract Russia and China for cooperation along the Great Silk Road (Shushō kantei 1997). In the novel, Ogawa conducts negotiations, gathering together businessmen, politicians and economists from Russia, UK, Turkey, Eastern Europe and Kyrgyzstan to push forward the cooperation alongside the Great Silk Road on modernization of Manas Airport. It is up to him to manage the deal.

There are no notions that Kuroki himself went to Kyrgyzstan. In interviews, Kuroki Ryo stressed the fact that working on a new novel, he takes a close look at literature concerning the topic he is considering; he uses research and literature in Japanese, English, Chinese and even Russian while developing a novel (Academyhills 2017). Thus, the picture of Eurasia depicted in his work is a composition of Japanese academic works, literature, media resources, and foreign texts based on a contemporary vision toward Eurasia among Japanese intellectuals.

The information about the state of affairs in Kyrgyzstan and the Japanese-Kyrgyz relation is sourced from the media on the background of intensifying bilateral relations of the two countries after the USSR collapsed in 1991. Since 1993, Japan began to allocate grant aid to Kyrgyzstan, and in 1996 cooperation under Japanese financial aid and cooperation for providing grass-roots initiatives and human security were implemented (MOFA 2015). The Japanese side provided financial aid for Kyrgyzstan on the project of reconstruction and modernization of Manas international airport, the place where a US military air base was also located in 2001 - 2009. Bilateral cooperation was carried out according to ODA aid programs, and with the assistance of JICA together with Mitsui and Sumitomo Corporations. Information on purchases of air vessels produced by Boeing with the help of Toyo Corporation has not been found, it is, apparently, the product of Kuroki's imagination. Works on the reconstruction of the airport (safety, technical modernization of a runway, sleeves, water supply and sanitary works, reorganization of baggage delivery system, ets.) were conducted between 1996-1999 (JICA 2003). In 1999 ODA aid reached its peak (60 million USD), but in 2002 it would sharply fall (less than 10 million USD) (Sangiin 2014). The project on reconstruction and modernization was supposed to turn Manas airport into the largest regional air hub connecting China, India, Turkey, Russia, the states of Central Asia and Europe (Germany, Great Britain). Delivery of vehicles and special equipment for Manas airport was launched in the late 1990's, it reached a new level in 2015, and operated under the agreement between the governments of Kyrgyzstan and Japan for the modernization of the airport and the supply of navigation equipment and land special equipment for a total amount for 1,5 trillion Japanese yen (Inform Agency 24.kg 2018).

During the early 2000's, the leading part, according to documents by the Japanese agencies JICA and JETRO, for development of economic relations between Japan and Kyrgyzstan (viewed as a gate from China to Central Asia) was played by Japanese governmental organizations and ODA. Kuroki Ryo, through his central character Ogawa, shows Tokyo's official position, stating that Japan has for many years made numerous efforts towards the expansion of economic and humanitarian collaboration with Kyrgyzstan. The text of 'A Runway on the Great Silk Road' corresponds to the policy of Japan in the country. For instance, members of the House of Councilors of the Japanese Diet went to Kyrgyzstan and published an official report that noted: "It is important for Kyrgyzstan to maintain good relations with Russia (especially close economic ties such as security and trade), and preserve the balance in its diplomacy towards Great Powers such as China and the United States.<... > From the geopolitical perspective, Kyrgyzstan is an important region connecting Asia and Europe, Russia and the Middle East, it is a very Japanese-loving country, and it plays a positive role for Japan in international negotiations and cooperation with Central Asia". (Sangiin 2014). The report was published at last 10 years later than the novel, but the understanding of the situation is rather similar.

In Kuroki's text, Kyrgyzstan acts as a bridge binding East Asia with Central Asia, the Middle East and Russia, confirming the geopolitical importance of Kyrgyzstan for Japan, which highly estimates the role of Russia, Kazakhstan and China in the region. In general, the policy of Japan towards Kyrgyzstan during the post-Cold War era is characterized as aid diplomacy (Kuroki 2005: 45, 53, 60, 64), combining financial, humanitarian and intellectual assistance. Kyrgyzstan, the same as other countries of Central Asia, tries to attract foreign aid for the development and modernization of infrastructure, transition to market economy, and deep involvement in international affairs. Kyrgyzstan, together with the neighboring Central Asian countries, tries to maintain a balance between the interests of the Great Eurasian Powers (Russia, China, India, Turkey) and US, all of whom are active in the region.

"Great Eurasian Powers" is a one of the central theoretical approaches within the Japanese academic discourse for analysis of regional developments from the late 2000's. Russia, China and India act as main centers of power, whose cooperation and competition define the balance of power configuration and the progress of minor and middle powers in Eurasia (Tabata 2009). Kuroki Ryo anticipates this approach, which had just begun to be developed in Japanese scientific organizations (such as the Slavic-Eurasian Center of Hokkaido University) in the late 2000's. Japan occupies a position at the most eastern edge of Eurasia, and has no ability to play a crucial role in regional developments. However, seeking for new friendly countries in Eurasia from the beginning of the 1990's Japan became a teacher of democracy and market economy, as well as a provider of social welfare to newborn countries in Eurasia. Kuroki Ryo shows how the Japanese company employee Ogawa conducts negotiations with Kyrgyz partners, and supports their cooperation with developed countries of the West (England) and Middle East (Turkey), because of the lack of experience of the Kyrgyz side in business talks with partners around the world. Japan characterized as a Western power sharing Western values and way of thinking, that is one of the central concepts within the Japanese political and geopolitical context after the Second World War.

Kuroki Ryo shows Kyrgyzstan as a minor representative of Eurasian countries, located at the crossroads of China and the West. He draws attention to the fact that China's and Kazakhstan's involvement in the Kyrgyzstan development gives cause for concern from Russia (Kuroki 2005: 313); however, there is a lack of perspective on China in the text. The reason is that the urgent 'One belt, one road' initiative was not articulated yet, and Russia played a crucial role in the region. At the same time, Kuroki relies on works by Inoue Yasushi and Shiba Ryotaro, who had demonstrated in their novels the intricacies of the interaction between countries of East Asia, Northern Eurasia and Central Asia. Interaction was provided by the Great Silk Road caravan route and through the migrations of steppe nomads from Far East to Western Regions of China and Central Asian steppes. And the most eastern edge of the route is Turkey (Kuroki 2005: 324), thus Kuroki shows the difference in views of Eurasian geography, when Seiiki or the Western Regions and the Great Silk Road were considered as the axis across Eurasia. Kuroki's understanding is anticipating and characterizing the modern approach, where Eurasia is considered as a united area from East Asia to the Middle East (Horie 2010: 4-5).

On the other hand, Kuroki follows mostly literary tradition imitating travel notes made by his central character Ogawa, who describes nature, traditions and historical nuances of Kyrgyzstan development. In the second chapter, Kuroki quotes Inoue Yasushi's novel 'Seiiki monogatari', where the birth of term 'Great Silk Road' (first used by the German geographer Ferdinand von Richthofen) is discussed. In 'Seiiki monogatari' Kyrgyzstan was characterized as a route between the West and the East, a major transport artery opening through Tian Shan and Issyk-Kul Lake, and also Fergana Valley as a way to the West (Kuroki 2005: 21). Mountains, lakes and transportation routes embody the essence of the country.

Kuroki uses minute details, as well as paradoxes. He wrote: "Nowadays Bishkek has become a large international capital, located in the unknown foothills of Tian Shan" (Kuroki 2005: 51). His meaning is that international city is somewhere in an obscure place, but at the same time he tries to suggest that it might have significant implications in the political context of the Great Eurasian Powers. Eurasia from the Japanese perspective unites Russia and China, Central Asia, Caucasus, Turkey and Mongolia. Thereby, Turkey comes to the Eurasian arena, but it is weakly touched in the Japanese geopolitical Eurasian academic research, except for research from a cultural studies perspective on the Central Eurasia, and historical research relevant to the Ottoman Empire. Kuroki shows that Turkey and Russia, having long term ties with the Eurasian states, are playing the role of major conductors for cooperation between Japan and Kyrgyzstan.

Kuroki mentions the Islamic world a little, although it has stepped forward to Central Asia in the post-Cold War decades. In the 2000 - 2010's, Kyrgyzstan attracted the interest not only of its neighbors, but also of the Islamic world (The Islamic Development Bank, Iran), European countries (France, Czech Republic), and US, though the main partner and investor in the power industry - China, as well as South Korea also display major involvement (Beisebaev 2017: 27-31).

The historical perspective of longue durée for several thousand years shows that intensive interaction among the Great Eurasian Powers developed across the transport artery - the Great Silk Road. The geographical core of interaction between China and Central Asia was the Tian Shan Mountains, which are treated as an exchange route in Kuroki's text. This view is corresponding to a widely applied approach of the Japanese scholars: for example, historian Matsuda Hisao pointed out that "Tian Shan Mountains being an axis in Inner Asia for interactions between East and West, also establish the connection between South and North, it is existing as a crossroad in the heart of

Asia" (Matsuda 1963: 1). Thus, Kyrgyzstan is a direct route from China to Middle East, and connecting the Islamic population of Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region which cooperates with Kyrgyz Muslims (Kuroki 2005: 53). Kuroki demonstrates to the readers that the geopolitical competition, as well as strategic and economic interests of the Great Eurasian Powers, constituting the particularities of modern Central Asian states, are at the center of Eurasia. He also uses modern terminology and approaches to define the geography of the region. At the same time, he connects regional development with the history of Eurasia, making a combined picture of the traditional vision that Eurasia represents the Western Regions and the Great Silk Road, and the contemporary political understanding of geopolitical Eurasian space is that is a post-Soviet area.

2. History of the Eurasia integration

The history of the Eurasian development is shown as successive periods of its integration. The crucial role for Eurasian integration played by the caravan road through the continent appeared prior to the beginning of Common Era, Chinese Han period, and the early Middle Ages considerably contributed to communications between countries along the Great Silk Road. Kuroki Ryo narrates the ethnic and imperial history of Eurasia. Eurasian empires have been studied in Eurasian research in Japan since the late 2000's, particularly in the "Great Eurasian Powers" approach. Kuroki notes that the Mongolian conquest and dominance deepened the communication and cultural and historical integrity between regions and peoples: "*Since the 13th century, the Mongolian empire had been headed by Timurid's empire, which had broken the state of Kipchaks (Khaganate). Kyrgyz moved to these lands in the 16 - 17th centuries; Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region was called East Turkestan, and Central Asia - the Western Turkestan, and numerous people of Central Asia, including Kyrgyz, were Turkic horse breeders*" (Kuroki 2005: 60). During the Ottoman Empire dominance, a Turkic-speaking population flows into Central Asia and to the borders with China and Russia, and this change created a new basis for consolidation of local peoples, the policy provided by the Russian Empire and the USSR on absorption and association of Siberia, Central Asia and Eastern Europe becomes the final historical stage of Eurasian integration or association[3]. This approach focuses on the consecutive ascension of several empires - from ancient China to the USSR; it is reflected in one of sections of the Japanese academic Eurasianism within

[3] 4 stages: 1. China period (Han dynasty and early Middle Ages); 2. Association under Mongol Empire; 3. Ottoman Empire, Russian and Qing Empires dominance; 4. USSR unification of Eurasia.

"Great Eurasian Powers" discourse - research in the field of history of the Eurasian imperial past, when Eurasian Asian nations, including Central Asian states, were annexed by neighboring Empires (Tang Dynasty, Qin Dynasty, Mongol Empire, Ottoman Empire, Qin Dynasty, Russian Empire). Within this approach, contacts between Russia and the Ottoman Empire since the 17th century, and numerous Russo-Turkish wars had determined the orientation of Central Asian states during Russian penetration to the region (Mayuzumi 2009). In the 19th century, disagreements between the Qing Empire and the Russian Empire occupied a more significant place in the expansion of the two empires to Kazakhstan (Noda 2009). This fact diminished the influence of the Ottoman Empire, giving a way to China-Russia penetration into the region. On the other hand, the Japanese political scientist Masaki Miyake noted out that four empires of Eurasia - the Russian Empire, the Ottoman Empire, the Mughal Empire, and the Qing Empire - had occupied vast territories and created the political and ethno-cultural specificity of today's Eurasia (Masaki 2000: 2-4).

The Soviet heritage is remarkable throughout Kuroki's text, being expressed visually, culturally and even ethnically, in architecture (theater, the university, government buildings), household culture (transport - planes and cars, objects of daily use), the culture of negotiating. The Soviet policy of resettlement, namely the forced relocation of Volga Germans and Koreans, enlarged regional multiethnicity; for example, Soviet Koreans were treated as one of the most numerous '*the wandering people*' in Eurasia (called Koryo-saram) (Kuroki 2005: 95). The author creates dialogues between characters that tell readers about the existence of 'three Koreas' - Northern, Southern and the 'wandering Koreans' (a Korea which has no location on the map) who live in the territory of the former USSR, counting up to 470 thousand people that generally corresponds to the Russian sources data (Demoscope 2020). Kuroki points also to the number of Koreans in China, Japan, and the USA to show that the practice of this kind was widespread in 'empires' in the middle of the 20th century. In Kuroki's text, this is raised as one of more sensitive issues for Eurasian history affecting countries of Northern, Central Eurasia, China, Japan, Korea. The history of imperial assimilation moved like a wheel across the peoples inhabiting its territories, violently displacing them and depriving them of their native homeland.

Nevertheless, due to the Soviet heritage, Russian became the language of international communication, the language of local intellectuals promoting the internationalization of Kyrgyzstan. For example, during an informal meeting, Ogawa spoke English in dialogue with Kyrgyz partners, but the Czech Pavel Zdenek translated his words into Russian because "*every Kyrgyz man understood Russian*" (Kuroki 2005: 74).

Kuroki Ryo considers the Soviet heritage of Kyrgyzstan and the former communist camp countries as a destructive element of behavior and thought, damaging their potential entry into the world economy market. Several times Ogawa reacts negatively and violently to the rudiments of communist thinking that appeared in the negotiations with representatives of the Kyrgyz government. These elements (arrogance, unprofitable way of negotiating, pressure) presented as an outdated phenomenon that hinders the normal course of negotiations. Every one of the negatively evaluated phenomena is named as a trace of communist behavior and thought. Ogawa cautions the Kyrgyz side that he offers to play by international rules of business negotiations, which the representatives of Kyrgyz Ministry of Transport have not yet learned (Kuroki 2005: 102). Japan occupies the position of a highly developed modern country, however in the end of the story Ogawa's Kyrgyz counterpart - the minister of transport Ahmedov - stole the credit money meant for purchasing aircrafts for Manas airport. This is a plot development implying that Japanese side is not able to understand the rules and hidden intercommunication within the post-Soviet Eurasia. Ogawa's partner Zdenek mentioned that Ahmedov had accomplices in Russia or in Lebanon. The situation concerning the fraud perpetrated by the Kyrgyz minister reveals the misunderstandings and weaknesses of the Japanese policy in Eurasia. While Japan views itself as an advanced country of market economy, in fact it unknowingly steps into the wild steppes of Eurasian countries with high crime rates and unscrupulous politicians.

Kuroki shows the struggle between Eurasian and Western values, the main point being when Japan, represented by Ogawa, identifies itself as a developed Western economy that is experiencing difficulties in conducting effective negotiations in Eurasia, shrouded in Soviet heritage. The argument against purchasing Boeing aircrafts raised by the staff of Manas airport is that they are used to working with the Soviet Tupolev (TU) and Ilyushin (IL) aircrafts.

His [Ogawa's] interlocutor was a blue-collar worker, a former communist sly old dog. <…>

- *I am sorry, why did you say, you don't need that [new Boing vehicles]?*
- *The Boeing price is extremely high!*
- *But these are very effective. Thus, finally you could get them cheaply.*
- *Soviet airplanes are easy to use…*

- *The user guide for Boeing was made very well. And there is a training camp in Seattle.*
- *We are not used to piloting Western planes.*
- *It's like this for everyone initially. But actually, air companies of the former communist countries such as Poland, the Czech Republic, Ukraine are one after another purchasing Boing aircrafts.*
- *Kyrgyz people feel intimacy (friendship) to soviet planes.*

Then six technical employees raised various reasons, why they do not need Boeings, but their explanations were not convincing. The main issue was that aircrafts made in the former Soviet Union were better than Boeing. (Kuroki 2005: 182 - 183).

Ogawa together with his partners from the Czech Republic and the UK see logic of this kind as an obstacle and unwillingness of former communist countries to develop in the way adopted by Western developed countries. The Soviet heritage is viewed as an element of the modern Eurasian culture and mentality, but it also includes destructive features that must be eliminated at all costs. Therefore, the current stage of Eurasian integration is a dialogue with the Great Eurasian Powers and Japan, which introduces Kyrgyzstan to the world of modern economy in the process of overcoming its communist past. In this case, Kuroki's statements are politicized, reflecting the ideological and geopolitical struggle for dominance in Eurasia between West together with Japan, and the Great Eurasian Powers (Russia, China, Turkey), as well as the issue of promoting Western values as universal.

3. Multiethnicity and cultural diversity

Kuroki Ryo pays much attention to the description of history, lifestyle and culture of different small ethnic groups inhabiting the territory of Kyrgyzstan and Russia, Kazakhstan and Turkey. He constantly emphasizes the multiethnicity of Eurasia as its qualitative characteristic. The key for politics and business is the understanding of ethnical diversity and ties between different ethnic groups. For example, about the population of Kyrgyzstan, Kuroki states that within its 4.5 million people (data for 1992 - 1995) only 52% - are Kyrgyz, other ethnicities being: Russians - 21%, Uzbeks - 13%, and besides them there live Tatars, Ukrainians, Kazakhs, Germans, Mongols, Dungans (Muslim Chinese), and about 80 other smaller groups (Kuroki 2005: 37). The "*wandering Koreans*" status relates to the interpretation of the history of Kurds in Eurasia, who were thus characterized by the Turkic man Yashar Olgun: "*Kurds are the most numerous people in the world who* *have no country*" (Kuroki 2005: 119). Kuroki writes that Kurds were always under the control of stronger people: Arabs, Turkic, Mongols, Ottomans; after the First World War, with the fall of the Ottoman Empire, independence was promised to Kurds, however in the early 1920's they were absorbed by the Republic of Turkey (Kuroki 2005: 119). Finally, Yashar Olgun turned out to be a Kurd, involved in the national struggle, who participated in the fraud committed by the minister of transport to obtain money for his political activities. In the end, Ogawa understands that it was just an example of how unpredictable business can be in Eurasia.

The Eurasian steppes multiethnicity corresponds to Shiba Ryotaro's picture of the historical movement concentrated on the successive ethnic groups of nomads (Xiongnu, Mongols, Turkic) who moved throughout the great steppe and passed several peaks of growth from ancient times. In 'Sōgen no ki' he argues that the Mongol Empire in the 13th century was a zenith of nomadic culture and power, and the Empire of Genghis Khan covered the whole Eurasia, from China to Europe and the Arab world (Shiba 2018: 66 - 85). Then, the Soviet period eliminated nomadic culture. In contrast, Kuroki contradicts this vision, criticizing the Soviet period as an economic anomaly, but he points out that the Soviet era was one of extremely important times of Eurasian association and unification, forming the modern shape of Eurasia under the Russia-oriented cultural model.

Kuroki Ryo shows that Eurasian multiethnicity is based on the policy of empires, who had controlled the steppes for many centuries. Empires conduct their policies, ignoring ethnic consciousness, and try to establish an international society; its wrong continuation is found in the 'post-imperial' existing of Central Asian peoples in the 1990-2000's. Joseph Stalin's method of forced relocation is described as preferable for empires in their national politics, when in the 1930's small ethnic groups - Chechens, Koreans, Germans - were forcibly resettled to Kazakhstan and other countries of Central Asia. However, Koreans in the USSR and in the former Soviet Union space, as well as other ethnic groups, in the second or third generation received significant upward mobility within the Soviet imperial social system: they were able to occupy positions in society as highly professional workers (doctors, engineers, intellectuals) and so forth, having mastered Russian and having been relatively assimilated by the Russians-centered society (Kuroki 2005: 97). However, they met certain difficulties in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan after the declaration of independence, as the governments began to pursue an uncompromising language policy. Nevertheless, negotiations conducted by Ogawa with the Kyrgyz Ministry of Transport, and his communication with Germans and Koreans in Kyrgyzstan were carried out in Russian, which shows its unifying function. Kuroki emphasizes that international communication with Kyrgyz officials and businessmen was provided only in Russian (Kuroki 2005: 74, 135). At the same time, the variety and interpenetration of the cultures of different local people in the Eurasian steppes, mountains and seas is mentioned repeatedly, and this variety incessantly surprises Kuroki.

The concept of Eurasian culture proposed by Kuroki Ryo consists in the cultural clashes (Eurasia - West) and the unity of cultures (Eurasia - Great Eurasian Powers), and in forming specific relations inside Eurasia. First of all, Kuroki highlights the ethnic unity of the Eurasian peoples, descendants of Mongols and Turkic tribes, who during the Soviet period were diluted with the Russian-speaking population which became an ethno-cultural kernel for integration in the 20th century. But after the USSR collapse, the Russian-speaking population became an object for ostracism in Central Asia. Thus, mention of cultural features, even about language of Turkic people is given in comparison with Japanese culture. When Ogawa first arrives in Bishkek, he is surprised by the similarity of Japanese and Kyrgyz physiognomies: "*The faces of Kyrgyz people are of the Asian type, and it seems that you have already met them in Japan*" (Kuroki 2005: 32). He notes the similarity of household culture, every-day behavior, and especially food culture. For example, when Ogawa visited the house of the uncle of one Kyrgyz woman (Sofia), he was invited to the tea room where they were sitting on carpets, and he said about owner - he is similar to Japanese ("*the host looked just like Japanese*") (Kuroki 2005: 73). It is remarkable that Ogawa and his companions were invited to a Kyrgyz house and brought into the Turkish style tea room; Kuroki made a parallel between the Kyrgyz tea party and the Japanese table and tea culture, showing the common points. Kuroki uses also direct comparisons, for example, Lake Issyk Kul - Lake Biwa, Bishkek - Sapporo. Turkic languages, including Kyrgyz, are also similar with the Japanese, so the cultural exchange is facilitated through the similarity of languages (Kuroki 2005: 159). Numerous excerpts about cultural and anthropological proximity resonated with Kuroki's readers, many of whom left comments on Amazon.co.jp, Bookmeter.com, noting the polyphony of cultures reflected in the text of the novel (Dokusho mētā 2014).

Kuroki Ryo structures the connections between the characters within the narration illustrating international nature of the business policy provided by Japan in Central Asia. The Czech Pavel Zdenek and the Turkish Yashar Olgun help Ogawa to establish relations with the non-western world of Eurasia. Ogawa's self-identification and, respectively, Japan's identity is estimated as developed and western country, having a common business culture with the West. The Western world is symbolized by the English lawyer Richard Perham, who is used to conducting business using the communication culture specific to the West; he does not properly understand how to deal with the Kyrgyz side, which still retains traces of its Soviet past and economic backwardness. But the Japan represented by Ogawa and the England represented by Perham can communicate easily with each other, sharing common visions and values as well as business strategies. During negotiations on financial agreement, the desire of Kyrgyz Ministry of Transport to discuss the agreement on a paragraph-by-paragraph basis, and their fears about an asymmetrical cooperation between sides causes an impassioned negative reaction from the English lawyer, who calls his Kyrgyz partners fools. Three months earlier, Ogawa had been involved in negotiations and had violently reacted to the behavior of the Kyrgyz side concerning the signing of a memorandum (Kuroki 2005: 55). He conducted himself as a Western person with Western values, while the Kyrgyz men, on the contrary, behaved as representatives of the traditional Eastern culture with its gender and age hierarchy. On the other hand, characters (Olgun, Zdenek), who are acting as Ogawa's assistants for activities in Kyrgyzstan, created a cultural membrane on the Japanese path to Eurasia. Ogawa considers the Kyrgyz traditional culture, represented in relation to seniority and status, unwillingness to agree to sign the agreement at once, and delay in negotiations as a method to sabotage them by Kyrgyzstan (Kuroki 2005: 83-85). He does not understand the partners' behavior during negotiations. That shows the paradox of the Japanese position in Asia and Eurasia - Japan is a member of Asian countries, but finds it easier negotiate with imperialistic and Western societies, compared to traditional Asian societies.

We must note, however, that the business behavior displayed by the Japanese participants at business meetings is considered by participants from Europe and USA similarly unclear, based on national cultural standards, and limited by these norms that disturb the conclusion of effective agreements. The Japanese culture of negotiations, focused on a format of preliminary talks and the tactic of 'laying the foundation' called nemawashi, is widely known (Zhang and Kuroda 1989: 199), and this style was estimated overseas as extremely original and traditional, misunderstood by the non-Japanese negotiators. Nevertheless, in Kuroki's text the behavior of the representatives of Kyrgyzstan based on tradition is perceived emotionally, sharply negatively. The ideal of 'progress', 'proper, 'modern' means the Western culture of business management and behavior. In order to develop fruitful communication with locals, Ogawa needs assistance, and it is provided by the Czech Zdenek, who helps Ogawa to conduct negotiations in Moscow and in Bishkek, and by the Turkic character Olgun as he is the cultural conductor who understands the features of national culture of the Kyrgyz peoples, and keeps the traditional norms of social communication.

Thereby, Japan acts as the provider of modern economy and culture for Eurasian peoples, as the owner of a long experience of implementation in business activities under the rules of Western style. Rudiments of Soviet culture in this context are treated as antiquity. Toyo Corporation impersonated by Ogawa trains the Kyrgyz leaders to run business with Western countries in English, to sign modern contracts, to use modern financial instruments, to be incorporated in the international trade and economic relations. However, finally Japan is defeated without realizing the actual power balance.

4. Conclusion

Thus, what is the nature of Eurasia in this text? It means transport arteries and the Great Silk Road, interaction among Great Eurasian Powers on the open spaces of small states of Central Asia, it is diverse interpenetrating culture and concert of different ethnic groups which were integrated in one and a half decades prior to story events on the basis of Soviet sociocultural model and statehood and scattered in polyphony of countries and peoples, united by typological features of traditional thinking. The geopolitical aspect of Eurasia-construction by Kuroki Ryo means the cooperation and competition of the Great Eurasian Powers on spaces of Eurasia, while minor independent states such as Kyrgyzstan have no other option but to choose a leading partner (China, Russia, Turkey). The place of Japan in this context is in and outside of processes: Kuroki finds numerous similarities between Japanese and Kyrgyz cultures and peoples, however the existing cultural distinctions cause misunderstandings and conflicts which can be overcome by the willingness of the parties to cooperate. Finally, in the novel, the project of Boeing purchase and modernization of Manas airport under the Japanese plan failed. The Soviet legacy, which Ogawa at the beginning of novel viewed as an obstacle for effective business negotiations and transition to market economy, is becoming an integral factor for modern Eurasia, which Western values-oriented Japan is forced to apply. Japan must have a deep understanding of the ethnic and cultural characteristics of Eurasia for effective communication with Eurasian nations, since their intricacies determine both the balance of power and the success for business interactions. Kuroki's Eurasia does not play by the Western rules of the business game; it uses a combination of traditional values and heritage of the Soviet era. Kuroki Ryo made a call to the Japanese business community to come up for communication with the Eurasian states on the basis of scientific knowledge and experience acquired during long negotiations. Eurasia acts as a non-western and own-values oriented partner, that is necessary to take into account by non-Eurasians. Trying to show the similarities between Kyrgyzstan and Japan, finally Kuroki Ryo shows that at early 2000's Japan acted as an alien in Eurasia.

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EDO AND ITS FLÂNEURS: IN SEARCH OF AN EARLY-MODERN JAPANESE URBAN LITERATURE

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Abstract: *During the eighteenth century, a relevant number of heterogeneous texts, sharing some common features on different levels, such as detailed descriptions of the nightlife in the pleasure quarters or a focus on soundscape depiction and realistic rendition of dialogues, were published in Edo, mainly in the kohon 'little book' format. Edo's identity as seen through its commercial literature is still an uninvestigated area of the mutual encounter of text and urban space that should be covered by new research. The city appears in several kohon as a physical space, perceived through the eyes and the ears of the characters, but the various urban areas of Edo are also described as a space of human relations, where different people live and struggle, revealing the phantasmagoria of everyday life. By investigating the characterisation of city space, intended as a space for human relationships and urban lifestyle, in some "little books" from the An'ei (1772-1781) and the Tenmei (1781-1789) periods, this paper aims to cast light on the urban identity of Edo, as seen through the eyes of its flâneurs, and to evaluate the possibility of assessing kohon as an ante litteram expression of urban literature.*

Keywords: *urban literature, Edo period, Japanese literature, sharebon*

1. City identity and the *sharebon*

The debate on the identity of Tokyo as a megacity is neither new nor unexplored. From its very beginnings many observers have noticed that the 'warp and weft' of the new urban fabric, albeit relatively cosmopolitan and highly flamboyant, masks traces of its shogunal past, when Tokyo was still Edo. In fact, as Italo Calvino wrote in *Invisible Cities*, a city consists of relationships between "the measurements of its spaces and the events of its past": the city can be likened to a sponge soaking up and expanding "as the wave of memories flows in" (Calvino 1974: 10-11).

A number of Japanese scholars have been engaged in the study of Tokyo's past, such as Yoshida Nobuyuki (e.g. Yoshida 2012) and Jinnai Hidenobu (e.g. Jinnai 1985) in addition to the famous studies conducted by Ogi Shinzō (e.g. Ogi 1986), who coined the term *Edo-Tōkyōgaku* (Edo-Tokyo Studies) not to mention Western scholars such as Paul Waley (1991) and André Sorensen (2002).[2] However, the main objective

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[2] Yoshida 1990 gives a detailed list of Japanese studies published during the 1980s devoted to the early modern city. Philippe Pons, the French scholar, produced an ambitious work in 1988 and the Italian scholar, Rosa Caroli's work in 2012 also deserves a mention.

of my research, still in its initial stages and as such its “exploratory phase”, neither directly addresses the history of the city nor that of its individual districts. One of the main aims is to ascertain the start of urban literature in the city of Tokyo, dating it back to the Edo period (1603-1868), even before the very famous eulogy of the shogunal city, *Edo hanjōki* (Chronicles of the Prosperity of Edo, 1832) by Terakado Sekien (1796-1868).

The existence of a wide range of geographical texts and travelogues dealing with Edo, as well as illustrated anthologies portraying in various ways the wonders of the city, is without doubt an explicit sign that Edo was attracting growing attention from intellectuals, cartographers, and illustrators (see Elisonas 1997 on famous places, Berry 2006, Ch. 1 and 5 on visual accounts on the early modern city and Yonemoto 2003: 17-26 on Edo city maps). But the goal of this essay is to collect pieces of *fictional* Edo literature which tell us about Edo whilst recounting a story: not just stories set in Edo (examples range from early sixteenth-century stories, to Ihara Saikaku [1642-1693] and Miyako no Nishiki [born 1675]), but the settings of the stories in Edo where the city appears as a meaningful actor or a symbolic environment. The object of this research is not Edo as a background, but Edo as a dynamic space for social encounter and personal histories.

Although less explicitly and comprehensively narrated when compared to modern portrayals of Tokyo, Edo found its media in the pages of early modern popular literature thanks to the little-format books (*kohon* or *kobon*), also known as *sharebon* (literally, witty books), which obtained a certain recognition during the Meiwa years (1764-1772) and reached their peak of popularity in the An’ei (1772-1781), Tenmei (1781-1789) and Kansei (1789-1801) eras.

From the start, this type of publication appeared in a book format that, on the one hand, was closely linked to the pleasure quarter of Yoshiwara, and, on the other, to orality. In fact, even in the first decades of the eighteenth century, these little books were compiled as detailed maps of the gay districts and the format was soon perceived as conveying erotic or prohibited overtones (*Ryōha shigen* [A Toast to the Pleasure Quarter] by Yūgidō in 1728, or the 1740’s *Shin Yoshiwara saikenki* [Detailed Annotation of the New Yoshiwara] by Urokogataya Magobei). Furthermore, books of jokes or puns and oral short stories were also published in this format (amongst others, *Seishin hiroku* [Secret Record of Divine Teachings] was released in Osaka in 1756). The two instances delivered by the little book format combined an original experimentation of new narrative voices, which emerged in the second half of the eighteenth century when a new narrative mode was developed.

This method allowed to depict realistic scenes using humour and thus render the kaleidoscope of human feelings accessible and intelligible to readers (Pallone 2019: 347).

Dialogue-based witty books became good sellers among the citizens of Edo, a unique literature written by Edoites for Edoites. *Yūshi hōgen* (The Libertine's Dialect) in 1770 set a standard for these types of stories, envisioning a narrative structure where oppositional characters move together in a spatial departure spanning from the city centre to the gay district of Yoshiwara. There, the characters spend the soiree drinking, chatting and flirting until dawn breaks and the teahouse boy appears right on time to remind them it is time to go home.

In other words, these books presented a fairly clichéd plot and shared a common expressive thesaurus, but some authors soon devised strategies aimed at innovating the format mainly by moving the plot setting into different gay quarters. In fact, some abandoned *shin*-Yoshiwara in preference for less prestigious areas as the settings for their witty stories. The efforts expended by authors in search of a realistic portrayal of different Edo districts, through both diegesis and dialogues, could be seen as a milestone in the development of an urban literature in Edo and its spatial fragmentation that determined the creation of urban identities which changed from place to place within the shogunal capital city. In other words, although a genuine *edokko* (Edo true inhabitant) identity was already perceived by Edo inhabitants in the eighteenth century, a global Edo identity was not as deeply explored in popular literature as that of the identity of individual districts. This was due to the efforts made by authors in moving the plot out of *shin*-Yoshiwara without sacrificing the strong deviant spatial identity of the setting: every district chosen as the setting for a new story had to be depicted as a place as special and unique as *shin*-Yoshiwara and as a result, these stories most certainly contributed in giving a literary identity to the marginal areas in the city of Edo, which only later would coalesce into a global city identity. The "Yoshiwarisation" of urban settings also determined the emergence of dichotomic characterisation of some districts in Edo, whose features were often described as extreme and highlighted in order to show internal opposition[3].

General statements on the identity of Edo which precede the publications in *kohon* format include depictions of the city as the quintessential city of *samurai*. One example is the famous story of the *ōtsugomori* (last day of the year) gathering of *samurai* in Edo,

[3] See for example Tanaka 2020:11, who notes the "duality" of the sea as portrayed by *ukiyo-e* artists in the nineteenth century: they highlighted both the rural or melancholic aspects of the seaside as well as the crowded and lively gatherings of certain seasonal occasions.

Shinagawa, which is said to represent the concept of *giri* (duty) in the summary of *Saikaku shokokubanashi* (Saikaku's Tales of the Provinces, 1685), Book 1. On the contrary, the *edokko* identity is the theme of many stories set in the eighteenth century and is well exemplified by Edo's "cultural appropriation" of the story of Hanakawado Sukeroku from his original Kamigata setting (although the first occurrence of the term *edokko* is in the Meiwa era, as Nishiyama [1997: 42] notes). Sukeroku's songs and lines mention several keywords which are associated with the *edokko* identity, such as the view of Awa and Kazusa, the aqueduct water, etcetera. A famous summary of the elements participating in the typical *edokko* portrait can also be found in the prefaces of many touristic journals of the time. However, the most famous example is probably located in the incipit of Santō Kyōden's *Sōmagaki* (The Great Lattice, 1787), as Nishiyama (1997: particularly 41-52) makes clear. These portrayals undisputedly testify to the completion of the transfer of property of the identity of Edo citizens from the *samurai* to the town-dwellers (see Coaldrake 2013; McClain 2013: 338-339).

2. The Ryōgoku area in early-modern popular literature

In order to introduce some urban portrayals included in dialogue-based witty books published in the "little book" format during the 1770s and 1780s, the district of Ryōgoku has been chosen as an example. Ryōgoku was a marginal area during the seventeenth century but became an important landmark for Edo inhabitants during the eighteenth century, thanks to the vitality of its street arts, its religious festivals and consequently the satellite-activities that sprung up around its major religious institutions. As Finch (2016: 40) argues, Foucault posited oppositional spaces typically within the city: his well-known heterotopias or *spaces of difference* are spatial carnival sites where one can be isolated from the usual order: two prototypical examples are brothels and graveyards which abound in all cities, and Edo was no exception. Ryōgoku included both places in a relatively small geographical area.

The Ekōin Buddhist temple of the Pure Land Sect, which is highlighted as a famous place in Ryōgoku by Edo tourist guides such as the 1772 *Shinpen Edo sunago* (Grains of Edo Sand - New Edition), was founded in 1657 in order to enshrine the souls of the numerous dead of the Meireki fire, which changed Edo's face for good and literally decimated the population in some districts (and as Shimizu says [Sakura 2014: 926], it is often considered a watershed moment in the history of the city). The foundation of such an important temple in the area beyond the Sumida River decisively resulted in those territories being annexed from the city of Edo.

Furthermore, the district was conceived from its beginnings as a hybrid territory hosting both the dwellings of the *samurai* and the citizens, with the residences of the elite landlords being surrounded by a range of condominiums designed for the lower echelons of the military class. As the name of the homonymous bridge Ryōgoku (*ryōgoku* meaning 'both countries') states, the area beyond the Sumida river was considered part of the country of Shimōsa, whilst the adjacent side of the Sumida was originally the Edo village, part of the country of Musashi. Other toponyms, such as Mukōjima (literally 'the island on the other side'), testified to the perceived alterity of the yonder side of the river.

The presence of the temple enhanced the vitality of the urban area and strengthened the local community, allowing many teahouses and shops to prosper throughout the district. In parallel, street performances and several shows, such as peepshows, dances and open-air theatres also flourished (see Markus 1985: 506-507; Hur 2000: 99-100; Groemer 2016: 317). The Yonezawa-chō and Yoshikawa-chō areas prospered thanks to the presence of the Hirokōji, a wide space, similar to a square in Western cities, where many merchants set up their activities. The southern side of the "square" was Yagenbori, where several merchants including confectionery makers, pharmacies and *ukiyo-e* artists opened famous shops and boutiques (Yamazawa 1957: 33-35; Takeuchi 2011).

The area became even more popular in the late 1770s, thanks to the fact that the temple hosted the so-called Zenkōji *degaichō*, a public exhibition of the secret Buddha enshrined in the Zenkōji temple of Shinano, today's Nagano Prefecture. Faith in the powers of Zenkōji was widespread in Japan and the event in Edo was extremely successful (Hur 2009: 54-55). The streets of Ryōgoku were congested 24 hours a day and the courtyards of the temple were constantly full to bursting. The festival was initially scheduled for a total of sixty days, but it was eventually prolonged for a further sixteen days (Tanahashi 1986-1989: I, 131). This vitality further promoted the prosperity of illegal prostitution practiced in many teahouses in the area.

The 1771 text *Yūri no hana* (Flowers of the Gay Districts), which includes a ranking and review of many Edo districts where illegal prostitution was transacted, describes eastern Ryōgoku as a *sakariba* (night-life mecca) on two occasions. The first entry is a report of the prosperity of Dotegawa (more precisely Ekōin-mae dotegawa, literally 'the area beside the embankment, in front of the Ekōin'), famous for its *ginneko* (literally 'silver cats'), a term used for the prostitutes moonlighting in the teahouses of the area: they offered their company in limited time-slot units, each slot at a fee of seven *monme* and five *bu* of silver, which explains their sobriquet. The other entry of *Yūri no hana* where Ryōgoku's prosperity is mentioned is *nekojaya* (literally 'cat teahouses') and indicates the area of Honjo hitotsume in the Ryōgoku district. Despite their name, these cat teahouses were nothing like the *neko-kissa* or *neko-café* of our times. They were brothels where "golden cats", namely prostitutes, were paid a fee of 100 coins of gold (*kin hyappiki* or *kin hyappi*), corresponding to one *bu* of gold, a quarter of one *ryō,* for each timeslot. A fictional account of the origin of this system is found in the illustrated short-tale *Zenkōji gorishō Kayoikeri neko no wazakure* (Gifts of the Zenkōji: Tricks of the Cats, 1779). According to this text, after some cat ghosts committed several crimes in Ryōgoku, an epiphany of *buddha* Amida appears to the protagonist and orders him to build a teahouse in the area and divide day and night into five time-slots, to be used as time units for pricing the activities. Thus, *nekojaya* became a keyword when referring to Ryōgoku as a *sakariba*. Another keyword was *misemono* (street shows), inasmuch as many street performers competed in surprising the Ryōgoku's *flâneurs*.

Not only little books, but also many illustrated texts narrated some aspects of Ryōgoku and its peculiarities, with a peak in production corresponding to the 1778 *degaichō* festival. Most of the books mention Ryōgoku's religious festival without describing it in detail. The *degaichō* is portrayed in some texts by humorously narrating the story of Ōmi no Honda Yoshimitsu (sixth century), who is believed to be the founder of the Zenkōji temple: in *Ichiji senkin* (A Thousand Coins of Gold for One Thing, 1778), for example, the saintly man is described whilst enjoying the company of some courtesans in Yoshiwara; another example of a text where Yoshimitsu appears is *Honda Yoshimitsu Muchū no goriyaku* (Honda Yoshimitsu and the Divine Blessing of a Strong Passion, 1778), illustrated by Torii Kiyotsune (dates unknown, circa 1757-1780) and was a *kiwamono* (seasonal) publication dedicated to this religious event. Other similar short stories narrate the origins (*engi*) of the Zenkōji temple and relate them to the contemporary display of the secret Buddha[4]. There are also stories unrelated to the festival but that mention the *kaichō* in order to convey the *medetashi* (joyful) finale: two illustrated versions of previous *chūbon* (medium-sized book) or *kohon* texts, such as *Ohana Hanshichi Kaichō riyaku no mekuriai* (Ohana and Hanshichi: A Fortuitous Encounter with the *Kaichō* Blessing, 1778), based on the *sharebon* entitled *Sakiwakeron* (Treatise on the Varicoloured Flowers, An'ei period) and portraying the crowd of

[4] See for instance a story known only by its *hashira* (outer edge of the page) title, *Zenkōji* (1778), which recounted the story of Honda Yoshimitsu and on its last page included a visual representation of the festival at the Ekōin temple (Tanahashi 1986-1989: I, 141); or *Zenkōji gohonzon Denraiki* (Chronicle of the Transmission of the Zenkōji Treasure, 1778), which states that it tells the true story of the temple and also illustrates the present day *kaichō* festival on *folio* 10 *verso* (Tanahashi 1986-1989: I, 154).

pilgrims gathered in the temple, or *Kuruwabanashi misoka no tsuki* (Stories from the Brothel: The Moon of the Last Day, 1778), based on a medium-sized book, *Keiseikai tora no maki* (Secret Treatise on Buying a Courtesan, 1778). They both share an uncommon layout and describe the *kaichō* as a sixty-day long event: it is believed that they were published (or at least composed) while the event was still ongoing and prior to the decision by the authorities to delay its conclusion (Tanahashi 1986-1989: I, 131). A group of stories is related to the *onimusume* show, a *misemono* (open-air show) which gained some popularity in Ryōgoku during the Zenkōji *degaichō*. Such is the case of texts like *Okimiyage* (The Left Souvenir, 1778), *Kijōden* (Life of the Demon Maiden, 1778), or the illustrated *Ryōgoku no hyōban musume Oni no shikogusa* (The Famous Maiden of Ryōgoku: A Demon's Weed, 1778); the latter text also includes some illustrated tables where the entertainments on offer in the area are portrayed, with an emphasis on the lively atmosphere of the neighbourhood[5]. *Misemono* of Ryōgoku were often displays of rare or uncommon things or beings; therefore, many illustrated stories tell of demons or monstrous creatures who end up making money in a Ryōgoku show. We could mention *Edo miyage Ōtsu no meibutsu* (A Souvenir from Edo: The Specialty of Ōtsu, 1781) or *Imamukashi bakemono no oyadama* (Once upon a Time: The Best Monster of All, 1781), visually representing the commercial districts near Ryōgoku; or *Ōmori no karuwaza Kusunoki no onimusume Hon no ii misemono* (Ōmori's Acrobatics and Kusunoki's Demon Maiden: Just a Good Show, 1790) of the Kansei period. Another group of texts includes stories related to different religious festivals held in Ryōgoku: some texts testify to the Meguro Yūtenji *degaichō* festival held in Ekōin in 1780, such as *Yūten oshō nenbutsu no kuriki Kinugawa monogatari* (The Priest Yūten and the Powers of the Sacred Word: The Story of the Silk River, 1780) or *Asane ga sonryō Yoemon ga ichiryō Ii ten gorishō* (Asane's Charge, Yoemon's Gold Coin: The Blessings of Good Fortune, 1780); on the other hand, texts such as *On atsurae Ryōgoku Shinodazome* (A Custom-Made Shinoda Cloth from Ryōgoku, 1786), include allusions to the 1786 *degaichō* festival of the Seiryōji temple of Saga[6].

[5] *Haishishō* (Treatise on the Historical Novel, nineteenth century) by Hachiya Mokitsu (1795-1873) also mentions an illustrated text entitled *Hyōban Oni musume* (The Demon Maiden and its Fame, 1778) published by Marushō. It is believed that this also deals with the *onimusume* show of Ryōgoku. See Tanahashi 1986-1989: I, 152-153. Most of the plot settings of these texts are in hell and therefore, share certain similarities with the well-known *Nenashigusa* (Rootless Weed, 1763) by Hiraga Gennai (1728-1779). See Ozaki 2000: 679-683.

[6] Ryōgoku is also incidentally mentioned and described in texts portraying the marvels of Edo, such as *Edo ōjiman* (Edo High Pride, 1780), which highlights Ryōgoku's fireworks and peepshows; *Mameotoko Edo kenbutsu* (Mr Tiny Tours Edo, 1782) (see Markus 1985: 508); *Fuki jizai Hana no Oedo* (A Story of Prosperity: The Flowery Capital, 1783); or in the above-mentioned *Yūri no hana* and other *okabasho*

The major part of these texts thus, emphasises the lively atmosphere of Ryōgoku both visually or verbally, depicting the crowds gathered for religious festivals, for *nōryō* (escaping summer heat) entertainment, or to watch peepshows, queue at the many show tents and buy Ryōgoku specialties. In later years, Ryōgoku became the stage for *sumō* performances, and literary portrayals of the area would also take this into account. Similar portrayals would be seen in eighteenth-century *ukiyo-e* prints by well-known artists such as Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849) and Utagawa Hiroshige (1797-1858).

3. Sharebon portrayals of Ryōgoku: the case of *Ryōgoku shiori*

Ryōgoku shiori or *shibori* (A Ryōgoku Guide, 1771?) is one early example of a *kohon* describing Ryōgoku in detail. As described above, in later years many witty books were published dealing with the area of Ryōgoku and its prosperity with a focus on the previously mentioned An'ei *degaichō* festival, as one may observe from the concentration of publications on this topic in the years 1778 and 1779. Among the short stories of the 1770s, only *Ryōgoku shiori* is actually set in Ryōgoku; the others mention famous elements of the geographical characterisation of the district and include descriptions or allusions to the Zenkōji *degaichō*, but are set elsewhere. If we analyse the main features of the urban atmosphere of Ryōgoku as described in this work, we notice that particular attention is devoted to the realistic rendition of the soundscape of the city: voices of vendors and merchants and sounds and music of the *misemono* on a mid-sixth-month afternoon are carefully described in *Ryōgoku shiori*. After a lyrical description of the river crowded with boats coming and going beneath the Ryōgoku Bridge, the narrator describes the arrival of the characters within the atmosphere of the city:

> The voices of the sedge hat and coloured mat vendors distract one from the heat. Vendors of fresh water and live insects settle under the shadow of trees whilst one hears the horse mackerel vendor touting his wares of the evening. Then one is pervaded by the sensation of inhaling the perfume of the cool breeze. The soundtrack melody of a peepshow played by the drums and the *shamisen* then reaches one's ears. At that moment, three or four country bumpkins, including a monk, walk in from Bakurochō, preceded by an Edo tourist guide (Mizuno et al. 1978-1988: V, 216-217).

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hyōbanki (reviews of illegal bordellos), such as *Fumiguruma murasakiganoko* (Carriage of Letters, Lavender Dappling, 1774), amongst others. Another category of texts mentioning Ryōgoku is the (*kobanashi*) anecdotal collections, such as *Shinsaku otoshibanashi Hatsuegao* (Newly-Made Short Stories: The First Smile of the Year, 1780) or *Ningen banji Saigyō ga neko* (The Variety of Human Life: Saigyō's Cats, 1790), which binds together many human activities related to cats including a visit to Ryōgoku cat teahouses. Another animal related to Ryōgoku was the mosquito, because it was said that Honjo's many sewage canals were a cozy habitat, even during the winter, for countless mosquitoes (Mutō 1965: 123).

Then, the narrator makes way for the realistic dialogue of the characters by means of which the description of Ryōgoku continues. The dialogue focuses first on the *misemono* sounds, then on a famous Yonezawachō sex toy shop selling a range of drugs to enhance the sexual performance of both men and women (see Motai 1956 on this topic).

> Country bumpkin: «Well, what is the name of this place?»
> Edo guide: «This place is called Yagenbori. The Fudō-*sama* is over there»
> Bumpkin: «And what is this sound of drums?»
> Edo guide: «That is the sound of the peepshow drums in Ryōgoku»
> Bumpkin: «Hey, reverend, take a look over there please! What is that place with that huge exposed crest of the Sasaki family?»
> Buddhist priest: «Well, the shop sign says that they sell this life-prolonging drug, it must be a famous medicine»
> Edo guide, laughing: «Yes, this is a medicine for a longer life»
> Priest: «Maybe it is the elixir of eternal youth!»
> *A nasal-voiced woman screaming:* «Take a seat! Take a rest with our soup noodles! Cold noodles! Smoke a pipe at our place!»
> Country bumpkin: «Wow! It is unbelievably crowded! Why is that so?»
> Edo guide: «This is Ryōgoku! Here it is always like that!»
> Country bumpkin: «Hmm, this place is even more upbeat than I had heard!»
> Another bumpkin: «Look at that! You can't even move an inch forward!»
> Edo guide: «Don't stray from the group! Be careful of your wallets!»
> «Our famous *chōjiyaki*! *Chōjiyaki*! Freshly baked! Take some as a souvenir!»
> Bumpkin: «What is that?»
> Edo guide: «It's an omelette!»
> «Fortune-telling! Both general fortune questions and specific questions answered! Desires, hopes, finding lost items, news on a long-awaited person, advice and predictions on good and evil!» (Mizuno et al. 1978-1988: V, 217).

After this dialogic sequence, other elements of the soundscape are described, such as private chats, announcements of an imminent show and availability of last tickets, a popular ballad, live ptarmigans in captivity, little puppet shows, vendors of various handmade products and the sequence imitating the various voices of the city in the manner of *ukiyo monomane* (imitation of the floating world) continues for seven pages (from *folio* 6 *recto* to 9 *recto* of the Tenri library's witness): the sequence catches voices advertising famous products from well-known shops in the district, but also chit-chat and vendors whose presence points to the demand for goods to provide relief from the summer heat which was typical for the season.

The following sequence is a geographical description of the area. The narrating voice imitates the manner in which a peepshow speaker communicates. You can see mentions to the *meisho* (famous places) of

Ryōgoku and references to classical literature, such as the *miyakodori* (the bird from the old capital) of Ariwara no Narihira (825-880):

> The next show is the cityscape of this place, Ryōgoku! Right in front of you, you can see Ryōgoku Bridge. It is ninety-six *ken* long (approximately 170 meters). Beyond you can see the Ekōin temple. The other side of the bridge hosts the square with its peepshows, shops and teahouses. On the right, you see Honjo Hitotsume. Then, old Yanagi bridge and the Big bridge up to Eitai bridge are visible. On the left side, you see North Honjo, Komatome bridge, the chinquapin tree residence, Mimeguri and Ushi no gozen (Ushijima shrine). Let's take a look along the embankment of the Sumida River: in the sky you can see the birds from the old capital, close to us you see Yanagi bridge, the shogunal warehouses, the stables on the bank and going down a little you can see the "Pine of the occasions" protruding toward the centre of the river, then the Komagata pavilion, Takechō, Hanakawado and Mount Matsuchi with the Asakusa Kannon and its five-storied pagoda. At Imado bridge people board a boat for San'ya and you can almost see it flowing on the river far away toward Massaki. And now, I will show you the nightscape of Ryōgoku [...] (Mizuno et al. 1978-1988: V, 218-219)

The description indulges in praising the beauty of the fireworks and the number of lanterns at the front of shops, restaurants and teahouses. Then, the text goes back to the soundscape and notes down another three-page long brouhaha of the sounds of the city (from *folio* 10 *verso* to 11 *verso*), including the voices of beggars, street artists, merchants and vendors.

Finally, the group reaches the Ekōin temple, whose history the priest explains briefly.

> Edo guide: «Over there you have the Ekōin temple»
> The priest: «The Muenji temple. Mr Jingobei, the hundred and eight thousand people buried there who died in the Meireki Era fire»
> *Whilst talking, they enter into the Ekōin* (Mizuno et al. 1978-1988: V, 219)

The subsequent sequence describes the voices and the atmosphere of the courtyard of the temple. At the end, the group hears about the temporary presence of Yoshiwara courtesans in the area:

> *Then they exit to Ryōgoku.*
> Edo guide: «There are many Yoshiwara courtesans here»
> Bumpkin: «Why?»
> Edo guide: «Where Yoshiwara is not accessible they stay here»
> Bumpkin: «I want to see the Madame Prostitutes! Can I?»
> Edo: «Unfortunately you cannot *just* see them» (Mizuno et al. 1978-1988: V, 220)

The allusion to Yoshiwara regards the practice of *karitaku* [borrowed houses], that is the temporary transfer of some courtesan houses of Yoshiwara in Edo in case of damage due to fire. Fires were quite frequent in the pleasure quarter and bordello owners managed to give continuity to their activities even when their houses were damaged by fire by temporarily moving prostitutes and attendants to outer teahouses, mainly in the Asakusa area, in Minowa or in Ryōgoku. The final sequences of *Ryōgoku shiori* include a dialogue between some *clichéd* characters on a boat going from Ryōgoku to Yoshiwara, then another long soundscape depiction of the area focuses on the crowded and lively atmosphere of the city.

Although extremely vivid and full of detail, *Ryōgoku shiori*'s portrayal of the cityscape of Ryōgoku is not an original rendition of the atmosphere of the district. A well-known literary model existed before and is found in the fourth book of *Nenashigusa* (Rootless Weed, 1763) by Hiraga Gennai, where the Ryōgoku bridge area is described in the peculiar style of the author and most of the characteristic elements found in later *kohon* production are mentioned. First of all, the bustle of the boats on the Sumida River passing beneath the bridge is portrayed, then the narrator focuses on the soundscape, composed of the voices of vendors and beggars. Many famous shops and restaurants, which also appeared in *Ryōgoku shiori*, are mentioned, including the Yotsumeya sex toy shop, the Igarashi perfume shop, confectionery producers and the Awayuki *tōfu* shop. However, Gennai catches a fundamental trait of the district, alluded to but not explicitly narrated in the *kohon* production of the An'ei period (different to the Tenmei production, which often mentions it) namely, the melting pot of social classes participating in the carnivalesque throng of the district:

> Monks mix with ordinary people and men with women, while gawking country *samurai* serving at the Edo mansions of domain lords mingle with stylish commoners wearing the latest long combs and short capes. The attendant of a lord's son carries a glass goldfish bowl and a woman-in-waiting follows a lord's wife, dangling a brocade pipe sheath. A chambermaid's thighs rub as she pulls her behind after her, and a low-ranking *samurai* who hires himself out to big mansions looks like he's stabbing himself as he walks awkwardly with pretentiously long swords. The man over there seems to be a popular doctor, and that man trying to look very elegant must be a haikai linked-verse master. The amorous-looking woman pulling her sleeves stiffly away from the men who tug on them looks like a professional dancer who already has a lover and that other stiff woman with an amorous look on her face must be a maid looking for love on a rare day off from the women's quarters in Edo Castle. And over there are the smooth body motions of a master swordsman; the steady movements of the bearers of a large palanquin; the relaxed

humming of a blind masseuse who knows exactly where he's going; the two-coloured formal robes of a merchant who sells to great lords; the old, ripped divided skirts of an unemployed *samurai*; the loose, light cape of a retired man; the leisurely strides of kabuki actors; the clipped motions of artisans; the long topknots of construction workers; the loose sidelocks of farmers, hunters coming and woodcutters going.
So many different styles and customs, and such diverse faces, in crowds too dense to push through-has Edo emptied the houses of the provinces? Dirt and dust rise, filling the air as if the world's clouds formed here (Chris Drake's translation, from Shirane 2002: 474-475).

4. Ryōgoku's social networks in literary works from the 1780s

In the Tenmei era, Ryōgoku had acquired an even greater reputation, thanks to the successful *degaichō*, the *karitaku* practice, the staging of *sumō* competitions, and its magnificent firework shows. *Kane wa Namiki ka Ryōgoku ka Kotchi no yottsu* (Are These the Bells of Namiki or Those of Ryōgoku? The Fourth Hour Downtown Here, 1784), for instance, recounts the *karitaku* world of Ryōgoku in detail focusing on how Yoshiwara courtesans and bordello owners managed to settle temporarily in the area and give customers a highly satisfying experience of luxury prostitution in an urban down-to-earth environment.

More than ten years after the publication of *Ryōgoku shiori*, *Nyan no koto da* (What Do You Meaown?, 1781) and *Hitome zutsumi* (Hitotsume Area at a Glance, 1788) described the atmosphere of Ryōgoku as an illegal prostitution mecca, famous for its cat teahouses, one that had already been visually portrayed in the illustrated short story *Kayoikeri neko no wazakure*, by Nandaka Shiran (aka Kubo Shunman, 1757-1820) (Tanaka 1993). In the preface of *Nyan no koto da*, Ryōgoku is called *Nyankoku* and it is said that it is divided into five districts (an allusion to the five districts of the old Yoshiwara); two of the names of these districts concern cats, such as Katsuobushi-shū and Gon-shū[7], and three are puns on actual toponyms, such as Dotegawa, Rokken and Ichimoku, meaning Honjo Hitotsume.

An element which characterises these texts is that, while several little books as well as the majority of illustrated short stories were sold as seasonal products of New Year's day or early spring - at least paratexts were dated on the first days of the year - *Ryōgoku shiori* and *Nyan no koto da* were released in summer: the preface of the first work is dated so: "written on a day when pearls of sweat flow down", meaning a summer day. The preface of *Nyan no koto da* is dated on "a hot day in the Year of the Ox [1781]". This element mirrors a characteristic aspect

[7] *Katsuobushi* (bonito flakes) was renowned as one of cats' favourite "treats". *Gon* is a typical lazy pet's name.

of Ryōgoku as a *nōryō* spot, a place where one could escape the summer heat, famous for its fireworks and vendors of several products directly related to summer, such as live fireflies and crickets, fresh water, sedge hats, watermelons and cold noodles. Not every text related to Ryōgoku, however, shared this element: *Hitome zutsumi*, for instance, was published in the first month of the year.

Nyan no koto da gives an insight into the peculiarity of the cat teahouses of Ryōgoku through the dialogic sequences narrating an evening spent by three customers in one of these brothels:

> Ohama, [a prostitute] *addressing Kōjirō* [a youth]: «Welcome to our place. Who did he choose?»
> Osae: «I don't know yet. Who shall we choose?» *says she, while going to the first floor; there she picks the garagarafuda and comes back. In the meantime, everybody is merrily drinking.*
> Osae: «Den-san, please advise him about who to choose among these». *She gives him the garagarafuda.*
> Denroku [the hairdresser working as a jester]: «Er hum, this one is too young for him and this one is no good either. Ah! Which one shall we choose?»
> *Kōjirō becomes serious, his expression is pitiful:* «Anybody would be fine…»
> Denroku: «Here she is! Omume should be ok»
> Osae: «Yes. That kid will be ok. Then, - *she screams down from the second floor* - Kihachi-don! Go buy Omume-*san*!» *she says and tosses down the garagarafuda to him.*
> […] Ryōfū [the wannabe sophisticate]: «Omume-san, let's drink!»
> *Osae lights the pipe for him*: «Please!»
> *In the meantime, Kōjirō and Omume complete the exchange of sake cups. She has been embarrassed since she arrived.*
> Osae: «Omume-san, go change your clothes». *Omume goes down to the first floor, where she eats her meal, urinates, etcetera. On the second floor too dinner is consumed. Ohama is with her regular customer hence, she eats on the second floor with the others* (Mizuno et al. 1978-1988: XI, 122-123).

These scenes describe some peculiarities of the cat teahouses, such as the custom of choosing the prostitute's partner from a block of wooden boards (*garagarafuda*). Each board shows the name of a prostitute from the neighbourhood, and when one is taken, the corresponding board is removed. Another custom regards the place where a "first time encounter" prostitute should eat, and so on. In another passage, the narrator also mentions an odd way of calling the waitresses, who were usually summoned by a person clapping his hands in most of the brothels in Japan. In cat teahouses, clapping hands was forbidden and a customer had to hit the *tatami* with the palm of his hand instead. This was because, unlike the other prostitution areas of the city, these cat teahouses were located right between high class *samurai* offices and workplaces, such as the *kaisho* (ceremonial venue) of the residence of the *daimyō* of Mito. And in order not to disturb the lords or the *samurai* of the neighbouring dwellings certain precautions had to be taken.

The lively atmosphere of the outdoor Ryōgoku conflicts with the silence recommended inside the cat teahouses, determining an interesting opposition within the characterisation of the area. Furthermore, the story makes an *en passant* allusion to the melted socialisation of the city, with *samurai* from the lowest echelons familiarising with town-dwellers and hairdressers working as jesters, and shows a fairly well organised system of prostitutes working semi-independently in the area.

The image of a stratified social network appears vividly also in *Ujishūi* (Tales from an Earth-Stinking Uji, 1783), a witty book dedicated to the nightwalkers soliciting near Ryōgoku Bridge. Two town thugs talk about their experiences in the gambling dens of the area, where they happened to lose a lot of money while playing cards with several town-dwellers, including a lucky greengrocer's wife; the evening spent looking for a hooker in the area ends in a fight:

> Dennai [an *ashigaru* (foot soldier) afflicted by a stutter]: «Hey you, if we arrive late, we'll have troubles at the Gate» (*He stammers)*
> Orisuke [a *chūgen* (*samurai* servant)]: «What are you talking about? Tonight I'm on duty, so they won't give the keys to the housemaster until I come back. It's fine even if we go back a little later. Now, I have fifteen coins left from drinking, these will be enough [for buying that hooker]»
> Matabei [the pimp]: «Please, try to understand and move forward. This behaviour is not like you, sir! Because of you the street has become congested and other customers are reluctant to come closer. We cannot work in these conditions. Please, I beg you, please!» *While he tries to push him aside, he loses his balance and hits the paper lantern.*
> Dennai: «Hey you! Pay attention!» (*He stutters)*
> Orisuke: «You idiot! What were you trying to do by shoving me? You see? The lantern is torn! Now there will be no excuses when I go back to the residence! And what's more, my reputation is shattered be it known that a man like me, who eats *samurai*'s rice, is pushed over by a useless townie like you. You're unforgivable!»
> Matabei: «It was my careless behaviour that caused the accident. If the lantern has been damaged, then please be so kind as to accept my apologies. Please, sir, tell your comrade to calm down»
> Ochiyo [a nightwalker with a strongly nasal voice], *from behind*: «Hey hey, nobody damaged that lantern. It was damaged from the start. So, get out of my face! And you, how do you think you can work in a place like this if you fear a loser like him. He's just a cheap servant!»
> A younger hooker: «Ochiyo, behave yourself»
> Ochiyo: «I know, but somebody had to teach that fellow a lesson!»
> [...] Orisuke: «Enough! Come what may! I will cut these idiots in two, one by one!» *says he, about to unsheathe his rounded tip sword.*

Dennai: «Hey! Have you gone out of your mind? What do you want to do?» *He stutteringly screams trying to hold him back.*
Ochiyo: «Don't' make me laugh! I would love to be cut in two, but your sword wouldn't be able to smash rice into glue, let alone cut the umbilical cord of a baby»
Mata: «You're crazy! What are you going to do?»
Ochiyo: «Look at you, you coward, letting him say what he wants like a rotten sissy! I'll give him a beating!» *She says and strips to the waist to wrestle.*
Orisuke: « [...] I will shoot a hole right through your belly and use you like a pair of bellows!» *He jumps on the hooker, she fights back; and then they grappled with each other.*
Dennai: «Hey! If you get injured while on duty, I will get into trouble! Please!» *He stutteringly tries to stop his friend. Matabei together with the younger hooker try to stop them. Hearing all this racket, the bridge guard comes out holding his six-foot long stick* (Mizuno 1958: 348-350; Mizuno et al. 1978-1988: 205-206)

In conclusion, the heterotopia of Ryōgoku appeared in literature before the development of dialogue-based witty books, in works such as *Nenashigusa* by Gennai and in Chinese-style comic poetry and *senryū*. The vivid depiction of the soundscape of the district we find in *Ryōgoku shiori* multiplies the details regarding the voices and colours of Ryōgoku, but the overall trait highlighted by the narrative sequences is that of the crowded atmosphere and the summer vibes felt by the Edo *flâneurs* of the Ryōgoku Bridge. This incredible flow of life and energy contrasts with the customs of the cat teahouses, where silence was a must. In the milieu of Ryōgoku brothels, classes were mixed exactly as they were in the streets surrounding them: this is the case of *Nyan no koto da*'s Denroku, who has a barber shop in the neighbourhood but is an expert on the nightlife of the area and therefore, works as a jester for customers of mixed classes, such as Kōjirō and Ryōfū, a *samurai* and a commoner; or the case of the hookers working near the bridge, offering their company to both merchants, city thugs and low-class *samurai*s.

The seventeenth-century identity of Edo as the city of *samurai* is therefore far from these texts, where narrators sought to deliver a genuine identity for Ryōgoku, choosing to highlight the mixed-class crowd and its function as a summer tourist spot. The specificity of the city is emphasised by the appearance of country bumpkins and other non-Edoites in the diegesis, an expedient which helps to mark the difference between a genuine inhabitant of Edo and its occasional visitors. While in the illustrated literature and art the city is described as a static background for the narrative action, the witty books analysed in this last paragraph manage to describe the social space of Ryōgoku, made up of personal histories and human relationships (not necessarily idyllic ones) and, in doing so, give a new and modern sense to their urban setting, in a way that partially anticipates what Follaco (2017: 8-12) advocates when applying a more dynamic definition of an urban setting to the twentieth-century novelist Nagai Kafū's literature.

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FROM THE GRAIN OF RICE TO THE SINGLE TRUTH: THE ONTOLOGY OF HUMAN EXISTENCE IN ANDŌ SHŌEKI'S PHILOSOPHY

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Abstract: *In this paper, I propose a brief examination of Andō Shōeki's take on the ontology of the human being, as it appears in Tōdōshinden 統道真伝 ("The true unified transmission of the Way"), his second major text, while also looking into some of the tenets that inform his understanding of ethics. I develop my analysis in two steps. Firstly, I discuss the idea of the human being as a microcosm (shōtenchi 小転定) focusing on the complementary notions of nibetsu naki 二別無キ ("no differentiation") and ichi 一 ("one", "single"), which underpin its existence within the world of nature. Secondly, I scrutinize in detail Shōeki's description of the grain of rice as an ontological catalyst, and of the "single truth" of nature as the driving force sustaining it. In my final remarks, I also briefly touch upon the "five relationships" that, according to Shōeki, regulate and modulate the ethics of the way in which human beings are in the world*[2].

Keywords: *Andō Shōeki, Tōdōshinden, ontology, ethics, human being*

1. A tap on the shoulder of philosophy

Andō Shōeki 安藤昌益 (1703-1762) is undoubtedly one of the most enigmatic figures in the history of Japanese philosophy. Except for a handful of disciples and followers who gathered to listen to his symposia in Hachinohe, a small fief in northern Japan where he practiced as a physician, almost nobody else ever spoke of his ideas; virtually unknown during his lifetime, even today he is usually relegated to the category of "others", i.e. marginal thinkers who barely make it into the footnotes of philosophy textbooks and encyclopedias. His works emerged from the murky haze of history in the last decades of the 19th century, more than one century after they were written, only to be almost completely destroyed in the fire that engulfed the library of the University of Tokyo in the aftermath of the Great Kanto Earthquake of 1923. So, we have hardly any information at all about his life, and we have but fragmentary patches and speckles remaining of his works - why study him, then?

Well, for several reasons. For one thing, pitted against the socio-ideological background of the Edo period, Shōeki does indeed seem to be

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the odd one out: he is not part of any of the major philosophical traditions or schools *en vogue* at the time - be it Confucianism, Buddhism, Daoism, or Shinto - yet he is versed enough in all of them to be able to criticize them thoroughly and exhaustively. His writings are full to the brim with vitriolic accusations and imprecations against all the other philosophical doctrines, but this is an integral component of his exegetical discourse, a part of the process whereby he positions himself in order to develop, refine, and then expose his own ideas in a coherent, systematic way. Thus, investigating his philosophy also helps us paint a better picture of the ideological landscape of the time, in all its richness and diversity.

A second reason might be the "social dimension"- for lack of a better term - of his philosophy. A vehement critic of the Tokugawa regime, Shōeki expressed his discontent with the ways of the world he was living in on numerous occasions: he berated and chastised the whole "ruling" class, from the lowest-ranking samurai to the *daimyō* and then all the way up to the shoguns, claiming they were nothing more than parasites who lived off the labor of others. At the same time, he was partial to farmers, the only ones who, in his view, had not yet lost the connection to nature and its rhythms and were still living in accordance with it. What underpins and sustains this vision of society is a profoundly humanistic, compassionate philosophy of nature in which the natural world (*shizen no yo* 自然の世) is an all-encompassing, self-sufficient, primordial whole unmarred by the egotistic contraptions of self-serving ideologies, in which human beings exist on the same plane as all other forms of existence, and in which no hierarchies are possible. Thus, analyzing Shōeki's view of nature can provide us with numerous hints and clues helpful in the attempt to trace the development of *shizen / jinen* as a philosophical concept.

I might also mention here Shōeki's versatility and creativity when it comes to language use: utterly dissatisfied with language - and with the writing system, for that matter - he denounces it as an oppressive tool, a ruse whose only purpose is to maintain and intensify social control by spreading the falsities and delusions of the various doctrines. For him, Buddha, Confucius and all the other "sages of old" only created and used language and writing as a means to conceal the "true way of nature" and to derail humanity from it. To fight this, Shōeki irreverently pushes the boundaries of language in an attempt to make it relevant and non-deceitful: he reshuffles old words by giving them new meanings and nuances, creates new ones and then elevates them to a status of original philosophical concepts, and adroitly uses the versatility of the sinographic writing system to coin new ideographs which capture and convey senses and connotations better than the existing ones. Thus, examining his views on, and usage of, language and writing may help us open new doors into our understanding of these things.

Yet Shōeki represents so much more than just this. He is, as Blocker and Starling (2001: 114-115) put it, a tap on the shoulder of philosophy:

> He is that shadowy figure who approaches from behind to tap philosophy on the shoulder in the name of the millions condemned to silence by illiteracy, poverty, and oppression, and to offer a caustic reminder that Japan's official philosophy spoke only for the few. The entire intellectual canon of the time is in an instant radically challenged.

And this is no friendly tap, I might add, for Shōeki does indeed challenge the whole canon of philosophy. And he does that not (only) through his critical fervor against all doctrines, his empathetic view on society, or his innovative use of language. His works are teeming with statements, concepts, themes, topoi and motifs that, in a sense, dare us to come to grips anew with some of the most important topics of philosophy, Japanese, Asian, and global: the ontology of the human being, the problem of the self, the question of the Other, the relation between mind and body, nature and the environment, environmental ethics, epistemology and so on and so forth. His discourse is by no means linear and easy to follow, atypical judging from the perspective of Greco-European philosophy, which favors rational argumentation as the main mode of expression. And he does seem to be the odd one out, heretic, insolent and unconventional as he is; yet his philosophy is a complete arc, coherent and consistent, systematic and methodical. And that forces us to get out of our comfort zone, to think outside the box and re-visit our (pre)conceptions and our understanding of all things philosophical. After all, the purpose of the (unfriendly) tap on the shoulder might be exactly that.

2. The human being as a microcosm

The text I discuss here, *Tōdōshinden* 統道真伝 ("The true unified transmission of the Way"), is estimated to have been compiled around 1752 - approximately in the same period as *Shizenshin'eidō* 自然真営道 ("The true way of functioning of *shizen*"), Shōeki's other major work. *Tōdōshinden* consists of five fascicles grouped in four volumes as follows: volume 1 contains two fascicles, *Kyūseishitsu* 糺聖失 ("A critique of Confucianism") and *Kyūfutsushitsu* 糺仏失 ("A critique of Buddhism"); volume 2 is titled *Jinrin* 人倫 ("Ontology of the human being"); volume 3 is titled *Kinjū* 禽獣 ("On birds and beasts"); and volume 4 is titled *Bankoku* 万国 ("The myriad countries").

In *Tōdōshinden*, Shōeki puts forth, to a great extent, the same ideas and theories as in *Shizen shin'ei dō*, but he does it in a more detailed, consistent and systematic manner. At first sight, the text seems rather heterogeneous, as it is structured in short sections that each cover a different topic, but at a closer look we see that all these sections are in fact bound together by several things, the most important of which are the overwhelming, overbearing, omnipresent topos of *shizen* (nature)[3] as the "Way" (*dō* / *michi* 道), and Shōeki's vehemence in systematically criticizing and deconstructing all other disciplines and systems of thought. Here, I will focus on the second volume, *Jinrin*, the bulk of which is a detailed description of how human beings are born and of how they are / should be in the world.

When engaging with the other doctrines in his writings, Shōeki claims, for example, that Confucianism and its tenets destroy the very fabric of society by instituting hierarchies and legitimizing control, while the Buddhist doctrine deceives the human heart-mind through false promises and illusory salvation. And he does not stop here. He also turns his attention to medicine: in the *Tōdōshinden*, the section on the ontology of the human being is at the same time a critique against some of the most influential books of the time - such as the "Basic Questions" (*Somon* 素問) and the "Spiritual Pivot" (*Reisū* 霊枢)[4] - and a pretext for him to present his own vision of the origin of the human being and of its place within *shizen*. In his opinion, traditional medicine as it was practiced in Japan at the time was fundamentally flawed because it worked with an inaccurate representation of the human body, of its organs and of their functions. But before he exposes his own description of the human body, complete with detailed anatomical drawings - we must not forget that, after all, he was a practicing physician in Hachinohe - Shōeki picks up where he left off in the previous section (*Kyūfutsushitsu*), with a deeper, more nuanced and comprehensive explanation of how *nibetsu naki* (the principle of "no differentiation"), and its counterpart *ichi* ("one", or "single"), work. He starts with the following account of the inner workings of *shizen*:

[3] As I discussed elsewhere (Pașca 2020), I prefer to use the term *shizen* 自然 in the original, as its connotations and denotations do not completely overlap with those of the English term "nature".
[4] *Somon* and *Reisū*, compiled sometime between the 5th and 2nd century BC, were collectively known as the "Inner Canon of the Yellow Emperor" (*Kōtei daikei* 黄帝内経 in Japanese). They represented the quintessential doctrinal source for Chinese medicine, with *Somon* covering the theoretical foundations and diagnosing, and *Reisū* dealing with the more practical aspects such as acupuncture techniques (Unschuld 2003). An annotated copy of the text preserved at Ninnaji temple in Kyōto dates from 1167-8, indicating that it had been circulating in Japan since at least the early Heian period.

転定ニシテ一道、日月ニシテ一道、男女ニシテ一道、雌雄ニシテ一道 [...] 善　心・悪心ニシテ一道、苦心・楽心ニシテ一道ナリ。統テ二用ハ一気ノ進退ニシテ一道ナリ。(ASZ10, 67)

> Heaven and earth together are one way; the sun and the moon together are one way; man and woman together are one way; male and female together are one way [...]; the good heart-mind and the evil heart-mind together are one way; the heart-mind full of suffering and the heart-mind full of joy together are one way. In everything, the two sides are one way together as [the manifestation of] one single energy advancing and retreating.[5]

The ideograph *ichi* 一 ("one", "single") plays an extremely important part in Shōeki's discourse - we find it in *ichidō* ("one way"), *ikki* ("one energy"), *isshin* ("the single truth") and so on and so forth. The "one way" he talks about in this fragment is the Way of *shizen*, which means, simply put, understanding how it functions and living in accordance with it.

Ichi, however, does not designate a singularity, an individuality, oneness, or uniqueness, as it rather refers instead to an indissoluble union of two elements, an amalgamation of opposites which (have) become one, just like the two sides of the same coin. Shōeki refines his theory of *nibetsu naki* through the concept of *gosei* 互性 ("mutual natures"), which only appears in *Shizenshin'eidō*, where he specifies that there can be no differentiation between apparently opposing items or entities because in fact they contain within each other the essence, or the characteristics of the other, so they cannot be separated. He discusses at length, for example, in several sections sprinkled throughout his writings, the relation between man and woman, insisting on the fact that you cannot speak of a man and a woman as distinct entities, but only of man-and-woman together fused into one single unit called *hito* and written 男女.

To go back to *ichi* and the relation established between all things in the realm of *shizen*, here is another fragment from the same section, where Shōeki goes even deeper and gives a more detailed explanation about *nibetsu naki*:

自然ノ道ハ転中ノ自ヅカラ定、定中ニ自ヅカラ転、日中ハ月、月中ハ日、男中ハ女、女中ハ男、万物・万理、悉ク然リ。是レガ自然ノ進退、一真ノ行フ所ナリ。(ASZ10, 68)

[5] I choose to insert all quotes from Shōeki's writings both in the Japanese original, and in translation. This is justified mainly by a twofold philological interest, as the presence of the Japanese text makes it easier to identify and pinpoint the key concepts and, at the same time, it represents a vivid demonstration of how Shōeki understood to use language, push its boundaries and force its limitations. Unless otherwise noted, all translations are mine.

The Way of *shizen* means that heaven contains earth within itself, and earth contains heaven within itself; the sun contains the moon, the moon contains the sun; man contains woman, woman contains man - all things and all principles are in this kind of relation. These are the advance and retreat movements of *shizen*, determined by the single truth.

What has to be emphasized about *ichi* is that, for Shōeki, it is not a notion opposed to *ni* 二 ("two"), not even to the *ni* in *nibetsu naki* ("no differentiation", or to stay closer to the Japanese original, "no differentiation / distinction into two") - this is not an *ichi* that can be further subdivided into smaller parts or units, it is not an original entity from which everything else derives, it is not an alpha followed by a beta etc.. And it is by no means a transcendental entity of any kind: *ichi* is not a divinity, a deity or a god-like unit; nor is it some kind of principle of reality, "the one" as Plotinus and Plato might call it. It is not an expression of monism, and, as Shōeki repeatedly states, it is not a different denomination for the Buddhist idea of non-duality. And it is not a Leibnizian monad, either, as they are finite and contingent - and, again, dependent on the *monas monadum*, the supreme one. *Ichi* constitutes an ontological essence in and by itself, something that has always just been there and will remain there, with nothing prior to it and nothing posterior to it. It is eternal and omnipresent in *shizen* because it underlies everything within it; and it underlies everything within *shizen* because it is eternal and omnipresent.

Shōeki was adamant about seeing *shizen* as one single totality. He glosses extensively on its component parts (earth, heaven, plants, animals, human beings etc.) only to demonstrate that they are not separate or separable, but instead constitute an organic whole which has to be understood as such. And this is precisely the role of *ichi*: to indicate that *shizen* is just one, undivided and indivisible, and that nothing can exist beyond or outside of it.

The ontology of the human being - understood, of course, as man-and-woman fused together - becomes evident once you understand the processes of *shizen*, as *hito* is in fact a microcosm, i.e. a reflection, a reproduction on a smaller scale of the realm of *shizen*. Shōeki actually uses the term *shōtenchi* 小転定 to refer to this microcosm - literally, a "small heaven and earth". He even draws a rather complicated representation of the human body, with all its organs and respective functions, and then invites us to compare it with "the great diagram of heaven and earth"[6]. Here is the diagram[7], and how Shōeki describes it:

[6] Terao (1978) notes that there are several references in the text to this "great diagram", but it was either lost when the manuscript was compiled, or Shōeki never actually included it in his writings. Yet the fact remains that Shōeki makes extensive use of drawings and diagrams, particularly in the *Jinrin* and *Kinjū*

此ノ図ハ前ノ「転定大図」ト之レトヲ考ヘ合ハセテ観ルナリ。[...] 故ニ転定ト人身ト表裏ヲ為ス。嘆、辱キカナ転定、貴ヒカナ自然ノ進退。人ノ為ニ常ニ逆伏シテ頭ヲ見ハサズ、人ヲシテ常ニ頭ヲ上ニ見ハシ自由ヲ遂ゲサシム。是レ転定ト人身ト進退スル妙用ナリ。故ニ是レ自然ナリ。豈ニ貴キニ非ズヤ。(ASZ10, 106)

Let us look at this diagram and compare it with the "Great diagram of heaven and earth" I drew before. [...] In short, heaven and earth and the human body are like the front and the back [of one single thing]. Oh, how wonderful is heaven-and-earth! How noble are the advancing and retreating movements of *shizen*! For the sake of human beings, heaven-and-earth always bows downward and never shows its head; then it turns into human beings, makes them always show their head upward and allows them to fulfill their freedom. This is the superb relation of advancement and retreat between heaven-and-earth and the human being. This is *shizen*. Isn't it exquisite?

He claims that human beings and heaven-and-earth are upside one with respect to one another - or like the reversed recto and verso of one

volumes of the *Tōdōshinden*. In *Jinrin,* his main purpose is to illustrate, as a physician, the inner workings of the human body, from the place of the organs to their functioning, but also - most importantly - the way in which they mirror the workings of *shizen*. In *Kinjū*, he just exemplifies how the birds, beasts, fishes and crawling creatures are formed so as to correspond to the directions of heaven and earth and to the movements of the energies circulating in between, without focusing on their internal constitution. One essential thing about these diagrams and drawings is that, even though at first sight they might look like something incongruous and inapposite in the context, in fact they are not just some appendices, or digressions from the main body of text: for Shōeki, they represent part and parcel of the philosophical discourse, an important argument in his demonstration.

[7] The diagrams included here are scanned images of the originals as they appear in the original manuscript of *Tōdōshinden*, currently kept at the National Diet Library in Tokyo. They are also reproduced as such in Volume 10 of Shōeki's complete works.

and the same thing - because the cardinal points are inverted within the human being[8]. For heaven-and-earth, the north pole is up, "where human beings can see it all the time", while the south pole is down, "where it is hidden and cannot be seen"; for human beings, on the other hand, the north pole is down, "where it is hidden and cannot be seen" - somewhere in the area around the coccyx in the diagram, while the south pole is up, "where it can always be seen" - in the neck area. Even the attributes of visibility and invisibility of the two poles are reversed here - and they are reversed because heaven-and-earth and human being are in a relationship of complementarity, impossible one without the other; this brings us back to *ichi*, the ultimate expression of *nibetsu naki*.[9]

Before I move on to a more detailed analysis of Shōeki's understanding of the ontology of the human being, allow me to remark two more things about this fragment: first of all, the tone of the text - it is not very often that you see a philosophical discourse interspersed with exuberant interjections showing unbridled enthusiasm about its very topic, but Shōeki seems to be so taken with his subject he just shouts out to the world his own kind of Eureka-like moment of enlightenment that marks the profound and complete apprehension of the ways of the universe; and second of all, the use of the word "freedom" (*jiyū* 自由 in the Japanese original). I will not discuss the concept in detail here, but let me just say that even though at first sight it looks as though this "freedom" is something that is assigned from the outside, bestowed upon the human being from *shizen*, paradoxically it is not the case. The human being does relegate its agency to *shizen*, but this is precisely what brings freedom; relegating agency is not a negative choice, it is the only mode of existence possible within *shizen no yo*.

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[8] Nowhere in the text does Shōeki explain the reasons for this inversion, he seems to just assume it is a given. My hypothesis is that it might be connected to the circulation of the three energies (upward, downward and lateral): since human beings are sustained by the upward energy, he probably considers the North Pole to be the point of entry of the energy into the body, and the South Pole the point of exit.

[9] In the lexicon included in the first part of *Shizenshin'eidō*, titled *Shiseijisho* 私制字書 ("Dictionary of ideographs that were created for self-serving purposes"), Shōeki discusses *ichi* extensively over several pages, insisting that its meaning had been misunderstood by Confucian and Buddhist thinkers alike.

He cites for instance the *Book of Changes* (*Ekikyō* 易経), where there is a short sentence that says *chi wa ichi nari* 致ハ一ナリ - the ideograph *chi* represents the verb *itasu*, which can also mean "carrying things out", so a possible translation would be "the end is the beginning". Carrying things out to the end implies there will be a new beginning, but only *after* the end, so the focus, Shōeki claims, is on the end; therefore, he disapproves of such an interpretation because it ignores the original, authentic meaning of *ichi*. He also gives an example from the *Hōon jurin* (法苑珠林, *Fayuan Zhulin* in Chinese), a Buddhist encyclopedia; namely, an episode in which Śāriputra - who, as Ray shows, "is particularly associated with scholastic matters: he is concerned with 'correct doctrine,' clarifies obscure points, examines the doctrinal rectitude of the disciples, excels in preaching the dharma, and refutes heresies" (1994, 133) - was not able to reach the level of *ichi* in an intellectual contest with sixteen other arhats. Shōeki comments that using *ichi* for any kind of comparison is nonsensical, as any number, no matter how big, actually contains *ichi*.

3. The ontological grain

So, how are human beings born in Shōeki's vision? For him, it all starts with grains - and I mean that both literally, and as a metaphor. Shōeki catalogues meticulously a set of ten types of grains (*jūkoku* 十穀), even though he sometimes refers to them collectively as the *gokoku* 五穀, the "five grains", because he considers five of them to be advancing and the other five to be retreating. He describes them in detail, one at a time, listing their attributes, their functions, their natural cycle, and also their correspondence to other components of *shizen* such as the *ki* 気 (the generative force) or the dominant element (earth, water, fire etc.). He adds drawings of the plants, as if he were writing a botanical treatise or an agricultural textbook, trying to make sure that they are easily recognizable. Surely, a series of drawings of vegetation accompanying a text with a philosophical purport might raise a few eyebrows, but we have to keep in mind the fact that this is all part of Shōeki's effort to be as thorough and consistent as possible when engaging with the other traditions, and as exhaustive and metodical as possible when presenting his own understanding of the ontology of the human being. For him, everything is connected in the realm of *shizen*, so it makes all the sense in the world to start with the grains and their specifications.

The five advancing grains (*shinkoku* 進穀) are *bei* 米 (rice), *shoku* 稗 (barnyard millet), *zoku* 粟 (foxtail millet), *kyo* 秬 (proso millet), and *baku* 麦 (barley). The five retreating grains (*taikoku* 退穀) are *daizu* 大豆 (soybeans), *azuki* 小豆 (red mung beans), *soramame* 扁豆 (broad beans), *sasage* 角豆 (black-eyed peas), and *jūrokusasage* 長豆 (yardlong beans). They are generated through an intricate process in which the energies of *shizen* circulate in three directions (upwards, downwards and lateral), thus begetting, one by one, all creatures and things - but Shōeki is adamant in asserting that we should view this ontological process in terms of perpetual repetition, or continuous reiteration, in a never-ending cycle of creation; in any case, as a process that does not have a beginning and an end, just like *shizen*:

> 始メ無ク終リ無キ自然、五行ニシテ一真ナルガ、自リ感ジテ一神気ト為ル。此ノ一神気、自リ進退・退進シテ転定ト為リ、転定ノ精、凝リ見ハレテ日月ト為リ、日月ノ精、分生シテ星宿ト為リ、自然ノ一真、北宮ニ坐シテ、自感 ノ神気自リ運回シテ転定・人物ト為ルニ、通横逆ヲ以テ妙序ヲ行フ。其ノ通 気ハ神通・妙速ニシテ転定ト為リ、横気ハ止静・妙沢ニシテ土ト為リ、其ノ逆気ハ転定ノ中央土ニ穀種ト為ル。(ASZ10, 77-78)

> In *shizen*, which is beginningless and endless, the five elements form the single truth, which moves by itself and thus becomes the energy of the single vital force. This single vital force advances and retreats, retreats and

> advances, thus becoming heaven-and-earth; the essence of heaven-and-earth is condensed and appears as the sun and the moon; the essence of the sun and the moon is divided and produces the stars; and so, the single truth of *shizen* is located in the polar star, while its vital force moves by itself and creates heaven-and-earth, human beings and all other things, and when doing that it exquisitely takes the three directions of downwards, lateral, and upwards. The downward energy moves rapidly and creates heaven-and-earth, the lateral energy stops quietly and creates the fertile ground, and the upward energy becomes the seeds of the grains in the ground in the middle, between heaven and earth.

In this fragment, Shōeki uses another key term to describe the circular, permanent movements of nature: 神, which is the ideograph - usually read as *kami* - used to designate deities, or god-like entities, in Shintō. As I have shown elsewhere (Paşca 2017), in Shōeki's vision of the universe there can exist nothing external to the world of nature, i.e. the plane where human beings coexist with all other living things - in other words, all forms of existence can only be immanent to this realm, deeply embedded within it. This, in turn, entails that the notion of *kami* as a transcendental presence that hovers above and controls human beings is nonsensical and illogical, a mere fabrication. The very existence of any god-like, supra-natural entity is completely inapposite for Shōeki, as he emphasizes repeatedly in his critique of Shintō.

I must note, though, that this idea is not something Shōeki came up with out of the blue; as Blocker and Starling (2001: 34) state, the notion of *kami* as god-like entities is in fact a post-Buddhist one, perhaps the consequence of a phenomenon of contamination:

> [...] the pre-Buddhist Shintō kami were not perceived as independently existing anthropomorphic gods understood as transcendent beings, much less as abstract metaphysical principles, but simply as the power or strength that certain natural objects, such as a tree, a stream, a large rock, a mountain, or even a person, exemplified. Even to speak of a kami as the "power of" some natural object suggests too great a separation of the power from the object.

Shōeki does indeed seem to speak of a similar kind of *kami*, a "non-religious" one. When he uses the ideograph 神, he incorporates it in the compound *isshinki* 一神気 ("the energy of the single vital force"), and it is quite clear that it does not designate a god or some other transcendental entity. It is instead understood as a manifestation of *isshin* 一真, the single truth of *shizen*, and it functions as an ontological power that creates and sustains all things in the universe[10].

[10] As a matter of fact, there are several instances throughout the text where Shōeki seems to be using *isshin* 一真 and *isshin* 一神 interchangeably, playing on the common reading of the two. Confusing as this may be, though, the two notions sometimes designate the same thing - i.e., the unique, single truth of *shizen* -

To go back to the fragment quoted above: the three directions that this vital force takes when ceaselessly circulating back and forth between heaven and earth are extremely important for understanding Shōeki's cosmology and ontology, and I will discuss them below; but before that, I just want to remark here that, as this fragment explicitly states, the origin of material, substantial life is clearly indicated to be the grain - more specifically, the seeds of the *koku* planted in fertile soil.

For Shōeki, grains are able to engender and sustain life because they are, in fact, manifestations of the colossal energies at work in *shizen*; to be more specific, the grains exist as a crystallization of these energies, as some sort of small, highly concentrated pills in which the whole strength and vitality of the single truth is condensed. Moreover, each and every one of the ten grains contains all the other nine within it - and this is not just another expression of the notion of *nibetsu naki*, but also an indication that they have sufficient resources to support life. Hence, grains precede human life, or any other form of life for that matter. And Shōeki states this explicitly:

> 此レ何(ン)ガ故ニカ。人ヲ生ズルニ米・五穀ヲ以テスルトナレバ、五穀ノ前ニ人ヲ生ズトモ、穀無キ則(とき)ハ人生マレテ人ヨリ人ヲ生ジテ人倫無窮ニ相続スルコト能ハズ。(ASZ10, 94-95)

> When [heaven-and-earth] creates human beings, why does it use rice or the five grains as intermediary? That is because if it created human beings before the five grains, then human beings would not be born without grains, and then human beings would not be born from other human beings, and so it would be impossible to sustain the infinite existence of human beings and human society.

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while other times they refer to the truth of *shizen* and its manifestation as a vital energy, respectively. This is yet another example of the way in which Shōeki chooses to juggle with language, pushing its boundaries and limits to create new concepts and new words; it is at the same time an expression of his dissatisfaction with language, and proof of his commitment to getting his message across and constructing a unitary, coherent philosophical system.

But speaking of terms that might seem ambiguous or confusing at first sight, there is another example in this fragment, the pair earth / ground. "Earth" is *chi*, written by Shōeki with the ideograph 定 - which means "decided," "determined," "established" etc.), a tweak of the usual spelling 地 - while "ground" is *do* 土, which is the term most commonly used to refer to "soil" or "terrain". So, if heaven is above and earth is below, what is this "ground in the middle" Shōeki speaks of, and what is its role in the system of *shizen*? Well, the "earth" in "heaven-and-earth" sometimes means just earth as opposed to heaven, and other times it means the seas and oceans; but in either case it functions more like an abstract concept, a side of *shizen* regarded to be in a relation of complementarity and reciprocity with heaven. *Do*, on the other hand, is the materialization of this abstract concept, its concrete, substantial counterpart; it is the soil in which seeds are planted and on which human beings stand. Yet this does not mean by any means that *do* is subaltern or inferior to *chi* in any way - the abstract concept does not supersede its concrete manifestation, and vice versa. For Shōeki, they exist and function on the same plane, interrelated and complementing each other.

And so, in the beginning was the grain. *Et granum fuit*, as one might say, but without any religious connotations whatsoever. And then, human beings were created, and human beings were grain - again, without any religious intensions.

What emerges from all these fragments from *Tōdōshinden* though is the idea that the ontological *raison d'être* for the human being is the grain; yet this is not merely the grain that you plant in the ground, water, cultivate and then crop. This is the grain as the ultimate expression of vitality, the concentrated form of all the energies of *shizen*, constantly engendering and sustaining live, in a never-ending cycle; the grain of life and, as we will see in the last section, the grain of ethics.

Shōeki is extremely clear about this, there is no equivoque in his vision; in fact, he is so convinced of the truth of his words that he even makes (bad) jokes and puns about it, inventing phantasmagorical etymologies for grain-related terms, particularly for rice:

> 稲(イネ)ト言ヘルコトハ、命(イノ)寿(チ)ノ根(ネ)ト言フヲ中略シテ稲(いね)ト言フナリ。是レ人・物ノ命寿(イノチ)ハ稲ヨリ生ズルナリ。米(コメ)ト言ヘルコトハ、即チ此(コ)レ命(メイ)ト言フ中・下略シテ米(コメ)ト言フナリ。故ニ人・物ノ命ハ米(コメ)ヨリ生ズ。(ASZ10, 218-219)

> The rice plant is call *ine*, which is in fact a contraction of *inochi no ne*, "the roots of life". This is an expression of the fact that the life of all human beings and all things actually starts from the rice plant. The rice grain is called *kome*, which is in fact a contraction of *kore mei*, "this is life". This is an expression of the fact that the life of all human beings and all things actually starts from the rice grain.

To prove his point, in two successive sections titled "Diagram of heaven-and-earth and the human body emerging spontaneously from the single truth within the grain of rice" (米粒ニ転定・人身一真ヨリ自リ具ハル図解) and "Diagram of the single truth of the human being emerging from a grain of rice" (米粒中ニ人具ハル一真の図解), he also includes explanatory drawings, first of a grain of rice and then of a human fetus, complete with detailed information about the various parts, their function, and their development. He draws the grain in the same position as the fetus in order to make the ontological lineage connection more obvious, and notes around the edges what purposes the different parts of the grain serve; for example, the dent in the bottom right part is the south pole through which the sprouts will come out, thus allowing the flow of energy; the part immediately above is where the left hand will be formed, and the part immediately below is where the right foot will be formed:

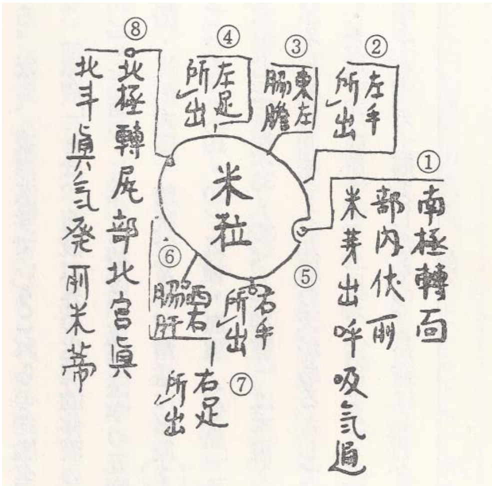

Diagram of heaven-and-earth and the human body emerging spontaneously from the single truth within the grain of rice

Diagram of the single truth of the human being emerging from a grain of rice

And he exclaims again with sheer delight, enthusiastic about the magnificence of *shizen*:

> 嘆（ああ）、感ナルカナ米粒、真（まこと）ニ自然・転定ノ妙体ニシテ、其レ其ノ形体ハ即チ転定小（こま）カニ凝レル者ナリ。(ASZ10, 88)
>
> Oh, how wonderful the rice grain is! It is the exquisite embodiment of *shizen* and heaven-and-earth, and each and every grain is a small, concentrated form of heaven-and-earth!

And then he continues his discourse with a very comprehensive - albeit unrealistic and completely unscientific - step-by-step account of how the grain of rice actually morphs into the human being: how the limbs emerge, when the teeth and gums are formed, how the energies advance and retreat to set everything into motion, which kind of energy each and every body part corresponds to, where the cardinal points are situated within the human body and why, and so on and so forth. There is not one shred of medical or anatomical truth in this fragment, but it is still a captivating thing to read as it reveals a philosopher who, even though he was also a physician (or perhaps *precisely* because he was a physician), tries to be as thorough as possible in constructing his own philosophical system down to the minutest detail before engaging in practice both as a thinker and as a physician.

For Shōeki, the world of *shizen* is complete in and by itself, self-sufficient and perennial, a quintessential, exemplary arc that starts in the grain as a crystallization of all the ontological energies, grows into all other forms of life and all other things in the universe, and then finishes back again in the grain, in a circular, never-ending movement that invites exclamations of awe and admiration.

It also reveals a philosopher who is preoccupied with the materiality and substantiality of the human body as well, not only with the mechanisms of *shizen* or with the human mind; or, to be more specific, a philosopher for whom mind and body are not different entities, there is no antinomy there. And there can be no antinomy, contradiction, conflict or differentiation whatsoever because of the notion of *nibetsu naki* - one cannot be separated from the other, one does not precede the other, one does not supersede the other.

4. The single truth

Of course, the question arises what kind of force, or mechanism, drives the metamorphosis of the grain into a human being - what is the energy that acts in such a way as to unleash the concentration of vital force within the grain, and shape it into human bodies? In Shōeki's view, the answer is quite simple and obvious: the single truth of *shizen*. He calls it in various ways throughout his works - *shin* 真 ("truth"), *shizenshin* 自然真 ("the truth of *shizen*"), *chūshin* 中真 ("the middle truth"), *isshin* 一真 ("the single truth"), and then, in the second half of *Shizenshin'eidō*, *kasshin* 活真 ("the living truth") and *dokasshin* 土活真 ("the living truth of earth") - but all these denominations designate one and the same thing: the constantly moving, life-sustaining, power of *shizen*.

If we unpack this "truth of *shizen*" to try and understand how it actually works in Shōeki's system, we see first and foremost that *shin* moves by itself, with no influence or jolt from any outside factor, and in doing so takes the form of *ki*, the generative force, which circulates in the three directions I mentioned above (ascending, descending, and lateral). Shōeki uses a whole series of terms to refer to this quality of *shin* of being able to move on its own: *mizukara kanji* 自ラ感ジ ("functioning by itself"), *jikan* 自感 ("self-functioning"), *hitori hataraku* 自リ感ク ("functioning on its own"), *jikō* 自行 ("self-moving"), *hitori unkai* 自リ運回 ("moving circularly on its own"), *hitori suru* 自リ然ル ("doing by itself")[11] and so on and so forth. He refutes the existence of any

[11] It might be relevant to note here that some of these terms constitute, yet again, another example of how Shōeki pushes the limits of language and plays with the meanings of the ideographs he uses. For example,

transcendental, numinous entity that might play a part in the whole process and insists that *shin* is completely self-sufficient; moreover, the way in which it moves within *shizen* determines the way in which all other beings and things are born, how they live and how they interact. In other words, *shin* is an ontological principle that sustains all of *shizen* - and this is the *shizenshin* Shōeki talks about in the very title of his work.

As for the form *shizenshin* takes when it moves - the *ki* 気 - and the directions in which it moves, here is how Joly explains it, very succinctly and eloquently (2014, 264-265):

> The answer is found in Shōeki's theory of the three-directional circulation of the generative force (*tsūō gyakki* 通横逆気). By reference to this theory, Shōeki explains the development of all life. Human beings were generated first, directly, and in a straightforward manner (通), from a *ki* descending from the heavenly *shin* 真. This is why humans are spontaneously straight-minded, have their heads oriented towards the sky, and their feet on earth. The direction of the *ki* curves then, becoming lateral (横), to generate the animals. When the *ki* curves up to 90º and takes an ascending course, returning to the *shin*, it produces an inverted (逆) *ki* which generates the plants. That explains why the plants have their roots, equivalent to their heads, in the earth and their feet facing the sky.

Of course, Shōeki does not use numbers and does not give mathematically precise data about the degrees of the curvature of the *ki*, but the description is quite accurate. This explains how life in the entire system of *shizen* is created and sustained, and at the same time it shows just how important the vital energy is for the ontology of the human being.

5. Final remarks

In both *Tōdōshinden* and *Shizenshin'eidō*, Shōeki goes even further with his explanations about *ki*, suggesting that all three directions are present at the same time within one and the same entity, but only one of them is dominant and therefore determines the nature of that entity. For instance, in the case of the human being, the descending energy *tsū* is the strongest, thus causing the vertical position, but the lateral *ōki* and the ascending *gyakki* energies are also present to a lesser extent[12].

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if we take the term 感 - which usually means "to feel" or "to sense" something - we see that Shōeki assigns to it the reading *hataraku* or *hataraki*, which normally means "to function, to work" or "function" as a noun. He keeps at the same time the reading *kanjiru*, thus suggesting that there is an equivalence between "feeling" and "functioning". In other words, the fact that the vital energies of *shizen* move is not just some automatic, mechanical process, a mere "function", but something that has a meaning and a purpose, something that is done with some sort of "feeling".

[12] There are, however, human beings in whom the lateral energy is stronger than the descending one: the saints and the sages. Shōeki pins their attempt to create self-serving laws in order to control human society

Knowledge of this fact is crucial for Shōeki for two reasons: first, understanding how the *ki* works in *shizen* means to also understand how the body of the human being is created, how it develops, why it gets ill, and how you can fix it - in other words, this theory of *tsūōgyakki*, the three directions of the vital energy of the single truth, also provides the basis for a thorough understanding of medicine; this is one of the capstones supporting the intricate architecture of Shōeki's thought and creating the link between his philosophical ideas and his medical practice. Thus, he builds for himself a platform of authority and legitimacy which allows him to criticize both philosophical traditions, and medical practices - since he is the only one who understands that the human body is a reflection of the energies at work in *shizen*, his argument is undefeatable. Isn't it?

The second reason has to do with the notion of *nibetsu naki* - expanded later to gosei 互性 ("mutual natures") - and with Shōeki's understanding of the self of the human being: since the human being is a reflection of the energies at work in *shizen*, it is not only the individual who is influenced by these, but also the relationships that the individual establishes. Thus, the truth of *shizen* and the three directions of the *ki* inform and underpin the ethical principles of being with others, as well; to simplify, the truth of *shizen* encapsulated in the grain of rice is also the basis for the ethics of the human being's existence in the world. Shōeki frames and expounds this idea with the help of two notions: *hito* 男女 (defined as "the human being as man-and-woman-as-one-single-entity"), which I examined previously in a different piece (Paşca 2016), and *shizen no gorin* 自然ノ五倫 ("the five relationships in *shizen*"), a thorough analysis of which still remains a task for the future.

Let me just remark here that, as the very name indicates it, *shizen no gorin* is an allusion to the five relationships that Confucian thinkers regarded as fundamental for each individual in order to understand his or her place in the natural order, and for social harmony. In the Confucian orthodox canon, these relationships are between ruler and subject, father and son, husband and wife, older and younger brother, and friends. Shōeki, however, dissatisfied with this vision - after all, let us not forget he was a harsh, implacable critic of Confucianism's erroneous and misleading ways - reshuffles it and proposes a whole new set of relationships: between husband and wife, parents and child, grandparents and grandchild, siblings, and cousins. As can be seen easily, all these relationships in Shōeki's vision are kept - or, to use a

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to an imbalance in their *ki* - they err in their ways because they fail to understand the intricate system of *shizen*, confounded by the ascendancy of a different type of *ki*.

better term, they only obtain - within the family. There is nothing outside the family: Shōeki does not care about ruler and ruled, and he does not care about friends. And the reasons for that is quite simple: there can be no relationship between ruler and ruled, as that in itself is an anomaly, caused by the self-serving laws fabricated by the sages and saints in order to control society, laws that institute hierarchies, which go against all the principles of *shizen*. In other words, the "relationships" (rin 倫) that Shōeki envisions all stem from the primary union between man and woman - which, as he emphasizes throughout his writings, should be understood as an indestructible fusion of two elements which are in fact one, just like the two sides of the same coin. And since man-and-woman-as-human-being originates from the grain, as we saw in his drawings, that entails that all relationships also stem from the grain, i.e. all relationships are reflections of the vital forces and creative energies of *shizen*, as they appear condensed within the grain of rice. Therefore, the basis for any kind of ethics of the human being cannot be something external to it - such as the relationship with a ruler or with a friend; ethical principles are embedded within the human being, regarded as an intrinsic part, and mirror of, *shizen*.

Due to space constraints, I will limit my discussion of the ontology of human existence in Shōeki's philosophy to these notes, which are perhaps nothing more than preliminary remarks barely scratching the surface of this complicated yet fascinating question. The picture painted here is by no means exhaustive or comprehensive, as I only focused on one single section (*Jinrin*) where Shōeki tackles the issue in a somewhat systematic manner; however, sprinkled throughout his writings, there are numerous other references to the birth / life / death of the human being, and to the principles and mechanisms that regulate its ethical behavior. These still need to be meticulously identified, rigorously systematized, and thoroughly examined. It is my hope though that this short piece contributes to shedding some light on Shōeki's understanding of the ontology of the human being as an intrinsic part of the indivisible, exquisite whole of the world of nature.

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SHIFTING NAMES AND MULTIPLE IDENTITIES A CROSS-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE ON THE USE OF JAPANESE NAMES IN OTHER LANGUAGES*

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Abstract: *Ever since Japanese students started learning English at school, English language education in Japan has taught them to represent Japanese names using the English order of 'given name' followed by 'family name' (the Western order). In 2000, however, the National Language Council claimed that the romanization of Japanese names should be written in the Japanese order of 'family name, given name.' The reason provided was that the romanization of the names of Chinese and Koreans, who use the same word order for their names as Japanese, are written in 'family name, given name' order. Recently, the Japanese government has announced that Japanese names should be presented this way when written or spoken in a foreign language context. This paper discusses how Japanese write their names in foreign languages from the viewpoint of education for understanding different cultures and their own. Then, it attempts to come up with a decision concerning this question of name order, using examples of Japanese names and Japanese people's sense of identity, especially in terms of socio-cultural history. The conclusions should prove beneficial for linguistic and cultural education and related fields.*

Keywords: *Shifting names, Multiple identities, Name orders, cross-cultural perspective*

1. Description of the Problem: The Word Order of Japanese Names

On May 28, 2019, a news website operated by Jiji Press reported a situation that occurred during a meeting between Japanese Prime Minister Abe Shinzō and U.S. President Donald Trump. On this occasion, the interpreter from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs translated the Prime Minister's name as „Shinzo Abe." Foreign Minister Kōno Tarō began expressing the opinion that it would be appropriate to render Japanese names in the Japanese order of „family name, given name" (East Asian order). For that reason, an article on the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that described a golf match between the Prime Minster

* This paper offered here is a more developed version of the presentation entitled "A cross—cultural perspective on the use of Japanese Names in Other Languages," which was presented at the 7th international conference JAPAN: PRE-MODERN, MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY. A RETURN TRIP FROM THE EAST TO THE WEST. LEARNING IN, ABOUT AND FROM JAPAN, 2-4 September 2019, "Dimitrie Cantemir" Christian University, Bucharest (Paper accepted for publication on February 26, 2020).

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and President Trump gave the Prime Minister's Name as „Shinzo Abe," but that was subsequently changed to „Abe Shinzō."[2] About half a year later, on December 25, 2019, the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology revealed that if relevant central ministries and agencies had agreed that, as of January 1, 2020, that Japanese names would be written in East Asian order in official documents, unless there were special circumstances, and that if it became necessary to clarify which was the family name, then it would be written in all capitals.[3] The ministries and agencies began to spread the word to the private sector, too, by informing the industries that they dealt with.

This proposal was not a sudden development. Twenty years previously, in December 2000, the National Language Council, an advisory organization of what was then called the Ministry of Education, recommended that romanized Japanese names should be written in East Asian order. They stated their reason as, „We should be aware of linguistic and cultural diversity and make use of them. The East Asian word order is the desirable option when romanizing."[4] At that time, the Agency for Cultural Affairs asked national and prefectural government agencies, universities, and the newspaper, broadcasting, and publishing industries to follow suit. „We hope that school-based training in English and other languages will make use of the points above."[5] Until then, English language education in Japan had been teaching students to use the English order of „given name, family name" (Western order) when representing Japanese names, but for the reasons given here, the number of officially approved textbooks[6] that adopted the practice of teaching the East Asian order for transcribing names increased.

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[2] *JIJI.COM* Eigo no namae hyōki, seimei jun ni = Gaimushō HP [Name writing in English to be unified in the "family name-first name" order, Ministry of Foreign Affair website]. https://www.jiji.com/jc/article?k=2019052700958&g=pol and the BBC News（2019.5.23）

Kōno Gaishō, Nihonjinmei no rōma-ji hyōki "sei・mei" jun ni: Kaigai media ni yōsei no kangae [Foreign Minister Kōno intends to request foreign media to follow the "family name-first name" order when Romanizing Japanese names]. https://www.bbc.com/japanese/48375546

[3] *Nihon Keizai Shinbun.* 2019. 20-ne 1-gatsu kara "sei・mei" rōma-ji hyōki Monka-shō hyōmei ["Family name-first name" order of Romanizing to be in effect from January 2020, Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology declares]. https://www.nikkei.com/article/DGXMZO51383880V21C19A0000000/.

[4] Agency of Cultural Affairs website https://www.bunka.go.jp/kokugo_nihongo/sisaku/joho/joho/kakuki/22/tosin04/17.html 2019 (accessed 8 January 2019).

[5] Japanese Language Policy by the Agency of Cultural Affairs http://www.bunka.go.jp/kokugo_nihongo/joho/kakuki/22/tosin04/17.html (accessed 10 January 2020).

[6] Under the School Education Act, Japan employs the textbook authorization system for textbooks used in elementary, junior-high, high school and other school. Textbook authorization denotes that the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology screens the books authored and edited by private businesses to see if they meet the standard as textbooks, and that only the books that passed the screening will be used as textbooks. School education through elementary, junior-high and high school requires maintenance and improvement of nation-wide education standard, assurance of equal opportunity for education, maintenance of proper education content and securing of education neutrality, in order to

The problems that this paper will point out include the fact that the recent requests do not stem from inconsistencies in the ways names are written on passports or bank cards, even in government institutions, or attempts to ensure unity in administrative matters. Rather, Foreign Minister Kōno said that „Even in English, the names of Chinese and Korean people, who use the same word order for names as Japan, are written in the order of 'family name, given name."[7] This is quite a poorly thought-out reason for making such a decision, and we believe that the fact that these poorly thought-out administrative guidelines have been reflected in the authorized textbooks is a greater and more important problem.

This paper will discuss the representation methods that Japanese people use when they write their names in foreign languages and will present some thought from the point of view of education in multicultural understanding. In particular, we will make the case that when teaching English as a foreign language in Japan, teaching the „given name, family name" order (i.e. the Western order) is an effective opportunity for multicultural understanding. At the same time, we will discuss Japanese people's sense of identity, especially in terms of socio-cultural history. We hope that this study will prove helpful for linguistic and cultural education and related fields.

2. The Sociocultural History of Names and Identities

2.1. "I am Nosaka."

The word "identity" refers to the answer to the question "Who am I?" and demonstrates awareness that the one is one's self. In simple terms, it may be appropriate to say that a name expresses the individual's identity. However, are Japanese people in the present day aware in the first place that their names express their identity? The author Nosaka Akiyuki experienced an episode in which he was forced to notice the essential but unconscious sense that Japanese people have about their names. That occurred when his first novel was filmed in Hollywood. When it came time to receive the money stipulated in the contract, it was determined that the name typed into the contract and the name noted on his passport, which he had presented as a replacement for an I.D.,

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substantially secure the people's right to receive education. In order to comply with such demands, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology stipulates the government curriculum guidelines as the standard for the education curriculum for elementary, junior-high, high school and other schools, while conducting the authorization for the textbooks, which takes on an important role as the main teaching material for each curriculum.

[7] *Asahi Shinbun.* 2019. Gaikoku demo sei→mei hyōki, kaigai hōdō kikan ni yōsei Gaimu-shō [Ministry of Foreign Affairs to request international press to follow "family name-first name" order]. https://www.asahi.com/articles/ASM5P3JL0M5PUTFK00G.html (accessed 8 Jan) The Asian Times. "What's in a Name? Japanese Identity. (2001) Ginny Parker, "https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-2001-jan-14-mn-12067-story.html (accessed 8 Jan).

were different, so he had an extremely hard time proving his identity. Another person's creation of this contract was what set off this chain of events, but even though he noticed, he ended up not being able to correct his own name. He describes the situation as follows:

The attorney pointed out the letters typed on my passport, which spelled out "Nosaka," and the documents that I received from him, where my name was spelled "Nozaka," one by one. "You sign your name 'Nosaka,' right? The contract has 'Nozaka.'" For a moment, I didn't know how to explain it, and although I didn't have a clue about how significant the difference between "s" and "z" was, this was the first time I was able to confirm one of the reasons that I felt shaky throughout the whole contract process. The difference between "s" and "z" was a mistake on the part of the American publisher. That is, the editor-in-chief came to Japan to meet with me about publishing my work, and I went out drinking with him a few times, and having been with the U.S. Occupation forces in Japan for seven years, he spoke Japanese quite fluently and called me "Nozaka." Pronouncing it with a "z" is common in the Kanto region around Tokyo, but in western Japan, we say "Yamasaki" instead of "Yamazaki" or "Nosaki" instead of "Nozaki." Because I was fine with either pronunciation, or else because it was a name I had acquired when I was in my teens[8], I wasn't particular and didn't correct him. For that reason, the contract that I concluded with the publishing company ended up with "Nozaka," and I signed my name to match the way it had been typed. My name on the American versions of my works was inevitably written "Nozaka," and it is only natural that the film producer thought that it was my correct name. (Nosaka, 1972:15-16, underlining as in the original)

This story took place around 1970, so it is by no means a tale out of the past, nor is it a story of Nosaka's vague sense of his own name, because afterward, he wrote, "Japanese people think of their signatures as trivial, but in the legal sense, these signatures represent their individuality." (Nosaka, 1972: 27) While Americans think of their names as something that stands for their individuality, it is clear that most Japanese people do not consider the name that represents their individuality and the way that it is written to be of much importance. One reason may be a history in Japan of using a personal seal as an expression of identity, a practice that continues to this day, but there is a more complicated history behind the ways of representing names.

[8] Born in 1930, Nosaka was raised by a foster father (Tajimaya) until 1945. After losing his foster father in an air raid, he was taken in by the real father (Nosaka). Though he kept his "Tajimaya" name for a year after being taken in, he returned to the Nosaka's family register (Nosaka 1972: 18).

2.2. Real Names and Taboo Names

It was only after the Meiji Restoration, after the Order Requiring Commoners to Adopt Family Names was enacted on February 13, 1875, that all Japanese people began to use family names. According to Daitō (2013:53), common people did not have any official family names[9]. They were limited to only part of the population: samurai, aristocrats, wealthy merchants, wealthy farmers, and so on. Ordinary farmers and merchants used geographical names or the business names that were displayed on houses instead of family names, an example being Echigo-ya, familiar from the samurai dramas seen on television. In the medieval period, people who had not been formally invested with an official rank could not take it upon themselves to go by that title, but in the latter part of the medieval period, the use of titles began to spread to the villages, and from the 17th century onward, names derived from official titles, such as „Genzaemon" or „Tōbei," became widespread among the common people (Daitō 2013: 88). The reason that the use of nicknames or titles became a general rule was that individual formal given names („real names") were thought of as taboo (Daitō, 2013: 81-84). Even today, calling people by their given names is considered unseemly[10], but the custom back then was to avoid the use of a person's given name except in the imperial court or on ceremonial occasions.[11] That name could also change for political reasons. For example, the 17th century shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu went by the name of Takechiyo as a small child and then as Matsudaira Jirōsaburō Motonobu (he was usually called Jirōsaburō), and after his coming of age ceremony, he took the name Matsudaira Motoyasu. It was only later that that he changed his name to Tokugawa Ieyasu. This phenomenon of changing one's name at different milestones during one's life, like fish that are referred to by different names at different stages in their development, was often seen among Japanese men before the Meiji Period. Again taking Tokugawa Ieyasu as an example, during his life he was sometimes called by the title „Naifu-sama." After he died, Emperor Go-Mizuno-o gave him the posthumous divine name of Tōshō Daigongen. In this way, the use of real given names was avoided in Japan, and nicknames and titles were used in

[9] It is a common saying that the ordinary people in the early modern period did not have a family name (Ōtō 2013: 52)

[10] A custom in which calling or writing the true name of higher ranking people, such as nobility or ones parents, is considered taboo (*Jitsumei Keihi Zoku*). Unlike Western society, in which calling respected, higher ranking people by their first names is culturally accepted as a means of showing affection, Japan does not have any custom similar, indicating that the custom of respecting higher ranking people is strongly rooted in its society.

[11] It was thought that calling someone by his or her true name would dominate the actually entity (personality) of that person. Writing with characters was also considered taboo (Ōtō, 2013:83).

their place. In addition, there is a historical and cultural tradition of changing one's name several times during one's life.[12]

2.3. Japanese: A Language without Grammatical Subjects

Since the use of given names was considered impolite or taboo, the cultural tradition of thoroughly eliminating the individual and the philosophy behind it are interrelated with and deeply rooted in the language. That is to say, one of the characteristics of the Japanese language is that it hides the grammatical subject a sentence. Komatsu (2003:101-102) points out that the concept of a grammatical subject is weak in Japanese. In his book, he presents such conversational exchanges as:

"How far did [you] go?"
"[I] went as far as the station, but [he] wasn't there."

He notes that Japanese people usually do not say "you," "I," or "he" in such cases. Komatsu (2003) also states that it is not just a matter of Japanese dropping the grammatical subject. Due to this feature, he says, the speech of Japanese people is composed of long, seamless, vague utterances.[13] He presents an example of part of a speech that caused problems for him when he interpreted it:

> 先ほどのような、われわれ大量に生産したツケというのですが、ある面では文化の進展に貢献したともいえるんですけれども、一面そういった大量生産、大量販売、大量廃棄につながるようなことが、環境破壊ということにつながってきて、それだけでは駄目だと、これからは使った製品を回収して、そして解体し、分別して再資源化すると、こういうふうにしなければ駄目だと、これまでの工場、これからは逆工場と、こういったことをしていかなければならないと、こういう認識に立っているわけでございますけれども、ここでもいろいろ課題もございます.
>
> [As before, about the result of our mass producing it, in certain respects, it is possible to say that it contributed to the development of culture, but in one respect, that kind of mass production, leads to mass marketing, mass disposal, has led to environmental destruction, and if it is simply no good, from now on, if we are recovering used products, then dismantling them, making decisions about them and re-resourcing, if we must do that or it's no good, if the manufacturing plants that have existed till now are reverse manufacturing plants from now on, if we must do these kinds of things, we are aware of this, but here, too, there are various issues.](Komatsu, 2003: 106)

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[12] According to Ōtō (2013: 85), this cultural background is not unique to Japan. The custom to hide the true name and use a common name can also be seen in China, India and Egypt. Ōtō does not mention whether the influence of this custom still remains in the contemporary society of these nations, as it does in Japan.

[13] I am presuming that the act of punctuating sentences and paragraphs comprehensibly according to the context may have been derived from the Western writing style that was imported from the late Edo period onward.

The speaker seems to be unaware of grammatical subjects in his own mind, and in the original Japanese, there is no mention of a subject in this long utterance, and yet, it is strange that despite this, the speaker's logic hangs together. Komatsu describes these traits as linguistic characteristics of the Japanese language. The episode from Nosaka's writings that is mentioned above is also entirely without grammatical subjects in the original Japanese, and yet the sentences are extremely long, so it is another example of the same feature.

2.4. A Society Where It Is Hard to Achieve One's Own Identity

Looking at Japanese society, where individual given names are intentionally avoided and grammatical subjects are omitted, from the point of view of achieving an individual identity, which Erikson (1994) proposes to be an issue of a person's youth, it has been noted that Japan has sociocultural characteristics that make it especially difficult for young people to achieve individuality. Achieving an identify means separating from the maternal and solidifying that separation. In other words, it means that once having separated from the previously intimate mother-child relationship and the guardianship of their parents, they have to reassess the values and worldview that they obtained from their parents, reconstitute their own values and worldview, and establish a unique "self." In Japanese society, where it is expected that the individual and the society are to exist as a unit, it is extremely difficult to achieve an individual identity. Tatara, Yamamoto, and Yamashita (1995: 265-267) offer the following explanation:

> At the same time, youth is the period when affiliation with the collective self[14] is a problem, but in this case, most youth affiliate with a collective self (they identify with a collective supported by powerful people), and this causes them to discard their individual self without having clarified its boundaries, so that the individual ends up buried in the collective. Behind this phenomenon lies the inherent Japanese psychosocial pattern of stabilizing both the collective and the individual through the individual being absorbed into the collective.

In other words, unlike the dynamism and powerful ability for self-expression that individuals in Western societies achieve, the identities of Japanese people are usually passive, dependent on the circumstances that surround them, but problems arise unless the individual can achieve an active identity. That is exactly what Nosaka experienced, as

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[14] Synonym for the collective identity.

mentioned before. When he encountered a situation where his values and ways of thinking did not work at all, unlike the interactions he had had with other Japanese people in the familiar environment of Japanese society, he was bewildered, as he said, „for a moment I didn't know how to explain it." After that, he expressed his unease (Nosaka, 1972:16): „I thought that it was outrageous that I was made to prove in each instance that I am Nosaka." If that were all there was to it, there would be no problem, but according to Tatara, Yamamoto, and Yamashita (1995: 268), when one looks at it in clinical terms, „At the same time that one's internal sense of powerlessness, a feeling of hostility arises toward the external world that has caused the feeling of powerlessness. Furthermore, that hostility cannot be expressed in relation with the outside world, so it tends to be suppressed. The result is a withdrawal from the outside world and internalization of the hostility or anger." They add that „the feeling of powerlessness can turn into depression."

If people are not to develop hostility or fall into an unhealthy mental state, they need to foster an active self-autonomy that creates the basis for an identity. That is because a person is forced into quite a challenging situation in the process of moving from Japanese-style confusion to differentiation as an individual (Tatara, Yamamoto, Miyashita, 1995:268). The process of achieving an identity requires a stubborn will, or, in other words, a proactive stance of exposing one's self to others while continuing to take a long, hard look at others. However, if one were to ask the authors, they would say that not only do Japanese not have the strength to maintain the process of separating and solidifying their identities but also that Japanese society does not produce that kind of strength. Now that we are facing a globalized era, the necessity has emerged for Japanese people to have a different kind of cultural background and to communicate with people who speak different languages. The conventional wisdom that has prevailed till now is no longer valid, and if people are hostile to those who do not accept them, it becomes difficult to maintain peaceful, friendly relations with the societies and peoples of different cultures. At worst, it can lead to war.

In the next section, we will consider the question of what kind of linguistic and cultural education in Japan will foster identities that can deal with multicultural societies. we will treat representation of names in a globalized era as one topic in my discussion and will try making some proposals for future linguistic and cultural education in Japan.

3. Representation of Names from the Point of View in Teaching Multicultural Understanding

3.1. The Significance of Teaching the Western Style

The initial goal of linguistic and cultural education is to make the students look at multicultural societies and to shake their existing identities. The ultimate goal is to foster the development of people who can achieve diverse identities in any multicultural society (Suehiro, 2012). For that reason, the problem of how to notate names is an excellent topic for linguistic and cultural education.

In the member countries of the European Union, it is proposed that all students be educated in their native language and learn two other languages in the interests of fostering awareness of their own culture, multicultural understanding, and the ability to coexist. It is believed that the more different the foreign language and the student's native language are, the broader the scope for self-rediscovery and multicultural understanding, and the more the ability to accept other cultures is cultivated. If that is the case, then study of a language as distant as possible from one's own is to be promoted. In that sense, the study of English by Japanese people is extremely significant. For example, interpreters use both their languages at a practical level, but Komatsu (2004: 95-98) has pointed out the difficulty of interpretation when the two languages employ different word orders.

> Japanese is a left-branching language, and English is characterized as a right-branching language. ... Yesterday, when I was on the train, I heard the following on-board announcement: „Tsugi wa Shinjuku desu. <u>Hidarigawa no</u> doa ga hirakimasu." This was followed by an announcement in English: „The next stop is Shinjuku. The door <u>on the left side</u> will open." This represents the difference between left-branching Japanese, where the equivalent of „on the left side" comes before „door" and right-branching English, where „on the left side" comes after „door."

Nowadays, training in grammar is being criticized, but thinking in terms of awareness of one's native language and one's own culture and understanding of other cultures and languages, we can say that making students clearly aware of linguistic differences is an extremely effective lesson topic. That is why the conventional way of teaching students to introduce themselves, with the names in the opposite order from Japanese, with the given name first and the family name second, is a good thing. This makes it easy to explain why the given name is called the „first name" and the family name, which comes afterward, is the „last name." When a student asked, „What is your last name?" in actual conversation, it is easy for him or her to answer, „My last name is Yamada" without getting confused. That is, teaching the Western order for names is sensible and makes it easy for the students to accept a different language and culture by comparing it with their native language and culture. If someone says, „My name is Yamada Taro," only „Yamada Taro" remains the same as in Japanese and is not changed into English, and the part that is best for helping the student understand another culture is omitted. Teaching the Western order for names is an effective and logical method for making the students notice the deep connection between the language being used and the culture that goes with it.

For example, if you display the difference between Japanese and English methods of addressing letters, the students easily learn by looking at the display that Western society (a foreign culture) and Japanese society (the students' own culture) take opposite approaches to the idea and treatment of the individual. The following (fig. 1) compares the Japanese and English versions of the same address. The arrows indicate the direction of the writing.

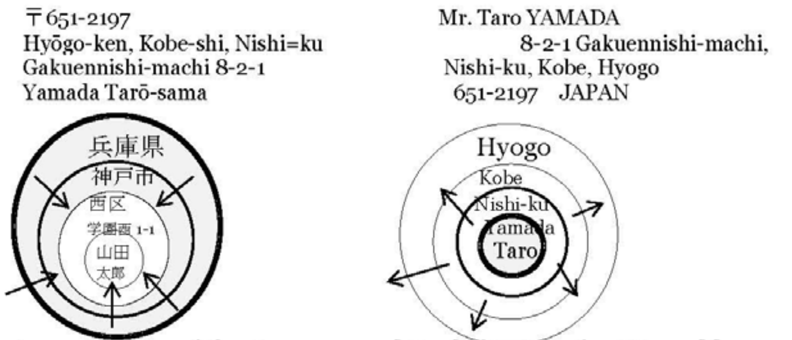

Fig. 1: A comparison of the Japanese and English ways of writing addresses

In the Japanese way of writing addresses, one starts with the postal code, then the prefecture, then the city, town, or village, and then the block. The addressee's name comes last. On the other hand, the English way of addressing a letter is exactly the opposite: one starts with the individual addressee's name. This demonstrates that first individuals exist and that their relationships with the communities and societies to which they belong are formed around them. In contrast to the English-speaking world, where culture and societies arose centered on the individual, we find that in Japan, the existence of individuals is positioned in the very last place within society. It is not a question of which idea is correct. Rather, noticing the existence of other cultures and societies and comparing them leads to a rediscovery of one's own culture. we believe that this kind of logical approach is effective at the initial stage of linguistic and cultural education.

3.2. Life Cycles and Name Changes

At the intermediate level and above, after the students have acquired a certain amount of linguistic and cultural knowledge, asking them to use a name that expresses an identity that can deal with any kind of different culture is a method of teaching the kind of name representation that this paper advocates. That is because we believe that an individual's name representation is something that he or she should make a final decision about after having struggled and suffered through life.

In Suehiro (2010: 126-129), she pointed out that we can see changes in the ways that Suzuki Daisetsu[15] wrote his name in the process of achieving an identity during his lifetime. After losing both his family, he became rootless and went to the United States, but his existing values and worldview collapsed, and he was forced to reconstruct his identity. During that period, he changed the way he wrote his name several times. However, he finally settled on „Daisetz." The combination „tz" is not found in any of the standard methods of romanizing Japanese, but he explained that his reason for spelling his name „Daisetz" was an effort to make it easier for Westerners to pronounce it correctly (Asami, 2010: 39-49). According to my analysis (Suehiro 2010: 128), this was the name that Daisetsu finally arrived at after achieving his identity. We can take this as proof that he achieved the final goal of linguistic and cultural education, namely becoming a person who can achieve various identities in all kinds of different cultures.

Sen (2006: 10) has said that one's identity is not something that one is given but something that is chosen through reasoning, and that „Central to leading a human life are the responsibilities of choice and reasoning." According to him, world political conflicts are often to be viewed as the results of differences in religion and culture. It is only according to „a singular and overarching system of partitioning" that biased and fixed thoughts about classifying the world's people exist. This view is a „solitarist approach" that thinks of people only as constituent members of a single group and can understand them in no other way. Sen states that this view cannot understand that people have multiple identities and ends up forcing a single identity on the individual. This approach often gives rise to factional conflicts and promotes violence.

3.3. Approaching the Global Era

The current Japanese government's decision about names seems to be an attempt to impose a single affiliate group on us. Saying that because we must use the East Asian order for names because we are Japanese is a very biased way of thinking. To begin with, what is the definition of "Japanese"? Nationality? So, what happens to people of dual nationality? We have entered an era in which a bewildering variety of people, things, and information from many countries and regions come and go, and in

[15] A Buddhist scholar who spread the philosophy of *Zen* in English throughout the world. His true name was Teitarō Suzuki. Daisetz was his lay Buddhist title.

the sports world, people born as children of international marriages, such as basketball player Rui Hachimura and tennis champion Naomi Osaka are noticeably active on the global stage. They are Japanese citizens, but Naomi Osaka has closer to native proficiency in English than in Japanese. Just thinking about these international figures makes it clear that treating Japanese people as having only one affiliation and recognizing only one-word order for names is a strange decision. According to Harding and Riley (2001:130), when children grow up between two cultures, their parents feel that differences in the representing and pronunciation of their names as a source of stress, but the children themselves accept the different names from the two cultures (for example, „Riley" and „Rilé") without any problems.

The representation of names is a problem deeply connected with individual identity. There are even cases where methods of representing names change during a person's lifetime. The Japanese government's decision means that a person can be given only one identity. That is, an important point in terms of linguistic and cultural education is to teach that there are many individual differences and that this is not a problem with only one correct answer. We believe that it is important to make students aware of this as a problem for which they must seek and find their own answers. In that sense, the issue of deciding the representation of one's own name plays a role for Japanese people in fostering a firm will to support the process of achieving their own identity. Depending on whether personal names are viewed as mere symbols or whether they are viewed as reflecting an identity that expresses one's personality, the way they are treated is quite different. Suzuki Daisetsu eventually decided that the form of his name that expressed his identity was „Daisetz" and was unable to represent his name in any of the standard methods of romanizing Japanese. Interestingly, the last name has disappeared in his name. If we understand the National Language Council's use of the word „diversity" and the phrase „ each name's characteristic form is the living form"as meaning that each person's name is something that is equivalent to their personal traits and expresses the individual's identity, then it is inconsistent for the national government and society to restrict ways of representing an individual's name. Doing so negates the identity represented by the name „Daisetz." Identity is something that people are asked about during their youth and achieve after repeated cycles of tearing it down and reconstructing it. The problem arises when the national government and society do not acknowledge the representation of a name that reflects an identity achieved after a struggle or impose the use of the East Asian order for names. As long as that happens, it will never be possible to raise up

Japanese people who have multiple identities. That is, they will be people who cannot adapt to the global era.

4. Issues for Further Research

The problem of word order and representation of names, one that seems as if it should be non-controversial, includes more multifaceted and deep issues than one can imagine. This paper has discussed the problem of representing the names of people born and raised in Japan. We would like to investigate further the increasing number of children of international marriages who span more than two cultures, as well as „third culture kids," to see how they achieve multiple identities through the representation of their names and how they use them in different ways.

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THE SUMMER OF MEN. TENJIN MATSURI IN THE YEAR OF THE PANDEMIC[1]

Carmen Săpunaru TĂMAȘ[2]

Abstract: *On April 13, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the main events of Tenjin Matsuri, one of the "three great festivals of Japan," were declared cancelled. The present paper is an attempt to analyze how the absence of a long-awaited celebration influenced the community, how the community coped with the phenomenon, as well as how myth and ritual are re-evaluated and re-interpreted in the new context. The millennium-old myth of Sugawara no Michizane whose wrathful ghost turned into the god Tenjin is actualized as a prayer for protection against disease, while the ritual is adapted to the new circumstances, the secrecy and taboo that had always surrounded it being replaced by a worldwide live transmission of the shinji (Shinto ritual) conducted to honor the spirits enshrined at Osaka Tenmangu. The "summer of men," when members of the community display a type of masculinity based on notions of protecting their families and neighborhoods, is replaced by the "summer of restraint," when entertainment is absent or subdued, but when there is strong belief that Tenjin-san protects his believers, and as such the celebration in 2021 will be all the more flamboyant.*

Keywords: *Tenjin Matsuri, Osaka, pandemic, myth, ritual*

Foreword

The first half of the title of this paper is borrowed from a different article I had initially submitted for publication here, "The Summer of Men. Entertainment for the Gods at Osaka Festivals", where I focused on expressions and meanings of masculinity as it is represented at various summer matsuri in Osaka. However, on April 13 (the decision had been made ten days before), Osaka Tenmangu publicly announced that most of the events associated with Tenjin Matsuri, one of the "three great festivals of Japan", would be cancelled, and only the religious rituals would be performed, in the presence of a limited number of participants. The announcement was by no means surprising, yet that did not make it any less of a shock for those directly involved in organizing the festival, and that is why I considered that a brief analysis of how Tenjin Matsuri was conducted in the year of the pandemic, as well as the impact that nationwide prevention measures had on the community, would be a topic of more interest for the year 2020. The summer of 2020 is still the

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summer of men, those men for whom masculinity implies protecting their families and their community; a summer mostly devoid of traditional entertainment and more imbued with prayers for the rapid containment of the disease.

1. Tenjin Matsuri. Myth and Ritual

Nowadays, Tenjin Matsuri is an extravaganza of sound, movement, light and color dedicated to the god Tenjin: fireworks to appease the god of thunder, and the sweat of the commoners to pacify the ghost of an aristocrat scholar (Tamas 2019: 43). Sugawara no Michizane, the central character of this millennium-old set of rituals and practices, is a historically attested character, a scholar who lived at the end of the 9th century, became a close advisor of Emperor Daigo, and was unjustly exiled to Dazaifu (Kyushu) as a result of the slander of one of his political rivals, Fujiwara no Tokihira. After his death in 903, Kyoto was plagued by epidemics and droughts, Tokihira and another member of his family died of disease in 909, while Michizane's successor suffered a violent death in 913. Moreover, in 930 the Imperial Palace precincts were struck by lightning, which caused a fire in which members of the Fujiwara family lost their lives. Emperor Daigo himself died of the shock and the society plunged into chaos (Fukuta 2000: 166)

These recorded historical facts created rumors that all the above-mentioned unfortunate incidents were caused by Michizane's vengeful ghost, and in 942 a shamaness claimed that she was possessed by "the deceased Sugawara's spirit … [and] that these disasters had been willed by him. In 955 an inspired young child of a Shinto priest also announced the same divine message and proclaimed that the spirit of Sugawara had become the deity of disasters and a chief deity of the thunder demons. The imperial court, surprised by these divine messages and the public rumor, enrolled his angry spirit among the deities and dedicated to him a shrine, named the Kitano-jinja, Kyoto." (Hori 1974: 115) The phenomenon that took place here is called *hitogami*, a person who becomes/ is turned into a god because there is strong belief that it possesses powers (be they destructive or creative) that can be harnessed for the welfare of humanity. We thus have quite accurate records of how a myth was created, that of the powerful Sugawara no Michizane, who was initially enshrined as a God of Thunder (the episode with the storm that ravaged the Imperial Palace being one of the most remarkable), and later associated with the God Tenjin-an association that has continued until today.

At the same time, the phenomena that had apparently been caused by the spirit of Sugawara no Michizane occurred in a period when there was a widespread belief that

> "disease, disasters, and calamities of all sorts-droughts, drownings, earthquakes, famines, ominous dreams, political upsets, stillbirths, thunderstorms, and so on-were also caused by the 'departed spirits' (*goryô*) of deceased people. This belief probably originated in Japan with the importation from China of the belief that spirits of the dead might become evil spirits or demons (*kuei*; Japanese *oni*) unless the proper funerary and memorial rituals were performed for the deceased. It its earliest usage the world *goryô* may have denoted all departed spirits of deceased members of aristocratic families who met premature, unjust, and violent deaths as the victims of political machinations. The departed spirits of such people, failing to find rest, haunted those responsible for their deaths and gave vent to their 'wrath' (*tatari*) in the form of disasters and troubles of all kinds, political, economic, social, and personal." (McMullin 1998: 272)

When it comes to the connection between myth and ritual, things are often ambiguous, and it is usually hard to determine which came first, whether the story represents the scaffold onto which the gestures were added, or whether a certain practice was later associated, for various reasons, with a tale about the deeds of extraordinary beings. Mircea Eliade, for example, sees myth as "the archetypal model for all 'creation'", something that "functions as a model and justification for all human action[3]" (1992: 359-360). Within this theoretical framework "beliefs, creeds, symbols, and myths" are seen as "conceptual blueprints: they direct, inspire, or promote activity, but they themselves are not activities" (Bell 2009: 19). These approaches, however, have become slightly obsolete, being focused on a metaphorical analysis of patterns of thought and behavior (similar to Jung's idea of a collective subconscious), while more recent studies seem to regard ritual as preceding myth in many cases[4]. The ritual studies expert Ronald Grimes is of this opinion, emphasizing the fact that "historically considered, the religious consciousness emerges in a sequence: ritual, myth, then drama. Myth and ritual are 'spatially' parallel, but ritual is temporally prior" (1995: 143).

This brief theoretical introduction is necessary to explain the connection between Tenjin Matsuri and Sugawara no Michizane, as well as the development of the ritual, since at a first glance, the relationship between the death of a political figure from the 10th century and one of the biggest festivals of Japan might be quite difficult to comprehend.

[3] Unless otherwise indicated, all the translations are by the author.

[4] The idea is not new, having been introduced in the 19th century by W. Robertson Smith: "So far as myths consist of explanations of ritual their value is altogether secondary, and it may be affirmed with confidence that in almost every case the myth was derived from the ritual, and not the ritual from the myth; for the ritual was fixed and the myth was variable, the ritual was obligatory and faith in the myth was at the discretion of the worshipper" (1889: 19). However, only one hundred years later did specialists come up with coherent arguments to support this theory.

The center of Tenjin Matsuri is the shrine Osaka Tenmangu, which, according to the shrine records, was built around an older place of worship, Dai Shôgun Sha, dating from the year 650. The legend says that on his way to exile, Michizane stopped at Dai Shôgun Sha to pray for a safe journey. Almost fifty years later, in 949, seven pine trees appeared overnight in front of the shrine, emitting a strange light in the dark. Hearing of the miracle, Emperor Murakami ordered another shrine, dedicated to Michizane/ god Tenjin to be built there. The shrine was completed in 950, and in 951 Tenjin Matsuri took place for the first time[5]. Nowadays Tenjin Matsuri is a vast enterprise, with thousands of active participants and elaborate events organized on July 24th (*Yomiya*, the eve of the festival) and July 25th (*Honmiya*, the main day), but originally it was conducted as a summer purification festival. Shôji Kurahayashi mentions it only by the name of *Tenma no misogi* (the Tenma purification), and, although he includes it among the three famous Japanese festivals, he makes no reference to Michizane or the god Tenjin (Kurahayashi 1983: 299, Tamas 2020: 156).

Kunio Yanagita connects such practices to offerings made to the deities of water-agricultural practices that fall under the category of fertility rites, and are meant to pacify the gods that can affect the crops (1974). This association is not far-fetched, as initially *Tenma no misogi* was conducted by the Edo river, now known as Ôgawa (the "big river").

One other element that must be taken into consideration here is the god Tenjin-Sugawara no Michizane came to be associated with this particular deity, but beliefs in the god Tenjin were common in Japan even before the inauspicious events of the 10th century. Kôji Takashima sees the Tenjin set of beliefs as a kami-buddha combinatory practice[6], an example of religious syncretism where imported elements and indigenous beliefs were combined (2016). We thus have three main threads that represent the origin of Tenjin Matsuri: a historical figure who suffers a miraculous transformation and the ritual to appease his vengeful ghost, a purification/ fertility ritual performed near bodies of water (rivers, in the case of Osaka), and popular beliefs in the god Tenjin, a deity known to respond positively to all kinds of prayers. In the 21st century, Sugawara no Michizane is regarded as the central figure of Tenjin Matsuri, familiarly addressed by the locals as either Tenjin-san,

[5] The information is available on the official website of Osaka Tenmangu (https://osakatemmangu. or.jp/about/), and the legend is retold each year on July 25th, before the Land Procession.

[6] *Shinbutsu shūgō*, the systemic combination of *kami* and buddhas, shrines and temples, and their priesthoods, that had its roots in the Nara Period (710-94). (Encyclopedia of Shinto, http://k-amc.kokugakuin.ac.jp/DM/dbSearchList.do;jsessionid=435945E4995EFA6CBF057B432F32B6F9?class_name=col_eos&search_condition_type=1&db_search_condition_type=0&View=0&focus_type=0&startNo=1&searchFreeword=shinbutsu&searchRangeType=0; accessed on July 29, 2020).

or Lord Michizane (slightly more formal). Due to spatial and temporal proximity, Gion Matsuri and Tenjin Matsuri (Kyoto and Osaka, both taking place in July) are often compared, but my own field observations have led me to believe that there is a greater degree of intimacy between the participants in Tenjin Matsuri and their local deity than it is the case with their Gion counterparts. As one of my informants stated, Lord Michizane is something like a local *ojisan* ("uncle", "mature man") who has come to visit the area and spend some time with the people he cares for. One explanation for this phenomenon may reside in the fact that religious syncretism is even more obvious in the case of Gion Matsuri, where several distinct deities are celebrated (Susano-wo at Yasaka Shrine, the Goddess Kannon in the Minami Kannon district, and the list can continue), as opposed to Tenjin Matsuri, where the assimilation of beliefs was more intense and resulted in a linear evolution towards the contemporary rituals.

Ronald Grimes states that "we become actors [in a ritual] in the moment we mythologize our myths" (1995: 143), and this becomes a significant theoretical construct if we consider the current social background of Tenjin Matsuri. Researchers may focus on its historical, religious, and literary origin and development, but the participants have absorbed the linear, unequivocal myth adopted by the religious center of the festival, and thus both the myth and the ritual exist on parallel planes in contemporary society, with no regard for historical chronology. This is particularly relevant in 2020, the year of the pandemic, when cancellation of the festival led to many voices arguing that it made no sense to cancel a ritual whose purpose is to prevent or stop epidemics exactly in the year when such an epidemic occurred.

2. Tenjin Matsuri in the 21st Century. The Year 2020

According to the official website of the festival[7], Tenjin Matsuri started as *Hoko nagashi shinji*-the ritual of casting a wooden stick into the Ôgawa river, with the purpose of erecting the *otabisho* ("journey place"), a temporary ritual space where the deity would be taken and celebrated for the duration of the festival. The practice was discontinued in the beginning of the Edo period, particularly due to changes in the geography of the area. In 1930 the ritual was reinstated, but with a different meaning: the *hoko* became part of the purification ceremony which is a fundamental element of Tenjin Matsuri, whereby the pollution and evil affecting the community are symbolically transferred onto the *hoko*, which is then cast away into the river. This way a celebration that started as a summer purification practice, being later

[7] http://www.tenjinmatsuri.com/other/history.

enriched by the legend of the God Tenjin, comes full circle to the original ritual. (Tamas 2020: 161)

25 groups called *kô* are involved in organizing Tenjin Matsuri, their main role being that of providing entertainment for the visiting deities. On July 24th, Dondoko-bune (a fast boat moving to the sound of bells), Moyôshi Taiko (the big drum continuously beaten by six drummers wearing tall red hats), and Tenjin Kô (a group including Lion Dance and Umbrella Dance performers) move around the neighborhood, announcing the start of the celebrations. At the same time, Ôtori Mikoshi and Tama Mikoshi, two elaborately decorated portable shrines, and Jiguruma (a *danjiri*-a parade float embellished with exquisite wooden carvings) are placed inside the precincts of Osaka Tenmangu, so that the visitors can admire them. On July 25th, the main day, the sacred spirit of Sugawara no Michizane is transferred on a plum branch from the inner sanctum of the shrine into the Gohôren-the portable shrine that will carry it during the Land Procession and River Procession-marking the beginning of the parade around the neighborhood and on the river, to the delight of the community members and visitors alike.

On April 13th, 2020 (during the state of emergency period declared by the government), however, Osaka Tenmangu officially announced[8] that all the regular events on July 24th and July 25th would be cancelled, while the religious rituals on July 25th would be performed in the presence of the priests only. On April 14th, the news was reported by Asahi Shimbun[9], who gave a brief overview of the festival and mentioned that in the 20th century it was cancelled only twice, in 1946, after World War II, and in 1976, after the 1973 Oil Crisis. According to the records of Osaka Tenmangu (currently under the care of Professor Kôji Takashima), the matsuri was interrupted in 1615, during the Siege of Osaka, when, fearing destruction during the armed conflict, the *mikoshi* was moved to Suita area. In 1865, a period of political strife under the Shogun Tokugawa Iemochi, the matsuri in Osaka were suspended, Tenjin Matsuri amongst them, and the same thing happened in 1879, during a cholera epidemic. While it is unrealistic to assume that a certain event has continued unchanged and uninterrupted for more than a thousand years (rituals are, after all, living organisms, just like language), the few documents that record such disturbances do stand out, that is why the topic was discussed in the Sankei Shimbun issue[10] from July 16, 2020.

The Asahi Shimbun article mentioned above also quoted Mr. Taneharu Terai, head priest of Osaka Tenmangu, who stated that "since

[8] https://osakatemmangu.or.jp/news/280/.

[9] https://www.asahi.com/articles/ASN4G3DV1N4FPTIL00K.html (accessed on July 29, 2020).

[10] https://news.yahoo.co.jp/articles/bf2ea2d1268d179b64f4490592e62890ae9275f3?fbclid=IwAR1h-fVS6qemXglmvs_msd3vQ2iL1jS7YMw4It13-SP_6kDQu3sfhTEKUBY (accessed on July 29, 2020).

Tenjin Matsuri is a ritual meant to ward off epidemics, we should do all we can so that the current pandemic is contained soon.” On the same day, the local Nichinichi Shimbun [11] published largely the same information, with the addition that it called the summer of 2020 the “Summer of Restraint.” Both newspapers emphasized the number of people who attended Tenjin Matsuri on July 25th, 2019-1,300,000-one of the main reasons the extravagant events that attracted such numbers of onlookers were cancelled, due to fears of contagion and spreading the new epidemic.

Nevertheless, that does not mean the work of the organizers stopped this year. One of the most important (visible) elements of the matsuri is the River Procession (*funa togyo*), involving a large number of barge-type boats fitted to accommodate portable shrines and passengers. While attending the meetings of Ôtori Kô last year, I learned that renting and fitting the boats (Ôtori Kô has three, one for the *mikoshi*-portable shrine, one for guests, and one for those who carry the *mikoshi*) represent the biggest expense of the organizing groups. This year, in an interview for Sankei Shimbun[12], Mr. Morimoto, the president of the Kô Association, stated that the average amount paid by one *kô* for renting a boat used to be 1,100,000 yen, which increased to 1,600,000 yen in 2019, and to 2,000,000 yen in 2020-in order to ensure that the boats would be available and in good condition in 2021. To this, an extra 500,000 to 1,500,000 yen would be necessary for chairs, lights, and other fittings for the passengers. The title of the article is “Kami-san ni haji wo kakasarehen”-“We won’t shame the god,” articulated in the local dialect, another indication of the close relationship between the festival organizers and the celebrated deity, which is seen as an important member of the community, for whom no effort will be spared.

I have been conducting fieldwork at Tenjin Matsuri since 2017, and I am well aware of the importance of this event in the life of the community. While it is not its single purpose, the Tenma community is structured with Osaka Tenmangu as its center, and its members often define themselves by affiliation to one of the *kô*. The cancellation of all the events (with the exception of the religious ones) most definitely represented a shock, but for both the shrine and the community, but the recovery was fast, and countermeasures quickly established.

On July 2, 2020, Sankei Shimbun published another article, this time about the “New Face of Tenjin Matsuri Rituals[13]”, which advertised

[11] https://www.nnn.co.jp/dainichi/news/200414/20200414026.html (accessed on July 29, 2020).

[12] https://www.sankei.com/west/news/200717/wst2007170011-n1.html?fbclid=IwAR1rsljiDMD96_F_LFMkjVnseAaTSvoEoLEA2upbnkve-UzYUq_75bBv2yY (accessed on July 29, 2020).

[13] https://www.sankei.com/west/news/200702/wst2007020007-n1.html (accessed on July 29, 2020).

the "first live transmission" of the sacred ritual on July 25th. Written by the same author, Hiroko Kitamura, the article mentions again the millennium-long history of Tenjin Matsuri, emphasizing the fact that the people in charge are aware of the dangers of the epidemic and want to minimize risks, while at the same time offering a proper celebration to the god Tenjin. The ritual in question, the formal prayer performed inside the Main Hall of Osaka Tenmangu on July 25th, is actually the only part that has (at least according to shrine records) continued uninterrupted regardless of the political and social context.

The ritual (*shinji*) was indeed broadcasted live on YouTube, which may not be such a surprising first considering the still brief history of the Internet, but it is quite extraordinary if we take into account the fact that the most important rituals are not for the eyes of the mere mortals. The rite that is actually performed on July 25th is called *shinrei igyo*-the transfer of the spirit, when the divine spirit of Sugawara no Michizane is moved from the inner part of the altar, which is opened only once a year, to the sacred portable shrine. As in most religious systems of the world, the moment is regarded as too sacred for the eyes of the participants, that is why special attendants hold up a white sheet which protects the divine spirit from the eyes of the onlookers. Although in the 21st century the taboo on looking at the gods (a common motif in world mythologies, present in Japanese culture in ancient myths, such as the episode where Izanagi fails to bring his wife Izanami back from the other world because he breaks the taboo of looking at her, or the folktales about the serpent wife) is only symbolically enacted, the ideology is still present and clearly stated by the ritual performers.

Even the breath and touch of the main priest (the one performing this most sacred act, and handling the plum branch that carries Michizane's spirit) are seen as polluted and polluting, that is why he wears gloves and a mask (on a regular basis, not just in the year of the pandemic). I had the chance of attending this ritual in 2017, 2018, and 2019, and I know from experience that it is possible to actually observe what is happening, although the priests instruct the participants to lower their heads. Nevertheless, attendance is limited to the most important members of the organizing committees and local community, and although the ritual was recorded by NHK for a series on Japanese matsuri, it is not something that is available to a wider audience. That is why Dr. Kôichi Sawai from the Osaka Museum of History was quoted by Sankei Shimbun expressing his surprise at the fact that "although recording a *shinji* is taboo, it is done for the continuation of Tenjin Matsuri, and it represents an appealing, albeit surprising gesture[14]."

[14] Ibid.

This unexpected decision taken by Osaka Tenmangu is by no means an attempt at gathering followers or donations; quite the contrary, it is a gesture meant to pacify not the gods but, as Neil McMullin put it, the populace. The active members of the Tenma community most likely do not remember a year without Tenjin Matsuri, an elaborate event around which most of the daily, profane lives are centered, and its complete disappearance at a time when the pandemic had already caused deep unrest in the society could have had profound negative effects. That is why, when the processions and fireworks display were cancelled, the Shrine decided to turn the secret, taboo, elitist ritual into an event for the entire community.

On July 2, a video featuring the chief *miko* (shrine maiden) from Osaka Tenmangu was uploaded on its YouTube channel, with the formal announcement[15] of the live transmission on July 25th. On July 3, a live event was added to the official Facebook page, "大阪天満宮　天神祭　神事　本宮祭　YoutubeLive[16]," and on July 21, a video featuring Mr. Hitoshi Yanagino[17], the priest in charge of rituals at Osaka Tenmangu, was also uploaded. The video was a brief instruction on how to perform the formal greeting to the gods-bow twice, clap twice, bow once-so that the audience would have the chance to actively participate in the ritual. On July 22, Asahi Shimbun published an article about the rehearsal for the big event[18]. One of the things I found surprising is that, although the unusual format of Tenjin Matsuri in 2020 had ample media coverage, the journalists did not seem overly concerned with the attitudes and feelings of regular people. They did report (as expected) the sensational: the first live transmission of a sacred ritual, the discovery of documents recording other extraordinary years when the events were either cancelled or conducted in a different way, but other than that, most newspapers seemed content to share the newest information (about the YouTube transmission) and the oldest (about the origin of Tenjin Matsuri). While I can only guess as to their reasons for this omission, I believe that the feelings of the people related to events associated with entertainment were less significant compared to fears of the new disease and the havoc it has already wreaked in society. By focusing on something apparently immutable (a thousand-year-old ritual meant to fight epidemics and appease the spirits causing them), they may have tried to restore some sense of peace and stability within the community.

[15] https://youtu.be/gB87kLf5kAY.
[16] https://www.facebook.com/events/1160898604266746/.
[17] https://youtu.be/wqqd27Vdhxs.
[18] https://www.asahi.com/articles/ASN7P3F2PN7HPTFC024.html.

On July 24th, the eve of Tenjin Matsuri, the changes that occurred in 2020 were announced on electronic billboards at JR Osaka Station.

Photos available on the official Facebook page of Osaka Tenmangu
(reprinted with permission)

The main day of Tenjin Matsuri, July 25th, started with the purification ceremony, *hoko nagashi shinji*, which is usually conducted on the previous day. Due to the fact that the restrictions related to public gatherings had been lifted in Osaka, not just the priests and the *miko* participated, but also representatives of the *kô* involved in Tenjin Matsuri, and members of the parishioners council. For ritual purposes, the priests and *miko* did not wear masks, but all the other participants did.

Hoko nagashi shinji 2020
(photos courtesy of Osaka Tenmangu)

Next, the sacred *shinji* celebrating the spirit of Sugawara no Michizane (Tenjin) and the other *kami* (deities) worshipped at Osaka Tenmangu, Tajikara no Mikoto, Sarutahiko no Mikoto, Nomi no Sukune no Mikoto, and Ebisu no Mikoto, began as scheduled at 2pm, recorded by an operational team of two fixed cameras, a mobile one inside the Main Hall, plus five computers and other technical equipment in an adjacent room. As the person in charge with the later translation into English of the explanation offered live by Mr. Hitoshi Yanagino, I was allowed to observe the event from the operation room.

The operation room next to the Main Hall at Osaka Tenmangu

Mr. Yanagino usually talks about the Land Procession (with additional pieces of information related to the history of the festival) for the onlookers on July 25th, but this year he modified his talk to explain the ritual, especially for the 4,000 members of the live audience who were for the first time in attendance. The first stage is *shûbatsu*-the purification of the ritual space and of all those in attendance, a gesture that is common to all Shinto rituals. The next stage, however, is performed only once a year: the head priest receives a key from the "key keeper" and opens the doors to the sanctum where the divine spirits dwell, thus welcoming them into this world. Since there are no entertaining processions, nor fireworks display to amuse the deities this year, their spirits are not transferred into the *mikoshi*, being merely invited to join the ceremony. While this action is performed, the other priests emit a continuous, low "oh" sound called *keihitsu*-an inarticulate warning that a god, the emperor, or a very high-ranking person is passing by.

Tenjin Matsuri on July 25, 2020 (photo courtesy of Osaka Tenmangu)

Once the kami are assumed present, nine types of offerings (*shinsen*), including rice, sake, seafood, wild herbs and mushrooms, fruit, and fish are presented to the visiting gods, followed by the *norito*, the sacred prayer words chanted by the high priest. After that, four *miko* perform the sacred dance *kagura*, and the ritual ends with the symbolic offering of a *tamagushi*[19] first by the head priest, and then by the attending members as representatives of their community. The addition to the ritual this year, before the solemn closing of the altar doors and withdrawal of the officiants, is the fact that the virtual audience is invited to formally greet the kami by performing the bowing/clapping gesture that had already been explained in a previous video. The 2020 pandemic took the summer entertainment (drums, bells, dances, extravagant parades, and fireworks) away from the community, but the Osaka Tenmangu opened a symbolic gate to the sacred for all those willing to enter it, thus offering, at a ritual level, more than had been taken away.

3. Community and the Summer of Restraint

William J. Goode (1951: 222-23) considers that religion "must be seen as a form of social acting out, not merely as a set of philosophical reflections about another world. It is something in which people believe, to be sure, but this belief is acted out in social contexts." His approach seems to be a perfect fit for the Tenma community (and I shall not address here the stereotype that the Japanese have no religion), where the cancellation of a community event with deep religious implication has made the participants more aware than even of its connection with the sacred. Osaka Tenmangu offered for sale the Tenjin Matsuri *goshuin* (shrine seals), which this year depicted the two *mikoshi* and the great drum, but the most coveted were the special amulets-prayers for protection against epidemics- available only in a limited number.

Goshuin (shrine seals)

[19] An object presented to the kami by a priest or worshiper, composed of a sprig of evergreen *sakaki* to which paper streamers (*shide*), or paper mulberry fibers (*yū*) have been attached. Numerous theories have been advanced to explain the origin of the *tamagushi*; and the most common holds that the t*amagushi* was originally a *yorishiro* (an object in which the *kami* reside), a physical object expressing the indwelling spirit of a *kami*. (Encyclopedia of Shinto- http://k-amc.kokugakuin.ac.jp/DM/dbSearchList.do?class_name=col_eos&search_condition_type=1&db_search_condition_type=0&View=0&focus_type=0&startNo=1&searchFreeword=tamagushi&searchRangeType=0; accessed on July 29, 2020).

Protective amulets (photo courtesy of Mr. Yoshiki Miyamoto)

One of my informants proudly told me that "They are definitely more potent than Amabie[20]." I asked him whether this was because Tenjin was a powerful *kami*, while Amabie was just a *yokai* (folklore monsters who, although belonging to the realm of the supernatural, as seen as a step below the *kami*, the original transcendent beings of primordial times), but he did not agree. Instead, he said "*Yokai* and *kami* are not that different, but there is something powerful about our Tenjin-san." In other words, the amulets were not potent because of their connection with a superior supernatural creature, but due to the relationship of said creature with the community.

For the people who organize at least half of their year around Tenjin Matsuri, the "summer of restraint" was not easy to endure, and they coped in different ways. Most of my research so far has been centered around Ôtori Kô, the keepers of the oldest *mikoshi* in use. Its leader, Mr. Yoshiki Miyamoto, was part of the committee who made the decision to cancel the events in 2020 (on April 3), and on April 4 he called for an extraordinary meeting of the Kô members, to make the official announcement. While most of them expressed visible emotion and regret, Mr. Nobuya Matsumoto, one of the leaders of the group, stated that he was actually happy that such a rare event should take place during his lifetime. However, Mr. Matsumoto, a lifetime participant in Tenjin Matsuri, whose own father used to be the leader of Ôtori Kô, may have been only partially honest when making such a statement, since he was also one of those who arranged to be away from Osaka for the duration of the festival.

[20] "Amabie is a yokai that is said to have emerged from the sea in Higo province (modern-day Kumamoto Prefecture) in 1846. According to a "surimono" (a printed material that practically doubled as a newspaper and a talisman) kept at Kyoto University Library, Amabie said: "There will be a good harvest for the next six years, but in exchange, there will also be epidemics. So, draw a picture of me and show it to people." (Dr. Masanobu Kagawa from the Hyogo Prefectural Museum of History, quoted by Asahi Shimbun, June 13, 2020) http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/13416948 (accessed on July 29, 2020).

On a regular year, starting in April, Ôtori Kô, the group which is most involved and most active both in the matsuri organization and daily community life, has meetings related to Tenjin Matsuri almost weekly, and more often than that in July. However, in 2020 they had just one semi-formal event, on April 18, when they received special permission to gather and move the *kodomo mikoshi* (the *mikoshi* for children) from the storage room at the shrine to the newly opened community center. The *kodomo mikoshi* is not regarded as a sacred object as no divine spirit is assumed as present there, that is why it is usually put on display at the Imperial Hotel in Osaka on the days preceding the festival, and carried by children around the neighborhood on July 24th and 25th (in the morning only).

This year, Ôtori Kô had an event for members and their families on July 24th, and a formal gathering to watch the live transmission on July 25th. It is worth mentioning here that all those in attendance on both days wore masks, and had their temperature taken (and carefully recorded) upon arrival-new rituals and ritual objects to go with the changes implemented in the year of the pandemic. As I stated in my 2019 study, being a member of the Ôtori Kô is definitely not easy, especially during the festival, due to the combination of increased responsibility, summer heat, and hard labor, but membership in the group is not a mere pastime, it is a passion and a vocation. Through their work for the Ôtori Kô, its members strive to create a better community for their families, establish lifelong friendships, and, for two days, allow outsiders to enjoy the wondrous world of Tenjin Matsuri. A 2017 study focused on the Tenma community discusses almost exclusively the involvement of the Ôtori Kô in issues related to Osaka Tenmangu, Tenjin Matsuri, and daily social life (Benno & Shitamura). That is why, despite the undeniable presence of personal emotion, they had to act as models for the community, promoting individual restraint, while at the same time upholding the ideal that Tenjin-san will fulfill his role of protecting the community from the epidemic.

4. Conclusions

One of the things Tenjin Matsuri is most known for outside the community is the impressive display of fireworks that can be admired during the River Procession. What is less known about these fireworks, *hônô hanabi*, is that they represent offerings for the deities, the enjoyment of the humans present there being altogether secondary. The same can be said about all the other forms of entertainment on the two days of the festival, the drum, the Lion Dance, the Dragon Dance, the Umbrella Dance-they are all performed first and foremost for the benefit of the gods, to appease their anger (which causes natural catastrophes and epidemics) and make them well-disposed towards the humans. And this is where the conflict appeared (at a symbolic level, of course): if the epidemic prevents us from honoring the gods who protect us from epidemics, how are we, the humankind, going to survive it? The response came in a way that is characteristic to the practical Osaka people: the conduct guidelines imposed by humans shall be followed, yet offerings will be made, and modern technology will be used to make ritual protection available to all. The hour-long firework display was replaced by a modest, two-minute one offered by a private company from Osaka (not advertised, so that people would not gather for that purpose), but the message was clear: Tenjin Matsuri "will be back."

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METONYMY AND SOCIAL MARGINS: CENSORSHIP AND THE MEANING OF HANSEN'S DISEASE IN "THE FARCE"

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Abstract: *In recent years Hōjō Tamio (1914-1937) has been receiving renewed critical attention as an author who popularized writing by people suffering from Hansen's disease that came to be known as "leprosy literature" or "Hansen's disease literature." This paper explores his depiction of a sufferer of Hansen's disease and social Others in his final novella, "Dōke Shibai," [The Farce] published posthumously in 1938 in both Chūō Kōron [The Central Review] and a collection of his works. Specifically, this paper looks at censorship in this piece to interrogate the way Hōjō created metonymic meaning between groups of social Others in order to critique those who perform alterity while turning their backs on those who are stigmatized by it. This paper provides new ways to engage with Hōjō's work and the social critique he embeds within it.*

Keywords: *Hansen's disease literature, modern Japanese literature, Hōjō Tamio, censorship, proletarian literature*

1. Introduction

Since his death in December of 1937, Hōjō Tamio (real name Shichijō Teruji, 1914-1937) has been considered a minor literary figure in Japan. This is despite his publication in major literary and popular journals during the late 1930s under the auspices of Kawabata Yasunari (1899-1972), his mentor and Japan's first Nobel laureate for literature. After he was diagnosed with Hansen's disease at the age of nineteen, he spent the remainder of his short life in Zensei Hospital (today Zenshō-en), a hospital for the treatment of Hansen's disease located in the suburbs of Tokyo.

While Hansen's disease has a long history in Japan, it was not the subject of extensive medical or legal attention until the Meiji period, beginning in 1868. At the time, the illness was incurable and care was palliative. The first national measure, in 1907 divided Japan into five regional districts, with each district obligated to establish a Hansen's disease hospital for the treatment of patients within their prefectures. Soon after district institutions opened in 1909, some doctors and groups of patients began to promote various activities to assuage patients' spirits, such as gardening, baseball, or pottery. Two early activities promoted

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were literature and religion, used as spiritual or emotional treatment to help residents come to terms with their illness and quarantine. While representatives of various faiths ran religious groups, patients themselves and hospital officials encouraged literary circles. Each hospital had its own magazine, or *kikanshi*, published by patients under the supervision of hospital staff; the oldest extant magazine is from Zenshō-en, the Tokyo Hospital's *Yamazakura* (Mountain Cherry Blossoms), which began publication in 1919. Initially readers were limited to those affiliated with Hansen's disease care or relief work in Japan or small, local groups of literati. At the same time, such publications gave patients a forum within the hospital to define their own experiences.

By the time Hōjō arrived at Zensei Hospital in 1934, a literary community was already established. Soon after his institutionalization, Hōjō began contributing to *Yamazakura* and the children's publication, *Yobukotori*. While he remained somewhat aloof from coterie activities within the institution, he was an active writer and his everyday surroundings were a constant reminder of his own illness and an inescapable portent of his future as the disease worsened. It is therefore no surprise that Hōjō's work should take Hansen's disease as its theme. Indeed, with the 1936 publication of his most famous novella "Life's First Night," Hōjō Tamio gained renown in Tokyo's literary circles as the reluctant so-called "father" of what was declared to be a new genre of literature, "leprosy literature."[2]

This was writing by patients about their illness and quarantine experience under Japanese legislation targeting people suffering from Hansen's disease. With the support of his writing by Kawabata Yasunari and after the success of his second novella, "Life's First Night," the idea of a genre of "leprosy literature" solidified around Hōjō and his writing. Yet, as Hōjō himself wrote in an unfinished essay, "I don't believe there is such a thing as leprosy literature, but if there were such a genre, by no means is that what I want to write. It goes without saying this is not what I have written up to this point, and likewise, I doubt I will write it hereafter. People can call what we write whatever they like, be it leprosy literature, or sanatoria literature, or something else. I simply want to write about humanity. Leprosy is nothing more than one example of writing about humanity."[3]

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[2] For more on the distinction between "leprosy literature" (today considered pejorative) and "Hansen's disease literature," see Tanaka, Kathryn, "Chapter 10: Literature as Social Activism and Reconciliation: Survivors' Writing and the Meaning of Hansen's Disease in Japan after 1950," in eds. Irina Holca and Carmen Săpunaru Tămaș, *Forms of the Body in Contemporary Japanese Society, Literature, and Fiction*, Lexington, 2020: 175-196.

[3] Hōjō Tamio Zenshū 2: 138-139. Also quoted in Hōjō Tamio, translated and with an introduction by Kathryn M. Tanaka, ""Life's First Night" and the Treatment of Hansen's Disease in Japan," *The Asia-Pacific Journal*, Vol. 13, Issue 3, No. 3, January 19, 2015. Available online: https://apjjf.org/2015/13/4/Hojo-Tamio/4256.html.

Literary criticism of his fiction has focused on Hansen's disease as a topic, and critics generally understand his literature as an exploration of the dichotomy of sickness and health. Illness and the quarantine experience are unmistakably a fundamental theme in Hōjō's work, but to understand the experience of a diagnosis of Hansen's disease in Japan exclusively within the paradigm of sickness and health is to ignore the layered use of illness that a closer reading of Hōjō's final work of fiction reveals. The critical potential embodied in the depiction of the Hansen's disease sufferer in this work becomes clear when Hōjō's fiction is considered in conjunction with the surrounding medical, historical, and cultural milieu, as well as in terms of literary production. In his final work, he aligns the figure of the sufferer of Hansen's disease with other marginalized social groups as a counter censorship strategy.

This paper traces the censorship of Hōjō Tamio's posthumously published novella, "The Farce" (*Dōke Shibai*) through a careful examination of the text in conjunction with a consideration of censorship and the depiction of Hansen's disease. I argue that in this novella, the figure of the Hansen's disease sufferer, Tsuji, is connected metonymically to other marginal social groups, specifically Koreans, prostitutes, and socialists. By bringing these groups into a novella that is ostensibly about living with Hansen's disease, Hōjō uses the voice of the protagonist Tsuji to radically critique the farcical performances of alterity by people who live in society, while connecting the figures who are truly forced into the margins of society with a purer state of humanity. In doing so, Hōjō interrogates the ways in which minorities are othered and oppressed in Japanese society.

2. Censorship and the Production of Literature

The influence of censorship on the production of Hōjō's texts has not been adequately considered. Many critics note that censorship at Zensei Hospital impacted Hōjō's work, but few move beyond mere commentary to consider the effect of censorship on the production of the text itself. Yet, as scholars such as Jonathan Abel, Kōno Kensuke, and Maki Yoshiyuki have recently demonstrated, censorship was an inescapable reality at that time, not only on the level of the sanatorium, but also nationally, and it significantly impacted how texts were written and published.[4] Counter-censorship strategies are embedded in the texts themselves, both visibly and invisibly.

[4] Jonathan E. Abel, *Redacted: The Archives of Censorship in Transwar Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012); Kōno Kensuke, Ken'etsu to bungaku-1920 nendai no kōbō [Censorship and Literature: A struggle of the 1920s], (Tokyo: Kawade shobō shinsha, 2009) and Maki Yoshiyuki, *Fuseji no bunkashi-Ken'etsu, bungaku, shuppan*, [A Cultural History of Concealment: Censorship, literature, publishing], Tokyo: Shinwa-sha, 2014.

Hōjō was acutely aware of censorship and its impact on his work; his biographers describe his efforts to avoid the censorship process in the leprosarium, and his diary is scattered with references to how not only his literary works, but also his personal letters faced censorship.[5] The system of censorship in the hospitals was pervasive, with the post office on the hospital grounds opening and inspecting each piece of mail that went through it. This meant that for writers like Hōjō, their works of literature would have been censored before they were mailed out of the institution and then again by government censors. Yet, beyond noting in passing that the censorship system existed, scholars of Hōjō's work have given its effect on his writing little attention, in part because few of his published works carried visible marks of censorship, *fuseji*. More attention has been given to the impact Kawabata Yasunari had on his work; Arai Yuki notes that most famously, Kawabata altered the title of Hōjō's work "Life's First Night."[6]

Fuseji, or redaction marks which took the shape of ・,× or ○ in the place of controversial words or passages, could impair but could also add meaning to the text, as Jonathan Abel notes: "*Fuseji* were controversial: they could sometimes successfully negotiate censorship and enable the publication of otherwise potentially objectionable material, but often readers could fill in precisely what had supposedly been removed by the Xs."[7]

Hōjō's work rarely bore any trace of these *fuseji*, with the few exceptions being his posthumously published diaries and his novella "The Farce." How, then, did Hōjō view censorship and how did he "write around it?" His diary and some of his correspondence clearly gives voice to his dislike of the censorship system in the hospital. The first reference comes in his 1936 diary, in an entry that was ironically censored, either by the censorship staff at Zenshō-en, the editor of the volumes Kawabata Yasunari, or the publishers of Hōjō Tamio's 1938 *Collected Works*, Sōgen-sha. In the next passages, I follow the censorship pattern used in

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[5] See, for example, Takayama, Fumihiko, *Hibana: Hōjō Tamio no shōgai* [The Spark: Hōjō Tamio's Life] (Tokyo: Kadokawa bunko, 1999), 23-5 for examples of how Hōjō used friends and visitors to sneak manuscripts out of the institution to avoid hospital censorship. In addition, during December 2010, I had residents at Tokyo's Zenshō hospital relate to me stories about the ways in which they avoided censorship of their mail and insured the receipt of their packages from home. Apparently, some neighbors living by the hospital were willing to accept mail exchanged between patients and their families for monetary or other considerations. For example, I was told during an interview with a subject who wishes to remain anonymous that in particular during the Second World War when supplies were scarce, when packages arrived from patients' families, the patients would sometimes share the contents with the family receiving the mail for them.

[6] Arai Yuki. *Kakuri no bungaku: Hansen-byō ryōyōjo no jiko hyōgen-shi* [Literature of Quarantine: A History of Self-Expression in Hansen's Disease Sanatoria]. Tokyo: Shoshi arusu, 2011, 137.

[7] Abel, Jonathan, *Redacted*, 4.

the text itself. One ・is used to indicate the erasure of one character in the original Japanese. In the censored entry, Hōjō writes:

> I turned a manuscript in to Censorship today. Any way I think of it, censorship is maddening. Whenever I see ・・・・・・・・・・・・・・・, my chest ・・・・・・・・・・・・・・・・・・・・・・・・・・ and I feel ・・・・・・・・・・・. He's by nature a cute kid, so I can't hate him, but ・・・・・・・・・ so that when I see him, I feel ・・・・・・・・・・. To censor our manuscripts, he ・・・・・・・・・・・・・・・・・・ to make them satisfied. Knowing he's the censor ・・・・・・ that I feel this ・・・・・・・・・・・・・・・・・・・・・・・・・・・ may be a man like that. Depressing as it is, I don't feel anger or hate.[8]

In this entry and again in an unpublished letter to Uchida Mamoru, a doctor who promoted patient writing under the pen name Uchida Morito, Hōjō wrote in a similar vein about the censorship system in the hospital:

> About censorship, if we don't really talk it over together, in the end I do not think we can reach a mutually satisfactory conclusion. Of course, if I say that I am unhappy with the censorship of letters, I do not mean that censorship ought to be completely done away with. In this type of hospital, censorship is necessary, and I sufficiently understand the director's maintenance of the system, but the problem is how it is followed. At present, the conditions are problematic.[9]

Here, we can see that while he acknowledges the system may be necessary to the directors of the institutions, he still argues that implementation of the system leaves much to be desired, a thread we can trace through his other diary entries.

Finally, Hōjō expressed his frustration with the censorship system as he completed the first draft of "The Farce" in two diary entries from April of 1937. As is the case with the 1936 diary, this diary too bears *fuseji* and traces of censorship on the text itself. Unlike the 1936 diary, however, the original 1937 diary is housed in the National Hansen's Disease Museum in Tokyo. Yamashita Michisuke (1929-2014), the librarian and archivist, and literary scholar Arai Yuki published a restored version of the 1937 diary in 2004. This translation, therefore,

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[8] Hōjō Tamio, *Hōjō Tamio zenshū* (HTZ) (Collected Works of Hōjō Tamio), volumes 1 and 2. Kawabata Yasunari and Kawabata Kaori, eds. 2nd edition. Tokyo: Sōgen-sha, 1996, 281. This translation is excerpted from the diary entry for 4 September 1936. In my translations, unless otherwise indicated I refer to this edition of Hōjō's *Collected Works*, first published in 1996, that contains his letters, which were not published in the 1938 edition of his *Collected Works*. At times, however, I will also consult the 1938 *Collected Works* and magazine editions of his pieces to point out the differences in censorship.

[9] Hōjō Tamio to Uchida Morito, 8 February 1937, *Uchida Morito bunko* (Uchida Morito Archives), Kumamoto Prefectural Library. This letter was not included in Hōjō's *Collected Works*.

follows the restored version with underlining to denote the deleted portions in the *Collected Works* where *fuseji* were used:

> April 2
> I agonize when I write a draft, thinking of censorship; when I write a letter, I have to worry about whether or not it arrives at its destination; if my work appears in a magazine, I have to worry about buying the magazine.
> Dammit, dammit.
> I want to write my work with feelings of relaxation, peace, freedom, without obstacles. I want to live my life. But on top of all this, inevitably the pain of illness oppresses me.
>
> April 3
> "The Farce" is 86 pages. I feel like it isn't really a novella (*shōsetsu*). But there's nothing that says it has to be a novella.
> There is no answer from Sōgen-sha or Kawabata-san. I doubt whether they got my letters. This thought makes me get angry and stop working. I want to curse the office. The fact that I have to show this manuscript to those asses Mutō, Nagai, and Hayashi! They treat a work I've thrown my whole self into like something vulgar. They arbitrarily draw red lines and whatnot and return it. What's worse, this is a group whose minds are so inferior, who wouldn't even know the "lit" in literature. Ah, these days of humiliation.[10]

In these passages, Hōjō's dissatisfaction with the censorship system is clear. His unhappiness at having his works examined by people he considered to be unable to appreciate literature is one issue, but the impact the censorship had on his writing is another. From these passages, we can assume that self-censorship likely impacted his work.

3. Hansen's Disease and Stigma

"The Farce" explores the creation of a social Other, as defined through illness and through the political system in particular, and articulates the consequences of social alienation on an individual. A social Other is defined by their inability to live within the social norms of a given society; these norms are established and perpetuated by dominant social groups and the power structures they create. Through normative discourse, individuals that do not conform to social norms are marginalized, and the normal is reinforced. Social Others such as leftists, prostitutes, or Koreans were defined by governmental normative discourse as Other; similarly, the concept of health is accepted as normal, and disease, or the pathological, is a deviation from this standard. The

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[10] HTZ 2, 306-307. Also Hōjō Tamio, *Hōjō Tamio nikki Shōwa 12-Hiiragi ni kakomarete* (Diary of Hōjō Tamio, 1937: Surrounded by Holly), ed. Yamashita Michisuke and Arai Yuki. Self-published, 2004, 49-50. Stored in the National Hansen's Disease Museum Archives, Tokyo.

different normative notions that proscribe the acceptance of, for example, the prostitute and the Hansen's disease patient into society also gives rise to gradations in the categorization of otherness, with the Hansen's disease patient furthest removed from the normal. A person diagnosed with Hansen's disease was unable, rather than unwilling, to conform to social norms, and because their alterity was located within and visible upon their physical body, there was in theory little possibility of re-assimilation into normal society.

Hansen's disease functions to create a deeply stigmatized Other, when more dangerous illnesses do not, in part because of the measures the government formulated in an attempt to control the disease. While recent work by Hirokawa Waka has demonstrated that there were multiple possibilities for treatment and so-called "total quarantine" was in fact unevenly applied and never absolute, the 1931 law on paper required the institutionalization of any person diagnosed with the illness.[11]

Tuberculosis and syphilis patients did not face the same potential restriction of freedom, despite the fact that these diseases disseminated more rapidly than leprosy, and were also an acknowledged threat to public health. Susan Burns and Fujino Yutaka both argue that leprosy was distinguished from other diseases and subject to stringent treatment policies in part because of the visibility of leprosy patients in Japan, and the effect of this on the nation's international image:

> Adding to the concern of the Meiji government for leprosy in particular was the outcry raised by foreign missionaries and residents in Japan at the plight of Japan's leprosy sufferers, which led Japan's official and civil elite to fear that Japan was at risk of being characterized as a "backward" country, since leprosy was then widely held to be common in what were viewed as the "primitive" societies of the non-West and rare in the modern West.[12]

> In the modern nation state of Japan, the recognition that hygiene = civilization, and healthy population=national power, caused the introduction and rapid dissemination of western medical and hygienic policies, and that process produced the logic of patient exclusion [from society]. Patients were made a symbol of anti-civilization, and were regarded as the principal cause of the deterioration of national power.[13]

[11] Hirokawa Waka, Hirokawa Waka. *Kindai Nihon no Hansen-byō mondai to chiiki shakai* [Modern Japan's Problem of Hansen's Disease and Local Communities], Osaka: Osaka daigaku shuppan-kai, 2010, and "A Colony or a Sanatorium? A Comparative History of Segregation Politics of Hansen's Disease in Modern Japan," in: David G. Wittner and Philip C. Brown, eds., *Science, Technology, and Medicine in the Modern Japanese Empire*, London and New York: Routledge, 2016: 117-129.

[12] Burns, 2004, 194-195.

[13] Fujino, 2001, 52. See also Burns, Susan, *Kingdom of the Sick: A History of Leprosy and Japan*, Honolulu, University of Hawai'i Press, 2019.

The body of the Hansen's disease patient was thus seen as enemy to the national mission, and the popularization of the idea that the containment of these threatening bodies in hospitals was necessary made the figure of the Hansen's disease sufferer the subject of government health policies and invested the figure of the sufferer with the potential to reinforce or critique the health policies to which they were subject. Indeed, the figure of the sufferer is deployed in multiple ways in the genre of "leprosy literature" and popular fiction at the time as a whole, with some authors using the figure of the sufferer to write in support of government policies and others using the sufferer as a way to highlight social fears.

4. Reading "The Farce"

In "The Farce," Hōjō articulates popular fears that circulated about Hansen's disease in 1930s Japan, and uses the idea of the sufferer and hospital life to critique how an Other is stigmatized within Japanese society and with what stakes. In my analysis, I will use two versions of Hōjō's text, both published in April 1938, and both bearing visible marks of the censorship process through the use of *fuseji* in the text.[14] The most complete version of the story appeared in the first of two volumes of the *Collected Works of Hōjō Tamio* (*Hōjō Tamio zenshū*, hereafter *HTZ*). The story also appeared in *The Central Review* (*Chūō Kōron*, hereafter *CK*), one of Japan's most popular monthly magazines. In *The Central Review* edition of the story, some passages that had been published without impairment in the collection of Hōjō's work were covered by *fuseji*. It seems clear that the more rigorous censorship in *The Central Review* occurred because it was a national magazine with a large circulation, and government censors would likely be more vigilant in their review of its contents. However, the collected works of Hōjō would most likely appeal only to academics and devoted fans, a fairly limited audience. Indeed, because the book and the magazine appeared concurrently in April 1938, the historical conditions and the censorship policies surrounding their publication were the same. The increased application of *fuseji* in *The Central Review*, therefore, indicates that the medium and target audience of the publication affected the degree of censorship in the work. The divergent application of *fuseji* in the two

[14] I will also refer to a more recent edition of Hōjō's *Collected Works*, first published in 1996, that contains his letters, which were not published in 1938; I will specify the date only when referring to this edition. In passages that I quote from the story, I underline phrases that were replaced with black dots in *The Central Review*, but appeared unimpaired in *Collected Works*. In the cases where certain expressions were deleted from both editions, I use similar black dots in my translation, with the exception that I cut the number of dots used in the *Collected Works* (where two dots appear to have been substituted for a single character) in half for the sake of brevity.

texts provides a valuable analytical tool: a comparison of the texts from the *Collected Works* and the *Central Review* indicates material the state found dangerous or subversive, and they also suggest some strategies Hōjō used in his attempt conceptualize "leprosy" as metonymy for different marginalized social groups and their plights.

Depicting the meeting of a Hansen's disease patient formerly active in the leftist movement and his teacher who has since undergone ideological conversion (*tenkō*), Hōjō Tamio's "The Farce" deploys the figures of the Hansen's disease patient Tsuji, his former teacher Yamada and Yamada's wife Mitsuko, to explore what it meant to be social Others.[15] Mitsuko accepts social order and aligns herself with dominant social trends; her husband, Yamada is situated uneasily on the border between dominant culture and alterity. Although no longer constrained his position as Other, Yamada's past as deviant prevents his complete assimilation into society. Tsuji is a former student of Yamada's, and has resided in Zenshō-en since his diagnosis with Hansen's disease several years before the story begins. While Yamada has moved closer to society since their last meeting, Tsuji has been completely alienated from society.

The story opens with Mitsuko's reflections upon the slow, but hopeful progress of the couple's re-integration into society. Her life was one of deprivation while Yamada was imprisoned for being a leftist leader, but it is some time since he has been released; and she has learned how to type and works for a German company. On the day the novella opens, Yamada receives a letter from a man named Tsuji Issaku that Mitsuko opens and reads. The letter asks Yamada to meet the writer at the station. Mitsuko waits up but Yamada does not return home until after midnight, and when he does get home, he dramatically shifts the tone of the story by announcing he has killed a man.

The story then shifts backwards in time to follow Yamada and the events of his evening. He does not want to go home because he and his wife fight constantly, so instead he decides to walk around the city. Walking through Tokyo Station, he notices a Korean mother with two children, and these figures catch his attention, redirecting the flow of his thoughts into his inability to be reaccepted into society because of his past activism in the socialist movement, his time in jail, and his relationship with Tsuji Issaku as he leaves the station and takes a taxi to Ōjima.

He stops the cab and begins walking again, thinking of Tsuji, before hailing another taxi and requesting to be taken to the brothel district.

[15] Hōjō wrote the story in part as a response to Shimaki Kensaku's 1934 short story "Rai" (Leprosy), which tells the story of two communist activists in prison, one struggling with tuberculosis and a desire to recant his beliefs, and the other a sufferer from Hansen's Disease who remains committed to his political ideals. Hōjō criticized Shimaki for the shallowness of this work.

After getting out of the cab, Yamada again begins aimlessly walking. A prostitute initiates a conversation by stealing his hat, but Yamada refuses to come up and retrieve it. He walks off without his hat and hails a third cab; after telling the driver to take him to Yokohama, he is about to fall asleep in the vehicle when a bump jolts him awake. The driver has hit a man and killed him. Yamada gets out of the car and stands in the crowd that has gathered around the dead man beneath the cab. No one particularly notices him, so he leaves and walks aimlessly for several blocks before arriving at the train station. He sees himself reflected in the train window, and again recalling his association with Tsuji. During the course of these recollections, we learn Tsuji visited Yamada in prison to announce he had been diagnosed with Hansen's disease.

There is another temporal shift to the day Yamada is meeting with his former student, Tsuji. The two have not met since the day Tsuji visited Yamada in jail, and when they meet at the train station, Tsuji has changed so drastically that Yamada no longer recognizes him. They go to a teahouse where Yamada struggles to make small talk; Tsuji informs Yamada his is on an annual vacation out of the institution, permissible because his case is non-infectious. Yamada asks questions about the hospital and the disease, and Tsuji replies with a description of how society reviles him, how he is different, and how he is no longer considered a part of society. A Hansen's disease patient is contaminated, unclean; while he lives, his flesh is rotting. He has renounced socialism because he is no longer a part of society, and he is useless. Yamada counters that he has converted, and life has been very difficult for him, as well. Tsuji returns that Yamada is simply living a farce, performing alterity because when confronted with a position on the social margins, he could not face it and recanted his beliefs. The men talk back and forth, both with an earnest desire to make the other understand, but both ultimately unsuccessful and ambivalent.

They finally part on the train platform, when Yamada boards a train to go home. Looking out of the window as the train pulls away, he sees the train Tsuji will take roaring into the station, and he sees Tsuji falling onto the train tracks. At the next station, he leaps off the train, intending to go back, but as soon as he is off the train, he thinks about how Tsuji's corpse is contaminated, and does not want to involve himself in the disposal of the remains. Instead, he returns home, thinking about Tsuji's words and behavior. He forces a quarrel with Mitsuko and asks her if she would like to separate, feeling all the while as though Tsuji were watching the two of them. He provokes and insults Mitsuko, and the story ends with Yamada wanting to cry after he choked Mitsuko until she began to lose consciousness.

The critical insistence that this story be understood in terms of marginalized social categories and the imagined "norm,", and that Tsuji should be understood as othered because of his illness in opposition to the physical health of both Yamada and Mitsuko, is complicated by several factors. Tsuji is diametrically opposed to Mitsuko; the healthy, female body is countered by the ailing male body, and her struggle to achieve social integration is mirrored by his permanent alienation from the society. Yamada's position, however, is not as clear as many critics represent, and instead of understanding the character as aligned with Mitsuko as a healthy citizen striving for normalcy, the former socialist leader is better understood as located between the positions of Mitsuko and Tsuji, with an alterity of his own making by his refusal to first commit wholeheartedly to the socialist movement and then his inability to reintegrate into society after he goes through the act of *tenkō*, or recanting his socialist beliefs. In that sense, the figure of Yamada highlights the way binaries of "norm" and Other are to a certain extent an artificial, social construct that creates systems of discrimination and exclusion.

The respective social identity of these three characters is inscribed into their body. Sandra Bordo, building on Foucault, has described the body as a cultural text, wherein cultural and social norms are physically inscribed upon an individual, so that as these norms change, bodies are also transformed.[16] Mitsuko and Yamada, as physically healthy, are not physically described; however, Tsuji's lived bodily experience is altered by Hansen's disease, a disease that has the potential to be extremely disfiguring, and thus we may expect that his changed social status is inscribed upon his features. Indeed, through Yamada's gaze, Tsuji's physical appearance is twice described in the novella, first when Tsuji comes to visit Yamada in jail, and later when they meet at the station. The narration through Yamada's gaze emphasizes the fact that Tsuji's status as a marginalized figure carries with it the expectation of severe physical transformation.

Predictably, the disease has altered Tsuji's appearance; his pale skin, thin body, and disheveled appearance indicate an ailing body. Yamada, when he was imprisoned for his socialist activities, recognized that Tsuji was deviant because of illness, although he initially assumes it is tuberculosis. At the same time Tsuji's body reveals his status as social Other, however, it also indicates that perhaps he is not as different from mainstream society as the his diagnosis suggests; he looks healthy, although certainly thin and unkempt, and he is allowed to leave the institution for short visits because of his non-infectious status. Indeed, in this, is also an implicit questioning of the construction of social Other;

[16] McLaren, 95-96.

in his work, Hōjō exposes the ways in which the institution does not contain social others and they remain a part of society as a whole.[17]

While Mitsuko is depicted as physically healthy and a representative of bourgeois society, Yamada's position as one who has created his own alterity is more complicated. Yamada is not physically ill, because by renouncing his communist beliefs, he has erased the underlying causes of his social alienation. However, his ambivalent position vis-à-vis society is embodied through a manifestation of a different kind of illness, as Yamada himself asserts in his conversation with Tsuji:

> "Really, I'm not in a situation that much different from someone in a leprosarium. That is, my flesh doesn't rot, <u>but my mind rots</u>, no, <u>my mind is made to rot</u>. You act like you're upset that I can't understand the feelings people have in your hospital, but don't you think that I also have feelings that you can't quite understand? If you say I think this because my mind has rotted and weakened the strength of my consciousness, then there's nothing I can say. But at the very least, in a certain sense, my intention is to live honestly. (HTZ 1, 319; CK 87-88)

Yamada is defending his position as deviant on spiritual rather than physical grounds; this is necessary because physically he is indistinguishable from mainstream society. Ultimately, through his insistence to Tsuji that their positions are similar, Yamada resists integration into the dominant society. Yamada's claims of spiritual rotting reinforce the ambivalence of his position, and because he cannot be characterized as a "normal" member of society, Mitsuko's role of the embodiment of dominant society is confirmed, and normality is represented in her.

Coupled with her identification of herself with dominant societal norms, Mitsuko also associates the period of Yamada's activity in the social movement-that is, their period of living outside of cultural norms-with suffering and hardship. She reflects on her husband's role in forcing her to become an Other through association: "Remembering her period of suffering-the three years when Yamada was in prison, and what [she] called [his] unemployed existence after that-she reflected woefully on the hardships of the existence she had been twisted into" (*HTZ 1*, 262, *CK* 50). Mitsuko strives wholeheartedly to erase their former position, and restore their social standing as members of the bourgeoisie; she is determined not to let her lifestyle slip back into the margins:

> While her husband was in prison, society in general lent support to Mitsuko's ideals, and these ideals supported her mentally. However, as

[17] For more on Hōjō and the porous boundaries of the hospital, see Tanaka 2012 and 2016.

society was swept up in change, her ideals were swept with it. Indeed, reflecting now, she had had absolutely no ideals. She had come to realize that what moved her was only the flow of society and her love for her husband. But reflections such as these hardly mattered. Her first priority now was to improve their lifestyle by even the smallest bit. No matter what happened, they could not lose this way of life, and for that reason Mitsuko endured indignities that were difficult to tolerate. (*HTZ 1*, 263-264, *CK* 51)

The beginning of the story focuses on Mitsuko's desire and determination to improve her material life with Yamada, and to overcome the obstacles she faces-such as the unhappiness of her marriage, and the fact that her husband is still struggling to regain acceptance in society. Mitsuko's efforts to improve her standing in society are made absolutely explicit: she works for a German company, she is secretly studying French, and she comforts herself with the thought that she and Yamada will be able to buy their own home the following year. The letter her husband receives in the beginning of the story is threatening to her, because Yamada's position in society is precariously established, and a misstep could again cause social alienation.

While Mitsuko wholeheartedly identifies herself with mainstream society and does all she can to erase the traces of their aberrant past, as a *tenkō-sha* her husband struggles both within himself and in society to understand his place. He is no longer in the margins, having rejected socialism, but his former socialist activities cling to him and prevent his acceptance into the dominant social whole. The ambivalence Yamada feels, and his inability to align himself with either normalcy or deviancy links him to both Mitsuko and Tsuji, while simultaneously rendering him unable to sincerely communicate with either polarity-resulting in the performance of a farce, a play, to continually reinforce his ambivalent position and his suffering to himself.

Hōjō demonstrates Yamada's failure to reintegrate into society through his interactions with his wife and his coworkers. Yamada works as an employee at his uncle's company, where he had been leading a labor dispute at the time of his arrest. He joins the entity he had attacked before, but he is known there as a "socialist leader," and is not fully accepted by his coworkers, as we learn in a scene where employees are discussing the company's annual flower-viewing party:

As he stood, shouts rang up around him, and Yamada heard the swell of female workers clapping their hands and their shouts. When they quieted down, he was called over, and the manager asked him if he'd like to go cherry blossom viewing. He answered with an acceptance, and had barely begun to ask, "Where…," when a murmur arose from among the women, as if they were surprised by something.

"Even the leftist militant…", he caught these muttered words at the end of the exchange. He turned around without thinking, and saw Sayama

> from the circuit department mixing with the women, laughing with a smirk. In that moment, his energy drained.
>
> Then the manager solemnly spoke up, "Sayama, I order you to do accounts the day of the cherry blossom party." At this, everyone burst into laughter.
>
> And so, the matter was settled, but Yamada's feelings remained perturbed. He knew that even now Sayama made insinuations about him and whispered things to the factory girls. (*HTZ 1*, 281, *CK* 63)

Thus, he still bears the mark of his otherness despite all of his (and Mitsuko's) attempts to erase it and his position is made a joke of in public, despite the public support of his manager. In Yamada's case, as Tsuji later informs him, he remains on the margins in part due to the stigma of his former life, but also due to his inability to completely accept his identity as a recanted leftist.

Mitsuko has no sympathy for Yamada's situation; she is doggedly working on her own to regain a bourgeois lifestyle, devoted to erasing all traces of their former lives, overcoming any remaining stigma they face, and Yamada's ambivalence infuriates her. She cannot understand the ambivalence Yamada feels over his renunciation of his socialist beliefs, and she exacerbates his feelings through her zealous endeavors to impel him into the normal. Mitsuko secures Yamada's employment, for example, by tearfully pleading with Yamada until he agrees to talk to his uncle. Indeed, Mitsuko serves as a foil off which Yamada performs his victimization. When the story follows Mitsuko, the reader learns of the way she was rejected by her family and her former friends due to her association with Yamada. Through her, the reality of stigma against leftists is clarified; but the figure of Mitsuko also shows us the way a person marginalized for their political beliefs can be to some extent reintegrated into society after recantation.

Yamada is hesitant to appear before his uncle and the other workers as a *tenkō-sha*, because to do so is to admit that both his deviant beliefs and his subsequent *tenkō* are performative choices that he made, rather than firmly held ideologically motivated positions. Mitsuko instigates this step toward social normalcy, but she does so without understanding the challenge to his identity Yamada faces; a petition for work in this way is an admission that he was truly wrong in his socialist beliefs. His reluctance to identify himself with society, coupled with his inability to truly bear what it means to really be marginal is what drives Yamada's performance of ambivalence.

The gap between Mitsuko and Yamada created by their divergent social positions, and their complete inability to communicate, is exemplified in the final paragraph of the story. After arriving home late, and instigating a quarrel with Mitsuko, Yamada becomes increasingly offensive and violent, and with the specter of Tsuji driving his performance, he begins to choke Mitsuko. Only after she begins to pass out does he loosen his powerful hold on her neck:

> At that moment Yamada suddenly remembered Tsuji's cold smile, and from his chest a burning feeling shot through to his open hand. Mitsuko was holding onto him while she sobbed. Yamada suddenly stood up and, tightly wrapping his arms around her neck, pulled her up. Mitsuko kicked her legs while straining her body. Yamada, with a feeling of mingled anger and love, increased the pressure of his arms wrapped around her neck, while he continued to violently hold her… Tears no longer fell from her eyes. Her face stiffened with fear. Mitsuko went wild, and tried to wrench free from the man's arms choking her neck, but Yamada's arms were like strong straw rope. Soon, she slackened as she started to lose power.
>
> Yamada released his arms with a start, as if he had been shocked with electricity.
>
> "Mitsuko, Mitsuko," he shouted, shaking her shoulders. For an instant, Mitsuko stared lazily at Yamada with an abstracted expression on her face, but then, as if she'd been shot, she scrambled away from him across the room. Burying her face in the futon, and without making any noise, she began to cry. While looking at his wife, Yamada thought, I can't explain to her how I feel now; to satisfy her now is impossible. He felt darkness within him, and he also wanted to try to cry. Without saying anything, he drew Mitsuko to him.
>
> "Go to sleep," he said in a whisper, pulling the futon over his head, as well. He felt as if he was going to cry. The thought floated into his mind, if I don't cry now, I won't be able to cry for the rest of my life, and he felt as though he were waiting for the waves of sadness to peak. (*HTZ 1*, 343-344; *CK*, 103)

Yamada understands that his relationship with Mitsuko, strained since his release from prison, cannot be fixed unless a shifting of social positions occurs. He attacks her as representative of the bourgeois ideals he as yet refuses to completely accept. However, the final sentence in the story hints that Yamada has finally identified his social position: as he waits for the sadness to peak, and the tears to come, he commits himself to his borderline existence. The performances driving of Yamada's tears in this passage is recognized by Tsuji.

Tsuji recognizes that Yamada has intentionally, if subconsciously, contributed to the creation of his own ambiguous social position. He abruptly informs Yamada of this during their conversation at the teahouse, a dialogue that comprises the bulk of the text.[18] After listening to Yamada describe his condition as one of continuous hardship, Tsuji declares that the imagined oppression in his position is simply an attempt to assuage his own ego:

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[18] Unless otherwise specified, all quotations spoken by Yamada and Tsuji are taken from that conversation.

"That's right. A play. You're putting on a play. Didn't you want to put on a play, and make yourself feel good? People perform in plays with very serious feelings. You get excited, you sob, and while the tears flow, you're putting on a play. That's not a lie, you yourself aren't even aware of it, when you put on a play to hide your true feelings. When you can't escape them, you purposefully wallow in performed feelings, and you end up believing that those feelings are your real feelings. A simple person will at that point get all mixed up. But you, but you, aren't you doing it, knowing yourself it's your own play? Because how can there be someone like you, a man with so much self-consciousness crammed into your head, who isn't at least aware that it's his own play? I was perfectly convinced of that from the way you talk. I understand why you have to put on that play, see. Even I understand those things. Aren't you a guy with <u>social consciousness</u>? You said before, <u>the consciousness of participating in the progression of history</u>. But suddenly <u>it's dangerous to participate directly</u>. So, you find the words, <u>it's a situation where nothing can be done about it</u>, and with those words you <u>sacrifice your precious consciousness</u>. That way it's more serious, as a play. But you use <u>the words, it's a situation that nothing can be done</u> to protect yourself, for example, there is no danger to you even if you run over somebody in a car and kill them. Will your throat be cut, or will someone else's throat be cut? Everyone tries to get some else's throat. You don't truly care if history doesn't progress even a little bit. Just, just as long as you yourself are in left peace it doesn't matter." (*HTZ 1*, 324-326; *CK* 91-92)

Tsuji accuses Yamada of social performance because of his inability to face the social costs and marginalization that would result from a true dedication to leftist ideology. After Yamada protests that this is not so, Tsuji asserts that Yamada has never lost his status as a social being, and that it was the terrible loneliness of being completely marginalized that Yamada felt in prison that caused him to renounce his former ideologies and turn again to mainstream society outside of the prison. Thus, it was the isolation from society (that Tsuji lives everyday) that caused Yamada to renounce his beliefs:

"That's just as you say. No, it's probably just as you say. But, in short, that's your self-defense. Isn't that evidence that you are putting on a play? No, I won't say it's just a play, tonight I'll say anything, I'll tell you everything. I want to open the lid and clear the fetid odors. Get this, before you began with this play, weren't you already · · · · · · · · · · · · ·, why · ? More than that · <u>while waiting for</u> · . In my eyes, · is reflected. No matter what kind of · , <u>for example</u> · , there must be, there's that argument as well. But it's no more than an argument. It's self-deception. What you saw while you <u>were in prison</u> was truly fate. You were an individual at the hands of fate.

> Are you going to say that that isn't part of your own true feelings? No, I won't let you say it. Didn't you say it yourself earlier? You, yourself, at that time, <u>until that point you had been social, y</u>ou who<u> stood on the foundation we call society</u>, <u>you were cut off from society, and the foundation shook and crumbled</u>, and you became aware that you were absolutely, completely alone. No, you didn't become aware of it, it's deeper than that, more fundamental, it's physical, felt directly through your entire body. You felt it, but at that instant you immediately turned your face outward. That's because it's brutal. It's because in actuality, it is brutal to be conscious of loneliness. You turned outward. Your play began at that moment. That's why now you say things like you're alone, that you're suffering, those are lies. If there is something you suffer from, it's because you're aware of your own play. Well, that's luxury. Because you had a position from which you could look outward. That's a way out. In your case, you had a way out. But in my case, I don't have a way out. Really, just as the characters read,[19] I don't have a way out. Like a tunnel, it's pitch-black, long, so long, so that no matter how far you go it is never-ending. That's the way it is. It's worse than a tunnel. Until death, until you die there is no way out. In this pitch-blackness, you simply cry and scream." (*HTZ 1*, 326-327; *CK* 92-93)

Tsuji points out that because Yamada's deviance was defined solely on the basis of his ideological alliance, Yamada never completely lost his status as a social being. He was always capable of living within societal norms, and when the isolation from society overwhelmed him, he chose to reject socialism. Through his description of Yamada's circumstances, Tsuji describes his own situation, as well. Yamada's solitude, true alterity, like Tsuji's Hansen's disease, cuts deeper than the level of consciousness; it is embedded in the flesh, spreading until it is felt "through your entire body." Tsuji's description of Yamada's experience locates the cause of physical suffering in social isolation, and in this, of course Tsuji is describing his own experience together with Yamada's. However, their experiences of isolation diverge because Yamada has the option of returning to society at the sacrifice of his beliefs. In contrast, as Tsuji makes clear, he was forcibly expelled from society; Tsuji has never recanted his socialist beliefs, he notes, but his beliefs rejected him as he was no longer a member of society. He has been removed from society, and so his socialist beliefs mean nothing. His deviance is beyond the possibility of assimilation into society.

In order for a complaint about life in the isolation of the leprosarium to carry the implication of a critique of the treatment of minorities in society, it was necessary for Hōjō to associate the medical institution with the political and social structures that created social Others specifically

[19] The Japanese word is "*nukemichi*;" *nuke* means "get out," or "pull out," and *michi* signifies a "road," or a "way."

within the story. He accomplishes this through a series of discreet questions Yamada asks Tsuji, as if he were making small talk:

> "Is the hospital a terrible place?"
>
> "Well," Tsuji said, and then, as if his mind were elsewhere, he added to himself, "I can't explain it. Anyway, it's beyond the concept of humanity held by most people."
>
> "No, not in that way, I meant in a kind of political way; how should I phrase it? In your life in the hospital, the relationship of the hospital governors and the patients, things like that..."
>
> "It's peaceful."
>
> "Peaceful, huh? But sometimes problems occur, and appear in the newspapers, don't they?"[20]
>
> At this, Tsuji laughed aloud as if he'd been amused, and took a gulp of sake.
>
> "It's boring, so those kinds of problems happen," he said simply, his head down and muttering as if he were talking to himself.
>
> "People in society think of hospitals as if they are horrible, as if it's not a place where humans live. It's a lie, that idea. Compared to society, the hospital is much better. At least humans live there. At the least, humans live there with a true human spirit. What is society, but lies, deception, and ugliness? The hospital also has foolishness and ugliness. But it's still much better than society. When we meet folks from society, they are always full of curiosity and won't take their eyes off us as they want to ask us questions. What do they want to ask about the hospital for? Maybe it's the same psychology as looking at something frightening. They anticipate that the hospital is terrible and want to know if it's true, or rather, they want it to be true. What stupidity. If you want to see something truly horrifying, society should take a hard look at itself. At the very least, society should be ashamed when compared to the leprosarium." *(HTZ 1*, 307-308, *CK* 80)

Yamada's language specifically invites Tsuji to create a parallel between society and the leprosarium. He asks Tsuji first, if the hospital is a terrible place (*Byōin wa hidoi tokoro kai*), and then, after Tsuji cannot answer, specifies that he meant this in a political way (*seiji-teki na imi*). He is asking about the relationship between people who govern or rule, literally (*shihai-sha*) rather than directors or managers, and the patients. This language is revealing, because *shihai-sha* is used primarily

[20] In the late 1930s, there were several incidents of unruly behavior on the part of residents that were reported in the newspapers around this time. The most famous of these was the Nagashima Incident (Nagashima jiken) of 1936, wherein residents went on strike for better living conditions. Throughout the 1930s, however, newspapers featured occasional reports of violence in the institutions, or more often, escape attempts. For one example of newspaper coverage of riots in the institutions, on January 28, 1936, the *Tokyo Nichinichi Shinbun* ran an article entitled "Residents of Zensei Hospital Riot: Anger at the Closing of the Rice-Cleaning Mill" [Zensei byōin no shūyōsha abaru-seimaijo no heisa wo ikidōri] that detailed the way in which 150 residents stormed the offices with taiko drums and empty oil cans in protest of the closing of the rice mill and the loss of resident employment this would entail.

to refer to those ruling in government or those with sovereignty. To apply the term to directors of a leprosarium is to compare their position with that of the government officials controlling the nation, the bureaucrats who map the boundaries of society.

Tsuji, in his answer to Yamada, makes the comparison between the leprosarium and society, declaring that the leprosarium is by far the better place. By privileging the leprosarium as superior to society, Tsuji asserts that any problems within the leprosarium must also be reproduced in society, because society is inferior to the leprosarium. Through this assertion, Tsuji makes it possible for criticisms of the structure of the leprosarium-that is, policies of isolation and social othering-to be applied, on a larger scale, as a criticism of governmental treatment of social minorities. Tsuji asserts the hospital is preferable to society, and he describes men from mainstream society, their eyes shining with curiosity, asking him about the hospital. The implied belief these men cherish, that Hansen's disease is a terrible disease, and so the leprosarium must be a terrible place, hints at the depiction of the disease in public discourse that was used to justify the lifetime system of isolation.[21] Tsuji discreetly points out that by believing the place is terrible before they ask him, the men simply want confirmation of their preconceived notions, and are not interested in the truth. They want to make the leprosarium a terrible place, because that would reflect on the horror of the disease, and justify the government discourse of isolation and the treatment of Hansen's disease sufferers as social Others.

5. Metonymy and Counter-Censorship Strategies

Through Yamada's linkage of Tsuji to political and social creation of marginalization and the system of isolation, Hōjō establishes the connections that make possible the metonymic voice of the Hansen's disease sufferer. It is Yamada's experience of isolation that helps Tsuji establish social alienation as a primary cause of physical suffering rather than illness, and this function of isolation is an integral part of Hōjō's strategy to allow Tsuji to metonymically speak for the margins of Japanese society. It is also Yamada's position between deviant and normal that enables him to complete the chain that links Tsuji to different marginal figures.

Yamada has several encounters with people defined as social Others as he wanders around the city at night, and these meetings unite Tsuji with figures on the margins of society, specifically Koreans and prostitutes. During Yamada's nocturnal ramble, his internal dialogue is interrupted only a few times, and always by a marginal member of

[21] Burns, 2003, 109-111.

society. Yamada's internal soliloquies as he walks provide the reader with an introduction to Tsuji and his history with Yamada-how they met, their activities together, their meeting when Yamada was in jail-and all of this information is broken by Yamada's contact with a Korean mother and her children, and then a prostitute. This broken relay of information serves to connect Tsuji to the figures that intrude into Yamada's recollection of the past.

In *The Central Review*, an attempt is made to erase the marginalized identity of these characters by the use of *fuseji*. Although the inclusion of *fuseji* in "The Farce" was unintended and only made possible because of Hōjō's death, their use still allows readers to create new meaning form the text. In particular, the erasure of these social Others confirms the metonymic function of the Hansen's disease patient as a necessary counter-censorship strategy, enabling Hōjō to give voice to marginal figures who were systematically suppressed.

These encounters begin as Yamada, reluctant to go home, is wandering around in the crowds of Tokyo Station. Oblivious to the scores of people filling the station, when he enters a waiting room, his attention is immediately drawn to the following figures:

> It was terribly dim and dirty there. A Korean woman[22], dressed in ill-fitted white clothes that billowed around her body, giving her appearance of a wearing a paper bag, was standing with an undernourished child. The child was wearing a Japanese kimono, and as if she were afraid of something, she kept looking around at all the people. In the eyes of this child, would all these people look like enemies? Or would they look like friends? Mulling this over, he stared fixedly at the child for a moment. The mother pulled the child's hand, and whispered something in Korean. In her other hand was a second child. Was the father in the bathroom? Shopping? He was probably around somewhere.
>
> Yamada suddenly thought of Osaka Station. Whenever he had been there, it was infested with Koreans. He recalled, in quick succession, things like Korean women with packages piled in their arms, women with no place to sit, squatting on the ground, and children sucking on candy or a treat, with faces like paper and clothes like bags. Yellow gypsies-he mumbled, going out of the waiting room, and walking to the ticket counter.
>
> Yet, a chill ran through him, and he felt that he himself had become a gypsy. I wonder if people with a psychology like mine are called gypsies, a man who is not out of place but rather fits into both the second and third class waiting room? (*HTZ 1*, 284; *CK*, 65)

In the censored text, Hōjō's writing provides several hints that render his topic intelligible despite the *fuseji*. Osaka had at that time a

[22] In this translation, I underline phrases that were replaced with black dots in *The Central Review*, but appeared unimpaired in *Collected Works* Where certain expressions were deleted from both editions, I use black dots in my translation.

high number of Korean residents, and many Koreans would pass through Osaka as they moved around Japan.[23] During the Taishō period (1912-1926), driven by a worsening economy in colonial Korea, migration to Japan rose, and companies from Osaka offered great opportunities to Korean laborers, while the Tokyo 1923 earthquake and the murder of Korean residents in its aftermath made that city less attractive to migrants from the Korean peninsula[24]. Thus, by the time Hōjō wrote this piece, the high numbers of Koreans and their communities in Osaka would easily allow the station to be associated with Koreans. The reference to Osaka, together with the use of the term "infected," in Japanese *ujauja*, had the effect in imperial Japan of making the reference to Koreans fairly explicit. *Ujauja* refers to the animals or insects of the same kind, existing in huge groups in the same place at the same time, and it is commonly used to refer to a pest or insect infestation. The use of this term here reflects the poverty and marginalization of Koreans in Japan.

The importance of the Korean family to the text is clear in part simply because Yamada takes notice of them. The mother and her children have drawn Yamada out of himself, and when he withdraws back into himself, he thinks of Osaka Station, something in his own past he can relate to these figures. Ultimately, in his attempt to perform alterity, he attempts to identify himself with the Koreans, by calling them "yellow gypsies," and then thinking that spiritually perhaps he, too, might be a gypsy. There is a repetition here of Yamada's inability to have his status in society reflected in his physicality, and so he continually performs characteristics that differentiate him from society in his spirit rather than in his body.

Despite the correlation Yamada draws in his mind between the Korean family and himself, the mother and her children are more effectively linked to Tsuji. The social deviancy of the family is signaled in part by their appearance in this passage, recalling the way Tsuji's body reflected his alterity as well. Rather than illness, however, the Koreans embody a racial otherness, illustrated by their inability to conform to Japanese society. Although a slight, and ultimately failed, attempt at conformity is made in their Japanese-style clothing, the mother speaks in the Korean language, and the child is distinctly distrustful of his surroundings.

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[23] Sakhaee Kashani, Sarah, "Colonial migration to the 'Manchester of the Orient': The origins of the Korean community in Osaka, Japan, 1920–1945," in *Japan's Diversity Dilemmas: Ethnicity, Citizenship, and Education*, eds. Soo Im Lee, Stephen Murphy-Shigematsu, and Harumi Befu, 168-190. New York, Lincoln, Shanghai: iUniverse, 2006: 168-190.
[24] Ibid., 172.

As stated above, Tsuji is again associated with Koreans subtly at the end of the story, immediately after he has killed himself. Yamada sees Tsuji falling onto the opposite tracks as his train pulls away from the station, and so there is nothing he can do until the train reaches the next station:

> When the train stopped at the next station, Yamada dashed onto the platform. He would change trains and go back. However, the moment he got off, his desire to go back left him. It might be that Tsuji's skull was smashed, and his head and his body might have been severed in two by the train; Tsuji's blood and flesh scattered, and his brain had to be pulp. Thinking this, a wave of disgust washed over. And that flesh and that blood was infested with bacteria. The image of a rotted corpse flashed before Yamada. There could be no mistake about it; Tsuji was dead, so even if Yamada went back there was nothing to be done. He didn't want to be involved with the remains. The train Yamada had come on had shut its doors and departed. Stranded, Yamada stood absent-mindedly on the platform. (*HTZ 1*, 332-333, *CK* 96-97)

Again, the word "*ujauja*," or "infested," catches the reader's attention, and both usages of the term, as applied to humans or diseased human remains, are fairly unique. In reading this later passage, then, the use of the term "*ujauja*" immediately recalls the earlier scene, when Koreans, like the bacteria, infest public train stations, and through them, the nation. These subtle lingual clues reinforce Tsuji as metonymic representation for marginal figures in Japanese society. The parallels drawn between Tsuji's situation and the situation of Koreans, or other marginal groups, must be subtle in order to avoid government censorship-yet by the repetition of these textual signals, such as the use of the same term in both cases, or the continuous, seemingly monotonous introduction of memories of Tsuji in conjunction with marginalized social groups, those parallels are conveyed to the reader.

A few pages after Hōjō introduces the Korean mother and her children, he presents another marginalized member of society in a similar fashion. Again, Yamada is drawn out of his solitary reflections by the people around him as he walks in the city:

> He wove in between the people, peeking into the zoo-like cages while bothered by an idea that this was cruel. But he wasn't satisfied even with this. His feelings of ・・・・・・・・・・
>
> ・・・・・・・・・・・・・・・ had completely vanished.[25] He fell into a sullen silence, and while looking sideways into houses that glimmered with

[25] The underlined words were censored from *The Central Review* text, but appeared unimpaired in the *Collected Works*. The dots given here are identical to *fuseji* that appear in both texts. No restored version of "The Farce" is known to exist. Thus, the dots here and in subsequent passages represent the censored portions of both *The Central Review* and the *Collected Works*.

light, he walked on, turning mechanically at any number of corners. The voices of **women**[26] calling out made a terrible racket. He was simply swept up in the movement of the crowd, moving as those around him moved.

In one alley, someone suddenly grabbed the hem of his coat, and he was yanked back. Without thinking, he went in the direction he'd been pulled and was drawn under the eaves. At that moment, from a form half-hanging out of a Japanese-style room, a woman's arm reached down and yanked his hat off his head.

"Please c'mon up, hey, c'mon?" the woman said, her body writhing. He looked up with a melancholy face, and in a languid voice said simply, "Gimme my hat."

"But, really, please come up. I'm free tonight. Hey, c'mon, please… please."

Yamada had already lost his desire to get back his hat. It was too much trouble. He suddenly turned on heel and was reabsorbed into the crowd. (*HTZ 1,* 290; *CK* 68-69)

The Central Review again tried to erase every mention of a "woman" in this passage, which hints that the marginal figure of the prostitute and the sexual connotations of this interaction would be subject to state censorship. The language of the speaker, however, marks her as a female despite the fact that her sex is not specified in this passage. Additionally, her speech makes her occupation fairly obvious; she speaks with attempts to be coquettishly polite ("please come up") and somewhat indelicate begging ("hey, c'mon"). There is a further hint in the paragraph preceding Yamada's entrance to the alley, as well. In *The Central Review*, it explicitly states that women's voices were calling, implying prostitutes are trying to attract customers. Although Yamada makes several turns in his rambles, he is still clearly in the red-light district.

In contrast to this, *The Collected Works* deletes the first mention of women's voices, highlighted in bold text in the excerpt above, but provides Yamada's interaction with a single prostitute unimpaired. *The Central Review* includes this first mention of women, but censors Yamada's interaction with the prostitute. The early mention of women in *The Central Review* and the language of the speaker function together to make it clear to readers that Yamada is being propositioned by a prostitute. It may be that the reference to "women's" voices was inserted into *The Central Review* to provide additional hints so that the reader could piece together the story. However, the reasons behind deletions or additions cannot be definitively known

In his introduction of these marginal figures, Hōjō is carefully aligning different groups that have been marginalized in Japan because of government policies and social prejudice-the Koreans, the leftists, and

[26] The word women (*onna no*) is covered in *fuseji* in the *Collected Works*, but the text is restored in *The Central Review* version. I have used a bold font here to reflect passages that are censored in the *Collected Works* but appear in *The Central Review*. See page 256 of *Collected Works* and page 68 in *The Central Review*.

the prostitutes. Hōjō introduces these characters in unremarkable scenes that would not have warranted much censorial attention but for his specific introduction of marginalized bodies. Hōjō is careful to clearly portray their marginality, through textual hints as well as through his depictions of Yamada's reflections on the figures, and he also meticulously aligns Yamada's interactions with his recollections of Tsuji. In this way, before the reader is aware that Tsuji is a Hansen's disease sufferer, we are aware that he is somehow deviant.

The association of Tsuji and the prostitute as marginalized figure is reinforced by Tsuji himself as he describes the humiliation of his social alienation. During his meeting with Yamada, Tsuji struggles to explain what it is like to live in a leprosarium, and at last bursts out with the following explanation:

> "The five hundred patients in my hospital, what kind of shame, and in what humiliation do they live with? It's terrible shame, a humiliation! And yet they endure. When folks face leprosy silently, with their heads bowed, that is taken as evidence that the man is a fool. It's a horrible humiliation. The humiliation of a prostitute is nothing to it! And even now, that humiliation continues. Probably until death, until death, really think about these words, until we die, we suffer that humiliation. But what I'm saying doesn't get through to you. If you lived for three days among leprosy patients you might get it; you'd probably understand how you should fear it, the kind of world where courage runs cold. And they are enduring in silence! Humans living on the internal power of the human body itself, living off the dredges of the depths of human power. For humans, there is no other condition more pure, more beautiful than this! Lepers achieve this unconsciously." (*HTZ 1*, 308-309, *CK* 80-81)

We again see the comparison of Tsuji's situation as being similar to, but worse than that of the prostitute-like Koreans, another group living on the margins of society. Tsuji's reference to the prostitute recalls Yamada's earlier encounter, which had also been associated with Tsuji. These repeated associations establish the link between these diverse Others, and Tsuji represents the whole because he is the most extreme Other-with no hope of reclamation and re-assimilation into society. His association with these marginal figures reminds us that alterity is inscribed on the body in many ways-through profession, through illness, through race. Again, the language in this passage suggests that it is social isolation, rather than the illness itself, are the primary cause of Tsuji's suffering. It is the humiliation, rather than symptoms of his illness, that causes Tsuji's oppression, and the humiliation is born in the government constraints placed upon him because of his illness.

Although the passage begins and ends with specific mention of Hansen's disease patients, the humiliation that Tsuji speaks of is applicable to any group on the margins of society. Hōjō is ostensibly using Tsuji to describe the humiliation caused by leprosy, but the broader referent is hinted at through the use of the word "humiliation," or "abasement" (*kutsujoku*) which is more often used to describe the condition of a prostitute. While it is certainly equally applicable to a Hansen's disease patient, the pairing of "prostitute" and "humiliation" in the excerpt invites a broad interpretation. Indeed, the deletion of the word in *The Central Review* again confirms this interpretation of the text and Tsuji's metonymic role, and the unimpaired use of the word in other portions of *The Central Review* text is even more telling.

The glorification of the Hansen's disease sufferer and those who truly live on the margins as the only beings truly able to understand humanity that appears at the end of the quote is another way Hōjō subtly offers a critique of marginalization and social deviancy. Through Tsuji, Hōjō argues that patients have achieved a deeper humanity through their suffering. Although their physical bodies may not conform to societal norms, the Hansen's disease patients -and other marginal social groups-have achieved a spiritually superiority:

> "But I believe in humans. I believe in humanity. After entering the sanatorium, I first met humanity. No matter how oppressed humans are, no matter what kind of abasement they have heaped upon them, they will never lose heart. No, it's not that; it's that when they are plunged into the abyss, humans first attain human nature. Those bastards in society, all of them just twaddle about. They are good for nothing because they're allowed all kinds of freedoms and happiness. When you lose such things as happiness and freedom, all of it, then for the first time humans become humans. That washes away all the trivialities that cling to us. In spite of never having suffered, those fellows in society act like they've suffered. And in spite of never having been alone, they try to pretend that they've been lonely. It's stupid. Everyone is self-satisfied. That's why, when they come to the leprosarium, no matter how proud they look, their pretenses are stripped away. I've seen it happen over and over again. It's true. I got sick, but I'm not unhappy at all. It's because I believe in humans that I can go on living. How could I live if I didn't believe in humans? In the beginning, every night I dreamed of society. I yearned for society. But I don't have those dreams anymore..." (*HTZ 1*, 329; *CK*, 94).

Tsuji, as the metonymic voice, argues that the ability to survive under discrimination and social isolation endows social Others with a true humanity. And by recalling in the text references to Koreans and prostitutes, as Tsuji makes clear, for those whose alterity is inscribed on their body, there is no escape but death.

Just as Tsuji can function metonymically to represent the Other because of the extremity of his position vis-à-vis dominant society, he also violently demonstrates what the end result must be. Death is the only resolution when stigma and social othering create marginal subjects that are beyond hope of social integration. The only way for Tsuji to escape the combined oppression of the limitations of his illness and social othering is to be disembodied.

It is significant that his suicide is a public, violent act that renders his remains a part of the city itself. After failing in his efforts to communicate, Tsuji turns to the only option remaining: "dying is a move beyond communication yet also functions as... [a] communicative act."[27] Tsuji's disembodiment is the ultimate attempt to communicate with society; in the capital city, Tsuji takes his life at a central train station, a metaphorical circulatory system for the society that has othered him. The impact with the train ensures that Tsuji's "rotted corpse" has become part of the city's systems of circulation.

6. Conclusion

Hōjō Tamio's "The Farce" and its posthumous, simultaneous publication in *The Central Review* and his *Collected Works* provides a new and important window into the ways in which authors in 1930s Japan wrote around censorship systems and deployed counter-censorship strategies. By connecting figures of Koreans and prostitutes with the character of Tsuji, Hōjō is able to comment on the social effects of having alterity inalterably inscribed onto the body itself.

It also foregrounds the double layer of censorship present in works of Hansen's disease literature in the pre-1945 institutions, as the work faced hospital and then government censorship, and many of the works ultimately did not bear visible traces of censorship upon their final publication. At the same time, the layers of censorship rendered partially visible in the alternate versions of this text point to productive ways in which meaning is created despite censorship. "The Farce" connects the treatment of Hansen's disease sufferers to other social minorities in Japan, opening broad dialogues about oppression and alterity in interwar Japan. Despite its relative neglect by readers and scholars due to its perceived "incomplete" nature, the fact that the issues raised in this text are still fundamental social problems in Japan today makes this text even more important.

[27] Bronfen, 141

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PEASANT ART MOVEMENT IN HOKKAIDO IN THE 20TH CENTURY: TOKUGAWA YOSHICHIKA'S CONTRIBUTION

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Abstract: *The world has seen a rise in traditional handmade art (later generally referred to as peasant art; explained below) from the second half of the 19th century. Artisans and intellectuals worked on its revival and dissemination for a variety of reasons, and their efforts also reached Japan over the years. This study aims to introduce the beginnings of peasant art in Hokkaido, with a focus on the 19th head of the Tokugawa family, Tokugawa Yoshichika's contribution to its dissemination and examines the possible effect of his connections with the Ainu people and their culture. Tokugawa's efforts are often overlooked in the shadow of the art critic Yanagi Sōetsu's famous Mingei (Japanese folk craft) movement and the artist Yamamoto Kanae's peasant art movement. However, one may argue that Tokugawa not only preceded Yanagi and used a different approach than Yamamoto in his efforts, but also encouraged the economic and cultural growth of the area of Yakumo in Hokkaido in a unique way.*

Keywords: *Hokkaido, peasant art movement, Tokugawa Yoshichika, carved wooden bear, Ainu*

1. Introduction

According to the second edition of the largest Japanese language dictionary, *Nihon Kokugo Daijiten* (The Encyclopedic Dictionary of the Japanese Language), peasant art refers to a form of art that is made by peasants in their leisure time. It has a particularly old history. According to the Hungarian Ethnographic Encyclopedia[2], it is impossible to tell exactly when it first appeared; the only way for researchers to investigate it is to examine recent works that were made in the last 200-300 years.

One of the main reasons peasant art became popular in Europe is the Industrial Revolution in the 18-19th century. Nations already had their unique peasant art before the Industrial Revolution, but works made by peasants hardly attracted attention. The reason was that artists and intellectuals considered these as simple everyday items and tools and did not regard them as valuable fine or high art. However, with the Industrial Revolution came the mass-production of cheap commercial

[1] Osaka University.

[2] Published by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, the encyclopedia does not only include explanations and descriptions related to Hungary, but gives definitions for fundamental ethnological concepts.

goods of rather low quality and loss of traditional crafts. As a reaction to this, efforts were made to revive handicrafts and re-establish craftsmanship from the second half of the 19th century.

By the end of the 19th century, these efforts (today often referred to as peasant art movements) became adopted in many places around the world, their motives and goals often shaped according to each country's best interest. In some European countries, peasant art became closely associated with nationalism during the same period (Cumming and Kaplan 1991: 191); while, in some others, folk customs developed as tourist attractions, and souvenirs were made to lure tourists to the country (Ōishi 1994: 11-12, Tokugawa 1964: 160).

According to Nakanishi (2008), by the first half of the 20th century, the British Arts and Crafts Movement contributed to the spreading of such efforts in Japan as well. From 1926, the art critic, aesthete and philosopher Yanagi Sōetsu[3] started the *Mingei* (Japanese folk craft) movement. Yanagi is famous for emphasizing the beauty of folk crafts made by ordinary people, as opposed to higher forms of art created by well-known artists. Nonetheless, contrary to popular belief, he was not the first. As Ōishi (1994) points out, researchers tend to consider smaller movements as having derived from Yanagi's. However, the efforts of the Japanese Western-style *hanga* (woodblock printing) artist Yamamoto Kanae, or those of the 19th head of the Owari Tokugawa family[4], Tokugawa Yoshichika, preceded the *Mingei* movement.

In 1919, Yamamoto Kanae established a peasant art training school, *Nōminbijutsu renshūjo*, in Nagano Prefecture's Kangawa village (today the city of Ueda), where he started his peasant art movement. In short, his movement aimed at helping peasants spend wintertime in a useful way, since there was no major agricultural work to be done in winter. Improving farmers' lives was also an essential factor; however, being an artist himself, Kanae's primary purpose was to promote and disseminate fine art through educated instructors.

It was around the same time that Tokugawa Yoshichika started his peasant art movement in the southern part of Hokkaido, in a place called Yakumo. Nonetheless, according to Ōishi (1994), Tokugawa's activities have not garnered sufficient attention in research. Studies on peasant art movements in Japan still arguably focus on Yanagi Sōetsu's *Mingei* movement or Yamamoto Kanae's peasant art movement and tackle studies on Tokugawa's contribution to peasant art in a limited way,

[3] Also known as Yanagi Muneyoshi.

[4] The Owari Tokugawa family is originally a *daimyō* (warrior lord) family that was founded in the early Edo period (1603-1868). It used to be the most prominent of the three branch families of the Tokugawa clan from which a *shōgun* (military governor) could be chosen.

focusing on one especially famous souvenir and its history, the carved wooden bear. When Tokugawa is mentioned, his cultural exchange with the Ainu people of Hokkaido is almost completely overlooked. Unsurprisingly, information on this topic is also scarce in English.

This paper aims to introduce the beginning of peasant art movement in Hokkaido, with a focus on Tokugawa Yoshichika's efforts and contribution, while also considering how Ainu culture may have affected him and the area of Yakumo. Today, wooden bear carvings are closely associated with the culture of the Ainu people. However, it is most likely that Tokugawa's exchange with the Ainu, and his efforts regarding peasant art – being one of the earliest of such movements in Japan – had a strong impact on the development of woodcarvings, as well as of other handicrafts made in Hokkaido.

2. Tokugawa Yoshichika and the road leading to peasant art

Tokugawa Yoshichika is probably most famous for his political activities. However, he was also a hunter, a botanist, and a biologist, who, in the 1920s, was determined to introduce and disseminate peasant art in the area of Yakumo in Hokkaido. According to his autobiography, published in 1964[5], he was born in 1886, as the fifth son of Matsudaira Shungaku, the last feudal lord of Echizen Domain, and was adopted into the Owari branch of the Tokugawa family in 1908. In the same year, he became a *kōshaku* (marquis) and the 19th head of the family. He graduated as a botanist from Tokyo Imperial University in 1914 (Tokugawa 1964: 153).

In 1868, the Meiji Restoration put an end to the long-standing leadership of *shōgun*s (military governors)[6] and nominally returned control to the Japanese emperor. However, this also resulted in the change of the social system and the abolishment of political, social and economic privileges of the samurai class. As Harootunian (1960) states in his study, the military and artistic accomplishments of the samurai could not be overlooked even after the restoration, and the responsibility to establish a secure place in the new society for the declassed military caste lied with the new Meiji government. As he points out, an important

[5] Tokugawa published two autobiographies. The first, which contains information about certain episodes from his life, was requested by and published in *Nihon Keizai Shinbun* (Japan Economics Newspaper) in 1964 under the title *Watashi no rirekisho* (My Personal History). The second autobiography was published in book form, titled *Saigo no tonosama: Tokugawa Yoshichika jiden* (The Last Feudal Lord: an autobiography of Tokugawa Yoshichika), in 1973, in which he explains his life in detail. Here, the author of this paper is referring to the latter, because it contains more details about the history of the Tokugawa family.

[6] *Shōgun*s were traditionally appointed by the Japanese emperor, but, as the country evolved into a feudal society, military leadership also evolved into de-facto control of the country.

part of this rehabilitation program for the samurai was to give them new land (mainly in Hokkaido) which had not been under cultivation until then, and to help them relocate there, so they could start engaging in agricultural and industrial activities.

According to Tokugawa Yoshichika's autobiography, published in 1973, his grandfather (referring to Tokugawa Yoshikatsu, the 17th head of the family) received land in Hokkaido from the Meiji government to relocate[7] his former samurai vassals there, who had become unemployed and were struggling to make a living after the Meiji Restoration. This land was to be called Yakumo. Tokugawa Yoshikatsu distributed the land among his former retainers and established the Tokugawa Farm. Along with these retainers arrived tenant farmers and peasants to cultivate the land, thus initiating pioneering efforts (Tokugawa 1973: 86). The farm was later inherited by Tokugawa Yoshichika when he became the head of the family. Incidentally, although Yakumo is often referred to as *Yakumo mura* (Yakumo village), this term may be misleading as Yakumo's area was rather significant and included nearby villages as well – one of them, Yūrappu, will be discussed later.

Tokugawa Yoshichika resided in Tokyo and first visited Yakumo in 1909, returning there every year from 1918. As the current head of the Owari Tokugawa family that, at the time, was responsible for the development of the area of Yakumo in Hokkaido, it seems evident that the purpose of his yearly visit was to handle official duties. Nonetheless, as Miura (2012) explains, he was generally known as adventurous, and also as the "lord of bear hunting." Thus, we may infer another purpose of his travels. As Tokugawa himself states in his autobiography, *Watashi no rirekisho* (My Personal History, 1964), he became interested in bear hunting, especially Ainu bear hunting in Hokkaido, after having a conversation with some of his research colleagues. The conversation took place in the *Tokugawa Seibutsugaku Kenkyūjo* (Tokugawa Research Institute of Biology) that Tokugawa himself established to promote the study of biology and support its researchers (*Kagaku Asahi*, 1991).

Before his first hunt, he visited Yūrappu, an Ainu village located in Yakumo, where he asked for the Ainu's assistance since they were the traditional bear hunters in the area. Afterwards, Tokugawa climbed the mountain near Yūrappu to hunt for bears with the Ainu every winter, between 1918 and 1952, for a total of 34 years.

During his visits, he became knowledgeable about bears and had the opportunity to learn about the living conditions of peasants and the Ainu people of the area. As he states in his autobiography: "In March, we walked around in the snow on Mount Yūrappu with the Ainu to hunt for

[7] The Owari Tokugawa family originally ruled the area surrounding present day Nagoya.

bears. There, I could see how ordinary peasants led their lives, but their poverty startled me. I realized that it is not only the settlers' lives that I have to improve, but every peasant's as well."[8] (Tokugawa 1964: 158)

There are multiple reasons as to why these living conditions were so miserable. To mention a few, many of these peasants and farmers who arrived in Yakumo to cultivate the land were from the milder climates in Honshū, the largest main island of Japan. Unlike the Ainu, the settlers, new to the climate of Hokkaido, had to learn about the specificities of the land, suitable crops, and how to survive the cold winter (Ōishi 1994: 30).

Moreover, as agriculture had been the primary occupation for a long time in Japan, peasants and tenant farmers rarely felt the need to have side jobs to make a living during the winter season (Ōishi, 1994). Another reason that made living conditions hard was a drop in potato starch prices after the conclusion of the First World War. Yakumo starch had been a market-leading product of the area, but, after the war, price fluctuations completely disrupted the industry (Ōishi 1994: 20-21; Hara 2005: 19).

Peasants and farmers around Yakumo certainly needed assistance in improving their conditions, and Tokugawa had the intent to help them. Still, he needed an idea for a working side business that they could take up. The idea of introducing peasant art in Hokkaido as a solution occurred to him while being abroad. Between 1921 and 1922, Tokugawa traveled through Europe visiting many countries, one of them being Switzerland, where he first met the notion of peasant art. Switzerland was famous for its woodcarving at the time, and many souvenirs and carvings were made by Swiss peasants during the winter season to sell to visiting tourists. The city of Bern was especially well-known for its carved wooden bears – the animal was so common around there that it eventually became the symbol of the city.

Tokugawa's autobiographies and the Tokugawa Farm's diary[9] contain significant information about the development of peasant art in Hokkaido. As the former were written by Tokugawa Yoshichika himself, we are presented with facts and personal experiences from the Marquis' point of view; however, these autobiographies only explain certain aspects and activities of Tokugawa's life that he himself deemed worthy of mention. On the other hand, the Tokugawa Farm's diary describes

[8] "三月にはユウラップ嶽にアイヌをつれてくま狩りに雪の中を歩き回ったものだ。私はそこで、一般の農民の生活ぶりをまのあたりに見たが、その貧しさには驚かされた。私は移住民ばかりでなく、すべての農民の生活を向上させなければいけないと思った。".

[9] As it is problematic to obtain access to the diary, references are made to the relevant excerpts found in Ōishi (1994).

daily activities carried out on the farm in great detail, including Tokugawa's time spent there and his discussions and preparations to disseminate peasant art in the area. Thus, notes from the farm's diary must also be considered for the present study.

Based on the sources mentioned above, Tokugawa realized a great opportunity in making woodcarvings in Hokkaido. As he stated: "Because they make such great souvenirs, I thought it would be good to start woodcarving in Yakumo, Hokkaido, on the Tokugawa Farm,…"[10] (Tokugawa 1973: 85). Side businesses were uncommon in Japan and not feasible during the busy farming season; moreover, most of them, such as carp breeding and animal husbandry, required special skills. According to Ōishi (1994), based on what Tokugawa had seen in Switzerland, he decided to convince peasants in Yakumo to implement carving as a side business on the northernmost island during the slower winter season as he was confident that carving would prove to be successful: the resources were ample regardless of the weather conditions, and it did not require outstanding skills (Ōishi 1994: 21)[11].

As Tokugawa himself gives priority to carved wooden bears, known in Japan as *kibori no kuma*, over his other efforts regarding Hokkaido's peasant art and as they eventually became the most famous souvenirs of Yakumo, prior studies tend to focus on them. However, the above does not imply that Tokugawa deliberately decided on promoting carved wooden bears from the beginning. Notes from the Tokugawa Farm's diary point out that Tokugawa sent various carved items (such as small bowls, round trays, bear-shaped needle holders and pen holders, along with others) to Hokkaido from abroad as samples for inspiration, not exclusively bears[12] (Ōishi 1994: 12-13). The above means that he intended to promote the making of both household items and decorative ones.

3. Planning and opening the first Peasant Handicraft Exhibition

Tokugawa combined his idea to provide an opportunity for peasants and farmers to make a living during the winter with his wish to disseminate the concept of peasant art among people in an exhibition

[10] "土産物としてよいので、この木彫を北海道の八雲の徳川農場から始めればよいと思い、見本を何個か買って帰った。".

[11] "小作農、自作農を含め誰にでも「冬季ヲ始メ農閑ノ余暇ニ於テ安価ノ原料ト徒費ノ時間ヲ利用シ」できる新しい試みである、この農村美術工芸の成功に込められた期待は、まさに「農家恢復、農村復興策ノ第一歩ヲコヽニ発シタイト思ヒマス」と宣言するほどに強いものであったろう。".

[12] "侯爵ヨリ送ラレタル農民美術目録　徳川農場　一、丸盆　大小各一枚。二、葡萄葉盆　三枚。三、熊針刺　二個。四、小針　四個。五、熊　一個。六、角力熊　一個。七、鶏　一個。八、巻煙入　一個。九、ペン軸　二本。十〇、小物容器　二個。".

where people could display their creations and would also be able to sell them. He named it *Nōminbijutsu Kōgeihinpyōkai* (農村美術工芸品評会; hereinafter referred to as Peasant Handicraft Exhibition), opening the first one in 1924. It was not only an exhibition, however: Tokugawa made his standards clear and thus influenced the further exhibitions by granting prizes for the works he deemed the most outstanding.

To ensure the success of the exhibition, Tokugawa and his farm officers, who have been educated on the importance of peasant art by Tokugawa, had to familiarize people with the idea behind this kind of event, as this was a new concept in Japan where hardly anyone regarded items made by peasants as art. Consequently, peasants also failed to see how peasant art could become a reliable source of income. Based on the exhibition's brochure, the primary way he promoted the event was by offering the artists additional income and by emphasizing the aspect of "charity" to the visitors: he stated he was introducing peasant art to the people as a means to improve peasants' economic situation during the winter season. He also strove to create a fashionable trend: he wrote that he wished to help people to find a "new hobby" that they would enjoy for the rest of their lives[13] (Ōishi 1994: 18-19). In other words, Tokugawa emphasized both cultural and economic aspects that could help make the movement attractive to both supply and demand chains.

As for the submission rules, Tokugawa accepted not only woodcarvings but varied peasant art, such as embroidery and textile goods[14]. He also wanted to open the exhibition to provide an opportunity for all people, not just peasants in the area, to exhibit their work[15]. It should also be noted that he emphasized freedom of expression, and people were not limited to specific rules regarding the appearance of an item (Ōishi 1994: 25).

In passing, it is an interesting and still debated issue whether Tokugawa based a few of his ideas on the Japanese *hanga* artist Yamamoto Kanae's peasant art movement. The latter started promoting the concept of peasant art a few years earlier than Tokugawa, on the main island of Japan. Miura (2012) argues that there is no written proof that they knew of each other's movement at the beginning of the 1920s. However, it is worth comparing the ways they tried to introduce and

[13] "冬季ヲ始メ農閑ノ余暇ニ於テ安価ノ原料ト徒費ノ時間ヲ利用シ実用並ニ装飾的ノ手芸品ヲ作製シテ之ヲ販売シ併セテ自家用家具ノ設備ヲナスコトヲ得ルノハ一家ノ財政ト生活ヲ豊カニシ高尚ナル趣味ヲ涵養スル上ニ多大ノ効果アルコトヲ認ムルモノデアリマス。"

[14] "出品種類　竹細工品、杞柳細工品、木彫品、木細工品、自然木細工品、粘土細工品、塗術品、刺繍品、編物類、染色品、藁細工品、雑類。".

[15] "主催者側がただ単に見本になる農村美術工芸品を展示するだけではなく、八雲町に住む人々が職業の限定なく参加すること。".

disseminate the concept of peasant art. According to Ōishi (1994), Yamamoto organized an exhibition in Nagano Prefecture's Kangawa village in 1921 where he put Russian peasant crafts on display, but the event met with an indifferent reception as people could not see the value in items made by peasants or understand what cultural significance they carried. It is impossible to tell whether Tokugawa consciously tried to avoid such an indifferent reception, but he certainly placed a great emphasis on planning.

As Ōishi (1994) explains, preparations had to be halted temporarily towards the end of 1923 due to the Great Kantō earthquake. However, they continued in early 1924 when Tokugawa Farm officers set out to villages and towns belonging to Yakumo to ask for their participation in the first Peasant Handicraft Exhibition and to hand out the brochure to every household. Another crucial part of planning was to hold lectures and training courses (taught by skillful artisans from outside of Yakumo), where the people of the area could learn about the importance of side businesses in Hokkaido and the concept of peasant art and its role in people's lives. Quality was also emphasized. Therefore, one can conclude that these training courses served as opportunities for the people to learn how to make items of quality high enough to be displayed and sold – if the artist wished to do so and also reflected Tokugawa's own understanding of the ideal peasant art.

According to Ōishi (1994) and the notes of the Tokugawa Farm's diary, Tokugawa's original plan was to display about 300 items in the Tokugawa Farm Office. As he was not only the head of the Owari Tokugawa family but also a marquis, and thus a member of the House of Peers at the time, he was a rather influential person. Consequently, his efforts regarding the dissemination of peasant art and the planning of the exhibition quickly became the topic of conversation, and they were covered in inland newspaper articles as well[16]. The preparations also gathered the attention of mainland Japanese, let alone the interest of other communities in Hokkaido outside of Yakumo (Ōishi 1994: 48-49). To be able to convey his ideas to a broader audience, Tokugawa eventually decided not to limit the exhibition to works made in Yakumo, and accepted items sent from the rest of Japan, too. It is worth mentioning that, to represent people's interpretation of peasant art, he initially allowed all kinds of items to be displayed – including food, such as dried *daikon* (Japanese radish), gradually setting down the standards, possibly based on their popularity and acceptance.

[16] *Hakodate Mainichi Shinbun.* 1924. Nōson kōgeihinpyōkai atarashiki moyooshi [Peasant handicraft exhibition: a new attraction]. 9 February, and *Hokkaidō Taimusu.* 1924. Kumagari no tonosama ga nōson shinkō ni kenmei [The lord of bear hunting promotes agricultural communities with utmost effort]. 19 February.

Due to high interest, more than 1000 items were displayed in the first handicraft exhibition in 1924, a number that also meant that the event had to be moved to another venue due to the Tokugawa Farm Office's limitations in space. As Ōishi (1994) indicates, the three-day-long exhibition drew a large number of visitors. There were more than 1000 people on the first day, some visitors coming from distant regions. The event concluded with more than 2500 visitors on the third day after prizes were awarded. Information is scarce on the exact judging criteria; however, it is known that prominent artisans judged the works and awarded prizes for those that could serve as an exemplary model for future works of peasant art.

This Peasant Handicraft Exhibition was the first such event in Hokkaido, and also the first chance for people to sell their handmade work on large scale. It was also the place where the carved wooden bear, later the typical souvenir of the island, first appeared, made by a Japanese dairy farmer, Itō Masao. This work is currently displayed in the *Yakumochō Kiborikuma Shiryōkan* (Yakumo Town Carved Wooden Bears Museum). Tokugawa recognized Itō's talent and made him one of the lecturers in the training courses for future exhibitions. His specialty remained the making of carved wooden bears, for which he was rewarded later, raising the standard and the quality of the souvenir.

Thus, we can conclude that the first Peasant Handicraft Exhibition was financially beneficial and had unprecedented success, paving the way for organizing more such events in the following years of 1925 and 1926. These exhibitions had the same purpose as the first one and played a crucial role in further disseminating knowledge about peasant art. As Miura (2012) explains, the number of carved wooden bears increased yearly, and, during the third event, handicrafts with traditional Ainu patterns were also displayed, meaning that some aspects of the Ainu culture may have had begun to spread in the area. As one would expect, these following exhibitions were also covered in newspaper articles, being described as the centers of a peasant art movement in Hokkaido.

The impact of these events and their reception were deemed significant enough for the *Yakumo Nōsonbijutsu Kenkyūjo* (Yakumo Research Institute of Peasant Art), to be established in 1928. Its members were mainly woodcarvers specialized in carving bears, and other artisans with outstanding skills. This institute also helped in the promotion of peasant art, but its primary achievement was paving the way for carved wooden bears to become the iconic souvenir of Yakumo. They achieved this by organizing workshops and training courses on woodcarving, while also inviting and employing remarkable artisans as lecturers. Those who wished to exhibit their works or sell them had to pass a screening process by the institute. The Tokugawa Farm also helped enhance the realistic sense of the new carvings by keeping two bears in its premises for the carvers to learn about various postures.

It is also worth mentioning that, even though other areas and towns began to mass-produce items with machines, after the Second World War Yakumo insisted on keeping its tradition to produce artworks and souvenirs with traditional tools, thus keeping the focus on handwork.

As a result, Yakumo's iconic wooden bears and Hokkaido quickly became associated with each other. However, while not directly related to Tokugawa's work, it is important to discuss how this association gradually took a turn and resulted in connecting the wooden bears with the culture of the Ainu people.

The inspiration behind Ainu carved wooden bears divides researchers to this day. Some emphasize the spreading of the souvenir from Yakumo to another city in Hokkaido, called Asahikawa. As Miura (2012) explains, a Yakumo-based carver, Shibazaki Shigeyuki, wished to know whether his works were adequately realistic, but the area of Yakumo was populated enough by then for wild bears to not venture close. Instead, he visited the Ainu living in Asahikawa in 1927 to have four of his carvings inspected by them since they had to occasionally face bears. The works impressed the Ainu and they eventually convinced Shibazaki to leave the carvings behind, thus making them the models for the first bears made by the Asahikawa Ainu. Asahikawa was famous for its wild surroundings, and the thriving population of bears made their observation and thus depiction easier. In this area, the majority of the works came to be made by the Ainu; the first Ainu man to carve bears was Matsui Umetarō. Gradually, carved wooden bears and the Ainu people became associated with each other.

Others, such as Fitzhugh and Dubreuil (1999), emphasize that the bear plays a crucial role as an essential, highly revered animal god in the traditional belief system of the Ainu. One may conclude that as the bear god was especially important, and as the Ainu have always carved their household items and tools, these aspects of the Ainu culture may have merged and given birth to Ainu wooden bears. The bear and its role in the Ainu culture will be discussed in the following section of the paper.

Tokugawa had been determined to improve people's living conditions through peasant art in Yakumo, but as the 19th head of the Owari branch of the Tokugawa family, he later became occupied with social and political affairs. Seeing Yakumo's improvement and peasant art becoming a possible source of income, he allowed the Tokugawa Farm and artisans in Yakumo to take matters into their own hands;

however, his contribution in the dissemination of peasant art in Hokkaido and his motives should not be overlooked.

4. Tokugawa Yoshichika's relation to the Ainu people

As explained above, Tokugawa had an adventurous character and was fond of hunting bears in the company of local Ainu people. However, their relationship did not limit itself to these hunts. A variety of topics sparked Tokugawa's interest throughout his life: he wrote his graduation thesis on forestry[17], established the Tokugawa Institute of Biology (Tokugawa 1964: 153)[18] - and, according to Miura (2012: 101), he also held aspects of the Ainu culture in high regard, especially the Ainu bear ceremony[19]. Nonetheless, a comprehensive study of his relations to the Ainu is problematic as sources are fragmentary on the topic.

In the primary sources, such as his autobiographies, the following facts are clear.

1) When Tokugawa Yoshichika's grandfather, Yoshikatsu, dispatched his survey team for the first time to what was to become Yakumo, they reported forty households in the area, among which thirty belonged to the Ainu (Tokugawa 1973: 87).
2) Tokugawa vividly described Ainu bear hunting and his feelings during the hunt (Tokugawa 1964: 162-164). One example: "When the bear appears, your body tightens up. The real pleasure of bear hunting does not lie in catching the animal, but in the feeling of devoting great attention to shooting the game."[20] (Tokugawa 1964: 164).
3) He met the Anglican English missionary, John Batchelor, who spent more than 60 years of his life among the indigenous people of Hokkaido, and supported him in the publishing of his Ainu-English-Japanese dictionary (Tokugawa 1973: 110).

The first point above has no direct connection to Tokugawa Yoshichika, but clearly indicates that the Ainu people were already in the area when his grandfather, Yoshikatsu, arrived in Hokkaido. Therefore, their constant proximity may have brought Ainu culture closer to the Japanese settling down and living in Yakumo.

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[17] The work is titled *Kisoyama* (Mt. Kiso) and was written in 1911. It investigates the history of forest management of Kiso district in Nagano prefecture, where the Owari Tokugawa family originally resided.

[18] "大正三年九月、徳川生物学研究所を設立した。".

[19] "当時の義親は、八雲に来て熊狩りをすると、アイヌの人たちが熊を捕ったりした際の熊送りの儀式を大切にしていたようで、当時は徳川農場でやったり、ユーラップコタンでやったり、アイヌの人たちの儀式というものを大事にしていたようです。".

[20] "熊が現われたとなると、心はひきしまる。熊狩りのだいご味は、熊をとることよりも、全神経を集中して熊を撃つ、その時に感じるなにか—それである。".

Additionally, previous studies mention two further facts that serve as evidence of Tokugawa's interest in the Ainu.

1) At the first Peasant Handicraft Exhibition, Tokugawa displayed no less than five works made by his Ainu bear hunting guide named Ikotor (Ōishi 1994: 56).
2) At the handicraft exhibitions, he regarded objects with intricate Ainu designs highly (Miura 2012: 101).

Given the above, it is clear that Tokugawa deemed Ainu culture and handwork worthy of promotion.

Tokugawa's relationship with the Ainu started with bear hunting but developed over the years. As the English missionary John Batchelor describes in his most well-known book about the Ainu, titled *The Ainu and their folk-lore*, the indigenous people placed great importance on catching the bear cub, bringing it up in the village, and later sending its soul back to the divine world during the bear-sending ceremony.[21] Evidence of Tokugawa's interest in the Ainu culture is his participation in this ceremony. According to Miura (2012), Tokugawa first attended the event in Yūrappu but later decided to have it celebrated on the grounds of the Tokugawa Farm. From the above, we may say that over the years, certain aspects of the Ainu culture spread among the Japanese living in Yakumo.

In addition, Tokugawa's book on his travels to Java notes his attitude towards the public; he did not make differences based on social status, but "his view to people was always horizontal."[22] Thus, him recognizing Ainu culture appears reasonable.

Another indication of Tokugawa's interest in and promotion of Ainu culture is his wearing the indigenous people's attire. Numerous photos serve as evidence of the above. In a few of them, he can be seen not only participating in, but conducting the bear-sending ceremony. Him being the center of an essentially religious ceremony, despite coming from a different background, is demonstrative of his interest in the culture.

Among Tokugawa's Ainu acquaintances, there were Shiiku Toshizō (known as Toitarek in the Ainu language), the chief of Yūrappu who always accompanied Tokugawa in his hunts, and Ikotor, also from Yūrappu, who had five of his works displayed at the first Peasant

[21] Fitzhugh and Dubreuil (1999) verify that Batchelor's accounts were reliable; nevertheless, the source should be treated with caution due to his research methods and possible bias. While Batchelor is known as one of the first people who wrote extensively on the Ainu people and is often referred to by researchers to this day, he was an Anglican English missionary and his book dates back to the beginning of the 20th century.

[22] The phrasing is by Tokugawa Yoshichika's grandson, Tokugawa Yoshinobu, who wrote the foreword to the English translation of *Jagatara kikō* (Journeys to Java).

Handicraft Exhibition. However, there must have been numerous other connections based on how many years Tokugawa hunted in the area.

As evidence of how aspects of Ainu culture affected Japanese settlers, Miura (2012) especially emphasizes the third Peasant Handicraft Exhibition, held in 1926, as the first one, where a majority of items with intricate Ainu designs were made by Japanese people. This fact indicates that Ainu culture had successfully spread in the area, and, although the possibility of adopting it for financial reasons cannot be overlooked, people have become more accepting towards certain aspects of it.

Tokugawa's sympathy towards the Ainu at the beginning of the 20th century was uncommon, along with Japanese people borrowing design elements from the Ainu. From the beginning of the Meiji period in 1868, Japan took measures to assimilate the indigenous people into Japanese society. However, the Japanese refused to treat the Ainu on the same level as them, which resulted in discrimination. As a consequence, the Ainu language and culture gradually became prohibited and despised. Unfortunately, this affected Ainu art and design as well. According to Ikeda (2014), a lecture note[23] from the Tokyo Academy of Fine Arts clearly states that the peculiar culture of the Yamato people reaches back to the Suiko period[24]. On the other hand, the Ainu people, while they could have started to practice painting and carving, did not do so; accordingly, there is no sign of artistic development among them (Ikeda 2014: 192). However, as Fitzhugh and Dubreuil (1999) point out, nowadays it is known that gods played a pivotal role throughout an Ainu person's life, and depicting gods used to be taboo in their culture.

While primary sources are scarce, we can presume that Tokugawa placed importance on getting acquainted with and then normalizing the culture of the Ainu. It is not stated how much his relations to the indigenous people affected his ideas in the development of peasant art in Hokkaido. However, one may assume that he encouraged the cultural exchange of Yakumo's population, based on him holding bear-sending ceremonies on the premises of the Tokugawa Farm, or supporting the exhibition of items with Ainu design at the handicraft exhibitions. As the events were exceptionally popular and served as models for later exhibitions, not only peasant art but Ainu designs too have spread and became recognized in the area.

5. Conclusion

The modern concept of peasant art reaches back to the second half of the 19th century when the revival of handicrafts and the re-

[23] The note was published in 1922, but the lecture was held in 1890.
[24] 592-628, Empress Suiko's reign in the Asuka period.

establishment of craftsmanship gained importance as a reaction to the rapid industrialization in Europe. Efforts, albeit with different motives, eventually reached Japan as well, where they also inspired various peasant art movements. Tokugawa Yoshichika's introduction and development of peasant art in Hokkaido is often overlooked despite the fact that the 19th head of the Tokugawa family placed importance on the improvement of people's living conditions with the dissemination of peasant art - both as a source of income and as a hobby - while also successfully making it appealing to the buyers. His visit to Switzerland in 1921 and encounter with European peasant art inspired him to find a solution to improve Yakumo both economically and culturally. To combine these two points, he planned and opened exhibitions of peasant arts and crafts where people could exhibit and sell their works to visitors.

These events are famous for displaying the first wooden bear carvings of Yakumo, an item that later developed into the area's iconic souvenir. The exhibitions also served as an opportunity for visitors to get acquainted with the concept of peasant art and its potential as a hobby and a source of income. While the Yakumo wooden bear carvings may have been the most memorable works displayed, everyday tools and items with intricate Ainu designs were also exhibited - a fact that indicates Tokugawa's appreciation of various aspects of the Ainu culture.

His efforts to introduce and propagate peasant art in Hokkaido were among the earliest such attempts in Japan. While sources are limited on the topic - even Tokugawa's descriptions are fragmentary in his autobiography, given the above, one can argue that foreign influences (such as his visit to Europe) and exposure to Hokkaido's local culture helped Tokugawa to visualize the future of peasant art in Japan and to bring it to the masses via his exhibitions, his endeavors thus successfully promoting Hokkaido's development, both economically and culturally.

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