

# Three Themes and a Few Points of View : for Rewriting of Japanese Modern and Contemporary Cultural and Literary History

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## THREE THEMES AND A FEW POINTS OF VIEW —for Rewriting of Japanese Modern and Contemporary Cultural and Literary History

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I proceed to elaborate on the main three themes which are closely related to each other and have relevance to today's world situation. # 1. For internationalizing of cultural studies, a reevaluation of the 20th century Japanese cultural history from the standpoint of international relations, coupled with proper reflection on the hitherto neglected cultural problems associated with the invasion of Asia. # 2. The great bounds made by science and technology while bringing about change in ways of life and inspiring future dreams, are evoking fear and doubt as well. I find today's situations very similar to what it was in Japan in 1910's. In this age, the trend of philosophy and art toward vitalism whirled vigorously, in the so-called "Taishō-vitalism", which was greatly influenced by the patterns of thought prevalent in Europe at the turn of the century. For historical relativization of today's thought, it is necessary to examine "Taishō-vitalism" and its results. # 3. There is a need for the critical rewriting of literary history. Both terms "literature" and "literary history" have sprung up alongside with the development of state nationalism during the 19th century in Western Europe. The established Japan's literary history has never considered the concept of "bungaku" and "bungakushi". And within it, the ambiguous terms of "jun-bungaku (pure literature)" exemplified by "watakushi shōsetsu (autobiographical novel)", and "taishū-bungaku (mass literature)" are conventionally used unrelated to artistic valuation. They are not analytical concepts; they should be relativized as historical concepts. We are approaching a time for the reestimation of modern literature according to aesthetic values; a time to construct a new literary history centering on literary works themselves, especially on their ways of expression.

*Keywords:* THE STANDPOINT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, THE INVASION OF ASIA, "TAISHO-VITALISM", THE CRITICAL REWRITING OF LITERARY HISTORY, "BUNGAKU" (LITERATURE), "BUNGAKUSHI" (LITERARY HISTORY), "TAISHŪ-BUNGAKU (MASS LITERATURE)", "JUN-BUNGAKU (PURE LITERATURE)", "WATAKUSHI SHŌSETSU (AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL NOVEL)", AESTHETIC VALUES OF EXPRESSION.

### I. Three Themes for Revision of Contemporary Japanese Cultural History

I will immediately proceed to elaborate on the main themes which contemporary Japanese cultural history is facing nowadays.

# 1. A reevaluation of the 20th century Japanese cultural history from the standpoint of international relations, coupled with proper reflection on the hitherto

neglected cultural problems associated with the invasion of Asia. It will be essential to the maintenance and betterment of future international relations.

# 1.1 First of all, a detailed search for relevant materials on the invasion of Asia must be carried out. Due to situations arising from the Cold War, there is much material related to Japan's wartime invasion which has to be discovered and organized, material that would shed light on cultural exchange that took place as a result of the invasion.

There is a reluctance on the part of Japan to sort through past wrongs, as well as a seemingly opposite tendency to view matters in simple terms of perpetrators and victims. Both of these are misguided.

During the process of economic invasion and also during the war that followed, how was Japanese imperial ideology promulgated and the policy of assimilation adopted? To what extent and how effectively did internationalism, socialism, and liberalism resist? Objective appraisals as well as an evaluation of the response of those being invaded are needed.

# 1.2 Additionally, a reevaluation is vitally needed of the relations among (a) expansionist nationalism, (b) a pattern of thinking that might be called "Asia vs. the established world powers", (c) internationalism, and (d) ethnic/cultural relativism. Thus far, there has not even been heard a clear call for a reappraisal of relations among these four aspects. [\*1]

# 2. The rewriting of cultural and literary history based on modern criticism and a reevaluation of modes of thought concerning the relativization of modern value (s). This work is closely related to the appearance of today's problems of "life" and "popular culture". In order to appreciate the historical relativization of today's theory (ies) of "life" and "popular culture", it is necessary to grasp various aspects of what I call the "vitalism movement" of 1910's and the "urban mass culture" of 1920's.

# 2.1 Within Japanese philosophy and art, the trend towards vitalism whirled vigorously from the 1910's through the early '20's, or roughly the Taisho years, and is known as "Taisho vitalism". (While I am not one to insist on the use of the imperial dating system, the state and people of Japan make much ado about changing the name of the era upon the death of an emperor and although this custom was only established in Meiji, one cannot completely ignore the custom and still portray accurately the flow of thought in modern Japan.) The approach to this theme, of course, cannot but be an "internationalistic" one.

The great bounds made by science and technology while bringing about change in ways of life and inspiring future dreams, are evoking fear and doubt as well. I find today's situations very similar to what it was in Japan in 1910's, which was greatly influenced by the patterns of thought prevalent in Europe at the turn of the century.

This was an age of development for science and industry, an age when solutions to the problems of labor exploitation and environmental pollution were being debated, when doubt concerning mechanistic civilization and the doctrine of survival of the fittest was being expressed and when philosophy was shaken by theories of evolution and genetics. Following the failure of revolution in France in 1848, and with various forms of spiritualism swirling in the background, a kind of romanticism

fusing science and urban civilization, which might be called “neo-romanticism”, began to assert itself. This brought forth the evidence of the philosophical concept of “vitalism” whose central issue is neither modernism nor logicism, but life itself.

“Taishō vitalism” was influenced by concurrent trends of thought in Europe, and also incorporated a variety of mystical, and civilization-critical ideas. Previously, thought and culture in the Taishō period have been focused on humanism, democracy, and intellectual culturism, with “vitalism” appearing as a narrow core which pierces through the thinking of the age. The influence of Taoism and Zen, however, can be seen to provide a peculiarly Japanese hue.

It is clear that the linking of “Taishō vitalism” with the reevaluation of that brand of romanticism transfigured by science and urbanization in Japan (that is, neo-romanticism) will lead to a major rewriting of cultural and literary history. [\*2]

# 3. Revolution of the problems characteristic of Japan’s modern literary history. There is a need for the critical rewriting of literary history.

The established Japan’s literary history has never considered the concept of “bungaku” as being equal to that of “literature”. And the concept of “bungakushi”, itself, had been used the concept of literary history. Both terms “literature” and “literary history” have sprung up alongside with the development of state nationalism during the 19th century in western Europe.

The established Japan’s literary history prevalent today divide all texts into two groups: “taishū-bungaku (mass literature)”, and “jun-bungaku (pure literature)” exemplified by “watakushi shōsetsu (autobiographical novel)”. But then what is the definition of “watakushi shōsetsu”? How is it different from the modern “first person narrative” of the West. The terms “jun-bungaku (pure literature)” and “taishū-bungaku (mass literature)” are themselves ambiguous, and are simply conventionally used terms unrelated to artistic valuation. “Jun-bungaku”, “taishū-bungaku”, and “watakushi shōsetsu” are not analytical concepts; they should be treated as historical concepts. [\*3]

We are approaching a time when the historical nature of these concepts should be made clear and should be relativized; a time for the reestimation of modern literature according to aesthetic values; a time to construct a new literary history centering on literary works themselves, especially on their ways of expression. [\*4]

These three themes are closely related to each other and have relevance to today’s world situation. Next, I am going to consider the question of the relevance of these three themes to today’s situation.

## II. Characteristics of World Civilization and Culture at the End of the 20th Century

With the approach of the millenium, reflection on 20th century civilization and culture as a whole is in order. One of the distinguishing features of the 20th century is the experience in the first half of the century of two “hot” world wars followed by the cold war which pitted East and West against each other. This eventually destroyed the system whereby the industrialized states directly controlled the develop-

ing areas as colonies, brought about a system of internationally recognized and independent states, and also brought about an order in which the various states were able to settle their economic problems. With the collapse of the former Soviet Union and its satellite European socialist states, however, ethnic and other tensions which had been held in check by Cold War structures became readily apparent.

Thus, we are facing the basic questions of nationalism; What is a state? What is a nation? Or does the word mean anything at all: national culture? national literature? national tradition? etc.

From roughly the time of the First World War, the trend towards interdependence among the world's states in a single system began to strengthen and after the War, states began to intervene more actively in their economics. The combination of state policy with large scale capital led to the creation of mass production/mass consumption economic systems and the mass media. Mass-produced goods and information funneled through the mass media brought about "mass urban society", and the ability to control the desires of "the masses" became the primary determinant of politics. This system of combined state and capital in the rich nations also came to dominate capital in the developing nations as well, widening existing economic and cultural gaps. Likewise, during the 20th century, we are facing with the problem of the relationships between literature and mass culture, which I shall discuss in detail later one.

Another distinguishing characteristic of the 20th century, related to these political and social tendencies, is the development of science and technology. The first half of the 20th century saw two total wars and the development of military power which led to slaughter of innumerable people, both soldiers and civilians. The second half saw the entire world clouded by the threat of the Cold War and hydrogen bomb; scientific progress became directly linked to the very survival of mankind.

Now, in the industrialized nations, computer and other technologies are effecting major changes on our way of life, and unlimited development of science inspires dreams of revolutionizing our physical environment. On the other hand, we must also address pollution and other newly discovered problems.

In particular, with the appearance of the problems of global environmental destruction and genetic destruction, and with the reorganization of the biological and medical sciences into the "life science" of the 1970's, leading to such new "life centered" technologies as genetic manipulation and organ transplants, the thorny moral problems concerning "life" are being debated and new thinking along these lines is being undertaken. We have entered an age in which the whole relationship between scientific civilization and "life" is being questioned.

These phenomena raise the question about the belief in the intrinsic superiority of the Western world, paralleled by interest in the Eastern wisdom, represented by its religions. And, on the other hand, the widening gaps between the industrialized and the developing nations, cannot be reduced to economics alone.

The third distinguishing characteristic of the 20th century, is the uniformity of popular culture in the world. Due to the development of "high technology" information spread rapidly on world-wide scale. This is particularly true of young

generation from various areas raised on common culture, such as the rock'n roll music, movies, TV animation, Karaoke systems, computer-games, etc.

### III. Japanese Culture in the 20th Century

Although only a small group of islands on the edge of East Asia, Japan jumped into the competitive fray of the industrialized nations of the 20th century and, despite its defeat in World War II, it managed to attract much attention due to its rapid rise to economic prominence.

As a result of its defeat in the Second World War, Japan was able to limit its military expenditures and concentrate its energy on economic development, thus becoming the economic center of Asia. The American strategy vis-à-vis Asia (including American military bases in Japan in return for the "shelter" of the nuclear umbrella), however, was what enabled Japan to achieve its level of growth.

The model for Japan's basic strategy can be found in the late 19th century. Following the opening of the country and the Meiji Restoration, Japan sided with Britain in its ongoing opposition with Russia. This helped Japan to undertake territorial expansion through the Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese wars, and to achieve increased world standing. In other words, Japan used the method of siding with the strongest power of the time to ensure its own benefit and expansion.

Subsequently, during the post-World War I process of the transfer of world leadership from England to the United States, Japan continued to hold its own against the Soviet Union and to develop a policy of East Asian imperialistic expansion, finally joining Germany and Italy to form the Axis, the whole process culminating in World War II.

In the present age, while Japan grants international aid, this also offers some cause for misgivings concerning its position and direction within international society. As a researcher in Japanese humanities, I believe that the problem of whether or not the cultural role of Japan in the 20th century has been properly understood by observers of Japan, deserves some consideration.

The answer, I believe, is that it has not. Until now, most of the modern history of Japanese culture and thought consists of works written after the Second World War. And although there has been some self-reflection on the role of Japanese imperialism in bringing about the war, the bulk of the emphasis has been placed on the goal of "re-modernization", using "westernization" as a guiding principle, which is essentially a repetition of the process in the Meiji period, focusing on Japan's distortion and backwardness. This self-reflection has been nothing more than that: *self*-reflection, concerning these problems of distortion and backwardness from the standpoint of Japan only, tending strongly towards doctrines that might be called "modernizationism" and "nationalism (intranationalism, non-internationalism)", and virtually ignoring Japan's own policy of expansion which has bypassed international political relations. Thus, there has been a fundamental lack of perception of the relative nature of the 20th century world system as well as insight into the meaning of "modernization" itself.

This is the tendency that has led post-World War II Japanese intellectuals to embrace a system of thought which encompasses both "catch up with America" of the establishment as well as the "democratic revolution strategy" of the Japan Communist Party, which basically boils down to the same thing as anti-establishmentism. (There was a trend among Japanese intellectuals until about 1960 to glorify the Communist Party and, even when criticizing, to merely point out flaws in tactics and organization.)

The historical standpoint resulting from this view, has been especially visible in the history of literature and culture. Prior to World War II, there was a strong tendency to see Japan as feudalistic, or to emphasize the feudal legacy, and this tendency has yet to be swept away, although it does have a historical basis in that the Japanese revolutionary strategy of 1932 Comintern was based on "single state revolutionism". This in turn was prefaced by the analogy of the modern emperorship (Tenno-sei) to the Russian tzars, and which completely failed to analyze the impact of international relations or the activity of Japanese state monopoly capital.

From the 1890's on, Japan took advantage of the antagonism between Britain and Russia to extend its prerogatives in East Asia. Through the agencies of military force and the introduction of state capital in areas such as railroads and finance it then proceeded to the following policies: It pursued the development of human resource through continued improvement of the education system; It encouraged the shift of private capital towards heavy industry in the wake of victory in the Russo-Japanese War; It colonized the Korean peninsula; It raised its international standing by positioning itself on the side of the victorious nations in World War I while managing to avoid sacrifice; It vastly extended its influence on the Chinese mainland during the 1920's; It overcame the financial instability, which became most acute in the same decade by means of capital investment and concentration of capital; And, taking advantage of various form of class struggle, it formed a mass production/mass consumption of the mass media, leading to the development of a "mass society".

In 1932, with the formation of the puppet state of "Manchuria", Japan began to consolidate its ambitions in Asia, and subsequently began its advance into South-East Asia, leading to open war with America and Britain.

The twin distortional doctrines of "nationalism" and "modernizationalism", then have shaped the basic view of cultural history that has pervaded Japan in the 20th century, and also prevented a realistic grasp of international and domestic state of affairs.

This tendency, also slightly resulted in the aggression against other nations, which in turn led the fields of cultural and literary history to too little criticism of the 20th century "modern civilization" and to an underestimation of the need to relativize its values. That is why now we have to examine the problems, theories of "life" of 1910's and "popular culture" of 1920's.[\*5]

And the bulk of modern Japanese literary history is for the benefit of intellectuals. As I will discuss later, this highbrow approach distinguishes between "jun-bungaku (pure literature)" and "taishū-bungaku (mass literature)", and seeks to ascribe the immaturity of modern realism to the history of "jun-bungaku (pure literature)", and

thinks “watakushi shōsetsu” important as particular sign of the distortion of Japanese modernization.

Here, I shall elaborate in slightly more detail on themes # 2 and # 3.

#### IV. “Taishō Vitalism”

##### 1. Philosophic Definition

The Definition of “Taisho Vitalism” can be found in the Philosophic discourses of Taisho era. TANABE Gen wrote in *Bunka no Gainen* [Concept of Culture] (1922) from the standpoint that the human being is an element of nature, and from the standpoint “biologism” (term of RICKERT), that the meaning of culture is not in the limited utilization of nature for the material life of human beings; culture makes our spiritual and material life more rich, the activity of our soul and body more free, and our desire more satisfactory. This is the total image of “culturism” in Taisho era, the “culturism”, which should solve the opposition of human being and nature, struggle of classes and nations, based on the “biologism” or “vitalism”.

The discourse of TANABE certainly came from NISHIDA Kitarō’s idea, that “a life is our will being projected on objective world”, “the real life is unity of total concrete being”, “our will for life must be will for culture” (*Jikaku ni okeru Chokkan to Hansei*) [Intuition and Reflection in Awareness], 1917).

##### 2. Preceding History and the Conditions of its Appearance

The word “seimei (life, vitality)” in modern sence is thought to have been first used at 1870 by NAKAMURA Keiu who introduced it as the reason of aumen equality in the translation of SMILES’s “Self Help”. It was often noted to be read as “inochi”, however, and the word seems to have taken on connotations of the latter. Due to the Tokugawa period concern with health and well-being based on Taoism, and also to the introduction of modern health and hygiene, the concept of “seimei” seems to have transformed very smoothly.

A transformation of “mystic vitalism” in Japan from Taoist thought to Christian spiritualism can be seen in the rapport between “inspiration” and cosmic vitality of KITAMURA Tōkoku (*Naibu Seimeiron* [Inner Life], 1894), and in the “new-style poetry” and “Symbolic poetry” of the third decade of Meiji. An overflowing of religious sentiment from Japanese mythology and Buddhist and Christian spiritualism is thought to have been a major factor. MIYAKE Setsurei (*Uchū* [The Universe], 1922) attaches importance to Taoist thought, which he uses to represent Eastern wisdom while also developing a more logical cosmology. We can see from these examples that Meiji thinkers assumed a Taoist orientation.

On the other hand, TOKUTOMI Sohō’s tract in support of the Sino-Japanese War, *Dainippon bōchoron* [Expansion of Great Japan] (1895) suggested that the problem of overpopulation be addressed by advancing into the Korean peninsula and the Chinese mainland, and through immigration. The “reproducing power” of the Japanese race was cited as a virtue.

Factors influencing the manifestation of “vitalism” in Japan of the 1910’s include



casualties resulting from the Russo-Japanese War, the exploitation and pollution caused by the development of heavy industry following the conflict, poisoning and pollution incidents at the Ashio and other mines, and the general stress and "washed-out feelings" brought about by modern urban life.

Class struggle was rife following the Russo-Japanese War, and various mass or people's movements came to life which stimulated the transformation of military government into democracy. In the midst of this, however, a mode of thinking also appeared which brought about an enlightened "art of the people" movement and put emphasis on entertainment.

### 3. European vitalism

Here I would like to cite four late 19th century/early 20th century European influences on "Taishō vitalism". Although these continue to be necessarily reappraised from a variety of angles, they all had great impact on "Taishō vitalism".

First is the life unitariness of Ernst HAECKEL's *The Mystery of Life* (1905). This provided for the start of ecology, but had a holistic shape and because of its treatment of racial evolution and eugenics it also provided a potent justification for the mass destruction of "inferior race". It was received in Japan on the heels of SPENSER's social Darwinism, popular in the second decade of Meiji and Dr. HAECKEL's name can be found sporadically in the journalism of the period.

Second is Henri BERGSON's *Creative Evolution* (1907). Denying teleology and introducing random chance to the philosophy of evolution, his theory of "differentiation", stemming from the "vital impulse" and accidental chance, overtook but partially affirmed SCHOPENHAUER's "blind will of life" and had an influence on Syndicalism and other thought. Following the First World War, BERGSON emphasized the world salvation of Christian spiritualism. In Japan, it was widely spread under the name of "philosophy of Élan vital" particularly after its embrace by NISHIDA Kitaro, ŌSUGI Sakae, ARISHIMA Takeo, and HAGIWARA Sakutarō.

Third is the liberal feminist thought of the Swedish sociologist Ellen KEY. This was widely known at the time for its support of freedom of love from a vitalistic standpoint in contradiction to Christian moral. Her book *Recreative Culture* which touched off Romain ROLLAND's "drama for people" movement, called for a culture that would recreate the vitality of the people and gave an active meaning to culture for the reproduction of labor. It greatly influenced women's liberation ideas in Japan in the 1910's, and *Recreative Culture* served as a basis for a "theory of people's art".

Fourth was KROPOTKIN's idea of "mutual aid". This concept denied the competitive principles and sought to harmoniously resolve contradictions such as those between agricultural village and city, and between nature and scientific civilization through the ideal of the anarchistic community. This had an impact on culture as well, most notable example being the architect Bruno TAUT. But because it lacked any theory of the seizure of power, however, it could not withstand Marxist-Leninist scientific socialism. In Japan it was embraced by ŌSUGI Sakae and some others.

In what manner, then did "Taisho Vitalism" develop while receiving stimulus from European thought? In search for an answer I shall proceed with the philosophies of democracy, women's liberation, and the expression of sexual love.

#### 4. Modes of Thinking Concerning People's Liberation

The poets who wrote anti-war poems in response to the Russo-Japanese War, who wrote the first poems in opposition to the development of heavy and chemical industries, and who broke the standards of fixed-form poems to compose colloquial free poems, subsequently formed the so-called "people's poem" school. Their general direction thought was one of praise and admiration of life.

Let me give but a few examples. HONMA Hisao, whose *Minshu geijutsu no igi oyobi kachi* [The Significance and Value of People's Art] (1916) dealt with the "people's art polemic", directed his thinking directly at Ellen KEY's *Recreative Culture*. His interpretation invited criticism from ŌSUGI Sakae.

ŌSUGI Sakae accepted BERGSON's *Creative Evolution*, and developed a philosophy centered on the "expansion of life" (Sei no Kakujū), in which he pursued the so-called ideal of the "individual self" (koga) that would supercede the modern ego involved in the competition for survival. Additionally, he accepted KROPOTKIN's socialist individual and leaned strongly towards an anarchist system of thought.

Finally, MUSHANOKŌJI Saneatsu's "new village" movement supported the ideal of discarding intellect and liberating internal life to merge with the life of nature. In practice, this meant an agricultural foundation to permit "daily life as art".

#### 5. Women's Liberation

Ellen KEY whose ideas were popularized by the woman's review Seitō [Blue Stocking] influenced the women's liberation ideas of HIRATSUKA Raicho and her group, although HIRATSUKA Raicho's thinking incorporated an aspect of spiritualism as well.

Another example is NATSUME Sōseki's *Gubijinsō* which is considered to have shaped the "new woman" of the time. The work concludes with a schema of opposition between "reason" and "diffuse life", in which we can recognize the influence of BERGSON, but the appearance of the vitalistic individual is as a spectator, and the position taken is one of denial.

#### 6. Expression of Sexual Love

There is a tendency for the schema which places intellect opposite instinct and social order or morals opposite the revelation of life as an affirmation of decadent art and of the sexual impulse to be happily taken up as a theme of artistic expression. From this standpoint, the idealization of sexual love is portrayed as breaking free of worldly constraints. Also, under the influence of Christian spiritualism and mental science and with the help of the tendency towards considering sexual love as mystic communication or as something surreal, the view that held young men and women to be penetrating life in a different world became widespread. The appearance of a journal which took its title, "Dai san teikoku (The Third Empire)" from the name

IBSEN gave to his "mystic country" was indicative of the way in which modes of thinking were tinged by spiritualism and vitalism.

Representative works which fairly exuded vitalism in rebellion against social order can be found among those of KITAHARA Hakushu, TANIZAKI Jun'ichiro, ARISHIMA Takeo, OGAWA Mimei, and others. The base of KITAHARA Hakushu's poems comprised of such various elements as decadence, nostalgia, exoticism, etc., exemplifies the anguish of modern age, and these elements are formed to escape from it. One of them is sexual love, *Seppun* [Kiss], and other one is revolution against the social order, *Muhon* [Rebellion].(\*6)

TANIZAKI Jun'ichiro's *Shisei* [Tattoo] (1910) has the first line showing the "fool as virtue" in an attack on modern cleverness, writes about a man who enthuses to beautify a woman's body with an erotic tattoo, enough to make devotion for all men's lives, and just like sexual action is sucked up with all his energy.

ARISHIMA Takeo's *Aru Onna* [A woman] (1911~19) is representative of the new type of a woman in this age: the intellectual young heroine falls in the arms of a wild natured man, devotes her life to sexual love, and becomes a neurotic being left by him. When ARISHIMA wrote it, he judged her wrong, but after a while chose to devote his own life to a love affair with a married woman.

OGAWA Mimei, known as the writer of the mystic tale *Akai Rōsoku to Ningyō* [Red Candles and Mermaid] (1921), and as an anarchic socialist, wrote many anti-war novels. His *Satō yori-mo amai tabako* [Cigarette Sweeter than Sugar] (1917) depicts a boy working in chemical industry, who has lost his reall, as a result of some poisonous chemicals. This work is an accusation of chemical industry from the standpoint of human body and life, and it has pared the way for HAYAMA Yoshiki's *Sementodaru no nakano tegami* [A Letter Hidden in a Barrel of Cement] (1926) and YOKOMITSU Riichi's *Kikai* [The Mechanical] (1930).

## 7. Holism and Universalism

The thought of the Taisho period often mixes various philosophies into one, and tends to posit international universalism, boundless optimism and generally idealistic concepts.

This trend can be identified in such works as NISHIDA Kitaro's *Zen no kenkyū* [Researches into goodness], but is more strongly evident in MIYAKE Setsurei's *Uchū* [The Universe]. MIYAKE places "vitalism" at the center of an agglomeration of Eastern philosophy including Taoist or In-Yang concepts of "Ki" (spirit), and Zen on the one hand, and conceptions of Christian God, and thought of KANT, HEGEL, and HAECKEL on the other. Likewise SUZUKI Daisetsu, who dedicated great efforts for the wide spread of Zen as philosophical doctrine, was inspired by the mysticism of SWEDENBORG.

A mixture of science and spiritualism can be seen in the well-known psychic photographic experiments of FUKURAI Tomokichi. NAGAI Sen professor in the Faculty of Science at the Tōkyō Imperial University in his book *Seimeiron* [A Theory of Life] (1911) also takes a holistic view of life phenomena, admitting the influence of "animation" (Seikiron) and applying it to "eugenics" in the final

chapter. His "eugenics" differ from HAECKEL, however, in that NAGAI does not take a racial approach, but instead considers the choice of spouse so as to leave healthy children and grandchildren.

#### 8. Absorption and Severance

In general, the vitalism of this era tends to mystically transcend modern mechanistic scientific thought, and also tends to glorify primitive vitality. It also seeks, in the place of secularized religion to overcome the competition of ego and struggle for existence through spiritual means allowed by Zen or new religions (Shinkō shūkyō); or to give birth to artistic expression through the sensitivity of sexual love, and to resist modern systems of oppression with democratic thought and the realization of various forms of communitarian/communist philosophy.

Following the Kantō Earthquake, however, and accompanying the trend towards the people's spiritual consensus/control and the increased antagonism of the Western Powers towards Asia, vitalism is considered to have incorporated nationalism/ethnicism and pan-Asianism, and to have broken with "Marxism" to become rooted instead in mass urban society, and mixed with modernist art to be popularized as "erotic-grotesque nonsense".

Then from about the 10th year of Showa (1935), given the social background of the impasse of mass urban society and of "conversion", the pattern of thinking began to reemerge within the spread of nihilism. Meanwhile, the development of modes of thought, such as those espoused by SUZUKI Daisetsu in *Nihonteki Reisei* [Japanese Spirituality], that did not necessarily agree with war can be recognized. But the war, "life of the nation/people" took the form of "eternal life", or of "heroic death".

However, this tendency was already apparent within "Taisho vitalism". Within the Taisho period criticism of civilization, the concept of nostalgia was already in motion. This was linked with spiritualism through the idea of the "home of soul", which was linked in turn with the concept of "people/race" to produce the notion of "life of the race". Symptoms can already be seen in the Taisho period from KITAHARA Hakushu and HAGIWARA Sakutarō. But FUJII Masumi, a writer of early labor literature, expressed from an internationalist standpoint an interest in the problem of minority people such as the Ainu, and it is in his writing from the close of the Taisho period that we can find the first use of the phrase "life of the race".

Vitalism, whose central issue is Life itself, reacts intuitively against everything which might be enthroned. It is because humans are able also to sense "life", that the concept of "life" tends to be either "unphysical", or misplaced by other philosophical concept including even the opposite one of "death".

The fact that the problem of "life" is surfacing today is evidence that we are in the midst of a large shift in values. It is not, however, the first time that this has happened, for in the industrialized countries, though it may be almost forgotten in the face of two world wars, the theme has a well established history. I believe that the reconsideration of the development of the concept of "life", will make a large contribution to the unfolding of today's theory of "life".

## V. The Theory of Literature and Literary History

### 1. Culture Code Reductionism and New Historicism

Next, I shall consider some issues specific to modern and contemporary Japanese literature, particularly the three-fold schema of *watakushi shōsetsu* ("autobiographical novel"), *jun-bungaku* ("pure literature"), *taishū-bungaku* ("mass literature"). But before that, I would like to touch upon some trends in literary research.

After the Second World War, the method of literary research has replaced the former personalism and historicism with new criticism and structuralism. Recently, however, there is a swing back towards historical value and relativism.

One indication of this is the method called new historicism currently popular in the United States. While structuralist theory confines itself with the revealing of the cultural codes in the texts, the new historicism, which reflects the various post-structuralist trends, takes up at that point and approaches the texts from a historical point of view. This method of research is having a certain influence in Japan, as well. On a surface level it may be considered as a revival of former Marxist ideology—that the characteristics of a particular mode of thought stem from its relationship with the economic system fundamental to that mode of thought. This is because the fundamental system of former Marxist ideology has the same structure as the cultural code of that age.

The flaw in the former Marxist ideology can be described as a fundamental system reductionism, in the sense that it did not recognize the development of a philosophy or culture comparatively independent from the economic base. New historicism, on the other hand, tends to reduce the text to the level of cultural codes, then to reduce the codes to the fundamental system. Or, in other words, new historicism could be considered as an elaboration of Marxist ideology with semiotic theory.

The relationship between the economic base and the cultural codes being grasped, it may seem as if the flaw of the former Marxist ideology has been overcome. But, then what about the relationship between the text and the cultural codes? There is concern that the flaw in culture code reductionism within culture code theory will be introduced as it is.

Although both the texts and the cultural codes are determined by the existing economical base, neither of them is reduced to it. Every text is determined by the controlling mode of the genre to which it belongs (literature, drama, painting, movie, etc.). The literary text is further determined by the controlling mode of the language and of the the sub-genre, such as poem, novel, play, or essay. The novel is then further determined by its sub-sub-genre, such as romance, modern melodrama, first person narrative, objective realism, the flow of consciousness, etc. . . . But because all these modes interfere with each other and change within the flow of time, it is necessary to differentiate the artistic modes within the over-all cultural code and to examine the relation to historical change.

Finally, the form of the literary work is determined by the method, i. e. by the organization of the various elements in accordance with the artistic modes and the

cultural codes. The method is the method of expression. Without this activity of the writer, neither the work nor the text can exist in the actual world. The author is not dead yet, although the experienced author knows well enough that his/her work is always against his/her expectations. The writer, so called here, is not the actual one, but rather an imaginary figure created by the reader in the process of reading, or put logically by the scholar as the subject of expression.

The semiotics of culture tends to analyze general cultural phenomena directly without fractionalizing to artistic modes within the over-all cultural code thus resulting in an abstract pattern of culture, and without recognizing the method of organizing. The real problem is what to use as a subject for analysis in order to obtain this cultural code, the artistic mode, and the method of expression. The method of expression is the total concept of organizing cultural codes, and artistic modes. And the expression escapes from established mode and code, accepting influence of other cultural genres and other national cultures, and changes them, and makes current of the artistic genre. And so a current of one artistic genre is relatively independent from the other current of artistic genre and culture, the basic structure.

Here, I would like to take up the example of the *watakushi shōsetsu*. If classic remarks concerning *watakushi shōsetsu* were analyzed, could the artistic mode for *watakushi shōsetsu* be obtained?

As an example of a classical statement about *watakushi shōsetsu* let us examine KOBAYASHI Hideo's *Watakushi shōsetsu ron* (1935). Most "watakushi-shōsetsu"s, says KOBAYASHI in 1935, are "conversion novels" (here "conversion" means to retire from left-wing activity) beyond on the author's first person recounting of experience. From the standpoint of generalizing on the flaws of "proletarian literature", the author's philosophy is placed antithetically alongside his/her actual life. And emphasizing the spiritual vestiges of feudalism through spiritual climate reductionism, tells of social immaturity of the ego. The spiritual climate reductionism which stresses feudal vestiges is reflected in the former Marxist fundamental system reductionism, and in the strategy for Japan's revolution taken up by the 1932 Comintern. Subsequent postwar study of *watakushi shōsetsu* based on KOBAYASHI's *Watakushi-shōsetsu ron* is also basically reductionist and stresses the feudal legacy.[\*7]

In line with this strategy, the novel of SHIMAZAKI Tōson's *Ie*, for example, has been interpreted as a struggle against the feudal "Ie (house/family)". But in fact, the work is set in the modern urban period and deals with the theme of the growing numbers of nuclear families who meet their siblings only at weddings and funerals. That is why the interpretation based on spiritual climate reductionism which stresses the feudal system, does not catch the substance of the book.

Subsequently, from the late 1950's, many writers and critics began to express a number of doubts about the consideration of the *watakushi shōsetsu* as an independent genre. Today, for example, the decadence and illusionary quality of SHIGA Naoya's works are cited.

KOBAYASHI Hideo's *Watakushi-shōsetsu ron* is based on the prevailing critical

view of this time. That is why, although it might be relevant to a certain extent to other Taisho period authors such as SHIGA Naoya or KASAI Zenzo, it does not at all match to *watakushi shōsetsu* of MAKINO Shin'ichi, for instance which contain criticism of the previous *watakushi shōsetsu*, or to KAJII Motojiro's *Lemon* (1925), which is a deviation from then-existing values. In other words, it is impossible to recognize remarks as a mode without taking into account of the historical nature of the remarks.

In short, the revealing of the artistic mode and the analysis of change can be carried out only through the analysis of the methods that support the forms of various works.

## 2. Concerning the Concept of the *watakushi shōsetsu*

In MAKINO Shin'ichi's *watakushi shōsetsu* which internalized criticism of *watakushi shōsetsu*, he criticizes his own treatment of his family within the *watakushi shōsetsu* code as fixture or furniture, and constructs the novel from the standpoint of looking down on himself, thus, for instance, *Semi* [Cicada] (1924) in which the hero's work is read by his wife and spoken ill of himself, becomes a sort of metafiction.[\*8] In KAJII Motojiro's *Lemon*, KAJII is an author who has the idea that writing of his own experiences is the true road to art, and he recounts his experience focusing on the thought that a single lemon is the most valuable thing in the world. This can be interpreted as a rejection of the system of existing values. The rejection of existing values in favour of perverted values was quite fashionable at that time, and because joy derived from the moment of illusion is a kind of mental "nonsense", it is a work born of the union of psychological experientialism and the spirit of the day. This sort of "nonsense", the joy of momental illusion, is found not only in many novels of the day but in avant-garde short poems, as well, such as KITAGAWA Fuyuhiko's *Rush Hour*, "My finger was punched out with ticket", *Scene from Loft*, "It feels like my eyes stick to the ground", and others. While the fusion of the method of writing of individual experience with the personal logicism is a feature of the Taisho period *watakushi shōsetsu*, these works deviate from the code.[\*9]

Looking at the history of the code deviation of *watakushi shōsetsu*, we can find around 1935 the influence of Andr'e GIDE's *Paludes* and *Les Faux-monnayeurs* on NAGAI Kafu, who wrote *Bokutōkitan* [A Strange Tale of the East Coast of Sumida River] as a kind of parody. We find also both ISHIKAWA Jun and DAZAI Osamu, "writing a novel about writing this novel".

ISHIKAWA Jun, DAZAI Osamu, and others have been using in their writings the traditional "rakugo" as well as colloquial forms, thus creating the avant-garde *watakushi shōsetsu*. During the period of "conversion" from the revolutionary left wing, the so-called "season of the disruption of the ego", most "conversion novels" were existentialistic in their focus on the collapse of values within the individual as a kind of extreme condition of existence. It can be argued that the point of tension in them is between actual existence and utterance.

In NAGAI Kafu's *Bokutōkitan*, just as in GIDE's *Les Faux-monnayeurs*, the author's daily life and a certain novel are presented in parallel, but along the way we

find that he has been falsifying his daily life and, just as the title of *Shisso* [Disappear] suggests, the inner novel disappears in the middle leading to a sense of parody on *Les Faux-monnayeurs*. The text is constructed as a mosaic of citations from Tokugawa period's "Gesaku", Haiku, Chinese poetry, as well as from other novels of his own. With the Chinese-Japanese War started in earnest and the smell of gunpowder in the air, it seems that he wants to create his own world to safety lock away in the structure of the book. [\*10]

Works from 1942, the year after Japan's declaration of war on America and Britain, include SAKAGUCHI Ango's *Shinju*, ITO Sei's *Tokunō Goro Monogatari*, and KAWABATA Yasunari's *Meijin*. SAKAGUCHI Ango's *Shinju*, written in essay style tells of his feeling as a special attack force member at Pearl Harbor, and is governed by anti-war feelings. ITO Sei's *Tokunō Goro Monogatari* is a parody of *watakushi shōsetsu* and incorporates a style of self innuendo, while KAWABATA Yasunari's *Meijin* is a documentary style of self *watakushi shōsetsu* about viewing a game of *go* between two *go* masters. Even this brief survey of experiential *watakushi shōsetsu* reveals that they actually employ a variety of themes, styles and methods.

Following defeat in World War II, there appeared numberless existentialistic works dedicated to the authors exposure to war and the changes in values following the defeat. The third decade of Showa proceeded with tales of recovery from war experience and with the problems of getting back to normal life. This trend was marked by the reemergence of a number of works with family themes and lest it be imagined that they are all of the nature of SHIGA Naoya's *Wakai* [Reconcile] (1917), it should be noted that the circumstances surrounding their appearance were highly varied. In the works by YASUOKA Shōtarō, YOSHIYUKI Junnosuke, SHONO Junzo and ABE Akira, we also find the basis for a "methodization of *shishōsetsu*". Since then the term *watakushi shōsetsu* was replaced by "shishōsetsu", and the term of "methodization" was used for save there works distinguishing from conventional style, because there was greate tendency to bash "shishōsetsu", regarding as destorted realism.

However, it is quite possible to consider SHIGA Naoya and others adopt the method to write "my daily life" as material, and the term "methodization of *watakushi-shōsetsu*" is completely ambiguous. Whereas such works as SHIGA Naoya's *Wakai*, concerning internal dissension among his own family, can be called *watakushi shōsetsu*, such works as SHIGA Naoya's *Kinosakinite* [In Kinosaki] (1917) of natural poetry-style miscellany should be called *shinkyō shōsetsu* ("attitude novels"), the name by which they were originally called around 1924. To put these later works in the same "tradition" with "watakushi-shōsetsu" is not appropriate. The positioning of "watakushi-shōsetsu" in a theoretical tradition was done on the basis of objective realism, and resulted from post war "modernistic" patterns of thinking and, as such, the "*watakushi shōsetsu* tradition" is nothing more than a "tradition founded" after the war.

### 3. "Pure Literature" and "Mass Literature"

The case of "pure literature" and "mass literature" provides exactly the same



problem. The term "mass literature" as used in Japanese literary history does not mean the art of mass culture. Mass culture, the culture of the subjected classes that threatens to destroy the culture of the ruling class when the masses achieve political power, in the case of Japan should be established as that of the Tokugawa era.

"Mass literature" in literary history does coincide partially with mass culture, but not necessarily fully. Thus, for instance, these are some texts of "mass literature" which were not received by the masses. YUMENO Kyusaku's *Dogura Magura* [A Magic] (1935), for example, was published first with his own money, and although it was praised by influential detective story writers it could not obtain popularity until the 1970's, when it was reevaluated, nowadays it is recognized as a post-modern novel. HISAO Juran's *Mato* [Demonish City] (1935) has been evaluated in a similar way.

The concept of conflict between "mass literature" and "pure literature" is grounded in subjugation, but the difference does not necessarily lie in the conflict between highbrow and lowbrow literature. Works categorized as "mass literature" may contain a high entertainment component and yet still be excellent from the standpoint of pursuing art and thought. Vulgarity produced merely for convenient consumption and enjoyment is not treated here. What is being referred to is the historical concept.

Certainly, Japanese consciousness of *jun-bungaku* ("pure literature") in the literary world came from a concept of "pure art" imported from the mid-19th century Europe, while it denoted condescension towards the bourgeois on the part of "spiritual aristocratism". Given the continued recognition of the poetic style Saigyō and Bashō, and of the *bunjin* ("literary man") of the Tokugawa era, the idea that held on throughout the Taishō period. Never the less the sudden rise of the masses and the creation of a mass urban society during Taishō, the concept of literature underwent major change.

The formation of 20th century mass urban society was accompanied by the establishment of the mass production/consumption mechanism and the mass media. This did not eliminate class or class differences, but it brought about the "mass public" as an abstract consumer of cheap goods and information. Given the formation of large scale monopoly/oligopoly capital and the formation of an international political system, about the time of the First World War, the state increased its interposition of capital. Due to the monopoly/oligopoly of the media and the control of information by the state, it became possible to manipulate this "mass public".

Monopoly/oligopoly capital and large scale state intervention had a direct effect on 20th century mass urban society. Japan's move to state monopoly capitalism, which began around 1895, was remarkably smooth. It was ushered in by the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war, with the leadership of the military, and of the state capital in such fields as railroads and finance, and covered for the late start made by Japan's industrial capital. The formation of mass urban society was completed in the strengthening of state control.

Although class struggle was fierce and democratic enlightenment progressive in the

Taisho period, this was followed by emphasis on change in high level literary concepts aimed at youth, which led to the development of "mass literature" rooted in mass urban society. This was shaped significantly by the mass media, but also by the birth of "proletarian literature" near the close of Taisho. Both of the latter were also rooted in mass urban society and based on the concept of "art for/of peoples".

What should be noted here is that the concept of *taisū-bungaku* ("mass literature") is not a cultural historical concept of art within mass culture, but a concept born of historical circumstance. It contains the genres from the time of its birth, novels of all time periods, mystery novels (including not only detective stories, but also a wide variety of others including fantasy), as well as current fiction and humorous novels. The "popular fiction" established in literary circles at the end of Meiji is treated separately, but *taisū-bungaku* is treated as one wing of new art, and within actual journalism, "proletarian literature", the "new sensualist school", and *taisū-bungaku* developed a mix of genres. A single author can be seen to try them all.

In about the year 5 or 6 of Showa, "proletarian literature" and *taisū-bungaku* completely overcame journalism, but "proletarian literature" tended towards politics while *taisū-bungaku* leaned towards entertainment. With the problem of "conversion" of 1933, "proletarian literature" became destructive, whereas *taisū-bungaku* became to produce works of high quality. Author of *jun-bungaku* ("pure literature") began to write works to be read by mass society and about 1935, many works appeared which achieved a balance between pursuit of art and pursuit of entertainment. From this time, we see TANIZAKI Jun'ichiro, KŌDA Rohan, YOKOMITH-U Riichi, KOBAYASHI Hideo, KAWAKAMI Tetsutarō and other talented writers and critics oppose the polarization of *jun-bungaku* and *taisū-bungaku*.

Following World War II, the world of literature and the world of journalism both became more structured, with *taisū-bungaku* becoming a synonym for low level entertainment fiction, with *taisū-bungaku* new for pursuit in art in fiction, and with the appearance of works of *chūkan shōsetsu* ("middle way fiction") that sought a balance. The previous schema which placed *jun-bungaku* opposite to *taisū-bungaku* shifted in the post war period to one of *jun-bungaku* vs. *chūkan shōsetsu*. The schema is essentially a holdover from the prewar Showa period.

To sum up, neither *jun-bungaku* nor *taisū-bungaku* are analytical concepts. They are provisional historical terms, which ignore aesthetic criteria. This means that the aesthetic value of a given text cannot be esteemed without insight into the history of art; neither can the history of art be considered without the evaluation of each and all of them. The interdependent undertaking of these evaluations, should allow a new organization of modern Japanese literary history to replace the old conceptions that have for so long hampered it. And, if these valuations encourage analysis of the relations between the sudden rise of "mass literature" and the establishment of mass urban culture, which in turn serves as a stimulus towards change in the existing cultural history, it may also lead to a reorganization of the entire culture.

## VI. Conclusion

Given the foregoing, it is quite clear that it is necessary to examine the changing history of expressional method and literary concepts, hidden by established literary history building up concepts firmly linked to ideology. Briefly, it is necessary to revise and rewrite literary history by the method of historical relativization from today's point of view. Cultural history, to which literary history belongs and from which it is relatively independent, is the same.

Additionally, I will proceed to the necessity of the meta-history of literature and culture. History of literature and culture was made by state nationalism in 19th century Western Europe. These have the tendency of "state-nationalism", against which a few persons such as Heinrich HEINE oppose the idea of "universal literature". If a nation-state would be reorganized, the cultural and literary history of it should be rewritten, though cultural and literary phenomena had not changed.

At the beginning of the Meiji period, the modern western concept of literature as linguistic art has been introduced, it is the first time *Man'yōshū* and *Genji monogatari* and other classical Japanese literary works became subject to textual analysis with the concept of *bungaku*. Up to that time, except in a few cases, these had never been categorized into *bungaku*. They have called *uta*, *monogatari*, *zuihitsu*, etc., and have never collected in one category. Because the traditional concept of *bungaku* in Japan which can be dated back to *Rongō* in ancient China, means literary study for political and economic and moral management of state, and literary works written in Chinese.

Examining strictly with the modern western concept, the works of *uta* in *Manyōshū*, are they literature? Some of *uta* made by KAKINOMOTO no Hitomaro are similar to a spell of prayer for the well-being of the kingdom. And some of *uta* in *Kokinshū* are similar only to the form of a love-letter. But we have criticized them as modern western literature. The fact is expansion of that concept.

Expansion of the modern western literary concept was not only it. The first Japanese literary histories had been written for the textbook in 1990 by MIKAMI Sanji and TAKATSU Kuwajiro, who had borrowed the image of literary histories from some of west European. Although west European literary history started in the Middle Ages, and is limited to fictional categories, Japanese literary history begins with the Ancient Age, with *Kojiki*, myths and history, and *Norito*, spell of prayer, and *Fudoki*, geography of regions.

These might be two reasons for this beginning. First, at that time Japanese history was identified with the history of Tenno-ke (the family of Emperor) as a symbol of the national dignity and spiritual unity. Second, their concept of *bungaku*, was a mixture of the Europe's "literature" and traditional *bungaku* in Japan or China. The result was that on one hand, the Japanese literary history was more nationalistic than European, and on the other, the differential between the genres in it was rather blurred.

And gradually, Chinese literature written by Japanese was excluded from Japanese

literary histories, and in the Taishō period, nationalistic character became more pure, while the ancient women's literature became highly esteemed. [\*11]

From its beginning, Japanese literary history has not dealt with the oral tradition and with the tales of Ainu and Okinawajin. Of course, it can be argued that literature limits the object of its study to written texts. The search for the origin of presuppose the consideration of oral tradition, however, as well.

And contemporary Japanese literary history cuts off literature spread in colonial area and Manchuria, like a turtle, which after being struck by the defeat of War, has withdrawn into its shell.

In conclusion, it is necessary to rewrite Japanese literary history reflecting the history itself, to defeat "nationalism", to relativize historically the concept of literature and culture, and to study the expressional method, and to reevaluate the literary works themselves.

#### Notes

- \* This is based on the paper which I have reported at the 8th Conference of Japanese Studies Association of Australia in JUL. 1993.  
And special thanks to Tzvetana KRISTEVA, she helped me to write the paper and this is English.
- 1 Concerning the first theme (# 1.1, 1.2), I am currently planning a large scale project which will compile a list of Japanese language publications including table of contents of different journals and magazines relating to literature and philosophy/patterns of thinking published in modern China. This will be undertaken with the vision of cooperative research among both Japanese and Chinese scholars of Japanese literature, comparative literature, and Chinese literature. If similar projects could be undertaken in the circum Pacific nations, large steps could be taken over the coming decade.
- 2 Concerning the second theme (# 2), I have paved the research way featuring "Taishō seimeishugi" on the quarterly magazine *Bungei* (1992, autumn, p. 245-321), and monthly poetry review "Gendai-shitecyō" (1992, October, p. 010-111), and monthly literary magazine *Waseda-bungaku* (1993, February p. 008-062). And with my edition, a book is prepared *Taisho-seimeishugi to gendai* [Taisho-vitalism and contemporary idea of life] publishing in 1994 spring, from Kawade shobōshinsha.
- 3 Concerning the third theme (# 3), I have written a long essay *Jun-bungaku to taisū-bungaku—kono ashiki inshu* ["Pure literature" and "mass literature"—this old wrong custom] on monthly literary magazine *Bungakukai* 1993 October~1994 January. And a SUZUKI's book is prepared *Nippon no "bungaku" wo kangaeu* [On some key concepts of modern Japanese literature] publishing in 1994 May by Kadokawa shoten, Tokyo Japan.
- 4 Concerning the theory of expressional method, see SUZUKI's *Bungei hyogenron no hoe* [Towards the theory of literary expression] (*Nihonkenkyu* No. 2, 1990, March. p. 139-170. "Gendai nihon bungaku no shiso—kaitai to saihen no strategies" [The ideology of contemporary Japanese literary thought—strategies of deconstruction and rewriting" Pb. 1992, by Gogathu Shobō, Tokyo Japan. p. 233-286
- 5 Concerning the relation between popular culture 1920's and literary expression, see SUZUKI's "Modan toshi no hyogen—jiko • josei • gensō" [The modern urban expression—self • femininity • illusion], Pb. by Hakujisha, Kyoto Japan.
- 6 See SUZUKI's *Shi no inochi—KITAHARA Hakusyu "Jashūmon hikyoku"* [The life of poem—KITAHARA Hakusyu's "Secret music of heresy"], "Gendaishitecyō" (1992, October) p. 056-064.
- 7 See SUZUKI's *KOBAYASHI Hideo "Watakushi-syosethu ron" ni tsuite* [On KOBAYASHI

- Hideo's "watakushi-syosetsu ron"] ("Gendai nihon bungaku no shiso—kaitai to saihen no strategies". p. 21-43)
- 8 See SUZUKI's *Mottomo Utsukushii Tamashii wa...*—MAKINO Shin'ichi no tameni [The most beautiful soul is...—For MAKINO Shin'ichi] ("Sengo rinen no kubiki moshikuwa hyogenno datsu-kindai" [Shackles of ideology after World War II, or escaping from modern expression]. Pb. by Kawadeshobō-shinsha, Tokyo Japan. p. 027-072)
  - 9 See SUZUKI's *Toshi-taisū-shakai to watakushi-jikozō-genshi no isō-gaku* [Self in Mass urban society—A Topologic Study on Self illusion], "Modan toshi no hyogen—jiko・josei・genso", p. 213-249.
  - 10 See SUZUKI's *Nippon no "bungaku" wo kangaeru* [On some key concepts of modern Japanese literature] publishing in 1994 May by Kadokawa shoten, Tokyo Japan.
  - 11 In Japan, texts of Japanese literary history was begun to write in 1890's which methods were learned from literary histories of Western Europe. Then, they had many chapters on Chinese verse and prose written by Japanese people. However, the text of HAGA Yaichi's *Kokubungaku-shi Jukko* (Ten lectures on Japanese Literary History) published in 1899 had no chapter on them. From this text, the trend of purifying nationalistic character on literary history began.

3つのテーマと2、3の観点  
—日本近・現代文学史、文化史の書き換えのために—

鈴木貞美

要旨：今日の日本文化史と文学史が直面する主要な三つのテーマについて提言する。これらの三つのテーマは、互いに隣接し、かつ、今日の世界の情勢と密接な関係をもつ。

1. 日本文化についての研究の国際化のためには、20世紀の日本文化について、国際関係の観点、とりわけ、アジア侵略に伴う問題がないがしろにされてきたことを率直に反省し、全面的に再検討することが必要である。

2. 科学技術の飛躍発展が、人々の生活様式を大きく変え、未来への夢を育む一方で、恐れと懐疑を生んでいるが、そうした今日の状態とよく似た状況を、日本の1910年代に見いだすことが出来る。1910年ころから、日本の思想や芸術において、ヨーロッパの思想から影響を受けながら、“生命主義”が横溢した。これを“大正生命主義”と呼ぶ。これを再検討し、その帰趨を追うことが、今日のわれわれの思想状況を歴史的に相対化するために必要である。

3. 文学史の書き換えが必要である。「文学」も「文学史」も、西欧19世紀のステイト・ナショナリズムによって育まれてきた概念であるが、これまで、これらの概念は対象化されることなく用いられてきた。また、既成の日本近代文学史は、「私小説」を中心とする「純文学」と「大衆文学」とを分断してきた。しかし、「私小説」とはいったい何であろうか。「純文学」も「大衆文学」も、実に曖昧な概念であり、芸術的な価値と無関係に習慣的に用いられてきた概念にすぎない。実は、「私小説」「純文学」「大衆文学」は、分類概念ではなく、歴史的概念にすぎない。これらの概念の歴史的性格を明らかにし、相対化した上で、作品の表現のもつ芸術的価値を再検討し、日本近代文学の歴史を書き換えることが促進されなければならない。