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AN INVESTIGATION OF HOW THE WORLD-BUILDING IN RECENT FOLKLORE-RELATED ANIME CAN SUGGEST THEMES OF NOSTALGIA

Elisha AGER¹

*Abstract: Japanese folklore and mythology are ever-growing components of anime (Japanese animation). Folklore-inspired anime often reflect the artistic representations surrounding creatures and phenomena (**yōkai**) that come from the collective isolation periods of Heian (794-1185) and Edo (1603-1868) Japan. Four reoccurring visual signifiers (fur colour, number of tails, supernatural abilities, and clothing) within anime show that **yōkai** characters are a symbol that emphasise the nostalgic and idealistic connection to a 'past' Japan, in contrast to the human characters. As such, these four signifiers seen in the character design construct the fictional worlds of anime in a way that reflects a passive cultural nostalgia for a pre-Westernised Japan (primarily eras from pre-1868 before Japan's rapid modernisation).*

Keywords: **yōkai**, anime, world-building, visual signifiers, cultural nostalgia

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Introduction

Anime (Japanese animation) and **yōkai** (妖怪 monsters from folklore) have long had a connection to *cultural nostalgia*, a concept that refers to the collective memories experienced and shared by a group (Havlena & Holak 1996, p. 38). **Yōkai** in *anime* represent an ideal image of a pre-Westernised past Japan, as they are characters that hold the collective memories of Japanese society. In the 21st century, folklore-inspired *anime* have followed this trend and used **yōkai** as visual symbols. So, one can utilise visual semiotics to view these characters as signifiers (a physical sign) that hold a deeper meaning (the concept that is signified) (Okuyama 2017, p. 3), because they represent an idealised Japanese past juxtaposed to the present-day world of human characters. As such, **yōkai** evoke a nostalgic feeling towards an idealised traditional and authentic Japan.

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Through semiotics, this article will show that there is a new phase of nostalgia in current Japanese *anime* that follows *cultural nostalgia* and *collective memory*.

World-building separates the fantasy (secondary) world of fiction made up of words, images, and sounds, from the real (primary) world (Alexander 2017, p. 16; Wolf 2012, p. 32). Through the character design features that encompass this fictional world, *anime* is constructed in a way that reflects real ideologies. By using this approach to analyse *yōkai*, a new phase of nostalgia is brought forth from the fantasy genre. Yoshiko Okuyama (2017) a scholar of film semiotics and Japanese mythology suggested that by using semiotics there can be a deeper understanding of how *yōkai* draw on collective memory and show Japanese culture (Okuyama 2017). However, there is still limited research in relation to recent *anime*, *yōkai*, and folklore as signifiers.

Yanagita Kunio (1875-1962) was the first to connect nostalgia in Japan to folklore, and this has continued into the present day. In the 1920s, Yanagita created the discipline of *minzokugaku* 民俗学 (folklore studies) in order to distinguish an ‘authentic’ idealised Japan from a nationalist agenda (Foster 2016, p. 141). Yanagita regarded the Edo period as a time of ‘pre-Westernisation’ (mainly pre-1850) because of his opposition to the rapid Western-influenced nation-building post-1850, and to the scientific views of earlier scholars, such as Inoue Enryō (1858-1919), who tried to eradicate *yōkai* (ibid.). Nostalgia continued in the post-war era because of the *manga* and *anime* of Mizuki Shigeru (1922-2015), who suggested that *yōkai* flourished during the Edo era, but modernity destroyed both tradition and *yōkai* (Mizuki 2011). In addition, in the 1980s, the Edo period became linked to national memory, and so became a nostalgic idealised “cultural space” rooted in a pre-Westernised image connected to Japanese ‘tradition’ (Sutcliffe 2013, p. 183). In the 21st century, Tokyo cityscapes have been reconstructed in the Edo-Tokyo and Fukagawa Edo Museums. In addition, these museums hold events on traditional Japanese arts such as shamisen performances, suggesting that **there is still a connection between ‘tradition’ and pre-Western times.**

It seems, therefore, that nostalgia for the past in Japan has gone through a series of phases. Scholars can see the current trend of a passive nostalgia for **the idealised ‘past Japan’ by using a visual semiotic approach** to analyse *yōkai* in *anime*. In the *anime* of this article, **the ‘past’ is** collectively made up of the Heian (794-1185) and Edo (1603-1868) periods because they are regarded as periods of isolation, away from foreign influences, making them quintessentially Japanese (ignoring the historical reality of these periods), and thus, they emphasise the nostalgic **and idealistic connection to an ‘authentic’ Japan.**

Using *yōkai* characters alongside a running literary motif for this **concept of ‘the past’ (an idealised, pre-Western Japan)** has become common in Japanese media to represent traditional Japanese culture (MacWilliams 2014, p. 256). For example, in various famous works featuring *yōkai*, such as the *anime* and *manga* *Gegege no Kitarō* (Mizuki 1968-2019), and popular Studio Ghibli films, such as *Spirited Away* (Miyazaki 2001) that introduce folklore stories to a young audience that may not recognise them. Furthermore, these popular media forms **reaffirm this traditional and purportedly ‘authentic’ Japanese culture**, giving a sense of Japanese identity that connects with the audience (Hartman 2017, p.10; Napier 2006, p. 289). Specific cultural signifiers appear in these works that are recognised as a past Japan, for example the depiction of the traditional Japanese bathhouse in *Spirited Away* (Miyazaki 2001, 10:56, 31:00, 32:01). These popular movies and *anime* have been analysed by researchers (Hartman 2017; Okuyama 2015; MacWilliams 2014; Napier 2006) however, the visual signifiers used to create this atmosphere of an ideal or desired past surrounding *yōkai* are not often investigated or acknowledged in connection to nostalgia or folklore studies.

This study will utilise visual film semiotics in world-building to analyse the characters from three *anime*, and how the accumulation of signifiers in the character design reflect current nostalgia through the *collective memory* of Japanese society. *Yōkai* characters act as an embodiment of *cultural nostalgia* through their features, clothing, and connections to previous visual representations. I analyse the *yōko* (妖狐 *yōkai* fox) which is common and well-known in Japan. Furthermore, this study compares the three *anime*, *Fukigen na Mononoke-an* 不機嫌なモノノ怪庵 (Iwanaga & Kawasaki 2016-2019), *Otome Yōkai Zakuro* おとめ妖怪ざくろ (Kon 2010), and *Kamisama Hajimemashita* 神様はじめました (Daichi 2015-2016). These *anime* were chosen because they have been created in the past 15 years and are, therefore, relatively recent, reflecting Japanese society. In addition, they belong to the same genre as *shōjo* (young girl 少女), and they share similar motifs of *yōkai* connecting to the past, and humans the present day. All three, however, have different character representations that can be analysed through the four signifiers of fur colour, the number of tails, supernatural abilities, and clothing.

The following sections provide an in-depth overview of semiotics and nostalgia, followed by an analysis of *yōko* characters in *anime* and discussion of how the theory relates to these four reoccurring signifiers to show a passive *cultural nostalgia*.

Background

In Japan there are hundreds of *yōkai*, such as *yōko* 妖狐 (also known as *kitsune* 狐), *tengu* 天狗 (mountain goblins), *tanuki* 狸 (raccoon dogs), and *kodama* 木霊 (tree spirits) (Foster 2015). For this reason, there are numerous ways to translate the word in English-language scholarship. As mentioned by Michael-Dylan Foster (2009), *yōkai* can be “...variously translated as monster, spirit, goblin, ghost, demon, phantom, spectre, fantastic being, lower-order deity, or, more amorphously, as any **unexplainable experience or numinous occurrence**” (Foster 2009, p. 2). Despite these nuances enumerated by Foster, in this article I will use the Japanese word *yōkai* or the more specific word for the supernatural creature being shown, *yōko*.

Furthermore, I follow the research of a prominent Japanese folklorist, Komatsu Kazuhiko's (2017) distinction of *yōkai* categorised into incidents, supernatural entities, and depictions (Komatsu 2017, p. 12). As a visual medium, scholars can view *anime* representations of *yōkai* in this third category of depictions, and, thus, they can be compared to previous portrayals seen in *anime* and artwork. Komatsu (2017) also suggests that in modern Japan people do not define *yōkai* in academic terms. Instead, they define these creatures in the way authors such as Mizuki and Kyogoku Natsuhiko (1963-present) recreated them, as premodern things from folklore and oral tradition (Komatsu 2017, p. 26). The *anime* in this article represent *yōkai* as coming from premodern eras, showing them situated within an idealised, pre-Westernised Japan.

As mentioned in the introduction, in Japanese media, there is a common motif seen in *yōkai* characters, which is that they are connected to a past Japan. This creates a nostalgic connection. In *anime*, *manga* and **games**, the **Taishō period (1912-1926)** is often used as “an imaginary past, replete with nostalgia. **It has little, if anything, to do with the present**” (Yoshiko 2008, p. 261). For example, some folklore-related *anime* set in the **Taishō and Meiji (1989-1912)** periods are *Demon Slayer (Kimetsu no Yaiba 鬼滅の刃*, Sotozaki 2019) and *Otome Yōkai Zakuro おとめ妖怪ざくろ* (Kon 2010), and they both emphasise the change from a ‘traditional’ (pre-Western) Japan to a ‘modern’ (Westernised) Japan through their use of *yōkai* characters. This can be seen from the buildings, clothing, and the use of stylised art, often inspired by artwork pre-1850, such as the encyclopaedias of Toriyama Sekien (1776). However, many *anime* that incorporate folklore are set in the present-day (21st century) and because of this, the *yōkai* characters showing these past features stand out as having characteristics, clothing, or connections to a pre-modern, pre-Westernised Japan.

Furthermore, the Heian and Edo periods are viewed as important cultural phases without foreign influences, with the Heian period moving away from Chinese inspiration and the Edo period isolating from a majority of the world. These eras hold an image of a cultural, traditional, **‘true’ Japan created by famous directors, writers, or artists**. For example, **literary works from Japan’s medieval period (1185-1600)** held a tradition of longing for the past as they lamented **“the demise of manners and customs associated with the Heian period”** (Nosco 1990, p. 7). Furthermore, Paul Sutcliffe (2013) suggests that the Edo period is nostalgic to contemporary audiences as it is an idealisation of a pre-Westernised **Japan that is not historically ‘true’, but instead “a Japan that existed prior to American influence”** (Azuma 2009, p.22; Sutcliffe 2013, p.184). As such, **nostalgia for this era comes from the disconnect between a ‘traditional’ Japan, and a Westernised Japan**. Thus, there is a desire to go back to a **‘true’ Japaneseess, as Edo was “the site of authentic Japan”** (Sutcliffe 2013, p. 183). This desire is reminiscent of *minzokugaku* 民俗学 as Yanagita Kunio desired a **‘true’ Japan that existed before Westernisation**. He believed that collecting *yōkai* stories could **“be seen as acknowledgment of their value as cultural commodities evocative of an idealised past rapidly being displaced by Western industrial modernity”** (Foster 2016, p. 141). **Yanagita’s impact is seen through the continuation of nostalgia being intrinsically connected to *yōkai***.

In *anime*, the connection between nostalgia and folklore has a deep connection to the Edo period that surrounds folklore-related characters. **Sutcliffe suggests that this idealised Edo figures as “commodified nostalgia”** (Sutcliffe 2013, p. 182-183) as they are not accurate to the real Edo period. The image created by *anime* is an idealisation of these pre-Westernised time periods connecting to *yōkai* characters. As *anime* do not need to be accurate representations of Japan's real past, the *mangaka* (manga artists), directors, and designers give themselves the freedom to change visual characteristics in order to fit into a desired aesthetic as they create an idealised image based on what the audience recognise as the Japanese past.

Theories

The methodological framework of this study applies semiotics to analyse and interpret the nostalgia constructed in recent *anime*. Visual semiotics refers to the way that images represent deeper meanings in a narrative by communicating a message (Okuyama 2015, p.4). In the *anime* in this article, the character design, clothing, and *yōkai* features are all visual signifiers that show a past or pre-Western Japan. In fact, **Ehrat suggests that “semiology is not even a classification of signs; rather,**

it is a taxonomy that **assigns differences and identities to ‘units’ called signifiers and signifieds”** (Ehrat 2016, p.112). By using graphic visual signifiers, I can analyse specific features to show that the signified **idealised ‘past Japan’ is prominent**. Furthermore, by comparing **yōkai** to previous representations, I can show how the visual signifiers are manipulated in present-day media. As such, each **yōkai** characteristic or article of clothing can be viewed as a visual signifier being directed to passively represent the **Japanese past and the ‘idealised pre-Western period’ seen in current anime**.

By using visual semiotics to find these signifiers, this study draws from research into *cultural nostalgia*. In the field of nostalgia studies, Svetlana Boym coined the terms *restorative nostalgia*, the past seen as truth and tradition leading to the desire to recreate the past, and *reflective nostalgia*, a longing for a time or place outside of someone's own experience without recreating it (Boym 2001; 2007, p. 13). *Reflective nostalgia* can often be seen in Japanese media, for example, Susan Noh (2017) analysed the appearance of nostalgia and Japanese identity in the film *Your Name* (Shinkai 2016), using the *iyashikei* (癒し系) genre (*manga* and *anime* that have a healing effect) to show how the transitions between past and present create a nostalgia that builds towards a future rather than one that rebuilds the past (Noh 2017, p. 25). Furthermore, Boym suggested that the cinematic representation of nostalgia can be **seen as a double exposure of two images “home and abroad, past and present, of dream and everyday life”** (Boym 2007, p. 7), and this is reflected in the juxtaposition of **yōkai** and humans. This **“double exposure”** applies to various folklore-inspired *manga*, *anime* and films, because of this aforementioned link between **yōkai** as the idealised past, and humans as the present.

A part of *cultural nostalgia* is *collective memory*, and this connects to societal, national, and the shared memories of a group of people (Boym 2007, p. 14; Confino 2008, p. 81; Erll, Nünning & Young 2008). For example, people that make up Japanese society are part of a symbolic cultural memory of a shared past, therefore, they can recognise things that have been passed down through generations (Erll 2008, p. 5). Furthermore, *collective memory* is linked to symbols or images seen **repeatedly in the media to the extent that they have become one people’s idealised image**. For instance, something seen in the media outside of **one’s personal experience, such as historical time periods, or as part of identity and nationalism, such as one’s identity to their own culture, or country** (Erll, Nünning & Young 2008, p. 2). This, in turn, implies that someone is creating these memories, for example, through the media. In this case, images of **yōkai** in Japan are all part of a *collective memory*

because of how often they are presented. *Yōkai* are consistently connected to a pre-Taishō image of Japan through their characteristics, appearance, and clothing, and these images accumulate to create a shared cultural memory of an idealised image, which continues to be perpetuated in media through the signifier of *yōkai* characters.

Jeffrey Olick analysed the metaphorical “cultural storehouse” which can hold things in the collective memory of a society (Olick 2008, p. 157). A “cultural storehouse” is something that exists within the minds of a group of people and so, through *collective memory*, what is presented in the media is something everyone in a group or society will collectively recognise. The appearance of *yōkai* changes throughout these *anime* because of artistic designs, however, certain features of folklore and *yōkai* characteristics remain and this presents the image of *yōkai* to the audience even when there are very few connections to previous depictions. In this sense, there is a “cultural storehouse” that holds different aspects of *yōkai* characters, and this can be drawn from when creating an *anime* world. Susan Napier analysed this in relation to nostalgia, suggesting that ‘the past’ is used in media as a “synchronic warehouse of cultural scenarios” (Napier 2006, p. 289; Appadurai 1990, p. 4.). In addition, Olick suggests that aspects of culture can be chosen as signifiers that are culturally recognised. As such, *yōkai* act as a passive reminder for a Japanese past because of their reoccurring, and recognisable, visual signifiers.

The concept ‘media memory’ is defined as the memories that come from what is seen in the media. All media is edited and approved before being shown to audiences, therefore, the media is somewhat controlled, which brings forth the question: why are these images being presented? Erll (2008) suggests that there are modes of representation that create different cultural memories in the audience, depending on the media used (Erll, Nünning & Young 2008, p. 390), so these representations can be analysed for deeper meaning. An example of cultural memories can be seen in *Spirited Away* because the film connects traditional Japanese culture with contemporary culture (MacWilliams 2014, p. 256). Miyazaki stands out as he expresses “Japaneseness” in his films by showing the diversity of Japanese culture, and he emphasises his personal longing for the Taishō and Showa eras (*ibid.* p. 257). Miyazaki connects his personal nostalgia of past cultural memories to a collective nostalgia relating to Japanese identity, as such, the popularity of his films (1963-present) has developed media memories over time.

The continued representation of *yōkai* creates a collective memory using what reoccurs throughout different *anime*. By looking at four signifiers in recent *anime*, I track the *collective memory* of *yōkai* features and suggest that there is a current phase of a passive cultural nostalgia coming from the idealised image of a pre-Western Japan.

Case study of *yōko*

This study investigates two ways *yōkai* characters semiotically show *collective memory* and *cultural nostalgia* in the worlds of *anime*; this is through aspects of character features and their clothing. These visual signifiers hold similarities across the three *anime* of this study, *Fukigen na Mononoke-an* 不機嫌なモノノ怪庵 (Iwanaga & Kawasaki 2016-2019), *Otome Yōkai Zakuro* おとめ妖怪ざくろ (Kon 2010), and *Kamisama Hajimemashita* 神様はじめました (Daichi 2015-2016). The character features relate to previous depictions of *yōkai*, acting as a signifier that connects them to the past. In addition, the clothing worn by these characters can be recognised as the costume of pre-**Taishō time periods** and are uncommon in present-day Japan. These visual signifiers can be collected as part of a cultural storehouse linking *yōkai* characters to Japan's past.

The *yōko* 妖狐 is a type of *yōkai*-fox. They are “**ambiguous spirits in Japanese folklore**; they are seen as messengers for Inari, the rice deity, but they also function as the shape-shifting tricksters so common in **mythology**” (Heinzekehr 2012, p. 5-6). These are separated into various categories of good, bad, and indifferent (Casal 1959, p. 3); within this, white foxes (*byakko* 白狐) **that can be culturally considered ‘good’ foxes** (*zenko* 善狐) **are related to Inari the rice deity, and ‘bad’ wild foxes** (*nogitsune* or *yako* 野狐) are common foxes that bring ill luck (ibid.). The following analysis will identify the features of *yōko* characters in three *anime* that draw from folkloric depictions, to show how these features act as signifiers for the past. There are four specific visual signifiers that create a ***yōko* character and connect these characters with Japan’s past** historical periods, rather than the present day of the *anime* because of connections with historical images and knowledge. The signifiers are fur colour, the number of tails, supernatural abilities, and clothing. Through the connection to past depictions, these four signifiers show how a similar image of *yōko* can be observed across various *anime* to the extent that they have recognisable characteristics that are symbolic because of how widespread their image is in the popular imagination.

Fukigen na Mononoke-an

In *Fukigen na Mononoke-an* 不機嫌なモノノ怪庵 (Iwanaga & Kawasaki 2016-2019) the *yōko* character Yahiko shows four visual signifiers. The character can be seen with white fur, a long fire-covered tail that splits into three, with black paws and ears (Iwanaga & Kawasaki 2016-2019, episode 7, 09:40). This design has meaning through the **colours which are “discussed as a semiotic resource - a mode, which,**

like other modes, is multifunctional in its uses in the culturally located **making of signs**” (Kress & Van Leeuwen 2002, p. 343). In folklore a fox depicted with white fur is a messenger of Inari, the rice deity, and therefore resembles a *zenko* (善狐) not a *nogitsune* (野狐). Despite this, the character is not known to have a connection to Inari within the narrative. Therefore, the use of white on this character implies other meanings. Since ancient times, white in Japan has been considered sacred and denotes innocence and purity (Cheng 2009, p. 1927). However, Yahiko also has black ears and paws. **Black, as a contrast to white, “is a kind of dirty, gloomy, and tarnished color in Japan. It is a symbol of [ferocity] as well as death” (Cheng 2009, p. 1928)**, so the combination of white and black fur suggests the character has some level of purity and is not an enemy of the main characters; however, the black brings the character away from the divine messengers of Inari and matches the **character’s trickster nature**.

Furthermore, the original image of *yōko* in Japan came from myths and stories from China and their image stayed relatively unchanged. This is reflected in the character design as Yahiko has one long tail that splits into three tails, a physical feature that directly correlates this character with *yōkai* depictions from Japanese myths and legends. **For example, Utagawa Kuniyoshi’s (1849-50) depiction of a *yōko* from *Sangoku yōko zue* 三国妖狐図会 (The Magic Fox of Three Countries) shows how *yōko* were depicted during the late Edo period, with a fox’s tail that begins as one and then splits into nine.** In addition, the number of tails is an important aspect of many *yōkai*, there are various stories of foxes with nine-tails and cats with two tails (Casal 1959, p.28, 63). The number of tails on a fox shows their power and this is a reoccurring visual feature for *yōko* in various media that can also be seen in Yahiko.

Furthermore, another reoccurring aspect of folklore that appears in various *anime* is the supernatural abilities possessed by *yōko*. One form of these powers is in a *yōko’s* tail producing fire (*kaibi* 怪火), and this is **seen around Yahiko’s tails and neck. *Yōko* fire is often called *kitsune-bi* (狐火 foxfires), for example, seen in the Edo period depictions of Toriyama Sekien (Toriyama, Yoda & Alt 2016, p. 109), and in various folktales where fire comes from the fox’s tail or breath (Casal 1959, p. 10; Foster 2015, p. 185).** By showing similarities to these older depictions, this *anime* creates an image for *yōkai* that has cultural roots in folklore.

Furthermore, clothing acts as a key visual signifier. Yahiko shows the *yōko* ability to shapeshift, which is common for foxes and other *yōkai* animals such as *tanuki*, both of which are known for shapeshifting and deceiving people (Foster 2015, p. 178). **In Yahiko’s human shapeshifted form he wears an outfit that resembles a Shinto priest’s costume,**

sashinuki hakama (指貫袴) that can be seen to balloon around the ankles, and *kariginu* (狩衣) hunting clothing, with wide sleeves (Iwanaga & Kawasaki 2016-2019, episodes 7, 20:17). *Kariginu* was commonly hunting attire worn by nobles in the Heian court, or, in present-day Japan, white *kariginu* are worn by Shinto priests to show purity during rituals (Cali, Dougill & Ciotti 2013, p. 31).

This costume that was worn in the Heian period can be seen in ancient Japanese dictionaries (Matsumura, Yamaguchi, and Wada 2001, p. 1466) that show a further similarity in the decorative red cords through the sleeves (*sodekkuri* 袖括り) of **Yahiko's attire**. However, the main difference is that the *anime* character does not wear an *eboshi* (a hat worn by court nobles), which is a “standard part of a priest's attire” (Cali, Dougill & Ciotti 2013, p. 32). As such, this *yōkai* character creates an image of Shinto by wearing familiar attire but is not depicted as a Shinto priest or a Heian court noble in the *anime*, and this is reflected in his clothing from the missing *eboshi*. In addition, the character Yahiko always wears this clothing, which is irregular in the present-day for those not connected to Shinto. As such, these aspects, create a cultural image for Yahiko that **connect the character to a generalised ‘past Japan’, despite the *anime* being set in the 21st century**, even suggesting that the character has not adapted to human society as he wears clothing that does not fit in with contemporary humans.

Otome Yōkai Zakuro

The four visual features continue with the character from the *anime* *Otome Yōkai Zakuro* おとめ妖怪ざくろ (Kon 2010) called Kushimatsu who is depicted as a large wolf-like fox with two tails (Kon 2010, episode 11, 04:58). Kushimatsu also has white fur, suggesting purity which fits the narrative of this character as she is the servant of a celestial being. Furthermore, when in a fox form, Kushimatsu is seen alongside a blue moon that is given an ethereal glow on the screen, suggesting both calm and beauty (Kress & Van Leeuwen 2002, p. 349; Cheng 2009, p. 1927). **As such, the use of white and blue in the character's design creates an otherworldly atmosphere.**

In addition, this character also has two tails which shows the reoccurring common signifier of a *yōko* character having multiple tails in *anime*, reflecting the older depictions from legends and myths. However, **Kushimatsu's tails do not start as one and split**, instead they are two separate tails, and this can also be seen in Edo depictions of *yōkai*. Two tails are often connected to *yōkai* cats in Japan called *nekomata* 猫又, a type of *bakeneko* 化け猫 (monster cat) which can also transform

and deceive (Casal 1959, p. 62). The representation of multiple tails on *yōkai* characters reflects to the audience a link to recognisable folklore.

This character also has abilities seen in earlier depictions of *yōko*, such as flight, which has also been depicted in traditional artwork such as from Ogata Gekko (1887) who depicted a red *yōko* fox wearing layers of clothing and flying through the sky. Flight has been further attributed to celestial foxes in Japan such as messengers of Inari and the connected Hindu deity Dakinīten who rode on a flying fox (Casal 1959, p. 3, p. 22). **Kushimatsu's connection to celestial beings in the anime** is emphasised by this ability. In addition, Kushimatsu can also shapeshift between a big fox form and an anthropomorphic being (as an animal standing on two feet with human-like emotions) that has a long animal snout, small ears, white fur, and wearing purple kimono (Kon 2010, episode 3, 04:50). Although *yōko* in folklore are able to transform into humans, Casal (1959) suggests that this is more common in foxes that are red, white, or yellow, that have escaped thunder three times, and are five hundred years old (Casal 1959, p. 8). The *anime* shows the ability to transform, but not into a human, keeping the image of humans and *yōkai* separate.

Kushimatsu's image can be compared to other depictions that show anthropomorphic *yōko* wearing human clothing, for example in illustrative works that present *yōko* with layers of clothing as they do human-like actions show influence from pre-**Taishō periods of Japan** (Ochiai 1860). This *anime* is set in the Meiji period, in 1873, and the clothing reflects this period. Kushimatsu wears purple, a symbol of nobility in the pre-Meiji period which reflects her status as leader of the *yōkai* characters in this *anime*. The human characters wear darker colours which Liza Dalby (1993) suggests was common for the time period as **“early Meiji commoners continued to wear familiar conservative styles and dark colors”** (Dalby 1993, p. 66). During the Meiji period Japan was rapidly Westernising, so the *anime* also presents clothing colours as a visual way to separate *yōkai* and human characters.

Kamisama Hajimemashita

Finally, in *Kamisama Hajimemashita* (Daichi 2015-2016) there is the *yōko* character, Tomoe, who continues these reoccurring visual signifiers. Tomoe is presented as a *nogitsune* (*yako* 野狐) in a human-like form with fox ears and a tail (Daichi 2015-2016, episode 5, 06:52). Wild foxes in Japan are typically the common red fox (*vulpes vulpes*) (Foster 2015, p. 178), **however, Tomoe's colour scheme does not match this** because he has white fur, once again suggesting a white fox 白狐 which are benevolent and showing purity (Casal 1959, p. 3). This is further **reflected into the narrative as Tomoe is the protector of a Land God's**

Shinto shrine. Although white foxes are messengers of the deity Inari, this shrine is presented as unconventional for taking a fox as a protector instead of the common guards, lion-dogs (*komainu* 狛犬). The colour scheme of white and purple also create a regal atmosphere (Dalby 1993, p. 259-260) that highlights the higher social position of the character. **Therefore, the character's white fur and regal colours can be recognised** as a way of connecting the character to the higher status of a Shinto shrine and to celestial beings.

Furthermore, Tomoe can teleport, create fire, and shapeshift, similar to other *yōko*. His name Tomoe (巴衛), contains the kanji 巴 (*tomoe*, comma-design), often connected to Shinto shrines through the commonly seen symbol of the *mitsudomoe* (三つ巴) which shows three *tomoe* in a circle, and the kanji 衛 (defence, protection). Furthermore, a famous historical figure from the Heian Period was Tomoe Gozen (巴御前), a female warrior that served in the Genpei war (1180–1185). As such, this character name shows that there is historical, and possibly Shinto inspiration in the world-building. Furthermore, unlike the previous two *yōko* characters in this section, Tomoe only has one tail throughout the series. Depictions of *yōko* with one tail can be seen in the Edo period image by Toriyama Sekien who depicted foxes and *kitsune-bi* (Toriyama, Yoda & Alt 2016, p. 109). **As such, Tomoe's character design through the name and appearance show inspiration from previous Japanese periods.**

In addition, Tomoe wears layers of clothing, with white under-clothing (*juban*), a kimono, and over kimono that hangs off his shoulders, all tied with a large *obi* (belt) in the front (Daichi 2015-16, episode 1, 05:44). The use of *obi* and kimono act as signifiers to Tomoe's character that can be analysed because they seem to connect him to conventional aspects of *yōko*. **For example, "front-tied obi formerly was an indication that a girl had passed adulthood [...] by the 1880s, however, only prostitutes in the licensed quarters, crones over age sixty, and widows tied the obi in front"** (Dalby 2001, p.97). This links Tomoe to the Edo or early Meiji period and emphasises the androgyny of the character. *Yōko* are often known to be **genderless and often transform between male and female "(most often masquerading as a beautiful and seductive temptress) to deceive humans to their advantage"** (Okuyama 2015, p.180). Therefore, Tomoe wearing clothing in a female style can also imply that he is androgynous and moves freely in his gender and form. In the first episode, he goes between wearing large female *obi* and smaller men's *obi* (Daichi 2015-2016, season 1, **episode 1**), **emphasising this fluidity in the character's design and behaviour.**

Furthermore, his clothing shows that Tomoe has not adapted to current society. He does not always wear clothing that would allow him to

fit in with humans as he does not wear current or 'Western clothing' (*yōfuku*), only traditionally Japanese clothing (*wafuku*). The black crests (*kamon*) on his kimono show that it is formal, and the more crests the more formal (Dalby 2001, p. 206-207). His clothing comes from a pre-**Taishō Japan and would not commonly be worn daily in present-day** Japan unless for festivals, or particular ceremonies. Tomoe often wears this clothing in casual every-day settings, which is presented in the *anime* as **strange, with many human character's asking to take their photo with him** because he stands out, or pointing and staring throughout scenes (Daichi 2015-2016, season 1, episode 3, 12:25-12:30; episode 11, 14:45-14:50). **As such, Tomoe's clothing furthers his status of being connected to a 'past'** Japan and not the present-day.

These four visual signifiers, fur colour, the number of tails, supernatural abilities, and clothing, are seen across these three *yōko* characters. They are reoccurring features, recognisable in media memory to an audience who know these aspects of Japanese culture. As such they are part of the cultural storehouse of symbols and images that make up the image of *yōkai* features, showing a passive connection between *yōkai*, their past depictions, as well as past time periods of Japan.

Discussion

The four visual signifiers that define these characters as *yōko* connect them to past time periods instead of the human society they live in. Individually, these are simple characteristics, but together the three characters show that there are reoccurring features and themes. All three characters can be recognised in their different shapeshifted forms as *yōko* because of these signifiers coming from previous visual depictions of *yōkai*. In addition, these characters come from the Heian or Edo periods **reflecting an 'authentic' Japan without foreign influence through their designs and clothing**. Therefore, the three *anime* show how media is drawing from and shaping the collective imagination of this selected image of the past through common *yōkai* features that resonate within the cultural memory of the viewers (Erll, Nünning & Young 2008, p. 398). This continues the current phase of passive *cultural nostalgia* that can be seen through semiotics.

Colour and Character Design

An important signifier comes from the characters. Ian Condry (2009) discussed the importance of *anime* study through the character design elements (Condry 2009, p. 3). The colour, clothing, and physicality together make up a character's personality and existence within the fictional world. This directly applies to the details and symbols of

world-building as characters make up a strong connection to the realms in which they exist, and this adds to the semiotic analysis. The visual images are seen by the *anime's* audience and relate to a *cultural nostalgia* in the form of *reflective nostalgia* (Boym 2001; 2007) because of these many past signifiers.

The signifier of a *yōko* with more than one tail can be seen throughout Japanese folklore and these depictions have inspired games and *anime*. For example, *Pokémon* (Yuyama 1997-present) character designs are often inspired by various *yōkai*. For example, characters that resemble *yōko* are the fox Pokémon Vulpix which has three tails and the evolved form called Ninetails which has nine. The mass spread of *Pokémon* as a franchise further spread this image of *yōko* as a part of the cultural memory surrounding *yōkai* in present-day Japan. Furthermore, the popular *anime* *Naruto* (Date 2002-2017) has *Kyuubi no Kitsune 九尾の狐* (the nine-tailed fox) based on a famous nine-tailed *yōko* of the same name. The image of a *yōko* with multiple tails is a very popular feature that reoccurs throughout media and is a key signifier that continues in more recent *anime*.

In addition, human characters in the *anime* connect with the past through their relationship with *yōkai*. The *yōkai* characters embody the cultural past that the human characters do not directly relate to, as such, this creates a passive sense of belonging in the current phase of nostalgia in *anime*. The *yōkai* characters do not let go of their past, as seen in how they remain unmodern and un-Westernised, and this creates a sense of **reassurance that this 'true' Japanese culture (Azuma 2009, p. 22; Sutcliffe 2013, p. 184) still exists**. Thus, the juxtaposition of humans and *yōkai* brings together the past and present as the two come together throughout the narrative. Collective media memory is being used to create a symbol of *cultural nostalgia* to present a longing for the past through the *yōkai*. The media is somewhat controlled by what is allowed, and, therefore, these nostalgic images can be analysed as what is being presented to the audience, suggesting deeper ideas of nostalgia towards traditional Japan prevalent in current society.

Clothing

The clothing of the *yōkai* characters further suggest a past Japan as the use of *kimono* is incorporated to create an atmosphere. In Japan, '*wafuku*' (Japanese clothing) is 'traditional' clothing, also called Japan's national costume with the *wa* (和) of *wafuku* (和服) referring to Japan (Dalby 2001, p. 67), compared to '*yōfuku*' (洋服 Western-style clothing). Human characters in these *anime* are shown as contemporary through their clothing (part of the present, 21st century society). This highlights

the *yōkai* character's clothing as unusual within the fictional world of each *anime*. The use of clothing shows the motif of *yōkai* symbolising the past because clothing, as well as costume in the sense of what a character is wearing, is taken from society, "playing a central role in expressing their personality, identity, and behavioural tendencies" (Odundo 2021, p. 2216). As such, within the three *anime*, the tendencies of the characters are reflected in their clothing.

The continuous use of older Japanese clothing by *yōkai* characters throughout all three *anime* suggests a connection to a past Japan. Sheila Cliffe (2020) suggests that "traditional clothing is clothing that is relatively static, functioning to maintain customs and social order, valorizing the past" (Cliffe 2020, p. 7). By giving *yōkai* aspects of the past in their design, these *anime* show a longing for the past as a part of *reflective nostalgia*. **There isn't a need to recreate the past, or to suggest anyone should wear this clothing from selected pre-Taishō periods, but by wearing this clothing, *yōkai* characters represent the ideal image of a pre-Westernised Japan.** As such, the *yōko* do not adapt to present-day society. These characters live in the 21st century, or in the rapid modernisation period of Japan, but their clothing can be collectively recognised as intentionally selected pre-Western clothing.

The physical appearance of the *anime* characters includes clothing worn not to continue social order or customs, but instead to represent a character as existing in a theoretical past in comparison to the present-day. This represents a cultural, indirect nostalgia as a remembrance for the times when *wafuku* were worn in everyday life. The use of *wafuku* in *anime* is, thus, as a symbolic shared cultural memory. Erll (2008) suggests that this is a cultural and collective idea that has become a part **of one's own memory because of representations of the past in present day media** (Erll, Nünning & Young 2008, p. 5). In this case, *wafuku* can hold personal nostalgia in Japan as they are worn at times in the present day, however these *anime* draw on the cultural image of *wafuku*, rather than their use in current society.

Therefore, using semiotic analysis, these signifiers make up a cultural storehouse of *yōkai* features. The reoccurring clothing and aspects of a *yōkai* character show the current phase of Japanese cultural nostalgia as a passive image of a pre-Western Japan. From this image, it seems that *yōkai* and humans are the past and present coming together. Their features and clothing show that *yōkai* are situated in the idealised past, as they present an unmodernised and un-Westernised motif, following the imagined nostalgic image of the pre-Edo and Heian periods.

Conclusion

In conclusion, visual semiotics can be utilised to research the current phase of nostalgia in the construction of animated mediums in 21st century Japan. The idealisation of a pre-**Taishō image has historically gone** through a number of phases in a non-linear process. Through the analysis of **yōkai** characters as signifiers for a signified ideal Japanese past, this research is starting to uncover how nostalgia is manipulated and used within *anime*.

This study focused on four reoccurring visual signifiers, fur colour, the number of tails, supernatural abilities, and clothing. Through the medium of *anime*, past and present images of Japan are brought together. **Yōkai** characters embody *cultural nostalgia* and *reflective nostalgia* as a longing for the distant cultural past through the visual designs presented to the audience. However further research can investigate these themes in the landscape and story narratives of the *anime* through signifiers relating to the **yōkai** characters and continuing their connection to an idealised past. This would show a more complete view of the passive nostalgia seen within the world-building. This research draws from anthropology, media, **yōkai** culture, identity, and nostalgia studies, and also relates to the globalisation of **yōkai** on an international stage as studies could investigate how Japanese audiences view **yōkai** characters, in comparison to audiences from other countries who do not have the collective memory or cultural background knowledge.

By using visual semiotics to pave the way for future research, a deeper understanding of the current phase of nostalgia towards an idealised past can be interpreted from how **yōkai** bring forth collective memory to show *cultural nostalgia* in *anime* and other forms of media in Japan and worldwide.

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COLLABORATION BETWEEN TWO DOOMED ARTS IN POST-WAR JAPAN: KABUKI AND NIHONGA

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Abstract: This article deals with the impact of collaboration between kabuki theatre and Japanese painting (Nihonga) during the first two decades after the Second World War, when both genres struggled to survive. As a means of drawing an audience, the kabuki theatre produced newly written plays and adaptations of popular historical novels, whose stage sets were designed by Nihonga painters. As a result, the article illustrates that stage design by renowned Nihonga painters like Maeda Seison and Hashimoto Meiji during the 1950s and 1960s led to a different aesthetic in terms of color and image composition for kabuki scenery, that successful plays were the result of combinations of specific playwrights, actors, and painters and that the involvement of painters also helped improve kabuki's social status.

Keywords: Kabuki, *Nihonga*, stage design

Introduction

On August 15, 1945, the Japanese Empire was defeated in its war with the Allied Powers. From September the Occupation of the Allied Forces commenced and until the Peace Treaty concluded in September 1951, the Supreme Commander for the Allied Power (S.C.A.P.) implemented their censorship policies on Japan. The S.C.A.P. saw kabuki as outdated (Brandon 2009: 345) and **too attached to traditional values and “the future for the rebirth of an authentic and contemporary Nihonga seemed bleak”** (Rimer 1995: 61). This opinion continued among the public even after the occupation ended in 1952 as the following quotation indicates. On May 26, 1957, the following text appeared in the daily newspaper *Yomiuri Shinbun*:

“The reason why contemporary Japanese painting has fallen into a kabuki-like existence, is because it is a world in which only a few virtuoso painters have been able to create works of art. The crisis of *Nihonga* is coming. Art is about to be defeated. Japan is about to be liberated and the value of its isolationist *Nihonga* is about to face rigorous international criticism. This will not be the local, exotic kind of sweet praise of the past” (*Yomiuri Shinbun*, May 26, 1957, cited after Furuta 2018: 318).

During the first years after the Second World War *Nihonga* was labeled second class or a doomed art with hardly any prospects to adjust to the modern

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trends in society_(Larking 2019: 165, Ishida 2020: 19). During the same period, the occupation forces banned plays glorifying loyalty or other feudal ideals in the traditional kabuki theatre. Both *Nihonga* and kabuki were challenged by international western standards in their respective fields and even teamed up to overcome their outdated image and to break new creative ground.

This article concentrates on the kabuki theatre during 1950s and 1960s when it joined efforts with *Nihonga* painters to overcome its crisis. It discusses how kabuki in particular tried to appeal to its shrinking audience not only by newly written plays but also by innovative stage sets designed by *Nihonga* artists.

Before discussing these developments in the theatre, I offer some remarks on the term *Nihonga*.

Nihonga

From the beginning of the Meiji period painters working within earlier painting traditions looked for concepts of a new modern Japanese painting.² The result was named *Nihonga*, **literally “Japanese painting”** but also labelled neo-traditional painting in order to distinguish it from the traditional painting schools before the Meiji restoration. During the first 20 years of the Meiji period (1868–1912) painters focused on western painting (*yōga*), eagerly adopting its painting techniques and materials. At the same time, early *Nihonga* painters also borrowed from western painting such as perspective for compositional organization, chiaroscuro, and subject matter. On the other hand, *yōga* painters incorporated Japanese aspects in their artworks, especially Japanese subject matter across the later 19th and through the 20th century (Larking 2019: 166). Due to the influence of Western painting techniques also in *Nihonga*, paintings have often been categorized solely by the materials used: Paintings executed on canvas in oil and watercolors were considered *yōga*, and works executed on paper in ink and mineral paints mixed with glue were considered *Nihonga*. In her seminal catalog on the latter genre, Ellen Conant defines *Nihonga* as **“all Japanese painting [...] from the late nineteenth century [forward and] executed, however loosely, in traditional media and formats” (Conant 1995: 14)**. In this sense the term is used in this article, although the title of a 2006 exhibition at the National Museum of Modern Art, **“Modern Art in Wandering: In Between the Japanese- and Western-style Paintings” (*Yuragu kindai: Nihonga to yōga no hazama* 2006)** got to the heart of the matter.

² The influence of Ernest Fenollosa (1853-1908), American art historian of Japanese art, professor of philosophy and political economy at Tokyo Imperial University shows the extent to which the perception of Japanese art was oriented toward Western concepts. In 1885 Fenollosa and Okakura Kakuzō (1863-1913) initiated a movement to create ‘new Japanese painting’ which would incorporate aspects of Western art. In 1887 the Tokyo State School of Art was founded by Okakura. In 1896, a Western Painting and Design Department was added. Since then, the two basic painting styles of the Meiji period had become established (Satō 1999: 192).

After World War II, *Nihonga* painters had to break away from the nationalistic image that the subjects of their historical heroes, which they had supported during the war period. With the defeat in the war and the change in political values, *Nihonga* and especially historical subjects were criticized as unrealistic, and many painters changed their subject matter (Ishida 2020: 19). Matthew Larking emphasizes that the theory of being a doomed art (*metsubōron*) was instrumental in bringing about westernized forms of pictorial consciousness and with it an increasingly westernized sense of individuality and identity within *Nihonga*. Furthermore, the binary of *Nihonga* and *yōga*, as well as discourses between the artists of both genres generated also new pictorial approaches within *Nihonga*. By the 1960s many of its painters had found individual styles that could compete with contemporary painting in other countries (Larking 2019: 185).

Kabuki theatre

Before looking at example plays with stage designs by *Nihonga* artists, I introduce an overview of the kabuki theater after the war.

Since its foundation at the turn of the 16th to the 17th century kabuki had developed from extravagant dances and skits performed by female entertainers and prostitutes, in gorgeous as well as crossdressing costumes, into an all-male performing art specializing in specific characters and with the female role players (*onnagata*) as one of its attractions by the middle of the 17th century. Its plays transfigured legends and historical or fictional heroes into a stylized romantic manner. These heroes provided a framework for entertaining love stories, thrilling intrigues or crucial crime stories that fascinated the townspeople of Edo and set trends in urban culture and fashion. In kabuki the **theatregoers are attracted by the actor's art that required years of training to** master the acting techniques required for each type of role. In kabuki both, acting and staging are stylized and follow conventions that had been developed and passed down from generation to generation. The same is true for costumes and the typical makeup (*kumadori*) which also have meaning and function as a visual language (Iezzi 2016: 108–118).

Due to social and economic changes in the course of the modernization and industrialization during the Meiji period (1868–1912) kabuki theaters were often in financial difficulties or went bankrupt. Since the beginning of the 20th century these theaters were purchased by the private theater production **company Shōchiku. By the 1930s the Shōchiku theatre trust had consolidated all** kabuki theatres as well as all kabuki actors under its management. In 1940, kabuki, like any other theater genre, was forced into line and obligated to support the war with its performances (Brandon 2009: 137–144). It struggled to survive after the war when most of its theaters were destroyed, including the eminent Kabukiza in Tokyo.

Under the allied occupation historical plays (*jidaimono*) focusing on **feudal ideals such as absolute loyalty to one's superior were censored between** 1945 and 1949 as they were considered of supporting feudal and therefore undemocratic thinking (Brandon 2009: 347–356). However, already before

World War II, kabuki theater contents were thought of as a cultural heritage of the past, without any influence on contemporary culture. It had lost its function as contemporary art since the beginning of the 20th century and fascinated its audience solely as representational art. Already in 1930, the *yōga* painter **Kishida Ryūsei (1881–1929)** had suggested that there was no need to reform the form and subject matter of kabuki anymore, as people were well aware that the plays about loyalty and duty, and the victory of good over evil had lost its relation to the daily life of the people (Kamimura 2003: 156–57). After the war this traditional theatre had to struggle to survive due to the harsh competition of new media and entertainments genres like film and TV and the rising popularity of musicals.

Kabuki Scenery

Unlike many theatre traditions in Asia, kabuki makes extensive use of scenery, which is used to characterize various locations. However, where western scenery typically attempts to create the illusion of place by transforming the stage into that place, traditional kabuki scenery decorates and stylizes the stage. As a result, locale is suggested rather than created. Stage sets and backdrop painting of the kabuki stage are characterized by ukiyo-e painting style and aesthetic. Most objects are outlined with a black line and trees, rocks and pillars of buildings painted in a uniform manner without regard for a light source. Therefore, kabuki sets are characterized by flat surfaces while the painting of all objects contribute to the ambiance of an idealized, unified world created especially for kabuki characters and play narratives. Since the middle of the 18th century, ukiyo-e painters (*butai gaka*) executed these paintings under the supervision of the scenery workshop in a theatre (*dōgukata*) that had been the monopoly of Hasegawa Kanpei.³ During the Meiji period professional painters from outside the kabuki theatre world gradually became involved in this closed world of scenery design. Since the 1890s western style painters occasionally were commissioned with the design of realistic stage sets, most often for plays adapted from the western repertory, first on the kabuki stage and later for the new drama genres that emerged during the end of the Meiji period (Itō 2014: 111–116, Asahara 2000, 29–32). *Nihonga* painters in particular were perceived as competitors to the stage painters of the Hasegawa workshop. For this reason, painters such as Kubota Beisen (1852–1906) initially often served as consultants for costume and set design, before they also produced their own stage designs, primarily for new historical plays in kabuki around the turn to the 20th century (Kodama 2005: 5).⁴

As the traditional stage painters had difficulties in realizing the unfamiliar new sets for western dramas, ballet and opera performances that became

³ In the period covered by this article it was led by its 16th head. After the World War II Hasegawa Kanpei (1889-1964) founded the Hasegawa Ōdōgu K.K. in 1949 that evolved into the Kabukiza Butai K.K. after the retirement of Hasegawa Kanpei XVII (*1924) in 1983.

⁴ One of the earliest *Nihonga* artists contributing to kabuki stage set design were Matsuoka Eikyō (1881-1938) and Kubota Beisai (1874-1937) son of Beisen who had studied western painting with the pioneer of this art in Japan, Harada Naojirō (1863-1899) and *Nihonga* with his father and Hashimoto Gahō (1835-1908).

popular during the 1910s and 1920s, students of western painting at the Tokyo Art School helped out with designing and painting stage sets for such plays. At the first theatre in western architecture, the Imperial Theatre, that had opened in 1911, the first department ever for stage scenery in Japan had been founded that employed *yōga* painters who were in charge of sets for New Kabuki (*Shin kabuki*) plays, *Shinpa* and modern drama as well as musical (*kageki*) and ballet performances (Sakamoto 2002: 46–47). Since the 1920s also *Nihonga* artists had become integrated in theatre cultures and gradually in parts of kabuki.

New kabuki plays (*shinsaku kabuki*) and *Nihonga* painters in the 1950s and 1960s

After the Second World War the reconstruction of the Kabukiza theater and its reopening in January 1951 marked the beginning of the post-war era for kabuki. Especially the years between 1952 and 1965 that Samuel Leiter (2013) characterized as the years of crisis. **Therefore, the production company Shōchiku** invested in newly written plays in settings designed by esteemed *Nihonga* painters.

The reconstructed Kabukiza fostered a special relationship with *Nihonga*, as the stairways and the foyer on the second floor functioned and still functions today as a gallery. The artworks on display were painted by renowned modern painters, mainly *Nihonga* artists. **With this concept, the Shōchiku company** intended to brush up the image of kabuki by creating an artistic environment to be enjoyed by the audience during the intermissions.⁵

Performances at the Kabukiza in the 1950s focused on popular traditional repertory and newly written plays, so called *shinsaku kabuki*.⁶ **Since Shōchiku's** first takeover of a theater in Tokyo back in 1910, the company had relied on this concept of the productions of classics plays of the Edo period and the performances of newly written dramas often tailored to the skills of specific star actors. In the 1950s historical fiction novels serialized in newspapers and magazines were adapted to the kabuki stage due to their popularity and to attract an audience that flocked to other entertainment attractions like film.

One of these authors was Osaragi Jirō (1897–1973)⁷ who was commissioned by Shōchiku to write plays for one of the stars of postwar kabuki, Ichikawa Ebizō IX (1909–1965). This actor was the eldest son of Matsumoto Kōshirō VII (1870–1949) and had been adopted in the Ichikawa family to eventually take over the top name in kabuki hierarchy, Ichikawa Danjūrō that had been vacant since the death of its last holder Danjūrō IX in 1903. The latter had no son, but two daughters. **Ebizō, at that time holding the stage name**

⁵ The highlights of this painting collection were showcased in an exhibition at the Yamatane Museum of Art in 2011 on the occasion of the reconstruction of the Kabukiza (*Shirarezaru Kabukiza no meiga* 2011).

⁶ For an overview and synopsis of new kabuki plays staged at the Kabukiza between 1953 and 1963 see Leiter 2013: 605-710.

⁷ He was primarily known for his historical fiction novels serialized in newspapers and magazines like *Kurama tengū* [Long-nosed goblin of Kurama] which he started writing in 1924. In 1950 he was awarded the Japan Art Academy Award for the novel *Kikyō* [Homecoming] and in 1964 he was awarded the Order of Culture. Osaragi's first success in the kabuki world had been a play about the tragic fate of the eight-century Chinese princess Yang Gueifei in 1951 with Ebizō IX in the male main role of the emperor Xuan Zong.

Ichikawa Komazō IX was adopted by the oldest daughter Ichikawa Suisen II (1882–1944) and her husband Ichikawa Sanshō V (1892–1956) in 1940. In the same year he adopted the prestigious stage name Ichikawa Ebizō IX and in April 1962 assumed the top name in the hierarchy of kabuki actors, Ichikawa Danjūrō XI (Nishiyama 2004: 311-315).

Ebizō IX he attracted crowds of especially female kabuki fans since he had shined as the handsome dandy and hero Sukeroku in a performance of the play in June 1946 at the Shōchiku owned Tōkyō Gekijō (Tokyo Theatre) that had survived the war. “Sukeroku” is one of the most renowned kabuki plays of the classic repertory and was first staged by Ichikawa Danjūrō II in 1713. The young **Ebizō had been nominated by the veteran star Onoe Kikugorō VI (1885–1949)** and leader of the theater troupe of the same name, to play the main part in the play under his instruction. This not only ennobled the young actor in the kabuki world but also dramatically heightened his audience popularity. The hype for **Ebizō IX increased even further with his performance as Prince Genji in “The Tale of Genji” that premiered in March 1951 at the Kabukiza.**⁸ This performance initiated the involvement of renowned *Nihonga* painters in the stage sets after the war. **The play is based on the novel by Tanizaki Jun’ichirō (1886–1965)** and was adapted for the stage by novelist Funabashi Seiichi (1904–1976). The March premiere and the October revival were directed by veteran playwright and **director Kubota Mantarō (1898–1963)**. The art and research for costumes and historical design were executed by *Nihonga* painter Yoshimura Tadao (1898–1952) renowned for historical genre painting and along with this the stage art was supervised by the *Nihonga* coryphaeus Yasuda Yukihiro (1864–1978). This performance triggered a veritable Genji boom and accelerated the hype about **Ebizō (Toita 1970: 136, 156–157; Leiter 2009: 148–149).**

As an actor **Ebizō IX was known for being almost possessed with a** harmonious and coherent interplay of content, acting and stage design. Therefore, he not only studied the historical background of his assigned roles, but he also insisted on the stage design by the most prestigious among the *Nihonga* artists, Maeda Seison (1885–1977). Well acclaimed for his historical paintings, Maeda designed the stage and costumes for plays written by Osaragi. **Thus, perfectionist Ebizō IX tried to eradicate any risk of inappropriate historical** stage sets and costumes. He also knew Maeda personally as he had acted as official matchmaker in his marriage (Leiter 2013: 324). Maeda had also served as a mediator in disputes within the Kabuki world of the actor, who was considered impulsive and of difficult character (Leiter 2013: 332). These two, kabuki actor and the *Nihonga* artist, were the perfect match for this collaboration.

Maeda Seison

Maeda Seison was born in Nakatsugawa, Gifu Prefecture, in 1885. He went to Tokyo at the age of sixteen and studied with *Nihonga* artist Kajita Hanko (1870–1917) who had been a popular illustrator then. He also participated in the

⁸ This play turned out to be a sensation for its content and stage aesthetic and started not the frequent production of theatre plays featuring the imperial court (*ōchōmono*). Until then plays featuring the Tenno or the imperial court had been a tabu in the socially still little appreciated art form of kabuki.

*Kōjika*⁹, literally “Society of babies,” which expressed the will of its members to re-begin their lives as artists by exploring new directions for *Nihonga*. He was a member of the Japanese Art Academy (*Nihon bijutsuin*), a non-governmental artistic organization which promoted the art of *Nihonga* through a biennial Academy Exhibition (*Inten*). Maeda intensely studied pre-modern paintings, including *Yamato-e*, thus acquiring a rich sense for colors and excellent brushwork technique. Although he was greatly impressed by the frescoes of the Italian Renaissance, he encountered on a trip to Europe in 1922, unlike other fellow painters during this time who matched western techniques with *Nihonga*, Maeda remained faithful to the traditional *Yamato-e* and *Rinpa* styles of Japanese painting. He worked with materials such as paper, silk, wood, and plaster, painted in inks, mineral and natural pigments mixed in animal glue (*nikawa*) (Furuta 2008: 312). He also became known for his watercolor paintings on historical themes and especially portraiture. He also worked widely on other subjects including still life, landscapes, and kabuki scenery. In 1937 he joined the Imperial Art Academy, in 1944, he was appointed official court painter to the Imperial Household Agency and in 1946 he became an official juror of the annual Japan Arts Exhibitions (*Nitten*). From 1950 he was appointed professor at the Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music until his retirement in 1959 and was awarded the Order of Culture in 1955. Despite his diverse background in traditions of Japan and Europe, Maeda throughout his career remained faithful to the traditional styles of Japanese painting and his historical **paintings of skillful composition, flowing lines in traditions of Japan and bright colors** established him as one of the most prestigious painters in post war Japan.

The stage design of the play “Young Nobunaga”

The most successful play that Osaragi Jirō wrote for Ebizō IX was “Young Nobunaga” (*Wakaki hi no Nobunaga*) with the actor in the title role that premiered in October 1952 at the Kabukiza under the direction of author Satomi Ton (1888–1983) and stage design by Maeda Seison. The play is a character study of the early days of the historically important military and political leader Oda Nobunaga (1534–1582). It consists of three acts and four scenes and traces his transformation from a carefree, selfish young man from the military nobility to a young military leader who accepts his position and responsibility inherited from his father in the midst of a tense political and military crisis. During the anarchic period of civil war in the 16th century, 18-year-old Nobunaga enjoys a carefree life in Kiyosu Castle. Despite the admonitions of his guardian, Hirata Nakatsukasa, he refuses to attend the ceremonies commemorating the death of his father who had died three years before. Hating the falsity of ceremonial occasions, Nobunaga spends his time with the village children instead, eating persimmons. Yayoi, the daughter of an Oda prisoner and secretly in love with **Nobunaga accidentally discovers a conspiracy by a spy for Nobunaga’s enemy**, Lord Imagawa, and a certain Hayashi Mimasaka. The latter prevents the spy to kill Yayoi, as he likes her. **Nobunaga’s guardian Nakatsukasa** commits ritual

⁹ This study group was founded in 1898 by Yasuda Yukihiko (1864-1978) and beside Maeda its members consisted of Imamura Shikō (1880-1916), Hayami Gyoshū (1894-1935), and Kobayashi Kokei (1883-1957).

suicide out of shame and responsibility because his protégé did not attend the ceremony. The shocked Nobunaga is lost in grief when the prisoner tells him about a planned attack by his enemy Imagawa. While his men are endlessly debating whether to attack Imagawa or surrender, Nobunaga orders his retainers to prepare for war. Before departing for battle, he dances the *kōwakamai* version of the noh play “Atsumori” accompanied by Yayoi beating the hand drum (Leiter 1997: 687). **Nobunaga’s change** from a seeming wastrel into a man of action, his change of mind and emotions are visually supported by the seasonal stage sets and costumes designed by Maeda to change symbolically from autumn to winter to summer.

Due to the appeal of Ebizō’s good looks and apt acting this play became one of the huge successes among the postwar *shinsaku kabuki* plays. In his **premiere review the theater scholar and critique Kagayama Naozō (1909–1978) stated: “The most exquisite point in this play were the stage set and costumes** by Maeda Seison. The superb elegance of his sense of taste made me feel avenged after a long time of declining aesthetic quality in sets and costumes in new kabuki **productions since the end of the war, and I enjoyed it very much”** (Kagayama 1952: 44). The reviewer for the restaging of the play at the Kabukiza in Osaka in **November 1952, emphasized that Maeda Seison’s stage sets, and costumes contributed significantly to the play’s success.** In particular, he raves about the first scene (fig. 1) which takes place at sunset under a large persimmon tree near **Nobunaga’s Castle.** According to the reviewer the warm light brown and orange colors of the scenery harmonically immersed in cozy stage lighting created a picturesque image of a golden day in late autumn. In terms of visual impacts, the last scene of the play located in the castle was also outstanding. In its Nobunaga was clad in a bright white dominated costume and performed his elegant dance in the middle of a gloomy atmosphere, caused by rumbling thunder, glaring lightning and down pouring rain (Inoue 1952: 50). By means of this gloomy setting with the actor shining elegantly in his bright formal outfit Maeda **provided a perfect setting for Ebizō to convey his fierce, decisive mood and his readiness to face responsibility in the face of war.**

In his stage design, Maeda had made extensive use of the *tarashikomi* techniques that is typical for *Rinpa* paintings but also in Maeda’s artworks. In this technique one color is painted over the other while the other is still wet. This can be recognized in the huge persimmon tree that dominates the set of the first act that takes place in the countryside outside the castle. Comparing the tree of the stage set for example to the painting *Momiji* [Maple Tree] (fig. 2) painted in 1960, it becomes clear that Maeda in his set design worked in the same techniques and used the same forms and aesthetics as in his *Nihonga* paintings, which added to the artistic impression of the set. This resulted in the actors performing within a huge *Nihonga* artwork. Unfortunately, there is no visual material available to trace the colors and compositions of these first performances of 1952. However, a **color photo of Ichikawa Danjūrō XII (1946–2013), the son of Ebizō IX, starring in the play “Young Nobunaga” in 1985 conveys an idea of the color palette of warm, pastel colors of the first scene that are also characteristic in Seison’s paintings** (Shōshiku Ishō K.K. 1991: 81).

By keeping the typical two-dimensional depiction that is not only typical for *Yamato-e* but also for ukiyo-e painting, which dominated and still dominates the kabuki scenery, Seison nevertheless created a new set aesthetic through his use of the typical *Nihonga* techniques such as *tarashikomi* and the pastel color palette prevailing in his tree and also in some historical paintings. In this way Maeda successfully freed the kabuki set of being superficially executed – a critique, which had been used against kabuki since the first information about western stage scenery had entered Japan in the 1890s.¹⁰

Hashimoto Meiji

Another *Nihonga* painter who also kept a close relationship to the kabuki world was Hashimoto Meiji (1904–1991) born in today's **Hamada City in Shimane Prefecture**.

He graduated from the Department of Japanese Painting at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts in 1931 and studied under the *Nihonga* painter **Matsuoka Eikyū** (1881–1938). In 1937 he was awarded a special prize at the New Bunten Exhibition, and he also became known for copying the mural paintings of the Golden Hall of **the Hōryūji Temple in Nara between 1940 and 1950 (Uemura 1980: 86)**.

During the postwar period *Nihonga* painters also looked abroad to Western modernism for artistic stimuli. They sought to explore new and also individual **ways in modern painting rather than relying upon the filtered versions relayed to them by their *yōga* contemporaries** whose pictorial expressions developed within Japan. The first two decades after World War II was also a time when in *Nihonga* parity and contemporaneity with international modernism, appeared possible as individual style gradually prevailed. The 1948 established Creative Art Society (*Sōzō Bijutsu Kyōkai*)¹¹ was founded by artists who broke away from the conservative government led *Nitten* exhibitions and can be characterized as one of *Nihonga's* **rapprochement with Western painting**. Hashimoto Meiji was one of these representatives of post-war *Nihonga* artists. As many of his fellow painters **Hashimoto Meiji's art based on Japanese traditional painting and traditional materials**, into which he weaved techniques and subjects of oil painting. However, he did not confine himself to a certain style or influence of his teachers. His oeuvre is characterized by clear shapes, strong colors, thick outlines, decorative style, and incorporates the emotional restraint, both towards the subject and the viewer that is typical of *Nihonga*. According to art critic Uemura Takachiyo (1911–1998), by unifying of Japanese and Western painting, though on the side of *Nihonga* at the limit of acceptability as such, Hashimoto created a brilliantly restrained avant-garde style in this genre (Uemura 1980: 86–87) This also showed in his **stage design for the play “Tokugawa Ieyasu.”**

¹⁰ One of the leading proponents of modernizing kabuki, Suematsu Kenchō (1855-1920) had lamented the quality of Japanese stage sets and commissioned the *yōga* painter Yamamoto Hōsui (1850-1906) to research the production of stage sets locally during his stay in Paris, so that he could then apply this knowledge in Japan. On his return to Japan, Yamamoto's ideas for modernizing stage design were not successful at any kabuki theater (Kanno 1993: 129-130).

¹¹ Members of this society were Uemura Shōkō (1902-2001), Yamamoto Kyūjin (1900-1986), Yoshioka Kenji (1906-1990), Fukuda Toyoshirō (1904-1970), Katō Eizō (1906-1972), Nishiyama Hideo (1911-1989), Sugiyama Yasushi, Mukai Kuma (1908-1987), and Hirota Tatsu (1904-1990).

The stage design of the play “Tokugawa Ieyasu”

At the beginning of the 1960s Shōchiku still relied on the staging of newly written historical plays as it did during the 1950s. However, now these plays extended not only one of the roughly four hours long morning or afternoon programs but extended across both sessions. One of the popular novels of the 1950s and 1960s was *Tokugawa Ieyasu* written by Yamaoka Sōhachi (1907–1978). Its 26 volumes appeared between 1953 and 1967, selling a total of more than 50 million copies. **Until then, Tokugawa Ieyasu’s skillful seizure of power after the death of Oda Nobunaga and Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1537–1598) had been historically perceived as cunning. His attempts to control the imperial family and court nobles had been incompatible with the prewar emperor-centered view of history. However, in his novel, Yamaoka depicted Ieyasu in a new and different way, as acting skillfully in the middle of the frequently changing power constellation in the second half of the 16th century. Shōchiku took advantage of the popular novel and produced a kabuki version. Writer and playwright Murakami Genzō (1910–2006) adapted it for the stage and directed the play. It was supervised by the famous veteran *Shin kabuki* playwright Hasegawa Shin (1884–1963) who had been the teacher of Yamaoka. *Nihonga* painter Hashimoto Meiji was commissioned with the set and costume design. It dealt with the intrigues around the rise of the founder of the Tokugawa shogunate, Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543–1616) in the shadow of the warlords Oda Nobunaga and Toyotomi Hideyoshi. The play begins in the year 1555 when the young Ieyasu was held hostage in the Rinzai Temple by one of the most powerful daimyo of that time, Imagawa Yoshimoto. Furthermore, it dealt with important episodes in Ieyasu’s life like his marriage with lord Imagawa’s niece, his return to his ancestral territory at Okazaki Castle, his later alliance with Oda Nobunaga and the meeting of the great military leaders Oda, Toyotomi Hideyoshi and Tokugawa Ieyasu in 1562 at Kiyosu Castle. The plot first focused on the intrigue of Ieyasu’s wife Tsukiyama Gozen against him in 1567, because she did not forgive him for his alliance with Nobunaga, who was responsible for her grandfather’s death in 1560. Further acts reflect the most important stages on Ieyasu’s ascend to power after the assassination of Nobunaga in 1582, focusing on his deliberate and cunning action against his rival Hideyoshi, whom he does not destroy in spite of the insistence of his retainers and allies, but forged another alliance with him. At the end of the play, the two military leaders meet in Kyoto in softly trickling snow in 1586 and decide to seal their alliance with the adoption of Ieyasu’s son by Hideyoshi (Tokugawa Ieyasu 1963: 48–53).**

“Tokugawa Ieyasu” premiered in February 1963 at the Kabukiza in Tokyo. It was performed by the actors of the Kikugorō theatre troupe (*Kikugorō gekidan*) with its male star actor Onoe Shōroku II (1913–1989) in the main part of Tokugawa Ieyasu. Onoe Shōroku II was not only the younger brother of Ichikawa Ebizō IX (Danjūrō XI), but also one of his competitors for as main star actor of the Kikugorō theatre troupe. Renowned for preserving and carrying on the acting tradition of his master Kikugorō VI he was also a brilliant dancer leading the Fujima School of traditional dance (*Nihon buyō*) as its head. In 1973 he was appointed a member of the Japanese Art Academy and in 1972 became a Living

National Treasure or certified Preserver of Important Intangible Cultural Property by the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (Ishida 2020: 102–105).

The play was well received by the audience. However, the critic and kabuki scholar Gunji Masakatsu (1913–1998), in general a vivid advocator of not confining kabuki in the border of classic theatre, wrote that he missed a climax in the play and criticized the numerous and fast changes of scenes that did not leave enough time and space for the actors to sufficiently explore and enact the characters. Gunji assumed that this fast tempo was chosen due to emulating the tempo of film or television. Gunji criticized the scenery of Hashimoto for being too coarse and sloppily executed. Only the set of the first act and the design of the Main Gate of Okazaki Castle received the approval of the kabuki scholar (Gunji 1963: 24).

There are no color photos of this production available, but the painted designs (*dōguchō*) by Hashimoto give an impression of his design for this play which covers the events in the life of Tokugawa Ieyasu from the years 1555 to 1586. The design for act one “Rinzai Temple, on a morning of the 3rd month, **1555**” (fig. 3) clearly reveals the painting style of Hashimoto Meiji. In terms of brushwork the trees and the outer walls of the temples show the thick and irregular black outlines that were a trademark of his paintings. The abstract designs of the surfaces of the mounds on which the trees are standing, their foliage and also the mound on which the white walls of the temple extend on the right side of the stage set, allude to expressionist painting. In terms of its colorfulness, green, yellow, and blue color dominate the design and particularly the deep blue-green and rich blue are reminiscent of Hashimoto's works of the 1960s. The outline of Mount Fuji in the background is reminiscent of its **rendering in woodblock print series of the “36 Views of Mount Fuji” of 1852 and 1858** by Utagawa Hiroshige (1797–1858) however in a much more stylized way.

However, the designs for two scenes in front of the main gate of the **Okazaki castle, one for act 1, scene 1 and for act 3, scene 1 called “In front of the Okazaki castle. Morning in the 3rd month, 1567”** (fig. 4) which Gunji favored, are depicted closer to a typical kabuki set of former new historical plays. **Nevertheless, the strong contour lines and rich colors reveal Hashimoto’s modern imagery.** This shows even more, when the subject is compared to other sets designed by other *Nihonga* painters for example by Tanaka Ryō (1884–1974) (fig. 5) in **1916 for the historical play “The sinking moon over the lonely castle where the cuckoo cries” (*Hototogisu kojō no rakugetsu*)** written by Tsubouchi Shōyō (1859–1935) and first performed in 1906.

To discuss all 14 stage designs by Hashimoto will exceed the scope of this article, therefore, only three more remarkable designs will be presented. The first is the design for **act 4, scene 2, “The Garden of Hamamatsu Castle. A spring morning in 1579”** (fig. 6) that shows a typical Japanese garden with a pond and the isle of saints behind a row of seven cherry trees in full bloom and a little tea house. The main parts of the picture like the mounds around the pond, its edge, the rocks on the island in the pond, and the trees on the right show the typical outlines but the colors here correspond to the natural appearance of the objects.

Strong blue and green tones are used only in the background. Instead, light, bright pastel tones predominate, such as the yellow-beige of the teahouse in the right front half of the picture or the light green-yellowish areas of the grassy hills. The cloudy pink clouds that incorporate the cherry blossoms dominate the whole scene. These techniques direct the viewer's gaze to the foreground of the picture, in front of which the actors also act on stage. Again, the overall impression is that of a fictive and almost abstract landscape that conveys this through a swift brushwork that Gunji had criticized as sloppy.

The set design for act 4, scene 3 “A mountain path in Iga Province. From night to sunrise, early in the 6th month, 1582” (fig. 7), shows, as the title suggests, a mountain path through the deep and dense forests of Iga Province. Hashimoto conveys this depth and density with the help of strong dark blue, green, beige, and purple tones, with which he models trees and landscape in an almost abstract expressionist manner. The path that narrows slightly in the background nevertheless does not convey any real depth. Further, the very broad outlines of the densely packed coniferous trees in the right-hand background of the picture also limit the pictorial space and prevent the impression of vastness, which supports the impenetrability of the forest.

The design for the last scene, act 6, scene 2, “Tea house of the Shirōjirō establishment. Winter morning in 1586” (fig. 8) shows a typical structure of a kabuki stage set with the main architecture for the scene's action, in this case a tea house, in a garden of an entertainment establishment in Kyoto. The vegetation of the garden, a willow tree, pines and bamboo, and the woven bamboo fence to the right and left of the teahouse are covered with a thick opaque white layer of snow. In this design, the reason for Gunji's criticism of a carelessly executed stage set becomes particularly evident as they are abstracted to an extent that it is for example hard to say what kind of plants the painter depicted on the left side of his design.

In the set designs for the play “Tokugawa Ieyasu” Hashimoto Meiji clearly stayed true to his personal style by designing a mixture of typical two-dimensional ukiyo-e-like stages and at the same time rendering the scenery in a western-like expressionistic style by using central perspective along with abstraction. But in all his designs for this play, he adhered to characteristics of set painting in kabuki, which Kazuko Mende has summarized as the follows: A horizontal line divides the stage in half at the middle of the picture plane. In case of one vanishing point, it is placed at the middle of stage. When there are two vanishing points they are placed symmetrically at both sides of the stage. The distance of eye is short, and the visual field is very small (Mende 2002: 189).

Hashimoto Meiji's modern abstracted almost expressionistic representation was completely new to the kabuki stage. The collaboration between kabuki and Hashimoto Meiji was crowned with success is evident from the fact that the painter was also commissioned with the stage design of the follow-up play “Tokugawa Ieyasu Part 2” (*Zoku Tokugawa Ieyasu*), premiered at the Kabukiza in February 1964, again with Onoe Shōroku II in the lead role.

Conclusion

In summary, for the collaboration of *Nihonga* artists and kabuki theatre it can be stated that both genres struggled for something new to overcome their image of being outdated and a relic, not only of the war but also of the past, that did no longer suit the tastes and desires of contemporary society. While *Nihonga* **painters proceeded to new styles and individuality, Shōchiku producers** capitalized on the popularity of historical novels that they adapted to the stage. They counted not only on popular content but also on new sets and new aesthetics implemented through collaboration with *Nihonga* painters. The most successful plays were the result of specific combinations of playwrights, actors, **and painters, for example the combination of plays written by Osaragi Jirō starring Ichikawa Ebizō IX, in the set design of Maeda Seison had been a success. The example of the play “Young Nobunaga” is representative of this concept.**

Shōchiku also made use of innovative trends in *Nihonga* by inviting Hashimoto Meiji to design the stage sets and costumes for “Tokugawa Ieyasu,” a stage adaptation of a popular long-run historical novel series. In his designs, showcased in this article, Hashimoto implemented his entire contemporary palette of style and painting techniques, mixing traditional ukiyo-e style painting with colorful abstract rendering of the elements of the stage. For Hashimoto, even though he had close personal connection to the kabuki world and painted, for example, a portrait of the star female impersonator Nakamura Utaemon VI (1917–2001) in 1955, **the set designs for “Tokugawa Ieyasu” and “Tokugawa Ieyasu part II” were the last ones.** This was presumably because the kabuki critics did not approve of his modern expressionistic style.

Nevertheless, the collaboration of *Nihonga* painters contributed to a new aesthetic in the stage scenery with attributes of traditional painting techniques together with innovative modern painting with western influence, even though the latter did not continue in kabuki. Furthermore, famous painters like Maeda representing the traditional *Nihonga* and Hashimoto representing the more innovative and contemporary *Nihonga*, contributed to the social standing and popularity of the kabuki theater.

While this article only touched upon two examples of the collaborations of *Nihonga* painters in the kabuki theatres, I suggest that this dynamic partnership of kabuki and *Nihonga* artists reveals a whole new dimension in both their historiographies and opens this collaborative field of visual and performance artistry to many more studies. Certainly, there are more of these intertwined art works to investigate and bring forward for their brilliance and significance in kabuki theatre and *Nihonga* studies.

Images and captions



Fig. 1 Ichikawa Danjūrō XI as Oda Nobunaga in “Young Nobunaga,” act 1. Playbill, Kabukiza, October 1952 (*Geijutsusai jūgatsu ōkabuki* 1952: no page).

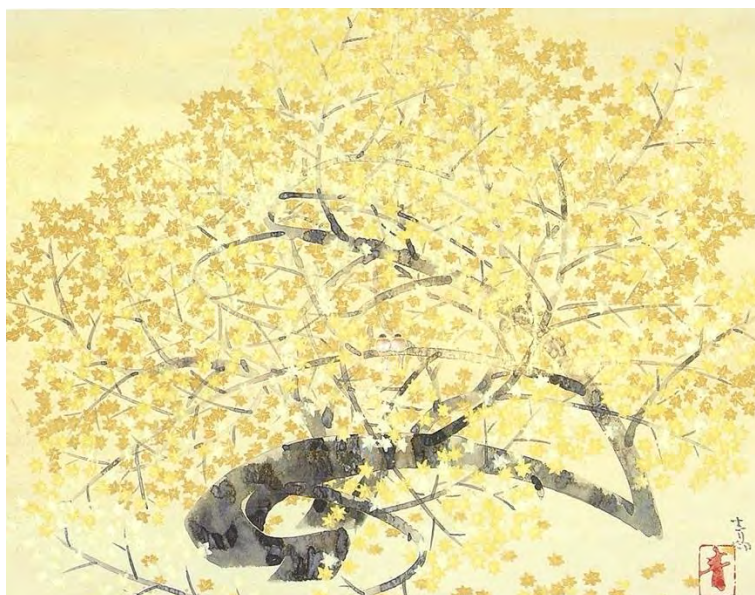


Fig. 2 Maeda Seison. *Momiji* [Maple Tree]. 1960. Gotō Art Museum (Maeda Seison 2001: no. 60)



Fig. 3 Hashimoto Meiji. Stage design for “Tokugawa Ieyasu,” prologue “Rinzai Temple, on a morning of the 3rd month, 1555” (Ishida 2020: 111, no. 118).



Fig. 4 Hashimoto Meiji. Stage design for “Tokugawa Ieyasu,” act 3, scene 1, “In front of the Okazaki castle. Morning in the 3rd month, 1567” (Ishida 2020: 109, no. 121).



Fig. 5 Tanaka Ryō. Stage design for act 4, “In front of the Cherry Tree Gate” of the play “The Sinking Moon over the Lonely Castle Where the Cuckoo Cries,” 1916 (Tanaka 1958: no. 108).



Fig. 6 Hashimoto Meiji. Stage design for “Tokugawa Ieyasu,” act 4, scene 2, “The Garden of Hamamatsu Castle. A spring morning in 1579” (Ishida 2020: 110, no. 124).



Fig. 7 Hashimoto Meiji. Stage design for “Tokugawa Ieyasu,” act 4, scene 3, “A mountain path in Iga Province. From night to sunrise, early in the 6th month, 1582” (Ishida 2020: 111, no 127).



Fig. 8 Hashimoto Meiji. Stage design for “Tokugawa Ieyasu,” act 6, scene 2, “Tea house of Shirōjirō establishment. Winter morning in 1586” (Ishida 2020: 112, no 132).

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INTRODUCTION TO THE TRANSLATION AND PHILOLOGICAL RESEARCH OF SHOGUNATE DECREES AND OTHER LEGAL HISTORY SOURCE TEXTS ON FIRES AND ARSON IN THE EDO PERIOD

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Abstract: The aim of this paper is to provide an introduction to the world of Edo period shogunate decrees and other source texts related to legal history on fires and arson. In this research project I use Edo period decrees as source texts to explore the relationship of the Edo period Japanese society to fires and arson; how contemporary Japanese viewed fires; and what laws and regulations the central authorities enacted to prevent disasters caused by careless or deliberate fire setting. In the Edo period, as cities grew larger and larger, wooden buildings built close together could easily catch fire, and a fire could quickly spread to a large area. As a result, many regulations and decrees were issued on how to prevent fires and catch arsonists. My aim is to use the analysis of these source texts to explore this important issue in the Edo period from a perspective that has been little addressed yet: by translating and analysing the content of the decrees, I believe we can better understand this aspect of Edo period life and society. Moreover, as I am working with source texts that only exist in Japanese, the translation, analysis and publication of these texts may also assist future research on early modern Japan.

Keywords: Edo period law, fire, arson, decrees, ofuregaki

1. Introduction

Since ancient times, fire has been an indispensable part of everyday life in every culture, but it has also been feared because of its danger. This was also the case in Japan during the Edo period (1603–1868), under the Tokugawa shogunate, known for its more than 250 years of peace and economic development. The aim of this paper is to provide a brief insight into Edo-period fires, fire-fighting and arsons, based on the translation and analysis of Edo-period shogunate decrees and other source texts related to law history.

My research is concerned with the translation and analysis of the most important Edo-period legal source texts, and between September 2021 and August 2022, I conducted research on a sub-theme, the

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shogunate decrees on morality. In the course of this research, I became aware of fire-related decrees, and thus started this new project.²

In my research, I am examining the regulations on fires, fireworks and arson in the collection of shogunate decrees entitled *Ofuregaki Shūsei* 御触書集成. This is a thematic collection of shogunate decrees called *fure* 触, which were ad hoc decrees issued by the shogunate offices and magistrates to regulate various aspects of life. (Hornos 2022: 137, 139) These decrees had no time limit, so that when one of their contents was forgotten by the common people, a similar decree was simply reissued. The first *Ofuregaki Shūsei* was compiled under the reign of the eighth Tokugawa shogun, Yoshimune 徳川吉宗, at his command, and was published in print in the 20th century by the legal historians Ishii Ryōsuke 石井良助 and Takayanagi Shinzō 高柳信三. In this paper, I present some of the fire-related decrees of the first collection of decrees, the *Ofuregaki Kanpō Shūsei* 御触書寛保集成, as illustrations of the topic, to introduce the research project. In addition, I will also refer to the texts on the punishment of arsonists in the *Kujikata Osadamegaki* 公事方御定書, a collection of precedents also compiled during Yoshimune's time, and the *Tokugawa Bakufu Keiji Zufu* 徳川幕府刑事図譜, an illustrated catalogue about Edo period punishment, published in the Meiji era.

However, it is important to stress that this research and paper only describes the fire protection in Edo on the basis of the decrees issued by the shogunate, and also only the provisions of shogunate law (*bakufuhō* 幕府法) on the subject of arson. In each province, the feudal lord (*daimyō* 大名) could make his own decrees or enact laws under his own authority, so that different rules could apply in different areas of Japan. Furthermore, even among the shogunate decrees, the above-mentioned collection of ordinances does not contain all the decrees ever issued: the compilers of the collection selected the decrees they considered important. For all these reasons, this study can only show a small corner of the fire protection in Edo period shogunate law; further research can be done to develop the subject in detail.

2. The development of Edo and the three great fires

The present study deals with fire protection in the Edo period, between 1603 and 1868, when the shogunate of the Tokugawa family ruled Japan. This was an era of warriors, the samurai, a period of peace

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for more than 250 years, when the economy and society were developing rapidly. The era was named after the quasi-capital, Edo (now Tokyo), the shogun's seat, which also developed greatly during this period, from a small fishing village to the most populous city in the world.

As well as being the seat of the shogun, the city's development was facilitated by the *sankin kōtai* 参勤交代 system as well, which meant that the provincial lords (*daimyō*) had to take turns in their provinces and their residence in Edo (Asako et al. 2010: 172). When they themselves were in their province, their families (wives, children) had to stay in Edo. In this way, the shogunate effectively held the *daimyō's family hostage*, preventing the *daimyō* from starting any kind of uprising in the countryside. The *sankin kōtai* system meant that all *daimyō* had to maintain a residence in Edo, which meant an increase in population, as servants etc. were also needed. As the city developed, more and more people from the surrounding villages settled there, especially in times of economic hardship, famine and natural disasters, when they were faced with a desperate situation, as their taxes were not reduced, and the remaining crops were not enough to live on. Likewise, the children of peasants who could not inherit the land (there could be only one heir, land could not be divided) flocked to the city in search of a better living. They could get work in the cities as day labourers (*hiyōtori* 日傭取り), and many of them were engaged in criminal activities (Kuroki 1999: 20–23).

As a result of the above factors, the city became one of the most populous cities in the world during the Edo period. While the population of Edo was around 200 000 in 1603, it rose to 800 000 by the end of the century and reached 1 100 000 in the 1700s, making it the most populous city in the world by 1721 (Kuroki 1999: 16–18). This resulted in the problem of overcrowding, which is a common problem in today's Tokyo metropolis as well. As the city continued to expand, houses were built close together, using wood as the basic material, and the congestion made it difficult to extinguish fires, which could easily spread to other parts of the city.

In Edo, fires were so common that the saying *Kaji to kenka wa Edo no hana* 火事と喧嘩は江戸の華 ("*Fires and fights are Edo's flowers*") was popular. Fires were particularly common in winter, until the onset of spring, between November and May; from contemporary records and current meteorological knowledge, it can be deduced that dry weather with strong winds was typical in Edo during this period, and that fires started in winter for heating purposes could also be a source of danger. Fires were so frequent that during a population census, the *machibugyō* 町奉行 (administrative official of the Tokugawa shogunate responsible for the city of Edo) noticed that the city had fewer inhabitants during the winter months. When he investigated the issue, he discovered that many

people had taken their female family members to the surrounding suburbs for the winter in preparation for possible fires (Kuroki 1999: 8–27).

From the Edo period, we can highlight three major fires that caused the greatest devastation. These are The Great Fire of *Meireki* 明暦の大火 (*Meireki no Taika*) in 1657, The Great Fire of *Meiwa* 明和の大火 (*Meiwa no Taika*) in 1772 and The Great Fire of *Bunka* 文化の大火 (*Bunka no Taika*) in 1806. The *Meireki* Fire lasted for twenty days, caused many deaths and even spread to the Edo Castle. 160 *daimyō* residences, over 770 *hatamoto* (high ranking samurai loyal to the shogunate) residences, 350 temples and shrines, more than 400 *chōnin* (townspeople) houses were destroyed, not to mention the other buildings or bridges (Eiju 2007: 8; Takano 1999: 96–97). Ironically, the fires also helped the city to develop: after the *Meireki* fire, the city was rebuilt and the roads were repaired (Eiju 2007: 25). Later, the roofing of houses was regulated, banning grass roofs and recommending tiled roofs instead, but this regulation was not respected by many (Kuroki 1999: 23–24). Fires therefore did not stop: often a burnt building was not rebuilt because it would soon burn again, so many people lived in temporary huts – which could easily catch fire, creating a vicious circle (Eiju 2007: 16).

3. Fire fighting organisations in Edo and fire-related regulations

In a city as frequently affected by fires as Edo, one would assume that a well-organised fire brigade would have existed from the beginning, but this is far from being the case. During the time of the first two Tokugawa shoguns, Iyasu and Hidetada, there was no systematic fire-fighting organisation. They concentrated only on protecting the shogun's residence, Edo Castle. In the event of a fire, if there were not enough men to put out the fire, the *rōjū* 老中 (official at the top of the shogun's administrative system) summoned *daimyōs* to put out the fire through an official document called *hōsho* 奉書. This system was known as *hōsho hikiishi* 奉書火消 (Eiju 2007: 27). For example, in 1632, during a fire, the *rōjū* ordered the mobilization of five *daimyō* (Kuroki 1999: 33). Then, in 1643, a system called *daimyō hikiishi* 大名火消 was established, in which the *daimyō* involved in fire fighting were permanently mobilized, divided into four teams. (Eiju 2007: 28.) The next stage in the organization of firefighting by the *bushis*, or samurai, was the *hōgaku bikishi* 方角火消 organization in 1657 and the *jōbikishi* 定火消 organization, both formed after the Great Fire of *Meireki* in 1657. In the *hōgaku bikishi* (*hōgaku* means direction) organisation, 12 *daimyōs* were divided into several groups according to certain parts of the city, and thus

assigned firefighting duties. In the *jōbikeshi* organization, which was born a year later, firefighting was carried out by *yoriki* 与力, *dōshin* 同心, or *gaen* 臥煙 (shogunate governmental posts), organized under the *hatamoto* 旗本 (Eiju 2007: 32).

But these organisations only covered the *bushi* social class; the social group of the townspeople, the *chōnin*, organised their own fire brigades. Such fire-fighting organizations organized by *chōnin* were the *tanabikeshi* 店火消 and the *machibikeshi* 町火消 (Kuroki 1999: 68–84). It should also be noted that the above refers only to Edo city; there were different fire-fighting organizations in rural towns. Thus, as is true of the Edo period as a whole (as can be seen, for example, in the legal system of the time), there was no single organisation for firefighting that included all residents, but rather divisions between different social classes.

In addition to fire-fighting, a great deal of attention was also paid to fire prevention. The *Ofuregaki Shūsei* collections of decrees contain a number of fire-related decrees, some of which I will present below in both the original language and in my English translation to illustrate their form and content.

一四五五 延宝七末年二月³

一 風強吹候間、火之用心之儀、町中家持ハ不及申、借屋店かり裏々迄、成程念を入、急度可申付候、尤水溜桶ニ水を入置可申候、右之通兩御番所より被 仰付候間、少も油断有間敷候以上、

1455) 7th year of Enpō [1679] (sheep) 2nd month

As the winds are blowing strong, as far as fire safety is concerned, we are ordering everyone in town, homeowners and renters and shop tenants alike, to exercise due diligence. Fill the water catch tubs with water. The above has been ordered by the two gobanjo [the north and south machibugyō offices], so one should not be a bit careless.

(Ishii–Takayanagi (eds.) 1934: 770.)

From the above decree, we can see that the shogunate authorities, in this case the *machibugyōs*, issued a decree in view of the strong winds, warning the residents of the town to be aware of fire safety and asking them to prepare for a possible fire by saving water. The decree emphasizes its content by describing at the end which authority issued it. However, such a *fure* can be seen as a simple reminder and information, without any penalty for those who do not comply with the regulation.

一四六六 天和二戌年十月

覚

一 町中にて火事出来候ハ、同町隣町之者共見付次第早速懸集、消可申候、勿論火本之相店兩隣向かハ裏々之者とも迄、諸事を差置、早速か

³ When publishing the original texts, I use the simplified version (新字体) of the Chinese characters, rather than the traditional forms (旧字体) that appeared in the original printed publications.

け付、精出し消可申候、若程近き者とも出合不申候ハ、穿鑿之上、急度曲事ニ可申付候間、此旨相守、少も油断有間敷候以上、
1460] 2nd year of Tenna [1682] (dog) 10th month
Regulation

If a fire breaks out in the city, the inhabitants of the same block⁴ and of the neighbouring block, as soon as the fire is noticed, shall immediately assemble and extinguish the fire. Naturally, the residents of the two buildings neighbouring to the source of the fire, across the street and behind the building should also cease all activity and rush there immediately and do their utmost to extinguish the fire. If a nearby resident fails to do so, they will be searched and treated as a criminal offence, so the above must be observed and no one should be careless.

(Ishii–Takayanagi (eds.) 1934: 771.)

In this decree, dating from 1682, the shogunate obliges the inhabitants of the town to help each other extinguish fires. It is worth noting that, unlike the previous decree, this one also lays down the consequences for non-compliance: those who do not help each other put out the fire may be held liable for committing a crime (*kusegoto* 曲事). It can therefore be seen that, whereas in practice the previous decree was merely a means of providing information, this decree is more serious, since it contains criminal penalties as well. However, as is customary in other regulations, no specific penalty is provided for in the text.

二七四五 寛永二酉年六月

一 前々も相触候花火之儀、大川筋海手之儀は各別、於町中一切立申間敷候、川筋ニても大からくり流星之儀は堅可為無用事、

一 花火商売之儀、店ニて売候儀は勿論、屋敷方并町方え売参候もの有之は、家主、五人組迄可為越度事、

2745] 2nd year of Kan'ei [1625] (chicken), 6th month

*As for fireworks, on which we have already issued decrees, except along the major rivers and the sea coast, their use is completely prohibited within the city. The use of *ookarakuri*⁵ and *ryūsei*⁶ is strictly prohibited on river banks either.*

*As for the purchase of fireworks, anyone who buys fireworks in shops or residences or in the city will be fined, not only him but also the head of his household [ie] and the *goningumi*⁷ he belongs to.*

(Ishii–Takayanagi (eds.) 1934: 1254.)

The *Ofuregaki Shūsei* in its thematic breakdown treats fireworks separately from fires and devotes a separate block to regulations on

⁴ Chō, part of town, neighbourhood.

⁵ A type of firework which is made by combining a thick tree trunk (pillar) in the middle and tying it together with green bamboo.

⁶ A type of firework which, as the Japanese name suggests, mimics the movement of a shooting star by making circles and then falling down in a shining glow.

⁷ Groups of five *ie* 家 (households) in the Edo period, which could be held collectively responsible for each other's misdeeds, were used by the shogunate to keep the people in check and under control.

fireworks; the above regulation is taken from this block. There could be several sources of fires, such as winter fires, heating of baths, smoking, arson as discussed in the next chapter, and even fireworks. The shogunate, as stated at the very beginning of the above decree, repeatedly issued decrees prohibiting the use of fireworks in crowded urban areas, allowing their use only on the seashore or on the banks of major rivers. This decree also prohibits the sale of fireworks within the city, and imposes collective punishment on the head of the offender's family (*ie* 家) and the *goningumi* 五人組 to which the offender belongs.

3. Arson in the Edo period

In the Edo period, fires were not only caused by windy, dry weather and carelessness, but arson was also common. There were many motives for arson, one of the most important being revenge. There are records of someone setting buildings on fire because he was desperate, because he was in a hopeless situation and had nothing left to lose (Eiju 2007). Others set fires to commit further crimes: in the confusion and chaos of the fire, they may have taken the opportunity to commit theft. (Kusunoki 2019: 144–145) Those involved in reconstruction, such as carpenters, roofers, etc., also benefited if a building or part of a town burned down, so that they could profit from the arson (Eiju 2007).

At the same time, arson in densely populated, crowded cities threatened the personal and financial safety of many people, and the resulting dissatisfaction could undermine the authority of the central power, the shogunate (or, at lower levels, the *daimyō* who ruled each province), so the government understandably sought to punish arsonists severely. In the *Ofuregaki Shūsei*, there are a number of decrees relating to the search for, capture and punishment of arsonists, of which I provide some below in the original language and in English translation:

一四五四 延宝三卯年二月

此ころ江戸中はしく火事出来、あやしき者於之は捕之、支配方迄急度其子細可申達、同類たりといふとも、其科をゆるし、御ほうひ被下之、自然見のかし、以来露頭候ハ、曲事たるへきよし、面々支配方へ可被相触者也、

1454) 3rd year of Enpō [1675] (rabbit), 2nd month

Recently, there have been fires all over the city of Edo. If anyone sees a suspicious person, apprehend them and be sure to report the details of the incident to the officials. If he is a partner [of the suspicious person, offender], the [reporting party's] punishment will be remitted and rewarded. But if someone pretends not to see it and this fact later comes to light, it will be considered a crime. This will be given to the officials by decree.

(Ishii–Takayanagi (eds.) 1934: 770.)

The above decree is similar to those issued in the period for other crimes, in which, in order to catch the perpetrator of the crime, the people are warned not to hide the perpetrator, but to report his whereabouts to the authorities. The decree also envisages the abolition of the punishment of the accomplice if he reports the main perpetrator. However, as is often the case with other decrees of the time, the form and extent of the punishment is not mentioned in the above text.

一四五九 延宝八申年十一月

一 頃日江戸町中火事頻繁候間、火付之儀は不及申、怪敷者於有之は、番所え召連可相越候、依品御褒美可被下候、若見逃、後日ニ相聞候ハ、可為曲事候、右之趣店かり下々迄可申聞者也、

1459) 8th year of Enpō [1685] (monkey), 11th month

There are frequent fires in the city of Edo these days, so arsonists or suspicious individuals if there are any, should be escorted to the office of the machibugyō. Those who do so will be rewarded. However, if someone pretends not to see it and this is later brought to our attention, it will be treated as a crime. Everyone, right down to the shop tenants, should be aware of the above.

(Ishii–Takayanagi (eds.) 1934: 771.)

The above regulation was issued ten years after regulation number 1454, but after a decade its content has remained essentially unchanged. It still draws attention to the frequency of fires and calls on residents to track down arsonists. The penalties for arsonists are not mentioned either.

The forms of punishment are described in a collection of precedents called *Kujikata Osadamegaki* which was compiled under the reign of the eighth shogun, Tokugawa Yoshimune. This code consisted of two volumes, the first containing 81 articles and the second 103 (Deguchi et al. 2018: 272–273). The collection of precedents was considered secret at the time, known and seen only by judicial officials, but in practice, many copies were made and circulated (Asako et al. 2010: 178–179).

The second volume of the *Kujikata Osadamegaki* contained the provisions for the administration of punishment, and the last, Article 103, detailed the different types of punishment and the manner of their execution. The penalties for arson and its various forms are described in detail in Article 70 of the *Osadamegaki*:

第七十条 火付御仕置之事

Article 70 – On the punishment of arson

従前々之例

一、火を附候もの 火罪

In accordance with precedents

Arsonist: kazai [death by burning]

享保二年極

一、人に被頼、火を附候もの 死罪

従前々之例

但、頼候もの、火罪、

Enacted in the 2nd year of Kyōhō [1717]

Whoever set fire at the request of another: shizai [beheading]

In accordance with previous precedents

However, instigator of arson: kazai [death by burning]

享保八年極

一、物取ニ而火を附候もの、引廻し之儀、

日本橋 両国橋 四谷御門外 赤坂御門外 昌平橋外

右之分、引廻通節、人数不依多少、科書之捨札建置可申候、尤火を附候

所居町中引廻之上、火罪可付事、

但、捨札は、三十日建置申候、

Enacted in the 8th year of Kyōhō [1723]

On parading arsonists for the purpose of theft

Nihonbashi, Ryōgokubashi, outside of Yotsuya gate, outside of Akasaka gate, outside of the Shōhei Bridge

When [the arsonist] is paraded in the above places, regardless of the number of people present, a sutefuda [a sign naming the offence committed] shall be raised. Furthermore, [the arsonist] shall be paraded in the part of the town where he set the fire and burnt at the stake. The sutefuda shall be erected for 30 days.

享保九年極

一、物取ニ而無之火附、不及捨札、火を附候所居町中引廻之上、火罪可申付事、

Enacted in the 9th year of Kyōhō [1724]

If the arson was not committed for the purpose of theft, no sutefuda is required. After being paraded in the part of the town where the arson took place, burn [the arsonist] at the stake.

享保八年極

右火罪御仕置、都而晒に不及事、

Enacted in the 8th year of Kyōhō [1723]

For the burnings at the stake described above, public display is unnecessary.

追加

享保七年極

一、火附を召連、又ハ訴人に出候 御褒美

人数之不依多少 銀三十枚

Supplement

Enacted in the 7th year of Kyōhō [1722]

Whoever brings an arsonist with him or delivers him to the accuser: reward

Regardless of the number of persons, 30 pieces of silver

追加

享保二年極

一、火を附候もの、年を越、頭におゐてハ、 死罪

Supplement

Enacted in the 2th year of Kyōhō [1717]

If the arson is discovered years later: shizai [beheading]

(Ishii (ed.) 1961: 108.)

As to the method of burning at the stake (*kazai*), Article 103 of the *Osadamegaki* states:

一 火罪

引廻之上、浅草品川におゐて火罪申付ル、在方ハ火を附候所江差遣候儀も在之、捨札番人右同断、

但、物取にて無之分ハ不及捨札、闕所右同断

Kazai [death by burning]

After being dragged around the town, death by burning in Asakusa or Shinagawa. In the countryside, take him/her to the place where he set the fire. About the sutefuda and the guard, same as above. However, for those who did not commit the crime for the purpose of theft, it is not necessary to set up a sutefuda. About confiscation of property [kessho], same as above.

(Ishii (ed.) 1961: 129.)

As we can see from Article 70 of the *Osadamegaki*, different forms of punishment have been established for arsonists, instigators of arson and those who commit arson for the purpose of theft, based on precedents. From today's perspective, it is strange to call them different forms of punishment, since the end result was always the death penalty for the perpetrator. In the Edo period, however, there was also a difference in the way the death penalty was carried out, so that death by burning was considered as a more severe punishment than beheading. The death penalty was often accompanied by a secondary punishment, the parading of the prisoner around the city in the source text above being a good example; however, public display is also mentioned in the text: while in the case of beheading the body of the prisoner was often displayed, in the case of burning at the stake the text states that this was not necessary. We have also seen that those who caught the arsonists were rewarded.

From the above texts we can see that arson was punished in the most cases according to the talion principle ("an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth"), i.e. the perpetrators were burnt at the stake. The condemned were tied to a wooden pole and burnt alive. When the convict's body had been burnt black, the last stage was called *todomeyaki* 止め焼き: the nose and scrotum of the convict were burnt separately for men and the breast for women. The burnt corpse was put on public display for two nights and three days as a deterrent (Ōkubo 1988: 28–30). It was not only the perpetrators of arson who were punished in this way; it was common for a mere attempt to commit arson to attract a similar cruel punishment. However, the age of the offender was taken into account: if the offender was a minor, specifically a child under fifteen, the punishment was not burning at the stake, but so-called *entō* 遠島, i.e. exile to a remote island (Ōkubo 1988: 28–32). From the above, it is clear to us that the purpose of the shogunate, by inflicting severe punishment and making the convict a

public spectacle, was general prevention, i.e. to deter society from committing similar crimes. This principle is also true of the Edo period in general: as opposed to specific prevention (where the aim of the execution of the punishment was to prevent the offender from re-offending), general prevention was still the main goal.

An illustration of the *kazai*, or burning at the stake, is found in the *Tokugawa Bakufu Keiji Zufu* (Illustrated Criminal Catalogue of the Tokugawa Shogunate) 徳川幕府刑事図譜, published in the Meiji era, in 1893 to illustrate how much had changed from the brutal punishments of the Edo period with the introduction of the modern legal system. Below the illustrations is a transcription in block letters of the notes above the original publication and my English translation.⁸



Punishment by burning at the stake.

火刑（ひあぶり）の図 – *Punishment by burning at the stake*

引廻わしの囚人（めしうど）場所に來りしときハ、非人六人にて馬よりおろし、図の如く設けし杭に縛りて、茅薪を積み、二三把（ば）の茅を手に持ちて、之（これ）に火を移し、風上に積みし茅の中程に火を掛け、菰（こも）の少しく煽るとき四方より火を移し、囚人（めしうど）の死せしを見計ひて、其燃残りし物を払い、更に四五把（ば）の茅を持ちて火を移し、左右より進みて一人ハ鼻一人ハ陰囊を焼く、又女ハ両乳をや

⁸ When publishing the original texts, I use the simplified version (新字体) of the Chinese characters and the current standard form of kana characters instead of hentaigana 変体仮名. Where the reading is not necessarily clear, I indicate in parentheses the readings in the original text.

く、乃ちとゝめなり。火刑（ひあぶり）の縛り縄ハ、総て土を塗る、燃切を防く為めなり。

Illustration of burning at the stake

When the paraded convict arrives at the place [of execution], six hinin⁹ take him off the horse and tie him to the stake, which is placed as shown in the picture, and pile thatch and firewood around him. They take two or three bundles of hay in their hands, light them, and use them to set fire to the centre of the hay piled upwind. They use a woven straw mat to fan the flames lightly, increasing the fire in four directions. They wait until the convict dies, then remove the burnt remains, then light four or five bundles of hay, one [hinin] burning the nose and the other the scrotum, from left to right; for women, the two breasts are burnt, this is the finish-off. The ropes used for burning [the convict] are all smeared with mud, this is necessary to prevent [the rope] from snapping because of being burned. (Fujita 1893: 50.)

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火刑取片附の図



Putting away after finishing the previous punishment.

火刑（ひあぶり）取片附の図 – *Putting away after finishing the previous punishment* (Fujita 1893: 51.)

4. Summary and further research possibilities

In this paper, I have tried to give a brief insight into Edo-period fire prevention and arson through the relevant decrees issued by the shogunate, the relevant points of the *Kujikata Osadamegaki*, and the illustrations and comments of the *Tokugawa Bakufu Keiji Zufu*.

⁹ An outcast group in Japanese society in the Edo period, one of whose tasks was to assist in executions, cleaning up after executions.

We have seen how the city of Edo developed over time, what factors determined its development and why fires were common in the city. Edo's three great fires caused enormous damage on the city, but also provided an opportunity for the city to continue to develop through rebuilding. There was no unified fire brigade organisation at the time, with samurai and townspeople (*chōnin*) organised in groups according to their social class to put out fires. The shogunate placed great emphasis not only on extinguishing fires but also on preventing fires from breaking out, and issued a number of decrees to remind the subjects of the importance of fire prevention. These decrees form a separate category in the thematically organized collection of decrees, the *Ofuregaki Shūsei*. In this paper I have presented some of the decrees and their translations from the first such collection, the *Ofuregaki Kanpō Shūsei*.

The shogunate also punished arsonists severely, in most cases by the *kazai*, burning at the stake. In addition to the decrees on the search and capture of arsonists, the study also included the relevant parts of the *Kujikata Osadamegaki*, a collection of precedents compiled during the reign of shogun Tokugawa Yoshimune. The purpose of the horrific punishment was general prevention, i.e. to deter the people from committing similar crimes, and it was used until the Meiji Restoration. The way in which the punishment was carried out can be seen by examining the relevant illustrations and descriptions in the *Tokugawa Bakufu Keiji Zufu*.

However, the present study has only shed light on a small part of the subject, since the subject of Edo period fires is extremely diverse and the amount of source texts, i.e. shogunate decrees, available to us is enormous, thus providing us with further research opportunities. In the next phase of this scholarship-funded research project, I intend to continue researching and translating further decrees written on this topic, and to explore the topic of Edo period fires and arson in more detail by searching for further literature and sources.

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THE TWO O-BON-FESTIVALS IN NAGASAKI - CELEBRATING THE BONDS BETWEEN THE LIVING AND THE DEAD

*Claudia MARRA*¹

Abstract: Bon, or more politely O-Bon, is the Japanese term for a regionally different midsummer festival celebrated not only throughout Japan but also in other Buddhist Asian countries. In Japan, it has changed over time and is essentially a mélange of ancestor worship, rural Thanksgiving customs, ghost beliefs, folk religion, superstitions and the Buddhist celebration of the temporary release of the spirits from hell.

During the Edo period, O-Bon gained popularity, as it gave those employed in urban areas a rare chance to reunite with their families in the countryside, meet friends, revel, and pray for ancestral spirits and deceased loved ones. Celebrations differ from region to region, but they all include eating, drinking, and lots of merrymaking to entertain the living as well as the visiting spirits.

Since the 7th century, O-Bon has been held on the full moon of the seventh lunar month, usually around the 15th day. The old calendar is still the basis for the calculations behind the traditional Chinese festival calendar used in both mainland China and Taiwan. However, since Japan adopted the solar Gregorian calendar in 1873, Japan became divided into different areas: some celebrating O-Bon in July (Shichigatsu-Bon, 七月盆), some regions sticking to the old lunar calendar with movable holidays, and some areas holding a Hachigatsu-Bon (八月盆) from August 13th to 15th.

During the Edo period, Nagasaki's Japanese O-Bon and Chinese O-Bon fell on the same dates. Due to the calendar reform, they came to be held on separate days. As a result, Nagasaki now celebrates two festivals:

- 1. a movable lunar O-Bon in July, locally called Karadera-Bon (唐寺盆) or Acha-san no Bon (アチャさんの盆 or 阿爹さんの盆) with strong connections to the city's Chinese temples and traditions, where it is called Yúlánpén (盂蘭盆) and*
- 2. a Hachigatsu-Bon, **celebrated by Japanese citizens, which reflects Nagasaki's** unique culture, history and customs.*

*In this paper, I would like to shed some light on the origins, religious aspects, traditions, **practices, and social function of Nagasaki's** two O-Bon celebrations.*

Keywords: Japanese Buddhism, O-Bon, Segaki, ancestral spirits, 'Hungry Ghosts', Nagasaki

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1. Introduction

1. Etymology of the term 'O-Bon'

There are many theories concerning the origins of the festival's name (Buswell and Lopez 2014, Muller 1995): Discussed are derivations from Sanskrit, Pali, middle Indic, Tibetan and even ancient Iranian, or Zoroastrian as origins of the Chinese transcription 'Yúlánpén', in Japanese *Urabon* (盂蘭盆). The Sanskrit '*ullambana*' means 'hanging downwards', and refers to the tortures of hell, but also can be translated as 'rescuing', and refers to the prayers and offerings on behalf of the spirits suffering in hell.

Other theories maintain that the name goes back to either special kinds of foods, or special kinds of containers for offering these foods on the *Pravāraṇā-day*, an elaborate monastic celebration, marking the end of the annual rainy season retreat. After asking for forgiveness for their own wrong-doings and shortcomings, monks receive alms from the community, chant sutras and on that occasion, also pay respect to deceased ancestors. (Karashima 2013)

Another possible source is said to be the title of an apocryphal Chinese Buddhist Sutra, concerning filial piety, the '*Yúlánpén-jīng*', or in Japanese, *Urabon-kyō* (盂蘭盆經). Also discussed is the hypothesis that 'Bon' refers to the customary tablets used to lay out rice, fruits and flowers, as they were used in rural Japanese Thanksgiving celebrations, or for the temporary display of memorial tablets (Japanese *ihai*, 位牌) and ancestral offerings (Karashima 2013).

2. Spirits and 'Hungry Ghosts'

In Chinese folk belief, the spiritual realm is populated by gods, ancestors and ghosts (Poceski 2009, 169-180). There are countless myths and legends concerning the origin of spirits, especially 'Hungry Ghosts'. For this paper, I intend to focus on the Buddhist narrative concerning the matter. Based on the doctrine of Samsara (Jap. *rinne* 輪廻), Buddhism teaches that the existence of all sentient beings is subject to impermanence. Simply put, all those within the 6 realms of existence *Sad-gati* (Jap. *rokudō* 六道) are doomed to an unceasing cycle of arising, changing, passing away, and being reborn, until eventually finding liberation, Nirvana. This supreme goal can only be achieved through letting go of all attachments and desires and opening one's eyes to the proper understanding of Buddha's teachings. Until that time, so reveals the Flower-Garland Sutra (*Buddhāvataṃsaka-nāma-mahāvaiṣṭya-sūtra*, Jap. *Daihōkō Butsu-kegon Kyō* (大方広仏華嚴經), or for short

Kegon Kyō (華嚴經), rebirth occurs in one of the six realms, depending on the Karma inherited from previous existences, and accumulated during one's lifetime (Baroni 2002).

There are six Enlightened Buddhas that exist in each of the six realms to help the respective denizens in their plight. Of these realms, the first three provide a chance to attain enlightenment and are considered favourable, while the last three are seen as the realms of evil and extreme suffering.

1. The *Deva-gati* (Jap. *tendō* 天道) belongs to powerful deities called *devatas*. Although these semi-gods are living in bliss for countless ages, this realm is still considered to belong to the world of suffering, because its inhabitants fail to strive for liberation.

2. Humans belong to the *Manusya-gati* (Jap. *nindō* 人道). Although hampered by suffering, attachment and desires, humans are considered lucky, because they are capable of reaching enlightenment.

3. The 3rd realm, *Asura-gati* (Jap. *ashuradō* 阿修羅道) is occupied by fierce demi-gods, who are consumed by powerful passions and uncontrolled emotions and live in a state of constant war.

4. Animals' ignorance makes them unable to reflect on their situation and find a way to salvation, they are designated to the *Tiryagyonigati* (Jap. *chikushōdō* 畜生道). Driven by instincts, they suffer and exist in servitude and are helplessly at the mercy of other beings.

5. Those who were greedy, stingy, jealous, corrupted, gluttonous, or guilty of stealing or sexual misconduct in their pre-existence are reborn as one of many different Hungry Ghosts, (*preta* in Sanskrit, *gaki* in Japanese 餓鬼) in the *Preta-gati* (Jap. *gakidō* 餓鬼道). This realm is characterized by incommensurable cravings and eternal starvation. The ghosts cannot rest and are constantly tormented by thirst and hunger. Any food they touch turns into excrement, and liquids turn into fire. They **may partake only of tiny amounts of nectar provided by Buddha's mercy**. According to Chinese oral traditions, spirits are invisible in daylight but can be seen at night or by spiritually trained people. They suffer from immoderate temperatures and are usually described as zombie-like creatures with enormously swollen bellies, but extremely narrow throats and tiny mouths. Their appearance mirrors their insatiable hunger and their inability to feed themselves. Unlike other hell dwellers, Hungry Ghosts are allowed temporarily to leave the *gakidō* during certain times of the year. On these occasions, their descendants are supposed to provide sufficient offerings in order to prevent the Hungry Ghosts from doing any harm to the living. Unattached spirits without offspring, spirits of those, who were victims of violent deaths, died in catastrophes or were denied

proper burials and death rites, need to be feared and particularly taken care of. In Japanese folk belief, Hungry Ghosts are divided into, *gaki* (餓鬼), and *jikininki* (食人鬼). The former are spirits of stingy, jealous and greedy people, who are tormented by their insatiable desires. The latter are cursed to consume human corpses as punishment for having been sacrilegious, selfish or greedy towards others. Among these are especially those, who showed impiety and withheld alms or offerings. *Muenbotoke* (無縁仏), the dead who have no living relatives, and *Kuyō sarenai seirei* (供養されない精霊), spirits, who did not receive proper burial rites, may belong to either group. While *gaki* are able to scare and threaten the living, they are mostly regarded as beings to be pitied. In many monasteries and even in some homes, a few grains of rice are left for them at every meal.

6. The lowest and worst realm, *Naraka-gati* (Jap. *jigokudō* 地獄道) is divided into hot and cold hells with many subdivisions. Beings in hell are wracked by torture, hate and aggression until their bad Karma has been exhausted and they are reborn into a better realm.

3. The Buddhist scriptural foundation of O-Bon

After Buddhism spread to China in the 1st century CE, it interacted with and absorbed elements of pre-existing folk religions, Taoism and Confucianism, and further evolved, to find a broader acceptance. Chinese emphasis on filial piety and respect for the ancestors, eventually led to the translation/creation of scriptures of dubious provenience dealing with this subject.

The scriptures involved are:

1. the *Urabon-kyō* (盂蘭盆經) and the 'Scripture for offering Bowls to Requite Kindness' (報恩奉盆經 Chin.: *bao'en fengben jing*, Jap.: *hōonbubongyō*), presumably translated by the monk *Dharmarakṣa* (Jap. *Jiku Hōgo* 竺法護, 233-310) one of the most important early translators of Mahayana sutras into Chinese, and
2. the *Segaki-e* related texts 'Dharani to save hungry ghosts', (Jap. *Bussetsu gubatsu enku daranikyō*, 仏説救拔焰口餓鬼陀羅尼經) and therein, the 'Food multiplication spell' (*Kaji Onjiki Dharani*, 加持飲食陀羅尼), attributed to *Amoghavajra* (Jap. *Fukō* 不空; 705–774), another prolific translator and politically influential monk (Orzech 1996).

Currently, many of the translations ascribed to these two, and compiled into the Chinese canon, are regarded as being not authentic. Nevertheless, they gained popularity in China because they:

"...enabled the Buddhist saṃgha to associate itself with traditional Chinese modes of ancestor worship. This helped deflect a major criticism of Buddhist monks in medieval China, which was that they were unfilial because, as celibates, they produced no descendants to care for their ancestors. Through the ghost festival, the saṃgha was also able to promote itself as a kind of public charity organization that could care for and placate disconnected, potentially dangerous spirits who had no family, thereby protecting the imperial state and the populace at large from their baneful influence. The feeding of hungry ghosts also expressed the Mahayana Buddhist ideal of universal compassion and sent the message that the 'family' of the Buddha included all living beings."

(Muller 1995, DBB entry: *ullambana*)

The above-mentioned *Urabon-kyō* and the 'Scripture for offering Bowls to Requite Kindness', both tell the legend of *Maudgalyāyana*, in Japanese Mokuren (目連), a prominent disciple of the Buddha, who supposedly possessed supernatural powers (Buswell and Lopez, 2014).

When Mokuren searched for his deceased mother within the six realms and found her hung upside down and suffering in the realm of hungry ghosts, he tried to give her food and drink, but even with his extraordinary powers, everything immediately caught fire and his mother could not eat. At the end of his wits, he asked Buddha for help to save his mother and was told, that his mother was condemned to the realm of hungry ghosts because she had been selfish in her lifetime. In order to help her, Mokuren was advised to chant sutras, make offerings, prepare a feast of food and drink of each one of the hundred flavours, and donate these dishes to monks upon their return from their rainy season retreat, on the day of the full moon of the 7th month, the *Pravāraṇā-day*. By doing so, the united spiritual power of the sangha would help one's present or deceased parents attain long life, pass one hundred years without sickness, and without any torments of suffering. It would also enable the salvation of one's ancestors back to the seventh generation and prevent unfortunate rebirths. Mokuren followed the instructions, and his mother was saved from *gaki-dō*.

The Mokuren legend does not purely stress the value of (individual) filial piety, it was also meant as an incentive to support the sangha, as only the combined efforts of monks would suffice to obtain relief from suffering and gain the blessings of a fortunate reincarnation (Teiser 1988, p. 53).

However, O-Bon did neither address the problem of unattached spirits nor of those, who did not get a proper burial. Therefore, other oblations, not limited to specific ancestors, but widely practised for the benefit of all suffering sentient beings were needed. The austerities to help those spirits are called '*Segaki-e*' (施餓鬼會), and their practice is not limited to the O-Bon period or any specific days of the month. In some Buddhist schools, *Segaki-e* rituals are part of daily monastic routines.

The contested scriptural foundation for that is the 'Dharani to save hungry ghosts' (Jap. *Bussetsu gubatsu enku daranikyō*, 仏説救抜焰口餓鬼陀羅尼經) (Kanemoto 2019) and the therein mentioned 'Food multiplication spell (*Kaji Onjiki Dharani*, 加持飲食陀羅尼). It narrates the story of Buddha's attendant and chief disciple **Ānanda**, and his encounter with a Hungry Ghost named *Enku*. The fearsome, fire-breathing creature told **Ānanda** that he would die within 3 days and fall into the *Gaki-dō*, unless he could provide sufficient meals for all the Hungry Spirits. Unable to provide such an amount of food, **Ānanda** consulted Shakyamuni Buddha, who revealed to him a secret blessing of Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva (*Kanzeonbosatsu no hinoroi* 觀世音菩薩の秘). When offering a bowl of food **Ānanda** should chant the phrase 'Kaji Onjiki Dharani' (加持飲食陀羅尼), thus the food would multiply until all hungry ghosts were satisfied, and all would be fed. **Ānanda** was also told, that through such an act of compassion and relieving suffering, the life of the benefactors would be extended, too. Also, karma would improve through the good deed, and by virtue of these merits, one would be enabled to come closer to reaching enlightenment. **Ānanda** did so immediately and was saved.

The above-mentioned apocryphal scriptures became popular in China during the 6th century and eventually were transmitted to Japan, where they also became the foundation for Japanese *Segaki-e* and O-Bon festivities.

II. O-Bon in Japan

Buddhism, transmitted via China and the Korean peninsula, was officially established in Japan in 552. The Bon festival, adopted from China, is said to have first been observed on the 15th day of the 7th lunar month in the year 606 by order of Empress *Suiko* (推古天皇, 554 – 628). Also during her reign, the *17-Article Constitution* (Jap. *jūshichijō kenpō* 十七条憲法) came into force, which elevated Buddhism to the rank of a state religion. The clergy's influence on the political elite continued to increase, and in 733, O-Bon was established as an annual observance on the initiative of *Shōmu-tennō* (聖武天皇, 701 – 756), a devout Buddhist (Yoshikawa *kōbunkan*: 1991).

Although the scriptural origins of each event, O-Bon and *Segaki-e*, are different, they eventually came to be held together. Not just as memorial services for specific ancestors, but for spirits in general, to improve one's Karma, and as prayers for one's own health and life extension.

Initially, when it came to the relationship between ancestors and descendants, commoners held on to their local Shintō and other

pre-Buddhist traditions. In popular Japanese belief, the mid-summer harvest time is a time when ancestral spirits 'return' to visit the world of the living and should be greeted with all due respect. However, the practice of annual liturgical oblations (*fusegyō*, 布施業) was limited to the elites in temples, and the imperial, and shōgunal courts up to the Kamakura period.

The observance of Buddhist rituals was a pompous and costly affair, usually held out of sight by the general public. The chanting of sutras in Chinese and the performing of mysterious acts, especially by esoteric schools, gave the *Segaki-e* and O-Bon-e an aura of aloofness and magic and did not have much to do with the festivities of the common people. Nevertheless, its practice by both clergy and the nobility was eventually influenced by the commoners' Shintō customs, local lore, ancestral veneration, harvest festivals, thanksgiving and general merrymaking (Hammitzsch 1990, 1349, 1438 and 1699).

When it came to folk beliefs, the fear of 'Vengeful Spirits' (*onryō* 怨霊), ghosts of people who died a violent or wrongful death, and who are believed to be capable of causing harm, killing, or causing all sorts of disasters (Kuroda 1996), helped to bring O-Bon closer to the people. Due to the fear of *onryō*, the bloodshed of the *Genpei wars*, (源平合戦, 1180–1185) led to an increasing interest in placating spirits by commoners and superstitious warriors of the upcoming Kamakura shōgunate (鎌倉幕府, 1185 -1333) alike. This brought new patronage to monasteries, especially to those from the Zen schools (Deal 2006, 210).

Other Buddhist sects profited from the fear of the Age of Dharma decline, *Mappō* (末法), which was widespread between the mid-Heian and early-Kamakura periods. In its wake, Buddhist lay movements started to spread, and the upcoming schools of Pure-Land Buddhism further helped to introduce Buddhist practices to a wider range of society.

With the exception of the *Jōdō-Shinshū*, which teaches that O-Bon and *Segaki* are not required, because a sufficiently strong belief in the salvific powers of Amida Buddha will lead to rebirth in the Western Paradise, even Pure-Land schools observe O-Bon and *Segaki-e* ceremonies (Higashi Honganji 1966 and 2013). However, even in the *Jōdō-Shinshū*, participation in local Bon activities is not prohibited, and giving alms and offerings is generally encouraged as an expression of compassion. (<http://www.jodo.org>)

Through the following Ashikaga and Sengoku periods, Japan continued to experience lengthy military conflicts. Often, whole clans were eradicated, thus increasing the demand for dead rites and ancestor services. The duty to hold and oversee proper burial ceremonies lasts on the shoulders of the eldest son or his heir. If there is nobody to continue with these duties, the number of unattached spirits increases.

Several religious, political, and economic factors boosted the wider practice of O-Bon during the Tokugawa period.

- a. The proscription of Christianity and the subsequent introduction of the Danka systems (檀家制度, *danka seido*), with its obligatory registration of all households in Buddhist temples, brought the common people into closer contact with the clergy and temple rites.
- b. The *Sankin kōtai* system (参観交代), which brought samurai and commoners from the provinces to Edo and vice versa, helped to spread O-Bon customs throughout Japan (Vaporis 2009).
- c. The accelerating urbanization favoured the emergence of O-Bon 'holidays' to allow people to return to their ancestral homes in order to oblige to their filial duties.
- d. Decreasing prices for candles and for sugar, helped to make the festival more attractive. The floating lanterns, and the fashion of special sweets called *bongashi* (盆お菓子), often shaped like lotus flowers to symbolize the wish for rebirth in the Western Paradise or the Pure Land of Amida Buddha, came up.



Fig. 1 Assorted *Bongashi*

III. The Course of the O-Bon Festivities

Upon their return to their ancestral homelands, families clean their houses and the graveyards and make offerings of fruits, fresh flowers, incense, or other things the deceased may have liked. To save their antecedents from suffering in the afterlife, Buddhist priests are invited into their homes to perform *su*tra chanting services in front of family altars (*butsudan*, 佛壇), where the ancestors' memorial tablets (*ihai* 位牌) are lined up. Lights, candles, bonfires or lanterns are lit to guide the

ancestral spirits to their respective families and to ward off evil spirits. Special dishes are served at home to feed family members and spirits alike, while many Japanese Buddhist temples hold assemblies, Segaki-e, to feed all the '*Hungry Ghosts*' of the '*Myriad Spirits of the Three Realms*'. In order to provide enough food and drink the above-mentioned 'Food multiplication spell' (*Kaji Onjiki Dharani*) is chanted, and a ritual cycle known as the Ambrosia Gate (*Kanromon* 甘露門) is performed by the monks involved. The merit produced in that rite is dedicated to the spirits of the deceased family members of the parishioners who attend, as **well as to placate evil spirits and ensure everybody's safety from evil.**

Sumo competitions and the widely performed O-Bon dances are meant to entertain visiting spirits and the living alike. These Bon dances are usually solemn group dances, the choreography of which often contains movements from agricultural work, hinting at their harvest festival origin. In many houses, decorations made from cucumbers and eggplants can be found. Traditional cucumber figures are supposed to resemble fast horses, which quickly bring the visiting spirits to their homes, while the eggplant figures symbolize slowly trotting cows, returning them to the netherworld. In areas close to the sea or rivers, the visiting ancestral spirits, are finally sent home on floating lanterns or spirit boats.

For historical and cultural reasons, O-Bon celebrations in Nagasaki differ in some respects from nationwide customs. After the local domain lord had converted to Christianity during the Sengoku period, the city of Nagasaki was governed by the Society of Jesus from 1580 to 1587. Numerous churches were built and almost all residents converted, earning the city the nickname "Rome of Japan". Nagasaki prospered as a busy port city and became a centre of foreign trade. However, Toyotomi Hideyoshi's Kyūshū campaigns put an end to the political and missionary ambitions of the Jesuits. Nagasaki was henceforth placed under the direct control of the central government and remained so until 1668. From 1587 to 1614, Christianity was increasingly restricted and ultimately banned outright. Those who did not want to give up their faith either had to leave the country or practice their religion in secret at risk of death as '*Kakure Kirishitan*'. The situation was exacerbated by the failed Shimabara Rebellion. The Tokugawa shogunate, therefore, imposed strict control on all residents of Nagasaki, particularly those with known ties to Christianity.

From 1688, fearing that Christians were hiding among them, but mostly because of deteriorating relations with China, seasonal Chinese traders were forced to relocate to a ghetto called *Tōjin yashiki* (唐人屋敷). Their freedom of movement was restricted, but the city's Chinese temples could be visited, so contact between the Japanese and the Chinese

continued, usually mediated by long-established city dwellers with Chinese roots. (Jansen 1992, Chapter 1)

Trade between Japan and other countries was severely limited by a strictly isolationist foreign policy. This gave the Dutch, who were still allowed to trade from Dejima, a special role. Although they were closely monitored and had very limited access to the city, a lot of information kept reaching the city and influenced local culture. Due to the strictly hierarchical social structure enforced by the Tokugawa shogunate, the general Japanese urban population also lived in separate districts. These were also regularly controlled by the samurai of the governors sent from Edo for fear of hidden Christians or illegal aliens.

For the urban population, ostentatious participation in Buddhist or Shintō festivals offered an opportunity to allay suspicions of sympathizing with Christianity. Frequent festivals also provided opportunities for local citizens to freely meet people outside of their city districts. As a result, Nagasaki's yearly calendar is full of lively events.

It starts with battle kite flying (*hata age* ハタ揚げ), from New Year until the beginning of the rainy season. These kites were originally introduced by Polynesian staff working on Dejima island and were used to signal public or private messages, and even helped hidden Christians to communicate (Marra 2021). In midsummer dragon boat racing (*pe-ron* ペーロン) commences. It was introduced in the early Edo period from China. The summer ends with the Japanese and Chinese O-bon festivities.

Next on the agenda is the locally very popular *Kunchi* festival. (Morita 1990, chapter 1) After the confiscation of the Jesuit's ecclesiastical properties, *Katakiyo Aoki* revived Shintō traditions and the worship of three Nagasaki's Ujigami; the deities Suwa, Morisaki and Sumiyoshi, by building *Suwa Shrine* in 1625. Initially, a celebration of autumn harvests, *Kunchi* grew in popularity after two courtesans performed a '*Ko-Mai*' dance in 1634.

In 1648, Tokugawa took the opportunity to further alienate the citizens from Christianity by providing the shrine with a representative plot of land and generously sponsoring the construction of *Chinzei Grand Shrine Suwa Shrine* at its current site. During the shrine festival, Shogunate officials also had a chance to inconspicuously check for hidden Christians through the custom of '*Garden Showing*' (*niwamise* 庭見せ). A day before the parade starts, all participants have to open their homes to public scrutiny and put the prepared attractions and costumes on display for scrutiny. Taking turns, each year, seven different neighbourhoods are responsible for the event. Popular attractions are the '*Dutch Ship*', the '*Red Seal Ship*' or the Chinese '*Dragon Dance*'. *Kunchi*,

too, incorporates elements of Portuguese, Dutch and Chinese culture blended with local Japanese customs.

All of Nagasaki's events, or at least the way they are held, have been influenced by the town's Christian history and its multi-ethnicity. The celebration of O-Bon is no exception. Since the Edo period, O-Bon in Nagasaki differs in many ways from the rather solemn celebrations elsewhere in Japan. While the general image is of people in yukata gathering on the quiet riverside at night, setting small lantern boats sailing, Nagasaki experiences a month of lively activities, climaxing in a boisterous and very noisy parade with lots of fireworks and alcohol.



Fig. 2 O-Bon 1820, 「長崎名勝図絵」

If someone had passed away during the previous year (*hatsubon* 初盆), special care is taken to ensure that the new spirit receives the due rites, respect and attention. Family, friends, acquaintances and neighbours gather to build a spirit boat (*shōrōbune*, 精霊船). *Shōrōbune* are an expression of the individual preferences of the deceased, so nowadays, instead of the traditional sailing ships other vehicles (buses, carriages, cars, rockets,...) may be chosen for the spirits' return journey. All vehicles, regardless of type, bear the name, family crest, and often a photo of the deceased. The sails are usually decorated with representations of Amida Buddha, Kannon, or lotus flowers and express the wish that the deceased should not return to Gaki-dō but rather be saved by Buddhas' mercy to await rebirth in the Western Paradise or Pure Land. For this reason, the ships also bear names such as Gokuraku Maru (極楽丸, Ultimate Bliss Liner), Jōdō Maru (浄土丸, Pure Land Liner) or Saihō Maru (西方丸, Western Paradise Liner).



Fig. 3 A *Shōrōbune* under construction

3. 1 The course of celebrations in Nagasaki

Nagasaki's Japanese O-Bon commences at the beginning of August. On the first day of the festival, graves are cleaned and decorated. At home, a special spirit shelf (*bondana* 盆棚) is put up. **It holds the ancestor's** mortuary tablets (*ihai*, 位) as well as offerings of flowers, fruits, sweets, and vegetables and is decorated with photographs of the deceased and special lanterns. Seasonal dumplings and sweets are prepared for the occasion and laid out for the visiting spirits. After that, a monk is asked to visit and chant a sutra. Also in early August, preparations for the building of *shōrōbune* begin.

On the 12th day of the month, firework sales begin within the city, so cemetery visitors and spirit ship crews stock up on ammunition for the event. According to local television station KTN, in 2022, some individual customers purchased fireworks amounting to 500,000 Yen. Supposedly, the total cost for the O-Bon-firework exceeds 100 million Yen per year. (KTN 2022, NHK 2022, Hanabistore 2022)

August 13th is the day when the ancestors return home. Again the cemeteries are visited, but then, in Nagasaki, a lively picnic is held at the graveside and fireworks are set off in the evening. For this purpose, most local graveyards are equipped with stone benches to accommodate the assembled family members. Accompanied by the spirits of the ancestors (*go-senzo-sama*, ご先祖様), the party then returns to their decorated homes for plenty of drinking, more eating and talking about deceased loved ones.



Fig. 4 Group *Shōrōbune*

On the 14th, the spirits are served three different vegetarian meals, such as *Sekihan*, *Sōmen* noodles or *Inarizushi*. In the case of *hatsubon*, family, friends, acquaintances, and neighbours gather to finish the spirit boats for the return parade. Individual boats became fashionable during Japan's economic boom years. They may be several meters long, and cost a substantial amount of money. For less affluent customers, some neighbourhoods, groups or clubs, and local funeral homes offer extra large boats, to accommodate groups of departed spirits, as customary up until the 1960s. Many funeral homes also provide professional boat-building for the elderly or less capable customers. Nowadays, even spirit boats for pets are offered.

On the 15th the spirits return to the netherworld. At home, extra rations of food and *okuri dango* on leaves are laid out as way-provision for related and unattached *gakijoro-sama* (餓鬼精霊様). Then the parade begins. Boats with a length of more than 2m need to be registered at city hall and are allotted a starting time for the procession. This year, there were more than 600 registrations, which is less than half of pre-Corona times. However, as smaller boats can join the parade freely, exact numbers are unknown and the whole noisy affair lasts most of the day and night.

Small ships can be carried by one or two persons, but at least 20 people are needed to move a 2m boat, even if it is mounted on wheels. As a result, half the city is on its feet. Also, depending on the distance between the home of the deceased and the gathering place at the harbour, substitutes may be needed. When the mother of popular local singer Sada Masashi passed away in 2016, the spirit boat in her honour had to be navigated by more than 100 people. (Sada Masashi Blog, Nagasaki Shinbun 16.8.2016).

The many hills of Nagasaki make the parade a strenuous affair. So generous amounts of often alcoholic fluids are involved. While pushing the spirit ships, Chinese gongs and bells are rung and firecrackers (*bakuchiku* 爆竹), extra loud multi-break shells (*rangyoku* 乱玉), and fire arrows (*yabiya* 矢火矢) **are set off to the chanting of “doi doi”, a dialectal abbreviation of the *Nembutsu* prayer.** (Nagasaki-kotoba kataranba) Frequently, firecrackers are set on fire in units of boxes, so it is unimaginably noisy. People, equipped with earplugs watch along the road, gift flowers or food to bypassing boats of acquaintances or follow the event on local television, gossiping and gathering the news of recent deaths. *Shōrōbune* are expressions of the deceased persons' (or pets') interests and personalities. So, next to Buddhist icons, motifs related to the *O-Kunchi* festival, hobbies or the deceased's former occupation are popular. The idea is to please the deceased and to spend a last happy day with him or her. The lively festival-like atmosphere is a mixture of craziness, merrymaking, melancholy, private mourning, and a public show of respect and gratitude towards the departed.

To keep the disruption of traffic to a minimum, the spirit boat parade, *shōrōnagashi* (精霊流し) starts nowadays at noon and ends around 11:00 pm. In the past, it started after midnight and lasted until dawn on the 16th. After the parade, the ships used to be left adrift on the sea, but nowadays, they are disposed of by the city. Finally, houses and graves are cleaned, the remaining fireworks set off, incense is lit, and goodbyes are said until next year.

3.3. Nagasaki's Chinese O-Bon

A few days apart starts the movable lunar O-Bon, locally called *Karadera-Bon* (唐寺盆) or *Acha-san no Bon* (アチャさんの盆 or 阿爹さんの盆). It has strong connections to the city's Chinese ex-pat community's traditions and Chinese temples, where it is called *Yúlánpén* (盂蘭盆).

Even before the opening of Nagasaki's harbour in 1571, a sizable number of Chinese traders started to settle and bring with them their eclectic form of Buddhism and other customs from their homeland. During the Edo period, up to one-**fifth of the city's population was either** Chinese or had Chinese relatives.

After Christianity was banned, the mandatory registration of all households at Buddhist temples (*danka seido* 檀家制度) was decreed. The Chinese settlement was eager to dispel any suspicion of involvement with Christianity. Hence, they started to build temples and invite monks from China, most prominently Zen master *Ingen Ryūki* (*Yin-Yüan Lung Ch'i*, 隱元 隆琦, 1592-1673), who arrived in Japan in 1654 and subsequently became the founder of the *Ōbaku* school of Zen Buddhism (Baroni 2000, Marra 2011 and 2012).

- Traders from Nanjing provided the means to build *Kōfukuji* (興福寺) in 1623/4;
- People from Zhangzhou in Fujian supported *Fukusaiji* (福濟寺) in 1628.
- From the same province, but from Fuzhou came the patrons of *Sōfukuji* (崇福寺), established in 1635.
- The fourth Chinese temple, *Shōfukuji* (聖福寺 or *Manjusan* (万寿山), was completed in 1677 with support from Chinese merchants from Guangdong province.

These temples were led by Chinese clergy, who had come to perform funeral rites, mark important holidays and lead the festivities around **Buddha's birthday** or *Yúlánpén*. As the monks followed Chinese monastic rules (*shingi* 清規), they helped to preserve their cultural identity as

Chinese in the face of the dominant Japanese culture that surrounded them. Also, since these communities included many traders of considerable wealth, they were able to hold lavish festivities, to where Japanese guests were frequently invited. Thus, among others, the habit of lighting fireworks may have spread to the city.



Fig. 5 *Sōfukuji* temple with O-Bon decorations

Today, Chinese O-Bon traditions are continued at *Sōfukuji* temple. During the festival, Chinese descendants and Japanese visitors from all over Japan gather here to pay respect to their ancestors and ward off evil spirits and pray for good luck and good health. On the occasion, the temple is lavishly decorated with streamers and lanterns. Little altars, in Japanese, called *meitaku* (冥宅) are erected. These miniature houses offer living rooms, bathrooms, table tennis and other comforts for the incoming

spirits. In front of these, offerings of food, drink, flowers, and incense are laid out.



Fig. 6 Meitaku

Many Chinese rituals involve burning symbolized material possessions, such as joss paper (*meisen*, 冥錢) in the form of money, clothes, gadgets, etc). In Nagasaki, virtual money is not only offered as 'Hell money' notes but also in the form of 'heaps of silver and gold' (*ginzan* 銀山 and *kinzan* 金山). Within the temple compound, there is also a 'Shopping Mall for Spirits' (*sanjūrokendo* 三十六間堂) available. It consists of 36 small painted 'stores' offering anything from tofu to haircuts, new coffins and tailors to furniture so that the ghosts can purchase the things they like with their offered joss money.



Fig. 7 Stores in the Spirit Mall

During the whole festival, people move from one temple building to another, bow and give offerings to the spirits and hope for blessings and protection from their ancestors in return.



Fig. 8 Offering Incense

Incense is burned in great quantities in front of the Chinese Buddhist deities, most prominently for:

- *Enma* (閻魔), the sovereign of the netherworld, who also judges and decides whether the dead will have a good or miserable rebirth in one of the six realms;
- *Shōki* (鍾馗), the vanquisher of ghosts and evil beings; and
- *Maso* (媽祖), the goddess of the sea and patroness of sailors and fishermen, who in Chinese Buddhism is worshipped as an incarnation of Kannon.

Since *Yúlánpén* is a festival to feed 'Hungry Ghosts', plenty of food is involved. Special food (*kinsai* 芹菜), is prepared and laid out on long rows of little dishes. On the first and second days only vegetarian dishes, for the last day, meat and seafood are also offered so that the spirits gain enough strength for their arduous way back to the netherworld.



Fig. 9 *Kinsai*

On all three days, *Ōbaku* monks gather to chant the relevant O-Bon and *Segaki-e* sutras.



Fig. 10 *Ōbaku* monks chanting sutras



Fig. 11 The abbot of *Kōfukuji*, Matsuo Hodo

During the sutra chanting, the oldest member of the gathered Chinese community offers incense and performs ritual prostrations in front of the main hall.



Fig. 12 'Heaps of silver and gold' waiting to be offered

After darkness, the remaining joss money, *ginzan* and *kinzan* are burned and the living sit down to a farewell dinner in honour of their departing ancestors.



Fig. 13 Farewell-dinner preparations

4. Conclusion

Both O-Bon celebrations in Nagasaki bring together the sacred and the secular and demonstrate the proximity of the living and the dead. For three days the divide between this world and the netherworld is bridged by food, drink, fireworks, customs and rituals, extending social ties over generations and connecting all involved with their ancestors and the community of the living. O-Bon activities place a strong emphasis not only on family ties but also on maintaining, strengthening or reestablishing the social network of the deceased and their families. During the Japanese O-Bon, the building of group-*shōrōbune*, neighbourhood-*shōrōbune* or commercial funeral-business *shōrōbune*, (re)connect the parties involved and ensure the continuity of social relations which had been weakened or cut off by death.

The lively spirit boat parade shows to some extent the characteristics of a *matsuri*, but the religious ritualistic aspects and other differences can't be overlooked:

- While periodically repeated *matsuri* like *O-Kunchi*, are collective affairs associated with Shinto beliefs and carried by groups with common traits (Morita 1990, chapter 1), O-Bon is more private and belongs to Buddhist traditions.
- Although the spirits may leave Hell every year, the focus is nevertheless on the death of an individual and his or her connection to the family, people of different ages, genders, professions and classes.
- O-Bon celebrations strengthen the ties to the mourning families' affiliated temples, as the sutra chanting in front of the house altar is performed by an invited priest.
- The names and decorations of the *shōrōbune* indicate a still present connectedness to Amida Buddhism and a however vague belief in karmic retribution and rebirth.
- The overwhelming number of spirit boats are privately built, and while the involved parties may sometimes tend to show off a bit, the competitive character of a *matsuri* is missing.
- *Shōrōnagashi* helps to bring closure to mourning relatives and friends, as they are left convinced to have done everything in their might to ensure the spirits' well-being in the netherworld.
- The O-Bon festivities also provide a public opportunity for spectators to bid farewell, and show their respect and gratitude to the deceased, and their support for the bereaved families.

Chinese O-Bon, has even stronger religious ties than its Japanese counterpart, as it is centered around temple activities. Kara-bon helps to

keep Chinese traditions alive and bring together the temple(s) and the (ex-pat) communities. Family, friends, neighbours and Buddhist clergy, Chinese and Japanese, gather and commemorate the dead spirits.

The events not only strengthen the ties between family members and the community, helped to overcome grief, bring closure and pacify the disturbances caused by the loss of a loved one, but they had also an important multicultural function. During the *sakoku* period, the celebrations were a rare opportunity to get first-hand news from mainland China and cultivate international contacts. As the two O-Bons originally were celebrated at the same time, they connected the Japanese and Chinese communities through their common Buddhist beliefs, established trust, and contributed to a fruitful cultural exchange and mutual understanding. In the Edo period, the extrovert demonstration of Buddhist traditions during the festivities also helped to protect the involved parties from any Shōgunate suspicions concerning their relationship with Christianity.

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THE REDISCOVERY OF EZO IN 1980s

JAPANESE CINEMA

Sean O'REILLY¹

Abstract: *Following Japan's 1945 surrender, the large northern island, Ezo (now known as Hokkaido), became the last colonial holding left in Japan's holding. Likewise, its native inhabitants, the Ainu people, were the only ethnically distinct indigenous minority group to experience the painfully paradoxical blend of assimilationism and exoticization the government of Japan pursued in the postwar years. As such, the historical legacy of Japan's internal colonization of Hokkaido is fraught with enhanced significance when depicted in audiovisual popular culture.*

How have filmmakers and other cultural creators made sense of Ezo's status as the final frontier of Japan's imperial ambition, and of the Ainu as the indigenous imperial subjects par excellence? I track a 1980s surge of interest in the historical circumstances leading to, and immediately following, the absorption of Ezo by Japan's government. I analyze three key audiovisual texts of the 1980s, arguing it is unsurprising that interest in a relatively 'safe' subject like colonial domination of Ezo and its native inhabitants peaked in the 1980s. Pop culture projects offered mainland Japanese viewers the chance not only to reflect positively on Japan's colonial accomplishments but also to lament the Ainu's population and linguistic decline...once that decline was safely irreversible.

Keywords: *Japan, Ainu, History, Audiovisual Culture, Cinema*

Introduction

Defeat in World War II stripped Japan of almost all the trappings of empire. Each of the overseas territories and colonies acquired from the 1870s onwards, even Okinawa (albeit temporarily) was lost in the aftermath of the 1945 surrender—all except one, that is. The large northern island, originally known as Ezo or Ezochi before being renamed Hokkaido, **became the last arguably colonial territory left in Japan's empire.** Its native inhabitants, the Ainu people, were the only ethnically distinct indigenous minority group to experience the painfully paradoxical blend of assimilationism and exoticization the government of Japan pursued in the postwar years. As such, the historical legacy of **Japan's internal colonization of Ezo/Hokkaido is fraught with enhanced significance when depicted in audiovisual popular culture.**

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How would filmmakers and other cultural creators seek to make **sense of Ezo's status as the final frontier of Japan's imperial ambition, and** of the Ainu as the indigenous imperial subjects par excellence? In this article, I track a surge of interest, broad enough to show up in multiple mediums (live-action films, TV movies, and animated feature films), in the historical circumstances leading to, and immediately following, the absorption of Ezo by first the Tokugawa Shogunate and then the Meiji government. This surge occurred in the 1980s, following many decades of comparative neglect. Ultimately, I will analyze three key narrative audiovisual texts of the 1980s, each representing a different medium, to **argue it should be no surprise that interest in a relatively 'safe' subject like** colonial domination of Ezo and its native inhabitants peaked in the 1980s (note that this study will be examining only trends in audiovisual narrative fiction, but those interested in documentary coverage of the Ainu will arguably find roughly concurrent changes in that field; see Centeno Martín 2017 for more information). Pop culture projects offered **viewers the chance not only to reflect positively on Japan's colonial** accomplishments (carefully bypassing far more controversial areas and events by focusing narrowly on Ezo) but also to commiserate with the **Ainu's population and linguistic decline...yet only after that decline was** irreversible.

Historical Context for the 1980s Audiovisual "Ezo Boom"

The Ainu population in Hokkaido actually experienced an unprecedented upward surge after defeat in 1945. However, this was not **necessarily something to celebrate; Hokkaido's gain was Sakhalin's loss,** as the USSR expelled all Ainu inhabitants of Sakhalin from the island upon reclaiming it. As such, Hokkaido, and the indigenous population there, experienced one of the more unusual repatriation crises to face postwar Japan, as the former inhabitants of Sakhalin may not necessarily have felt much kinship, let alone political or linguistic allegiance, to mainland Japan or even to other Ainu. This double othering, not only from mainland Japanese but also to the Hokkaido Ainu, from whose language the Sakhalin dialects were quite distinct, may have motivated **these "returnees" (many of whom had been living in southern Sakhalin** for nearly 40 years, ever since the end of the Russo-Japanese War) to abandon any markers of difference even faster and more assiduously than the Hokkaido Ainu (Lee and Hasegawa 2013, 2). In any case, the unique customs and linguistic traits of the Sakhalin Ainu do not seem to have survived to the present day.

The mainland government of Japan appears to have become concerned about the sociopolitical ramifications of the Ainu vanishing only

after their assimilation campaign had virtually run its course. Beginning only in 1972, the government began organizing a once-every-seven-years survey of the Ainu population, seeking information about how many indigenous Ainu remained in the country, and of those, how many considered themselves proficient in the Ainu language. These surveys appeared to show that linguistic extinction was imminent in the 1980s.

Nongovernmental actors were also aware of the dire situation facing Ainu language and culture. Notable among them was Kayano Shigeru, an Ainu native speaker and the most prominent Ainu rights activist of the twentieth century whose career studying Ainu customs culminated, in the mid-1990s, in him becoming the first Ainu individual ever to serve in the national Diet (Siddle 1997, n.p.). A grassroots campaign to preserve the Ainu language group and culture from extinction finally succeeded, in 1991, in convincing the Japanese government to change its stance and acknowledge to the United Nations that the Ainu were indeed an ethnic minority (for more information on the history of the Ainu struggle for **rights, see chapter two of Tsutsui Kiyoteru's 2018 *Rights Make Might***). **More importantly, 1997 (tied to Kayano's ultimately unsuccessful** campaign against the building of the Nibutani dam) saw the passage of a law designed to protect the Ainu from extinction (Minority Rights Group International, 2018, n. pag). In fact, the struggle was far from over, as the Ainu did not win full and concrete legal protection as an indigenous group until passage of the Ainu Culture Protection Act in 2019, with some critics labeling even this measure as too little, too late (Nakamura 2019, n. pag.).

I argue that legal success in winning recognition as an ethnic minority and eventually as an indigenous group was made possible by the surge of interest in Ainu culture and language which occurred in the 1980s. Partly this was due to efforts by Ainu activists themselves, which markedly increased in the 1980s (Hanks 2017, 98). But even a well-organized minority campaigning for its rights and identity can expect little progress unless and until the majority feels some sort of interest in or responsibility for the situation. At the start of the decade, that sort of political will must have seemed very far away indeed: in 1980, the LDP government baldly insisted to the UN Committee on Human Rights that Japan had no cultural, linguistic or religious minorities at all (Centeno Martin 2017, 74). So what transformed mainstream Japanese views of Hokkaido and its indigenous population? What shaped their impressions of the Ainu and the historical circumstances which led to their current state? Even more than increased newspaper coverage and other forms of fact-based and broad but perhaps somewhat shallow sociopolitical engagement with the Ainu issue, the key was to connect with mainland Japanese emotionally.

One key source of the increased emotional engagement, among mainland Japanese, for the plight of the Ainu is audiovisual narrative

material, which is why in this article I will focus on several audiovisual texts that seek to deal **with Hokkaido's colonial history**. Documentaries may seem like an obvious choice in this regard, but fact-based material may not have as strong an emotional impact on viewers—and almost certainly did not and still do not reach as wide an audience—as narrative fiction storytelling, so the three examples I will introduce are all of the latter category. While the first two 1980s texts discussed herein still dodge or obfuscate the question of Ainu as indigenous population entirely, by ignoring the Ainu and presenting Ezo (later renamed Hokkaido) as an **“empty” frontier waiting to be filled by mainland Japanese, one, namely *The Dagger of Kamui* (*Kamui no ken*),** tackles the issue of identity directly. Many viewers for these 1980s projects, especially the animated *The Dagger of Kamui* (which would have appealed primarily to younger audiences due to the medium and the adventure story alike) would have been too young to have experienced the earlier surge in depictions of the Ainu in Japanese pop culture, around 1960. A few high-profile films like *Mito Komon: Voyage to Ezo* (***Mito Kōmon umi wo wataru*, 1961**), a **feel-good parable of assimilation set in historical times, and Uchida Tomu's *The Outsiders* (*Mori to mizuumi no matsuri*, 1958)** as well as Naruse **Mikio's *Whistling in Kotan* (*Kotan no kuchibue*, 1959)**, both of which addressed the topic of present-day (circa 1960) Hokkaido and discrimination against the Ainu, had been released one generation earlier, but these projects were not fast-paced swashbuckling adventure stories nor did they delve particularly deeply into the history of the Japanese occupation of Ezo, suggesting a somewhat older target audience. As such, few children or young adults in the 1980s had likely seen any of this earlier generation of films, meaning that many 1980s viewers, of *The Dagger of Kamui* in particular, may have been encountering an audiovisual treatment which dealt specifically with the history of Ezo for the very first time.

Ezo as Purgatory: *Fireflies of the North*

Before examining *The Dagger of Kamui*, I will quickly introduce two other 1980s audiovisual texts which adopt a very different approach to the **issue of Ezo's colonial status**. In short, both entirely ignore the Ainu, presenting Ezo/Hokkaido as an empty land, a blank canvas onto which is projected mainland Japanese hopes and fears. In some ways, this refusal to engage with the Ainu issue may actually be less harmful than many earlier, far more stereotypical audiovisual depictions of Ainu culture and language, which tended toward extreme Othering (Centeno Martin 2017, 69-70). While both obviously will fail to forge an emotional link between Ainu as endangered minority and mainland Japanese viewers, one of them may indirectly foster sympathy through its extreme emphasis on the harsh living conditions in Hokkaido.

One of the more high-profile 1980s projects which attempts to show the relatively early history of Ezo/Hokkaido is *Fireflies in the North* (*Kita no hotaru*), a 1984 feature film directed by auteur Gosha Hideo and starring Nakadai Tetsuya. Its depiction of early Meiji-era Hokkaido is bleak indeed: the island appears as a dreary prison from which there is no escape. It is a wasteland, too cold for most to survive, let alone thrive, and the main plot concerns the suffering of mainland Japanese who have been sent to a literal jail in the remote reaches of Hokkaido. In this, the film harkens back to other such depictions such as the 1965 *Abashiri Prison* (*Abashiri Bangaichi*) and sequels starring Takakura Ken, and foreshadows the rather bleak hit 2005 film *Year One in the North* (*Kita no zero nen*), but unlike those films, which at least hold out the possibility that an intrepid few mainland Japanese might make a bold escape back to civilization somehow, nothing awaits the inhabitants of *Fireflies in the North* but suffering, despair and ultimately death. Even the cruel warden, played by Nakadai, is no exception, for the film stresses that he also is imprisoned in a sense, despite all his power, and forced to suffer the appalling conditions of Hokkaido alongside his prisoners.

A particularly poignant scene (from 86:54 to 88:33) shows a woman named Setsu, living near the prison in an attempt to stay close to her imprisoned husband, reduced to stripping clothes off of a dead prisoner as part of a desperate plot. She stumbles forward through the heavy blanket of snow on the ground, moving directly away from the camera and towards a gruesome forest of fresh grave markers ahead. The landscape is pure white, and the only diegetic sound is the howling of the wind and the scrabbling sounds of her hands as she claws at the frozen corpse in the most recent grave, attempting to remove the thin clothing. The nondiegetic soundtrack here makes the scene still more disturbing, with its haunting and almost sardonic tone.

She strips, shivering in the bitter cold, and dons the dead prisoner's clothing, intending to masquerade as a prisoner herself to attempt a long-odds jail-break when the prisoners are off doing hard labor. Nonetheless, given the bleak tone of the film, **the viewer's pessimism at** this plan is justified. No matter how earnestly she suffers and sacrifices, there is essentially no chance that both she and her husband will survive and find freedom, since after all, even if they do somehow manage to survive **the chaos of the planned riot and break out of the prison area, it's** the dead of winter; where can they go?

The total absence of the Ainu notwithstanding, by emphasizing the appalling living conditions in early Meiji-era Hokkaido, *Fireflies in the North* may well have fostered a kind of pity in viewers at anyone, regardless of ethnicity, forced to eke out a living there. In a place like

nineteenth-century Hokkaido, Ainu and Japanese were perhaps reduced to a lowest-common-denominator form of equality in their desperate struggle against the elements. This approach stands in stark contrast to the second audiovisual text to be examined, which is so utopian in its vision that it might lead to precisely the opposite sort of equality: anyone, regardless of roots, so fortunate as to live in the island to the north has the chance to find in it a veritable promised land.

Ezo as Utopian Blank Canvas: ***Goryōkaku***

Goryōkaku (literally translated, ‘the Five-Pointed Fort’ and referring to the eponymous star-shaped fortification erected in Hakodate which was the site of the final skirmishes of the 1868-9 Boshin War) is a two-part made-for-TV historical drama directed by Saitō Kōsei in 1988. It stars Satomi Kōtarō as the idealistic Enomoto Takeaki, most famous for setting up the short-lived Republic of Ezo in 1868-9 and serving as its first and only president. As a five-hour hagiographic biopic which lavishes praise on Enomoto despite or indeed because of his utopian tendencies, the audience is treated to a detailed account of Enomoto and his hopes and dreams, from his teenage years until his thirties, with then-52 year old Satomi assisted in this endeavor by prodigious quantities of makeup. The enormous age gap between Satomi and his subject itself speaks to the tone of the TV movie, which is clearly less concerned with audiovisual verisimilitude than it is with conveying the idealistic essence of Enomoto, his vision of Ezo as an empty frontier just waiting to be filled up with exciting new possibilities.

The production was the fourth entry (of nine) in a very popular and relatively well-received historical drama series, the ‘New Year’s Period Drama Special’ (*Nenmatsu jidaigeki supesharu*) which aired at the very end of each year and attracted impressive Kanto-area viewership ratings of over 17% at its peak despite having to compete directly against NHK’s extremely popular annual “Kōhaku uta gassen” singing show (the second entry of the series, *Byakkotai*, had reached this milestone on Dec. 31, 1986 despite airing at the same time as NHK’s singing show; *Yomiuri shinbun*, Dec. 26, 1987 evening ed., page six). As such, ***Goryōkaku*** was guaranteed to reach a very wide audience with its uplifting message about Ezo/Hokkaido, which is shown most often in sunny summer, forming a potent contrast to the bleak “eternal twilight” winter wasteland imagery of *Fireflies in the North*.

Goryōkaku ends with a curious coda. In the late 1870s Enomoto, now a Meiji governmental representative despite his earlier rebellion, has been dispatched to Siberia to negotiate with Russia over Japan’s northern borders. The sweeping vistas of Siberia visually echo how Ezo had been

depicted earlier. Enomoto wanted Ezo to be a place of freedom and opportunity. While that dream may have been too radical for his **contemporaries, the film confidently declares Enomoto's dream fulfilled** in 1980s Japan—and specifically in 1980s Hokkaido. In doing so, it appears to uphold the myth of Japan as monoethnic, and Hokkaido as entirely Japanese in its cultural and linguistic identity, since despite its five-hour running time, no Ainu character or phrase appears. The third and final text to be examined, *The Dagger of Kamui*, rejects both the equality-in-misery view of *Fireflies in the North* and the monoethnic utopianism of *Goryōkaku*, charting its own nuanced course in between these extremes.

Turning Japanese? Wrestling with Ethnic Identity in *The Dagger of Kamui*

The Dagger of Kamui, directed by Rintaro and adapted from Yano Tetsu's eponymous illustrated novel series, is a 1985 animated globetrotting epic produced by Madhouse, a studio already famous at that time for its gritty historical animated adaptations such as *Barefoot Gen* (*Hadashi no Gen*, 1983). The filmmakers clearly wished for continuity with the novels, as they hired Murano Moribi, who illustrated the book series, to oversee character design in their animated adaptation. *The Dagger of Kamui* was an ambitious project with a significant investment in its budget (hiring rising star Sanada Hiroyuki to voice the protagonist, for example), earning praise from some critics for its lavish visuals and epic scale, but it did not quite reach blockbuster status at the box office, earning around 210 million yen (Nakakawa 2014, 283). It also received a mixed critical reception at first but overcame these initial difficulties to amass a cult following (and more and more positive reviews, especially outside of Japan; see for example Jasper Sharp's largely positive 2011 review or *Animehead's Retroworld* 2017 glowing evaluation). This was thanks partly to the timely proliferation of VHS home video technology, which had completed its triumph over Betamax around 1985 and become more and more ubiquitous in Japan and the world (Cusumano et al 1991). While VHS sales figures for this specific title are not available, it was certainly seen and experienced by a substantially wider audience than the initial 210 million yen take at the box office might suggest (a drastically cut English dub entitled *Revenge of the Ninja Warrior* was even released in the United States in 1987, by Celebrity Home Entertainment).

The Dagger of Kamui follows the novels in embracing ethnic complexity, making its chief protagonist, Jirō, **himself half-Ainu** and, **more importantly, placing Jirō's struggles for a stable identity at the**

center of the story. Initially, he appears to harbor some resentment **towards his Japanese father, identifying more with his mother's Ainu side.** He intervenes when he finds a group of Japanese men beating an old Ainu man, killing the assailants. **This is Jirō's first step in what amounts to a global quest to find Captain Kidd's lost hoard but, more importantly, to fight against racial injustice wherever he finds it.**

There is even a narrative suggestion of an Ainu love interest for Jirō. This is the character of Chiomapp, a young maiden who becomes so **devoted to Jirō that she chooses to kill herself to prevent the villain, a mysterious Japanese ninja named Tenkai, from forcing her to aid him in tracking Jirō down, taking the knowledge of his whereabouts to her grave** instead. Tenkai is initially taken aback at the depth of her dedication, so it is tempting to view this self-sacrificial love at least somewhat positively: Chiomapp has stymied the villain with her devotion, after all. But why select a narrative which leads only to self-immolation for the native hero? Was her role in the story eliminated to show the strength of the Ainu (capable of the ultimate sacrifice), or to avoid the suggestion of miscegenation between her and the biologically half-Japanese but more **and more culturally Japanese Jirō? Given his own complex identity, who would in fact be a "suitable" love interest for Jirō? Midway through the film, a second candidate emerges, namely Oyuki, a Japanese kunoichi (female ninja) tasked with hunting him down but who appears more and more conflicted about her mission. Eventually she too sacrifices her life to enable Jirō to escape from Tenkai's pursuit.**

Deprived of the narrative possibility of romance with Chiomapp or Oyuki, **Jirō eventually earns the love of a different sort of heroine. Introduced as "Chico" at first, she is apparently the daughter of the famous Apache leader Geronimo, but it is later revealed that she was adopted, and her true name is Julie Rochelle. Her background is thus as unlikely as her appearance is stereotypical: she is a blue-eyed, blond-haired white (French) woman raised by Native Americans, who can code-switch between her American Indian upbringing and her ethnic roots!** It is as though the narrative of *The Dagger of Kamui* is not content with simple solutions to the problem of identity and motivation for its principal characters.

Both Jirō and Chico/Julie are narratively oversignified, allowing them to be many things to many different viewers, to fit multiple conceptions at once. This is where the medium of animation shines, as the characters' appearance itself, not only their costume and so forth but their facial features can themselves be altered as and when necessary to emphasize different aspects of their identity. In a live-action film, it would be difficult if not impossible to achieve this plasticity, as the audience can

generally tell at a glance whether someone shown on screen is a member of this or that racial or ethnic group, and visually ambiguous figures run the risk of never satisfying viewers they have any clear identity at all.

In an animated feature film like *The Dagger of Kamui*, however, the characters can simply and easily be redrawn in subtle ways, without running any such risk. **To give just one especially noticeable example, Jirō** is often shown with bright blue eyes when in touch with his Ainu roots (Fig. 1), but with brown eyes (Fig. 2) when connected to his Japanese side. **Perhaps this is why oversignified figures such as Jirō appear in animation** but rarely if ever in live-action film, and why the other works discussed herein did not manage to exert much lasting influence over the popular imaginary.



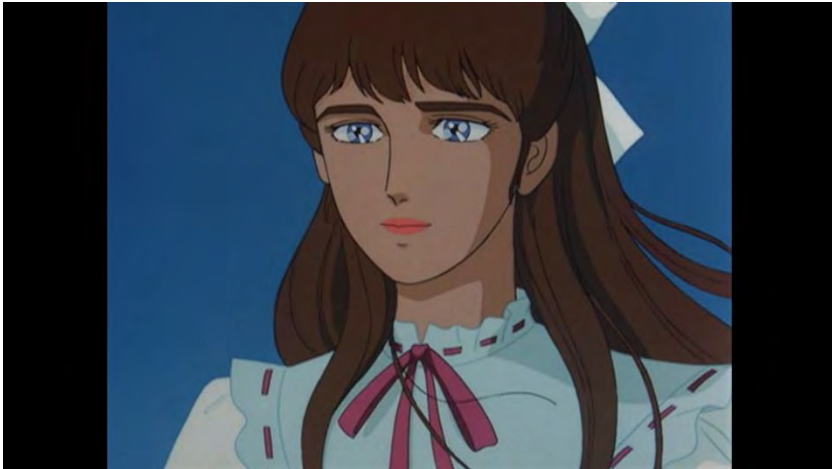
*Figure 1: Jirō's eyes are blue when he fights to defend the Ainu.
Screenshot from The Dagger of Kamui, 20:50*



*Figure 2: Jirō's eyes turn brown when he uses his Japanese ninjutsu skills.
Screenshot from The Dagger of Kamui, 46:08*



*Figure 3: Brown eyes when Chico, the heroine's native American identity, is dominant.
Screenshot from The Dagger of Kamui, 84:02*



*Figure 4: The heroine's eyes are blue when her French identity as Julie is at the fore.
Screenshot from The Dagger of Kamui, 104:06.*

Jirō and Julie are similar in being more flexible in their appearance—not just their costume—throughout. Because eye color and so forth are not predetermined (as they would be with live-action actors) in animation but are instead the result of choice, the animators involved in these transformations must have consciously intended to indicate the **characters' code-switching** facially as well as sartorially. For Julie, these choices result in the opposite transformation, from brown-eyed when depicted in moments of “native” identity as Chico (Fig. 3) to blue-eyed when revealed as Julie (Fig. 4). But while the plasticity in her visual design echoes that of Jirō, her identity remains unfixed: she is, in other words, both Chico and Julie, simultaneously, without being compelled to choose only one identity. Perhaps the creators were also making an effort to make

the mixed-race romance more appealing to Japanese viewers, because she even turns out to have a Japan connection, having been born in Nagasaki!

Jirō, by contrast, comes to embrace his Japanese side and, arguably, thereby loses his foreignness (as represented by his blue eyes). He becomes a fully Japanese hero with native roots who triumphs over his enemies not by channeling his Ainu identity but by turning more Japanese than the antagonist Tenkai, eventually outperforming him in ninjutsu. Along the way, he uses his ninja skills to fight for racial justice worldwide, freeing a Black slave from bondage and experiencing racist attacks himself while also rescuing various other people from oppression, most notably Chico/Julie when (as shown in Fig. 3) she is assaulted by lecherous white men **eager to dominate a “native” sexually. Jirō may be** uniquely qualified to combat racism due to his Ainu heritage, but his easy victories in his various encounters with racist white men come from his extensive training in a Japanese martial art, allowing him to be, paradoxically at one and the same time, both a global citizen-superhero fighting to end the evils of racism AND a thoroughly Japanese hero who is merely reordering the racial hierarchy to put Japanese ninja ahead of white cowboy.

Indeed, the entire conflict with Tenkai, and the cause of all his journeys, turns out to be a disagreement specific to the 1860s in Japan **over the country’s future political course.** Tenkai is not just any ninja, he **is the leader of the Oniwabanshū, the legendary spies of the Tokugawa Shogunate,** and as such he is shown to be a committed enemy of the burgeoning Meiji Restoration. Worse yet, pro-Shogunate figures like Tenkai and Oguri Tadamasa turn out to be literal sellouts: they plan to sell Ezo to a foreign nation in order to raise funds to defeat the Meiji Restoration forces seeking the dissolution of the Tokugawa Shogunate. Everything in the sequence showing their plotting, from the music to the **visual design, the shifty appearance and evil smirks on the characters’** faces and more suffices to convince viewers that this position is not only a mistake, it is fundamentally immoral, a betrayal of the nation-state of Japan (which, while it did not exist per se in the 1860s, was of course very **real in the viewers’ present of the** 1980s and thereafter).

Obviously, letting such villains get their hands on Captain Kidd’s legendary treasure would not be in the best interests of (the nation-state of) Japan. But the villains are powerful; who can stand against them? The answer is the **true patriots, of course, exemplified by Jirō, who is thus** fighting not simply out of personal revenge or any personal or provincial consideration, but for nothing less than the very future of Japan. This political undercurrent converts the story from a wide-ranging treasure **hunt for an infamous privateer’s hoard into a race to save the nascent**

nation-state of Japan from destruction at the hands of traitors. In this way, **Jirō's multiple ancestry and complex identity is no longer the focus of the narrative by the end, and Jirō has essentially turned Japanese, becoming** a true national hero. His native side is useful to this political component because it shows he is *choosing* to defend Japan (and the position of the Japanese people in the global racial hierarchy) rather than simply being compelled to do so by being unambiguously Japanese from the get-go.

Yet while Jirō is an explicitly Japanese national hero, a patriot of the Restoration era for his efforts to defeat the dastardly Shogunate, he is also more. His direct personal experience of racism by white Americans, and presumably his growing certainty that the racial hierarchy of the world is mistakenly forcing some worthy groups (such as the Japanese) into lower status than they should receive, makes him the ideal *global* champion to combat racial inequity. **Jirō's victory over the forces of racism made quite** an impression on one witness, who turns out to be Mark Twain. **As Jirō** prepares to ride off into the sunset around minute 93, Twain (speaking, as all the characters do throughout the film, in Japanese, as was standard of animated feature films made in 1980s Japan, such as Ghibli productions, regardless of foreign setting or concerns of verisimilitude) **waxes eloquent on Jirō's special qualities.** In response to Jirō's **puzzlement over why Twain was helping him find Kidd's lost treasure, he** replies, with a montage of now brown-eyed Jirō running with the setting sun blazing reddish-orange (Figs. 5 and 6), interspliced with footage of blue-eyed Julie and Twain watching his progress (Fig. 7) (*Dagger of Kamui*, 93:10 to 93:48 (what follows is my translation)):



Figure 5: Now a Japanese and global hero, Jirō dashes off, bright brown eyes shining. Screenshot from *The Dagger of Kamui*, 93:19

[I'm helping you because] when I saw you, my blood stirred. And in witnessing the fight just now, I came to understand the reason it did. Ever since the Industrial Revolution, our awareness of time and space have totally changed, and the West has been transformed by guns and wheels. The more these useful tools proliferate, the more people, as living beings, come to lose their spiritual essence. In doing so, people might start to transform into another kind of being. But you are filled with an indispensable *something* [**'nanika' in Japanese**] which we cannot afford to lose! And I felt drawn to you, because you can awaken that *something* in me too.



Figure 6: Jirō framed by the setting sun as he heads south to L.A. and Kidd's hoard.
Screenshot from The Dagger of Kamui, 93:37



Figure 7: Julie (blue-eyed now) and Mark Twain observing Jirō's heroic quest.
Screenshot from The Dagger of Kamui, 93:17

While it might be tempting to assume the ‘something’ in question is **Jirō’s native roots, that cannot be the case.** Mark Twain identifies it as a potentially universal spiritual quality rather than a genetic or ethnic gift: **Jirō is being celebrated for his ability to adapt to the changes that guns and wheels have brought without losing his ‘essential spirit.’** This is merely an echo of the historical Meiji-era slogan “Western Science, Eastern Spirit” and as such **Jirō is a stand-in for Japan itself, a personification of Japan’s successful emergence** into and navigation of the post-Industrial Revolution world.

Ultimately, *The Dagger of Kamui* does demonstrate a nuanced approach to issues of “native” identity and the historical legacy of Ezo, at least compared to the radical pessimism of *Fireflies in the North* or the utopianism of *Goryōkaku*. Ezo, as shown in *The Dagger of Kamui*, is neither an empty wasteland nor an empty promised land: it is peopled, and those people have agency (to a degree) and can choose in a sense what the future will bring to their land. But their choice is quite limited, partly by the worldview prevalent in the mid-1980s when the film (and the novels on which the film is based) was released: in the political struggle occurring over Ezo’s future, **the land and its people will either** come to be under (more?) foreign colonial suzerainty (if Tenkai and the pro-Shogunate forces prevail and sell it off) or will be absorbed into the emerging nation-state of Japan (if **Jirō manages to stop the villains and fund the restorationists’ efforts with Captain Kidd’s treasure**).

It seems that for the creators of the 1985 animated film, the idea of a third path rejecting external AND internal colonization was inconceivable. **Similarly, Jirō’s quest to find a stable identity seems narratively structured** into forcing him to embrace his Japanese side and becoming a national hero (with no suggestion that he could have traced a different explicitly native Ainu path) or simply letting the pro-Shogunate “traitors” win. But when one considers the main target audience for this film, which is to say mainstream Japanese viewers not yet perhaps overly concerned in the 1980s with issues of Ainu identity, the narrative choices of the film begin to make more sense. It may ultimately be unfair of us in the 2020s to judge Rintaro and others involved with *The Dagger of Kamui* too harshly.

The creators would have struggled to see clearly the sociopolitical context of the 1980s world (which structured the binary opposition between sellouts and patriots, etc.). It is unclear whether they could have hoped to rise above that somehow to create a more nuanced portrayal, **one which might have included “native” elements as more than a sort of costume** into and out of which some can easily code-switch. The very plasticity of the medium of animation, which allows easy transformation of characters’ appearance when such transformations fit the narrative,

is a double-edged sword, as by making such transformations so easy to achieve it runs the risk of reducing a complex set of linguistic, cultural and (audio)visual features into little more than entertaining window dressing.

Audiences eager, in later years, for a truly in-depth audiovisual look at Ainu culture in pop culture (as opposed to documentary) would have to wait until the 2010s. This decade saw the release of films such as *Unforgiven* (*Yurusarezaru Mono*, 2013, a remake of the eponymous 1992 American Western, but set in early Meiji Hokkaido—and featuring a half-Ainu character, Goro—and directed by a Zainichi Korean director) and the best-selling manga and later smash hit anime series *Golden Kamuy* (which brought in the linguist Nakagawa Hiroshi to oversee treatment of Ainu dialogue), set in the early twentieth century, as well as prominent works set in contemporary times, like *Ainu Mosir* (2020), all of which represent what might be called a third generational surge of interest, after the circa-1960 and mid-1980s surges. 1980s projects, even including the better-than-average *The Dagger of Kamui*, ultimately fell short in their treatment of the Ainu and their native land. **But that doesn't** mean that these projects, especially *The Dagger of Kamui*, had no positive impact at all. Merely by showing a half-Ainu character in such a prominent role (though with the usual caveat that the voice actor playing **Jirō, Sanada Hiroyuki, as well as the actor voicing Chiomapp, Jirō's** mother and various other Ainu characters were all ethnically Japanese) **doubtless expanded mainstream Japanese audiences' awareness of Ezo/Hokkaido as more than an empty wasteland or utopia.**

Many of the lawmakers and other key figures in recent years, who are responsible for the legal changes that have at last granted the Ainu protected status as an ethnic minority and Ainu culture as worth spending public funds to preserve, are at the age where some have likely seen *The Dagger of Kamui*. Even if not, or if they personally were uninfluenced by the specific narrative advanced in that film, many of their constituents have certainly seen and been influenced by it. In that way *The Dagger of Kamui*, its flaws notwithstanding, arguably helped pave the way for political and legal change in the 21st century, by forging an emotional bond between Japanese audiences and the Ainu homeland, increasing citizen **interest in Ezo's historical legacy.**

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RECONSIDERING SENUMA KAYŌ'S THOUGHTS AND IDEAS: FOCUSING ON HER NOVEL *WAGAOMOKAGE*

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Abstract: *Senuma Kayō* (瀬沼夏葉) is known for being the first person to translate Chekhov's works from Russian to Japanese, work she carried out from the end of the Meiji era to the beginning of the Taishō era (1901-1915). On May 10, 1912, the *Yomiuri Newspaper* called her a "New Woman" after her independent trip to Russia without family members and participating in the magazine *Seitō*² (Blue Stocking). She also wrote extensively on various topics, such as the women's movement in Japanese society and women's theory. **Indeed, Kayō was a pioneering figure in the Meiji era, and her ideas about women's rights and liberty deserve greater recognition.** However, previous examinations have often downplayed her influence, presenting her instead as an example of a 'Good Wife and Wise Mother' because her essays on the women's movement in the Meiji era and women's theory included several outdated elements. **Nevertheless, Kayō held a progressive perspective towards gender awareness and helped to shape the image of the "New Woman".** Therefore, to address criticism in previous research, a comprehensive analysis of her ideas must consider her essays and literary works together, particularly focusing on her early writings from the 1890s. **This article analyses Kayō's novel *Wagaomokage*, published in *Uranishiki* from March 15 to October 15, 1897, and examines whether the assertions made by earlier authors about Kayō's ideas and beliefs being outdated, meaningless, emotional, and contradictory were accurate. Through analysing this work, we propose an alternative perspective on her thoughts and ideas.**

Keywords: Senuma Kayō, New Woman, Women's education, *Uranishiki*, *Wagaomokage*

1. Introduction

Senuma Kayō (瀬沼夏葉) is known for being the first person to translate Chekhov's works from Russian to Japanese, work she carried out from the end of the Meiji era to the beginning of the Taishō era (1901-1915). On May 10, 1912, the *Yomiuri Newspaper* called her a "New Woman" after her independent trip to Russia without family members and

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² A literary women's magazine created in 1911 by the *Japanese Bluestocking Society*. They used the magazine to promote the equal rights of women through literature.

participating in the magazine *Seitō* (*Blue Stocking*). She also wrote extensively on various topics, such as the women's movement in Japanese society and women's theory. **Indeed, Kayō was a pioneering figure in the Meiji era, and her ideas about women's rights and liberty deserve greater recognition.** However, previous examinations have often downplayed her influence, presenting her instead as an example of a 'Good Wife and Wise Mother' because her essays on the women's movement in the Meiji era and women's theory included several outdated elements.

For example, Nakamura Kennosuke and Nakamura Etsuko (2003: 359-360) **asserted that Kayō's theory about the women's movement was contradictory, as she allowed her emotions to take control.** Additionally, Watanabe Sumiko (2005: 436-438) **stated that Kayō's novels seem old-fashioned. Nevertheless, Kayō held a progressive perspective towards gender awareness and helped to shape the image of the "New Woman".** Therefore, to address criticism in previous research, a comprehensive analysis of her ideas must consider her essays and literary works together, particularly focusing on her early writings from the 1890s.

This article analyses Kayō's novel *Wagaomokage*, published in *Uranishiki* from March 15 to October 15, 1897, and examines whether the assertions made by earlier authors about Kayō's ideas and beliefs being outdated, meaningless, emotional, and contradictory were accurate. Through analysing this work, we propose an alternative perspective on her thoughts and ideas.

Wagaomokage is the love story of Aiko and Shigeru, set in the Gunma Province. Chapters 1-4 discuss Shigeru and Aiko's relationship. Shigeru is a man who learns to draw in Tokyo and whose family owns a pawn shop in Gunma. When he returns home to treat his wounded leg, he meets Aiko, a girl from his neighbourhood who belongs to a brewer's family, and the two fall deeply in love with each other. Aiko decides to join a girls' school in Tokyo, and Shigeru is urgently required to return to Tokyo. Chapters 5 and 6 are the turning point in the story, where Shigeru disappears. Towards the end of the story, Aiko returns to Gunma to meet her sister, Akiko. Akiko gets married to Hideo but falls ill and begs Aiko to marry Hideo after she dies. Although initially indecisive, upon her sister's death, Aiko agrees to marry Hideo and become the stepmother to Akiko's daughter.

Watanabe Sumiko (2005: 438) asserted that, in *Wagaomokage*, **Kayō describes a "New Woman", who is passionate about love and higher education, and a "New Man" who can accept an educated girl as his equal. Interestingly, Kayō proposes the idea of a "New Woman" in *Wagaomokage*, but at the end of the story, the heroine decides to get married to support her household, which appears to contradict her initial ideals.** Therefore,

it is necessary to reconsider *Wagaomokage* in detail in order to effectively address and unravel the contradictory ideas presented in the novel. We argue that *Wagaomokage* focuses on the ideals of women's education and their decision-making powers in the Meiji Period.

First, the article examines Kayō's thoughts and ideas through her writings in the magazine *Uranishiki*. Second, we focus on Aiko and Akiko's characters and their attitudes toward girls' schools to reconsider Kayō's views on women's education.

2. *Uranishiki* and Senuma Kayō

2.1 *Uranishiki*'s Background and Policy

Before analysing *Wagaomokage*, we must first remark on the medium through which this novel was published. *Uranishiki* was the first **magazine to publish Kayō's work**, which seems to have profoundly affected her ideas and thoughts.

Uranishiki was first issued in November 1892 by Shōkeisha, Tokyo Women's Theological Seminary School's publisher. It was a literature and liberal arts magazine whose main contributors were the teachers and students of the school. Tokyo Women's Theological Seminary School differed from other missionary schools by focusing on traditional Japanese culture and the Chinese (Confucian) moral ideals adopted by Japanese society.

Uranishiki's philosophy was based on 'jotoku' (women's virtue) and the ideal of women's education in the Meiji era. Its index included a reference from Peter 1, Chapter 3 from the New Testament of the Bible:

妻なる者よ爾等の妝飾は髪を辮み金を掛けまた衣を着るが如き外面の妝飾に非ずたゞ心の内の隠れたる人すなはち壊ることなき柔和恬静なる靈を以て妝飾とすべし此の靈の妝飾は神の前にて価貴きもの也³

Do not let your adorning be external—the braiding of hair and the putting on of gold jewellery or the clothing you wear—but let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God's sight is very precious. (*The Bible, English Standard Version (EVS)*, 2001, 1 Peter 3).

This verse discusses becoming a good wife by focusing on internal development rather than external appearances. *Uranishiki* forged a connection between this biblical ideal and prevailing notions about women, supporting concepts such as the 'Good Wife and Wise Mother', which was widely embraced during the Meiji era. Additionally, various essays published in *Uranishiki* suggested that the Meiji government should advance women's education and encourage collaboration among

³ The Japanese Bible text was written on *Uranishiki*'s index.

women teachers. For example, Kōrijo (1894: 21-23) mentioned in *Jogakusei no Mokuteki* [The Purpose of Schoolgirls] that it is essential for women to be educated to become better mothers in the future:

故に、こを中心に銘刻せんとにハ、必学校に在りて教育を受くる時にあるべし。幼少の時の感化ハ、終生消滅する事なきが故なり。いかに諸姉、相共に、孜々として、勵み勉めて、我が国家に塵埃の功を積みて、真の快樂を味ふを得バ、之に勝る喜やある。これ女学生徒の目的としも云ふべきか⁴。

[Therefore, if we want to pass this on to our children, we should receive an education at a compulsory school. The influence during childhood will never disappear throughout one's life. How joyful it would be for all of us sisters to work hard, accumulate merits for our country, and experience true pleasure! This should be the goal of female students.] (Kōrijo, 1894: 23)

This essay, arguing in favour of women's education, demonstrates how the idea of women's education was closely entwined with state propaganda about supporting the nation by serving as a good mother. Another example is provided by Itsuko (1893:6-10) in her essay, *Kyōiku jo ni Hitsuyōnaru Josei no Netsuai* [Female Ardent Love Necessary for Education]", where she states:

凡そ人の母たる者ハ、其子を教育するに、徒に其身を成長せしむるを以て足れりとする事なく、必其精神上にも、注意を怠るべからず。己先づ充分に、愛国の心情を養ひ、人間出世の目的と、人の人たる道を尽くさしめんと、熱望と、堅固不拔なる精神を以て、其子を勇猛忠烈なる士に、女ならば、貞操節義なる者に、教育せバやと心掛くるこそ、母たるも本分なれ。

[As a mother, one must focus not only on the physical growth of their child but also on their spiritual growth. It is essential to cultivate a strong love for one's country, a desire for personal growth, and pursue being a good human being, along with an unwavering spirit. With these qualities, we can raise a child to be a brave and loyal soldier or, if a daughter, a woman of chastity and righteousness. This is the fundamental duty of a mother.] (Itsuko, 1893:8)

Similar to *Jogakusei no Mokuteki*, Itsuko's essay discusses women using their passion and love for their country as an argument for receiving an education, as they would be able to pass on a sense of patriotism and willingness to fight for the nation to their children. Interestingly, Itsuko's essay did not use 'love' in an amorous sense but rather as women's duty to their nation. According to her arguments, if female students take the wrong path, they will lose their ability to be good mothers and carry out their national responsibilities. Both essays stress the necessity of girls'

⁴ All translations from Japanese are mine, unless otherwise stated.

education for the nation's development through a connection to the 'Wise Mother' ideology. Thus, it becomes evident that *Uranishiki* deliberately sought to cultivate the ideal of a 'Good Wife, Wise Mother' through women's education.

Nolte and Hastings (1991: 151-174) state that the two decades from 1890 to 1910 were pivotal in Japanese state policy for women. In this period, the Ministry of Education popularised the ideal of a 'Good Wife, Wise Mother'. State propaganda exhorted women to contribute to the nation by raising children. Moreover, women's education was a way to support the modern Japanese household system (*ie seido*) as described by the Meiji Civil Code, which positioned women in a subordinate role. Therefore, women's education was dedicated to fostering obedience and chastity to support the modern Japanese household system under the 'Good Wife, Wise Mother' ideology. Girls were encouraged by this environment to enrol in schools that were affiliated with the Japanese Ministry of Education and supported traditional views about gender, such as the Tokyo Women's Theological Seminary, the publisher of *Uranishiki*.

2.2 Kayō's Essays in *Uranishiki*

Kayō was born as Ikuko Yamada on December 11, 1875, in Takasaki, Gunma Province. **Her father was Yamada Kanjirō, and her mother was Fuku.** In 1885, she enrolled in Tokyo Women's Theological Seminary, graduating in 1892 and later becoming a teacher there. In the year *Uranishiki* was first published, **Kayō used Kikyō and Yamada Ikuko as her pennames** to begin her literary career. **Kayō's works in *Uranishiki*** included novels and essays about women, nearly all of which expressed ideas and reflections on women's virtues. For example, in the essay *Uranishiki hakkou no hitsuyou* [Necessity of *Uranishiki* Issue], she writes:

初、神の人を造り給ふや、女を以て男を助くる者となし給へり。さるを方今我国の状態を見るに、女徳の跡全く絶えて、悪国中に漲るに至れり。(中略)此の如くなれば、国の開明に至ると共に、女徳も起らんこと当然なるべきを、反りてかく頹廢せしハ、誠に怪むべきことなり。此れ即洋風の長所を取り、短所を棄てざるがゆゑなり。(中略)一国の榮枯盛衰は、実に女徳の如何に關す。

[Firstly, God created humans and created women to be helpers of men. Looking back at our country, we can see women's virtues becoming extinct, **creating a terrible country... If the situation worsens, we will need to raise women's virtues along with enlightening the country... The rise and fall of a country is truly connected with women's virtues.**] (Ikuko, 1892:79)

Kayō expressed strong ideas about women's virtues, arguing that women must be good wives and wise mothers to support their country, following *Uranishiki*'s policy. The sentiments in the excerpt above are also

echoed in her other essays. However, in terms of women's education, **Kayō did not mention students' problems; instead, she focused solely on the female teacher's responsibility in educating children, especially young girls. While it can be said that Kayō wrote her essays in accordance with *Uranishiki's* more traditional policies, we argue that her novel, *Wagaomokage*, portrays an alternative representation of her ideas and thoughts about women's education and women's struggles with their household duties.**

3. Discussion of *Wagaomokage*

3.1 Views on Women's Education in *Wagaomokage*

While Chapters 1-5 of *Wagaomokage* present a romantic love story between a middle-class country girl wanting to study in Tokyo and a **middle-class boy learning art in Tokyo, we also glimpse Kayō's views on women's education through Shigeru and Aiko's conversations. This section concentrates on Kayō's perspectives on women's education, as presented in these chapters.**

First, let us consider Aiko's decision to attend a girls' school in Tokyo, as it illustrates some common sentiments about schoolgirls in the Meiji era. In Chapter 5, Aiko and Shigeru are conversing, and Aiko reveals her desire to attend school in Tokyo, as she believes elementary education is inadequate for her:

『でも行きたいんですワ、小学校位卒業したッきりでは物事に暗くて、高尚なかんがへはできないやうに思ひます。女は小学校位卒業して、よみかきに不自由でなければ、学問などは沢山だ、これからは裁縫の稽古が一番かんじんだって、お祖母様は申しまして、私東京の学校へ修業にやっして下さいって願つたこともあるンですけど、いつでもお祖母様がさう申すものだから、それで父様も母様もやっして下さいなんです。だからほんとにいまゝでも不満足で堪らなかつたンです、ですから私こんどこそ本気になつて、お祖父様に願つて見ますつもり。

[But I want to go to school. Graduating from elementary school is not enough and not sophisticated. My grandmother said that if girls who graduated from elementary school can read and write, there are various options for them to continue studying, and sewing is the most important thing. I used to beg my grandmother to let me study in Tokyo. My father and my mother disagreed with it. So, that is why I am not satisfied now. I am taking this seriously, and I will probably beg my grandfather next time.]
(Kikyō, 1897: 32)

Aiko's words show that she is passionate about education and aware that modern women should proceed to the next stage of education. Aiko's grandmother says that if girls can read and write, there are various opportunities for furthering their studies. However, those studies involve

preparing girls to be wives and mothers, such as sewing. This reflects the opinion that a women's education should support the notion of a 'Good Wife, Wise Mother'.

This concept restricted the freedom and lives of women in the Meiji era. The 1899 Girls' High School Order regulated courses and class times and increased the number of girls' high schools that were officially available to all social classes. Japanese girls then had more opportunities to interact with the outside world. After public high school education was introduced for women in 1899, some girls from the countryside travelled to major cities like Tokyo to further their education. In April 1899, Kabayama Sukenori⁵ said in a speech to a gathering of prefectural governors, "The education provided in girls' middle schools is preparing their students one day to marry into a distinguished household and become wise mothers and good wives"⁶. This overlaps with the attitudes of Aiko's grandmother and parents. However, her grandfather disagreed and supported Aiko's wish to attend high school. Aiko says:

お祖父様は、母様や、祖母様ほど女学生をきらいはないんですよ。女学生だって、皆生意気で高慢で、お轉婆と云ふわけはない、そりや性質にもよることで、少しはお轉婆に見えても、生き生きしてみて、話にも実があつて高尚な夫の、おとなしくばかりあつても、とこのまのすへもの見たやうな、無気力のものは、なほお轉婆よりしかたがないツてほ、、、

[My grandfather did not dislike girl students like my mother and my grandmother. Instead, he contended that not all schoolgirls are impudent, arrogant, or tomboys. It all depends on their personality. And even if they look like a tomboy, if they are lively and they know what they are talking about... **A refined person will know** that these tomboys are better than the quiet types who lack energy and resemble an ornament in the *tokonoma*.] (Kikyō, 1897: 32)

Aiko's mother and grandmother make negative remarks towards high school girls, and, ironically, it is her grandfather who seems to understand schoolgirls better than the women in the family. He says not all schoolgirls are "impudent, arrogant, or tomboys". In this period, many in Japanese society criticised high-school girls because they freely chased after love, held hands with boys, and went on dates. Jiatong Ying stated that, in the late Meiji era, high school girls' sexual affairs with boys began to be a heated topic of criticism and popular literature (Jiatong Ying, 2019: 157). For example, Futabatei Shimei's *Ukigumo* (1887) and Tayama Katai's *Futon* (1908) used high school girls as their heroines and developed plots around the topic of sexual affairs. **However, Kayō used**

⁵ Minister of Education in the second Yamagata cabinet.

⁶ Jiatong Ying, *School Girls' Resistance and Ryosai Kenobo in Late Meiji Period*, 2019: 155-156.

Aiko's grandfather's words to portray a positive attitude towards girl students and encouraged women to further their education to gain knowledge.

In the following sentence in the novel, Aiko asks Shigeru's opinions about a girl furthering her education, and he answers:

『愛子さんはえらい、なか／＼感心々々……イヤ馬鹿にするのじやないサ、ほんとに目が高い。うまれつき知恵のある人は、勿論、にぶい人にはにぶい人だけで力にかなふ程度だけ、学問する必用なのは、もう云はなくたって實際が立派に證をしてゐるじやないか、ね愛子さん。だからあなたも淑徳ある女学校をえらんで、高尚な学問をおしなさい、そして廣く高く世を觀察する人におなりさない。僕はあなたの心持をほんとに賛成しますよ。

[Aiko, you are great. I am really impressed. I don't mean to make fun of you. You have my appreciation. People who are naturally wise have an expert eye. Absolutely dull people are still dull and use their strength to fulfil their wishes. There's no need to say anything more about the necessity of education because there is factual evidence. Aiko, you need to select a girls' school that has feminine virtues and is sophisticated for you to become a wide-ranging and highly observant person. I agree with your feelings.]
(Kikyō, 1897: 33)

Shigeru supports Aiko's decision to attend school in Tokyo. However, although he advises her to become a "wide-ranging and highly observant person", he also says that Aiko must choose a school that has "feminine virtues and is sophisticated", suggesting that Shigeru ascribes to the notion that women's education should raise girls to be "Good Wives and Wise Mothers".

Based on these excerpts from *Wagaomokage*, the history of girl's education in the Meiji Era, and *Uranishiki's* policy, we can assume that **Kayō's sentiments expressed in *Wagaomokage*** at least partially supported the notion of a 'Good Wife, Wise Mother'. However, it also **appears that Kayō made an effort to promote women's education by not** turning her novel into a story about a schoolgirl's sexual affair with a boy. This is evidenced at the end of Chapter 5, when Shigeru returns to Tokyo without Aiko, and their love story ends. **This suggests that Kayō did not** aim to portray a schoolgirl who is passionately in love with a boy.

Even though Kayō portrayed Aiko as a "New Woman" who is passionate about her education, she did not explore women's education or its controversies in depth. Additionally, her essays contain many ideas about a woman's duty to support her nation by being a virtuous, good wife and wise mother. Our investigation has thus far established that her views and thoughts were slightly old-fashioned, as stated by previous studies. However, when we consider Aiko's final decision in the novel, a more

nuanced perspective and critique regarding women's roles and duties in Meiji society emerges.

3.2 Aiko's Decision and Women's Duty

In Chapter 6, Aiko enrolls in a Tokyo school but returns home because of her sister's illness. Omens of Aiko's future when she graduates from school are described as follows:

愛子は十五の春より、東京のさる女学校に入学して、渴きみし宿望を満足せしめ、一心に苦学すること茲に三年あまり、昨日の卒業式には優等の賞を得て、ほまれを肩に、あすは故郷にたび立んと、いそいそとして、そがしたくに余念なし。一步さきの未来は、なほ闇の中に葬られて、あはれ知るによしなきぞ、人ハはかなき。

[Aiko enrolled in a girls' school in Tokyo in the spring of her fifteenth year, where she discovered her calling. After three years of working hard, she is an honour graduate and brings her glory back home. She can't wait to get back to her hometown tomorrow and has no regrets. The future is still buried in the **shadows, and no one can know it.**] (Kikyō, 1897: 37)

Aiko has no clear vision of what will follow her graduation. The last line of the quote likely alludes to Aiko's fate: she has no control and must sacrifice her ambitions for her family. While studying in Tokyo, Aiko loses her parents to cholera. The family is then led by her sister, Akiko, who was married to Hideo, a business school graduate. Hideo provides for his wife's family and is a good husband, but childbirth makes Akiko ill. When Aiko comes back home, Akiko informs her about inheriting her estate and looking after her child. Akiko begs Aiko to wed her husband after she passes away, saying:

お前だとて私が今こうならうとは思はないから、大方希望もいろいろあつたらうが、もしできるなら捨てられるだけの事は捨てもらひたいの。そりや驚くのも最もさ、お前の心の中も少しは知つてみるから、実に忍びなくもあるけれども、だか家の安危にはかへられないし、後々の事を深く思へばお前の返つて為になるかも知れないのだから、そこはよくお前もかんがへて、何とでも返事をきかしておくれ。けれども私は決して強ひてもと、やぼは云はない、まづ早くつまんで云てしまへば、秀雄様と一所になつては呉れまいか、私のかわりにこの家の後をついでふびんなお花の母となつてはくれまいか、たゞこれだけの事、これは私ばかりの願ひではない秀雄様は勿論、お祖父様お祖母様も、私がない後はもとよりそうなさいたいお心持には違いない・・・

[I don't think you would like to be me right now. Even though most people have many wishes, if there are things that you can throw away, I want you to do so. No wonder, you must be shocked, but I know a little bit about what's in your heart. I really can't stand it, but I must protect our family's safety at any cost. I know it will be helpful for you not to think about

anything too much. Aiko, please answer me. I will not say anything to force you. First of all, and in short, would you marry Hideo? Of course, this is not only my wish, as I am sure that Hideo, grandfather, and grandmother would have the same thought after I'm gone.](Kikyō, 1897: 40.)

Akiko believes that Aiko should give up her desires and aspirations, pointing to the commonly held belief at the time that women should sacrifice their lives for their families. Akiko is portrayed as a 'good wife' who dedicates her life to her family. Regarding marriage, Akiko says, その代わりに私は秀雄様といふよい保護者に、其後は助けられまた助けて、楽しく嬉しく日を送りました。」 [I have Hideo as my protector, we help each other. **I enjoyed every moment of it, and I was happy.**] (Kikyō, 1897: 39). While Akiko may represent the idea of a 'Good Wife, Wise Mother', she also lacks a higher education, saying 「それでも秀雄様に不足でもあるならそれはしかたがないが、廣く世間を知らない私の目からは、ほんとに一から十までまづ點の打どころはない、まあ秀雄様こそ男らしい人でせう。」 [If Hideo is not enough, then it can't be helped. But in my eyes, which don't know much about the world, there really isn't any flaw from head to toe. **Hideo is a manly person, isn't he?**] (Kikyō, 1897: 40).

In this quote, Akiko says she does not know as much about the world as Aiko, who went to school in Tokyo. Furthermore, Hideo is portrayed as a good husband whose kind-heartedness helps her realise that life within the modern Japanese household system is not entirely challenging. Akiko begs Aiko to marry her husband after her death because she is fully committed to dutifully supporting the household.

After Akiko speaks to Aiko, she gives her Hideo's diary. In it, Hideo confesses his feelings toward Aiko:

七月九日余が妻の妹なる愛子嬢は夏期休暇の為に帰へり来れり、余は一見して其清楚たる風姿としかもそのあでやかなるとには驚きぬ。またその一学一動は余をして嬢がいかに教育ある女子たるを思はしめしぞ、余や幸にして嬢が如き妹を得たり、知らず世に嬢が如きを我がものとする幸福なる人はそも誰なるや、ああ可憐嬢！

[July 9, Aiko, my wife's sister, came back home for the summer holiday. At first sight, I was surprised by her neat and gorgeous appearance. Because education made her like this. I am so happy that I have her as my sister. Who will be the lucky man who gets this innocent young lady? What a cute girl.] (Kikyō, 1897: 41)

Hideo's diary entry implies his desire for a wife with an education like Aiko. However, Aiko's feelings after she reads Hideo's diary are not mentioned, and the reader does not know how she feels about Hideo's feelings. While Akiko may represent the ideals of a 'Good Wife, Wise Mother', she lacks a higher education that could make her as "neat and

gorgeous" as Aiko. These elements place Aiko in a promising position to marry Hideo. Even though she had to marry Hideo to inherit her sister's estate, she would also obtain a loving husband who favours her education, thus concluding the story with a happy ending. At the end of the novel, Aiko accepts Akiko's request by simply saying, 「姉さん、私花坊の母になります！よ…姉さん」 [Sister, I will be Hana's mother! Sister!] (Kikyō, 1897: 42). This demonstrates that even though women can receive an education, it is difficult for them to deny their duty to marry someone who will support their family and reject the role of being a devoted mother.

4. Conclusion

This study focused on Senuma Kayō's thoughts and ideas regarding women's social roles and education as expressed in her essays and her novel *Wagaomokage*. It considered the socio-historical background of the Meiji Era during which the novel was written, and the policies upheld by Kayō's frequent publisher, the women's magazine *Uranishiki*.

Uranishiki aimed to inculcate the idea of a 'Good Wife, Wise Mother' to girls who attended Tokyo Women's Theological Seminary. Kayō's essays suggest that her ideas corresponded with *Uranishiki*'s notion of a 'Good Wife, Wise mother', and both the author and the publication espoused ideals that were influenced by and reflective of the Japanese state propaganda on women's education at the time. However, a more focused examination of *Wagaomokage*, particularly focusing on the attitudes toward girls' education expressed in the novel, reveals a different **perspective, showing that Kayō attempted to adopt a more positive attitude towards women's education by depicting Aiko's grandfather as a supportive figure who opposed the criticism of the rest of Aiko's family and Japanese society in general.** However, even though the novel shows that women want to and can attend school, its ending seems to corroborate the belief that they cannot deny their duty to be devoted mothers and marry people who will support their households.

We can assume that Kayō thought that women's roles in the the modern Japanese household system were strictly defined in the Meiji era, which limited girls' liberty and opportunities in life even when they received an education. Kayō deviated from *Uranishiki* and covertly criticised the modern Japanese household system supported by the Meiji government. Focusing on Kayō's writing in the context of her ideals highlights her inner conflicts, perspectives, and ideas expressed through the characters of her novel.

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THE IMPACT OF SOME SOCIO-CULTURAL FACTORS AND OF COVID-19 ON EATING DISORDERS IN TODAY'S JAPAN. ART THERAPIES AS A POSSIBLE CO-SOLUTION

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Abstract: Starting from an examination of some Japanese government measures, and of socio-cultural factors, this research will analyse how such elements put pressure on the national population about precise physical canons considered "healthy", especially with regard to body weight. Emphasis will be placed on the risk that these elements continue to unintentionally favour a growing range of eating disorders, one above all anorexia nervosa (restricting type). Added to this is the fact that since the beginning of 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic and its consequences have put a strain on the psychological strength of individuals. In some cases, this has led them into stress, anxiety, and even psychiatric disorders, which drastically increased in Japan, mostly developing as eating disorders especially among young people (Harada et al. 2020). In many other countries, however, numerous recent studies on the effectiveness of art therapies for people with eating disorders have been gaining ground. After analysing some of these studies at a theoretical and practical level, the aim of this contribution is to identify in them sources of inspiration also for today's Japan, whose culture has always been strongly characterised by the protagonism of images and visual art.

Keywords: *Eating Disorders in Japan; Socio-cultural Anorexia Nervosa; Art therapy and Anorexia in Today's Japan*

Introduction

Over the past three decades, there has been a drastic increase in the incidence of eating disorders (EDs) around the world, especially of anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa, and of the mortality rate associated with them (Van Eeden et al. 2021). No single source of these disorders has been identified, but research agrees that a combination of genetic, biological, behavioural, psychological, and social factors can increase a person's risk of developing a persistent disturbance of eating behaviour and an impairment of physical or mental health (Estrella 2007).

Among the most affected countries, especially in the last pandemic years, is Japan (Zauderer 2022), whose situation will be analysed in this

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research with reference to recent clinical studies. These implies that among the reasons that have led to such many patients suffering from anorexia nervosa (restricting type), especially adolescents, it is possible to refer to socio-cultural factors that have involuntarily contributed to creating pressure on many individuals and have therefore favoured the onset of similar mental disorders. It is, in fact, true, that anorexia nervosa is a typical example of multidimensional distress, which includes psychological, biological, and cultural elements. Focussing on the latter and geolocalising it in Japan, this research analyses some government measures, several peculiar elements of the Japanese cultural context and some current (aesthetic) models that seem to have a severe influence on the spread of the illness.

The first purpose of this research is to highlight how these aspects risk becoming contributory causes in the emergence of eating disorders among the young Japanese population. Acknowledging the limitations of current common therapies (such as psychotherapy and drugs), the second aim of the research is to highlight the potential of alternative treatments like art therapies. As evidenced by the number of research and clinical activities currently underway, these are increasingly being used in Japan, but still intended for a small number of people, generally elderly or **individuals suffering from diseases such as Parkinson's, or mental disorders** such as schizophrenia and 適応障害 (*tekiō shōgai*) [adjustment disorders] (Ono 2017). Yet, endowed with great communicative efficacy, art therapies are increasingly considered effective worldwide, even more if applied to cases, as in the context of mental (and so even eating) disorders, where patients have difficulties in talking about themselves and their condition. Furthermore, art therapy, which adopts a predominant use of visual elements, could arguably be even more effective in Japan, a country where appearances and portrayed images of self and others have a tremendous impact on social interactions and self-identifications.

The current Japanese eating disorders' situation:
a near-pandemic spread

In Japan, restricting type anorexia nervosa has increased in physical and psychopathological severity over the last decades (Harada et al. 2020). It is no coincidence that headlines such as those in the article published on November 30, 2022, by NHK titled "摂食障害は心が発する SOS 症状や治療法、家族の寄り添い方を解説" (*Sesshoku shōgai wa kokoro ga hassuru esuōesu shōjō ya chiryō-hō, kazoku no yorisoi-kata o kaisetsu*) [Eating disorders are SOS from the heart, treatment methods, and family support] are on the rise. A change was also registered in the trend that historically attributed the pathology to the world of the female gender as

the most affected (Hawks et al. 2003). The number of males suffering from anorexia has increased dramatically, as has that of children and adults in more general terms.

As described by emerging studies, the number of individuals suffering from eating disorders has witnessed a drastic increase in recent years, particularly during the Covid-19 pandemic (Lin et al. 2021; Taquet et al. 2022). Although Japan had not opted for particularly rigid forms of social isolation and restrictions, but rather voluntary self-control and reduction of avoidable social contacts by eighty percent, the lifestyle of the Japanese has nevertheless changed. Many social relationships and daily activities have been transformed from real to virtual. The consequence of this change was an apparent improvement in the conditions of those suffering from mental disorders, but this was due to the impossibility of collecting relevant data. **However, the patients' conditions were in fact worsening** because of their forced isolation and social distancing. Eating disorders are certainly among the psychological pathologies aggravated by the pandemic and by the sense of impossibility of planning, instability, and personal and collective insecurity that it has brought about. This has been reported by different research efforts. One of the most widely cited was conducted at the Department of Psychosomatic Medicine at the University of Tokyo Hospital (Japan Times 2020. 14 April). Its results show that the Covid-19 pandemic undoubtedly worsened symptoms in patients already diagnosed with eating disorders. In addition, it highlights that the pandemic also influenced eating behaviours in the general population, and that the number of adults with eating disorders has reportedly increased (Kurisu et al. 2021). Another important study, conducted by the Department of Psychosomatic Medicine at Kyushu University Hospital, demonstrates how the coexistence of family members spending more time together due to the reduced possibility of carrying out other social activities, sports, and gatherings significantly lowered the average age of early diagnoses of eating disorders, especially in cases of anorexia nervosa (Takakura et al. 2022). The same research highlights the family factor as extremely relevant in the therapeutic (psychotherapeutic) path of a patient suffering from eating disorders. In many cases the family can be an indispensable presence to help a person with EDs, but in other cases it appears to be a looming and limiting presence. The difficulties of intergenerational communication between parents and children, added to the stress generated by contingent factors, can aggravate the situation. In conjunction with this study, three significant testimonies collected in a video interview conducted by NHK News are reported below. **“My father didn't understand my eating disorder, he repeatedly suggested me to eat.” (NHK World Japan: 0'54);**

“I don’t want to behave like that or hurt my parents. I want to eat my favourite dishes, but I just can’t.” (NHK World Japan: 1’12); “I have decided to get help, but most hospitals have long waiting-lists and require minors to be accompanied by their legal guardian. I hadn’t talked about my problems with my parents, so I couldn’t get help from hospitals.” (NHK World Japan: 1’56). Similar communication difficulties are also reproduced in traditional psychotherapy, in which the communicative medium sometimes becomes an obstacle rather than a potential facilitator.

The third interesting research consists of the testimony reported by the Japan Times News, on November 4, 2021. It emphasises the increase in cases of anorexia nervosa by sixty percent in 2020, especially among young people. Researchers believe that self-restraint and temporary school closures were among the factors that caused stress in young people and contributed to eating disorders. The problem of the lack of beds to be allocated to the most serious cases due to their occupation by Covid patients is also highlighted. Certainly, during the pandemic, the government's role in protecting the health of its citizens has acquired greater importance. However, since the previous decade, the Japanese central authorities had already placed the physical well-being of the population among the main points of their agenda.

The promotion of health and fitness: government measures and controversial consequences

Over the past twenty years, the Japanese government has progressively been concerned with the physical and nutritional health of its population, in particular the Japanese Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW) has undertaken a series of specific surveys aimed at providing statistical data on the physical conditions of the population annually. Among them, particularly relevant is 厚生労働省「令和元年（2019）人口動態統計月報年計（概数の概況）」（*Kōsei Rōdōshō “reiwa gan’nen (2019) jinkō dōtai tōkeigepō nenkei (gai-sū) no gaikyō”*) [Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare "2019 Vital Statistics Monthly Annual Report (Outline of Approximate Numbers)"], a study that examines the main serious diseases (with fatal outcome) of the Japanese population.

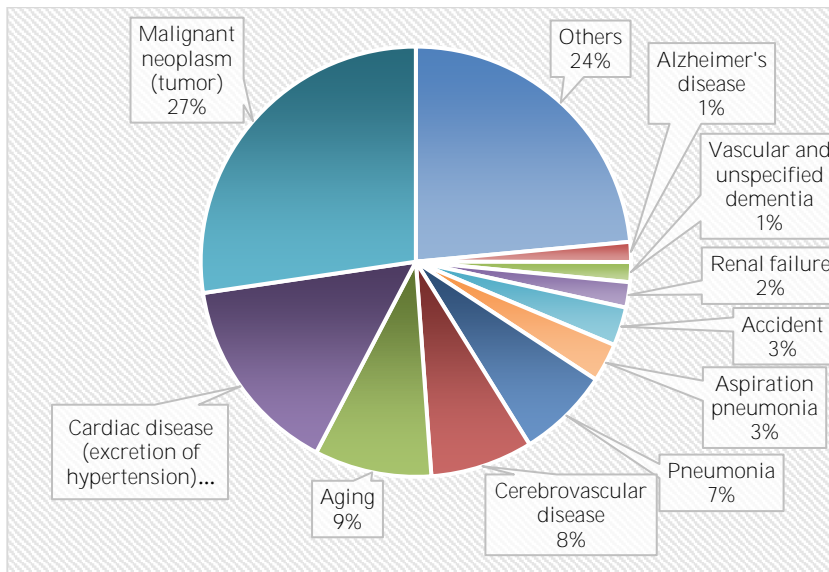


Figure 1

As can be seen from the graph (figure 1), lifestyle-related diseases play a predominant role. Mention is made of cancer, and heart conditions caused, for example, by the combination of unbalanced eating habits, lack of sleep and exercise, stress, and smoking. Lifestyle-related diseases account for more than half of all deaths in Japan. There are also heart and cerebrovascular diseases, the second most common cause of death. The research has led to the emergence of the need to safeguard the population from similar conditions, from the comorbidities in which they generally occur. In fact, the coexistence of illnesses such as diabetes, hypertension, dyslipidaemia, and arteriosclerosis, caused by an excessive accumulation of fat in the internal organs located in the abdomen, is frequent. The condition of having two or more concurrent risk factors is called "metabolic syndrome". The government therefore embarked on an intense information campaign, stating that raising consciousness before sickness develops would enable more people to live longer and more vigorous lives. Since diagnosing lifestyle-related diseases is particularly complex – the symptoms are subjective or hidden by the patients – the government has established guidelines for preventive and systematic medical examinations, extended to the entire population, with the aim of obtaining early diagnoses and developing related therapeutic treatments, defined 特定健診 (*tokuteikenshin*) [Specific Health Checkup] and 特定保健指導 (*tokuteihokenshidō*) [Specific Health Guidance]. The aim is to detect the risk of lifestyle-related diseases at an early stage through a medical examination on one side, and to provide a specific health guidance to reduce the percentage of body fat and to limit its risks on the

other. The MHLW conducts annual examinations (including medical interviews, measuring height, weight, abdominal circumference, and blood pressure, and taking blood samples) for people between 40 and 74 years old (Public Relations Office - Government of Japan Website).

As another measure strictly connected to the ones already described, it is important to refer to the one promoted since 2008, the so-called *メタボ法* (*Metabo-hō*) [Metabolic Law]. It requires men and women between the ages of 40 and 74 to have their waist circumference measured annually. The waistline circumference limits are 85.09 centimetres for men and 89.9 centimetres for women. **In addition, companies' health insurers** are required to provide weight loss classes to employees who have become overweight or meet other specific criteria. The government imposes fines on companies and local administrations that do not meet specific targets. All these measures have led the population to necessarily pay more attention to their physical form, but for some this has turned into a real obsession. The mania for control, the exclusion of certain categories of food, the perception of oneself only in numerical terms, the complex mental mechanism of the reward for what is considered "good behaviour" (though unhealthy) are symptomatic manifestations of an already advanced eating disorder (Makin 2000a). **Anorexia nervosa's** behavioural symptoms may indeed include attempts to lose weight by severely restricting food intake through dieting or fasting or exercising excessively. Other important emotional and behavioural signs may include preoccupation with food, fear of gaining weight that can lead to repeated weighing or measuring the body, and frequent checking the mirror for perceived flaws (Mayo Clinic Website). It is not surprising that in public places frequented by many young people such as, for example, school and university canteens, the calories corresponding to the food offered are very often indicated. Many students could risk being guided in **their food choices by the desire to limit their calories' consumption** rather than by their own preference or real dietary needs.

All these government measures aimed at the physical well-being of the Japanese population have, in some cases, had very negative effects, indeed contrary to those desired. The attention and care for their body, for many individuals encouraged by socio-cultural elements peculiar to the Japanese context, have turned into an obsession with controlling their body, especially in terms of weight and measurements (waistline).

Japanese old and new socio-cultural aspects that influence **the EDs' situation**

In addition to the already described government measures, some peculiar elements rooted in the Japanese socio-cultural traditions risk

favouring EDs. First, it is necessary to refer to the Japanese propensity to belong to a social group, in compliance with its relative (including aesthetic) standards. Depending on whether or not the individuals meet **the group's requirements, they are socially labelled as members of the** category of 勝ち組 (*kachigumi*) [winners] or 負け組 (*makegumi*) [losers], stereotyped categories individuals enter for social or work conduct, without the possibility of withdrawal nor redemption. They are, thus, bound by the concept of 恥 *haji* [shame, dishonour], an element that guides **many individuals' choices experienced with great intensity by the** Japanese population throughout history (Lebra 1983). The social canon is generally defined by the so-called 建前 (*tatemae*). *Tatemae* represents the side of oneself that is shown to others, one's position with respect to the general context, which is reproduced in every social core (within the family, the educational and working environments). Conversely, 本音 (*honne*) indicates the private sphere of real, personal feelings, that inner side generally kept hidden from other people. This contrast could be defined as a real voluntary split of personality, suggested by socio-cultural and formal reasons. Although the study of this antithesis has already been abundantly discussed, the attempt to include it in the list of psychic cultural syndromes is quite recent. In particular, the psychiatric Department of the Keio University Hospital in Tokyo conducted a study² that demonstrates how sometimes the inability to communicate between the two personalities can cause serious inconvenience.

As already researched by professors at the University of Illinois (Chicago) Kathleen Crittenden and Hyunjung Bae in 1994, the concepts just mentioned contribute to the annihilation of every self in favour of collective social responsibility, a recurring phenomenon in Asian cultures. In Japan, more than oneself, one is a representative of a group (for example family, company, or nation) and it is deemed necessary for the **individual to reflect the group's dictates and characteristics** (Crittenden and Bae 1994). In aesthetic terms, the need to reflect certain canons imposed by one's social role often results in an altered perception of one's physicality, usually perceived as *wrong* in some of its elements. This is what is clinically defined as body dysmorphism, another psychological disorder. In turn, this often results in conversion disorder, for which those who suffer from it tend to ascribe their psychological distress to physical symptoms, usually considered easier to solve.

In addition to the more traditional elements just mentioned, some more current aspects help to emphasise the importance of the aesthetic

² The work, titled 建前中毒 (*Tatemae chūdoku*) [tatemae poisoning], is currently being published. The references are the result of an interview granted to me by the Italian psychiatrist affiliated with Keio Hospital Francesco Pantò on May 28, 2022.

aspect in the incidence of EDs. Pike and Bovoroy had already highlighted the ideals of beauty (weight and shape), together with the development of gender role, as relevant elements in the aetiology of eating disorders in Japan (Pike and Bovoroy 2004). These ideals appear today in the form of new models embodied by the so-called idols and the protagonists of well-known television series. The first, a phenomenon spreading to the entire world generating from South Korea, are pop music singers and dancers, subjected to a rigid regime of daily life to maintain their role, fame, and win over the competition. Their daily rhythm is marked by very intense sports training, study, and performance tests, all accompanied by particularly restrictive and unhealthy diets. Many idols in recent years have revealed their discomforts caused by this lifestyle, emphasising the intrinsic dangers of their diet. One above all is the well-known Korean pop artist IU, who posted a rather eloquent image on her social profiles disclosing the contents of her daily meals: an apple for breakfast, two sweet potatoes for lunch and a protein shake for dinner (Jeong 2021). Despite similar forms of denunciation, idols are appreciated all over the world, not only for their art and personality, but also for their aesthetics, and they instil in the minds of many young people a great desire for imitation. Similarly to pop stars, the protagonists of some television series can also become role models. One example among many is the protagonist of the TV series entitled *Rebound*, which since 2011 has enjoyed considerable success in Japan. The plot is interwoven on the relationship between the young Saki Aibu and Mokomichi Hayami. Everything is played on Saki's ability to resist the temptation to eat the sweets prepared by Mokomichi to stay fit. The ability to resist food, in particular high-calorie foods, thus becomes a personal quality, a real element of heroism.

The ideal models of dietary conduct are certainly not those just described, nor is it possible to define any heroic trait with reference to them. On the other hand, the successful healing paths from similar pathologies are worthy of praise.

Summary of the most common EDs' treatment methods in Japan

In cases where it is not necessary to resort to hospitalisation, to undertake a path of treatment for a complex disease such as an eating disorder, one generally starts with traditional methods, one above all psychotherapy. However, it is full of difficulties: in the first place the lack of therapeutic motivation on the part of the patients. In many cases they fail to admit to themselves or to others their pathological condition. Consequently, even the interlocutory relationship with the other becomes difficult, especially with the therapist.

Although there has recently been an increase in Japanese people who resort to psychotherapy as a way to remedy and cope with social phobia (and other similar disorders), it shall be said that the population is still not particularly familiar with it (being it a typically American and European practice), and tends to ascribe psychic discomfort to a physical malaise, which is the expression of a conversion disorder. Consequently, the patients still aim to resolve or alleviate the symptoms with pharmacological therapies and, in the meantime, to obtain certificates of illness to justify their absence from the workplace (Nippoda 2012). The reason for such behaviour is the social stigma towards mental disorders, particularly widespread at a national level, which has been voluntarily and involuntarily fuelled by both patients and doctors for longer than a decade now.

Although psychotherapy is still the most widely used method in much of the world, many patients who undergo it eventually present the symptoms of relapse of the disease following long treatment periods.

Beyond psychotherapy, in addition to raising awareness on the issue of eating disorders, alternative forms of therapy have been developing in recent years.

To reduce the chances that this pathology might end affecting people in a serious or irreversible way, it is certainly useful to talk about it in the first place, with the aim of recognising the symptoms from an early stage. There are different ways to raise awareness of eating disorders and related risks. It is possible, for example, to make them protagonists of forms of denunciation by well-known personalities, or subjects of artistic dissemination methods. About the first of the cases just mentioned, it seems appropriate to refer to the famous Japanese high fashion model Kiko, who has since 2020 publicly fought vigorously in favour of a more sustainable fashion sector, both from the point of view of production (fabrics, animals and working conditions of workers), and from that of the exhibition (models and related lifestyles) (Tanaka 2020). Among the examples of (cultural) artistic dissemination, one may refer to well-known *manga*, such as, for example, 「私を笑わないで」 (*Watashi o warawanaide*) [**Don't laugh at me**], which became famous in 2018. The story revolves around two protagonists suffering from eating disorders. Hikari has a slim figure, while Airi has a chubby one. It depicts the anguish of Hikari, who is getting thinner and thinner saying: "I can't eat even if I want to.", and Airi, who always states: "I can't stop eating even though I know I'm going to get fat." (Telling 2018).

In Japan, however, more assertive forms of dissemination have not yet been adopted. These have instead become popular in other countries, where the number of patients with eating disorders is constantly increasing, such as in Italy. This is the case of the 2019 exhibition by the artist Vesna

Pavan, who represented the severity of eating disorders, especially anorexia nervosa. Her creation was made of sculptures in the shape of red skeletons surrounded by real bread on the floor of the room, while the walls were covered with symbolic representations of the pain experienced by those suffering from these disorders (exhibition poster in figure 2).

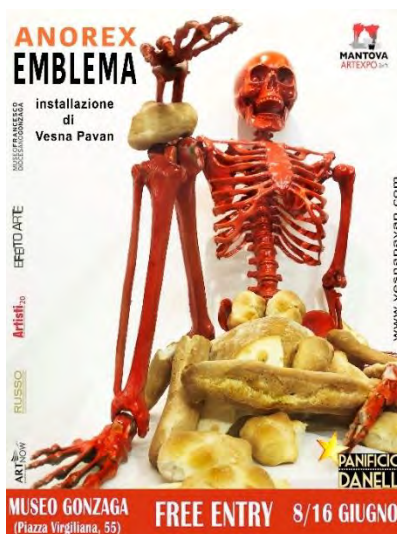


Figure 2

Speaking more specifically of alternative methods of treatment in Japan, in 2021, Dr. Yamauchi Tsuneo of Osaka City University together with his team created a smartphone application through which patients with eating disorders can share information and images of their meals and report their health status, receiving in exchange medical feedback in terms of observation and monitoring, and support from psychologists, psychiatrists and teachers (NHK World Japan: 3'14).

Parallel to similar initiatives, art therapies are also noteworthy, in constant development and updating.

Illustrative report of the effectiveness of art therapy in EDs (anorexia nervosa) treatment in the contemporary world: some emblematic examples

The interest around the artistic practice in the treatment of psychic or psychiatric disorders, such as eating disorders, was born in France³ at the end of the nineteenth century. It then developed mainly in North America (with a more pragmatic approach) and in the United Kingdom

³ In 1872, psychiatrist August Ambroise Tardieu, using art therapy as an effective diagnostic tool, established objective criteria for a legally acceptable diagnosis of insanity, published in his *Medico-Legal Studies of Madness*.

(with a more theoretical approach) (Makin 2000a). The element that allows the art-therapeutic activity to be effectively therapeutic consists in the fact that the creative experience allows those who live it to let their emotions flow freely, transferring them, therefore communicating them, consciously or unconsciously, to the outside world. During the creative process, the use of multiple materials can facilitate the expression of repressed thoughts and feelings, or even project trauma, fantasies, existential questions, impulses, and thus create stimuli for association-making. In the case of people affected by eating disorders, who often cannot admit that they suffer from such pathologies even to themselves, this process of externalisation in the artistic product is particularly important (Milner 1950; Gilroy 2006). The way in which patients relate to the materials (usually collage, pastel, paint, 3-D materials, or even mixed media) used in the creative process reflects their own approach to many elements of the world around them. Often unspoken problems emerge relating to the propensity for control, limits and boundaries, proprioception, and relationships with others. By artistic means, patients with EDs simultaneously explore themselves and the world around them (Murphy 1984; Makin 2000b). As Makin stated in her work titled *More Than Just a Meal. The Art of Eating Disorders*, **“arts therapies’ processes enable individuals to overcome obstacles to self-expression in ways that other treatment methods cannot. This points out the significant gaps in psychotherapies that rely more exclusively on verbal communications” (Makin 2000a: 40).**

Numerous studies conducted in European and US contexts report how the use of art therapies in collective or individual treatment of patients affected by eating disorders is registering a particular efficacy. Similar success has been highlighted in some research set in those East Asian countries that in the 2010s seemed to be less affected by eating disorders, but that in the last decade have become the scenario of a drastic increase in their cases (Qian et al. 2013). There are other forms of art therapy, not detailed here but certainly worthy of note, which are also particularly effective for patients with eating disorders, that incorporate the art of poetry into the creative process of visual art. Sometimes, a similar path, which combines drawing and words, can turn into creative journaling. This hybrid methodology, particularly promoted by Makin, together with moments of play and lightness, allows patients to project their pain on the pages of a newspaper purposefully created (Makin 2000a). Here we intend to take into consideration the most recent practical studies that adopt applied methodologies already tested and theorised by well-known experts such as Mary Levens, Mari Fleming, Ditty Dokter, Paola Luzzatto, Holly Matto, Diane Mitchell, and Joy Schaverien.

An important study, conducted in South Korea in 2006 with the multiple aim of encouraging weight gain and healthy eating, reducing

other symptoms related to anorexia nervosa, and facilitating psychological and physical recovery by means of art therapy, concluded that affected individuals from anorexia nervosa involved as case studies have achieved a good improvement following a brief intervention with art therapy treatment combined with other multimodal approaches (Hae-Young and Youl-Ri 2006). This study took as methodological reference the guidelines promoted in the UK (National Collaborating Centre for Mental Health 2004), which clearly highlight how the so-called "traditional psychological approach for the treatment of anorexia nervosa" needs to be multifaceted and multimodal, therefore including cognitive analytic therapy, cognitive behavioural therapy, interpersonal therapy, focal psychodynamic therapy, and family interventions.

In the UK, a pioneering country in this field of research together with the United States, during the years of the Covid-19 pandemic studies progressed further. In 2020, there was a drastic change in terms of the offer and use of the art therapy service, which necessarily turned into an online practice. Although the context changed considerably and social distance had to be taken into account, examples of online art therapy, such as *art psychotherapy* to three groups of adolescents attending an NHS day service programme for anorexia nervosa, proved to be very effective. Mentalising body proprioception helps patients relate their inner world to the outside one (Shaw 2020).

Also in Italy, art therapy is very often contemplated in centres specialised in the treatment of eating disorders, such as the Villamare - Neomesia centre, a rehabilitation community active since 2012 in the province of Lucca (Tuscany region) under the guidance of Dr. Luca Maggi. The centre has recorded an increase in guests during the pandemic. Looking at the same period, other Italian models should be taken into consideration, particularly with reference to some cases of art therapy applied to patients with eating disorders that in 2021 were particularly successful. The first is that of the Cosmo Cooperative at the Villa Margherita nursing home in Arcugnano, in the province of Vicenza (Veneto region), which on March 15⁴ 2021 organised an exhibition of works of the guests under treatment, titled "Dialogues between proximity and distance". The theme of (dis)connection, which was one of the main recurrent issues around the world during the Covid-19 epidemic, has always been present in the field of eating disorders; people who suffer from it usually oscillate between the pole of intrusion-incorporation and that of emptiness-lack (Cosmos 2021).

⁴ Since 2012, the national day against eating disorders has been celebrated in Italy on March 15 in memory of Giulia Tavilla, who died of bulimia on March 15, 2011, one step away from hospitalisation. The purpose of this anniversary is to pay more attention to this growing phenomenon through information and prevention, and to create a support network for those who suffer from it.

In the field of hospital schooling, a service already promoted by the Italian Ministry of Education⁵, it is possible to refer to the words of psychologist Manuela Cosenza, who described the creative process of her patients suffering from eating disorders during the workshop undertaken in November 2020 with professor and art therapist Sara Volpato.

Art and psyche. The flow of emotions through the grey lead of the pencil. The crunching noise of the passage of thought on paper. The emotional connotation through colours: dark for the darkest moments, lively when the hope of a sought-after and found well-being emerges. And then there to observe what materialised on paper from the soul. Becoming concrete, more usable. Almost able to touch it. And so, it scares less. Thus, demons have a visible face and are no longer shadows locked up in the heart. All of this has been tested in our laboratory. The girls confront their fears, aware that they could be supported and collected by me in these delicate moments. **An opportunity for us and for them to experience and 'throw out' their discomforts in a protected place full of empathy (Italian Ministry of Education 2021).**

Another Italian study was conducted in the city of Pisa, in central Italy, in the Stella Maris Clinic, specialising in eating disorders. A course of art therapy sessions was proposed to a group of five girls suffering from anorexia nervosa. The sessions ranged from a minimum of four to a maximum of eight patients, for about sixty minutes per session. In their path, the girls were followed by a multidisciplinary team to facilitate their adherence to the Clinic's programme. The testimony, reported by the therapist, of one of the girls involved in the path is particularly illustrative.

After initial contact and an invitation to depict what she felt on paper, Ada depicted a tunnel with a black crayon. **She then added the title 'the nothing' (figure 3), and the words 'entry' and 'no way out' at the ends of the tunnel. Ada explained: 'I feel nothing inside of me, it seems to me that I don't feel any emotion [...] I am in the centre, and it is very dark. I feel confused because I see everything black'.**

After the first session, Ada wrote the story of that tunnel, telling of a red dragon who lived in it and could not get out for fear of the judgement of others. One day, intrigued by the sounds of people playing on the lawn outside, he decided to go out. He met many people, so he didn't feel so alone anymore.

⁵ The hospital school in Italy was born around the 1950s, when in some paediatric wards - with the help of primary school teachers - sections of special schools were opened to provide educational support to young patients and avoid the typical difficulties of returning to class. The C.M. 2 December 1986, no. 345 ratifies the creation of school sections within hospitals. The later C.M. no. 353 of 1998 then states that "organising schools in hospitals means recognising the right-duty of education of young patients and helping to prevent school dropout and abandonment". Currently, the service boasts the collaboration of teachers at all levels, to provide a sufficient degree of knowledge to hospitalised and/or day-hospitalised students.

Ada was discharged shortly after, as she resumed eating regularly and gained acceptable weight. She has been followed by local services, together with her parents, who have both started psychotherapy (Del Curatolo et al. 2017).



Figure 3

Even if there have already been good attempts⁶ to create a standardised method for using art therapy to treat people with EDs, it is important to emphasise that most of the studies so far taken into consideration highlight the need to broaden research in this field, possibly including a comparative perspective.

Conclusions

It is no coincidence that the type of eating disorder that has grown the most in Japan in the last thirty years is precisely the restricting type of anorexia nervosa. It is in fact the eating disorder most subject to the influence of external factors, such as the socio-cultural ones described above. The condition in fact derives, among other variables, from the patient's willingness to fall within certain aesthetic canons, to follow ideal models, from a sense of belonging to the community of the "righteous" (so implicitly promoted by government measures), devoid of aesthetic defects.

Japan is characterised by a culture widely influenced by visual art. As well as in a strictly creative and artistic sense, it is often used to disseminate content to the national population and to that of foreign countries, in order to raise awareness on specific issues. In conjunction

⁶ I am referring, for example, to Paolo Knill's theory, according to which it is possible to verify the effectiveness and potential of creative activity (namely art therapy, music therapy, drama therapy, and dance/movement therapy) through an intermodal approach, even beyond the direct testimonies of patients or therapists (Bucharová et al. 2020). Expressive Arts Therapy (EAT), also referred to as "intermodal therapy", is an established health service not far from cognitive behavioural therapy, play therapy, speech therapy and occupational therapy. It is based on the ability to access and stimulate the imagination, by shifting from one art form to another (Knill 1995).

with the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, for example, the government immediately went out of its way to commission images, posters, videos, cartoons whose message aimed to make the population pay greater attention to their own hygiene and to adopt measures of social distancing. In addition to preventing certain pathologies, visual art could also be used more effectively to treat them. In a country so pervaded by art, the creative language could be much more immediate than the verbal one, even more in the case of the Japanese language, which is particularly complex and suffocated by social formalisms (Nippoda 2012). The creation of an artwork could be a useful communication and expressive channel even for those who are unable to orally express themselves well enough. At the same time, art therapies can convey more attention on the creative process and precisely on the communicative meaning, thus taking the **patients' eyes off the perfectionism of the product that Japanese culture** too often tends to overstress.

From this analysis, art therapy seems to be suitable for the Japanese socio-cultural context, especially if combined with other already existing therapies. In fact, art therapy proves to be particularly effective in co-identifying or discovering eating disorders and their root causes, preventing the issue from going unnoticed.

This article has also highlighted elements that are common to a number of international realities where the use of art therapies in the treatment of patients suffering from eating disorders is being increasingly recommended. This analysis has stressed the potential effectiveness of this type of treatment, clearly useful in the current Japanese context, in an attempt to broaden the interdisciplinarity of this research field and to **further raise the awareness around the correlation of EDs' root causes and** multimodal treatment approaches.

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Images index

1. Figure 1: is 厚生労働省「令和元年（2019）人口動態統計月報年計（概数の概況）」 (*Kōsei Rōdōshō “ryō wa gan'nen (2019) jinkō dōtai tōkeigepō nenkei (gai-sū) no gaikyō”*) [Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare "2019 Vital Statistics Monthly Annual Report (Outline of Approximate Numbers)"] <https://www.mhlw.go.jp/stf/seisakunitsuite/bunya/0000161103.html>, (Accessed 13 May 2023).
2. Figure 2: Vesna Pavan Exhibition Poster – Francesco Gonzaga Museum (Mantova), <http://www.museofrancescogonzaga.it/?s=vesna+pavan>, (Accessed 13 May 2023).
3. Figure 3: “The Nothing”, black pencil on paper – Nuove Artiterapie, <https://www.nuoveartiterapie.net/adolescenti-anoressiche-ospedalizzate/> (Accessed 13 May 2023).

TRANSFERS IN THE ACQUISITION OF JAPANESE PROVERBS: ANALYSIS OF NATIVE JAPANESE SPEAKERS' EVALUATIONS OF ILLUSTRATIONS OF PROVERBS DRAWN BY INTERMEDIATE- TO ADVANCED-LEVEL LEARNERS OF JAPANESE

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Abstract: This study quantitatively analyzes common features in acquiring proverbs from the results of 19 native Japanese speakers' evaluations of illustrations drawn by 43 intermediate- to advanced-level learners of Japanese. Certain Japanese proverbs can have similar meanings to those in the learner's native language (L1); therefore, the transfers from the L1 results are expected to work well. Based on the results of a 6-scale evaluation of the learners' illustrations by native Japanese speakers, we created a frequency distribution table and analyzed the commonalities in each data range. We extracted common features in the illustration groups in each class. For example, the low-scoring illustration group showed features that were not typical of Japanese culture (influence of L1); in contrast, the high-scoring illustration group presented features typical of Japanese culture (influence of L2). The analysis of the reason why the evaluators gave each score demonstrated that the factor of "insufficient images" had a significant impact on the evaluation. In conclusion, the learners' visual images reveal six intermediate stages before they reach full mastery of the proverbs; they are distributed as a continuum. Therefore, it can allow for some generalization of the order in which learners of Japanese learn proverbs.

Keywords: Japanese proverbs, second language acquisition, interlanguage, Japanese language education

1. Introduction

In second language acquisition theory, errors can be identified by learners during target language acquisition through certain linguistic expressions (pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar). Yet, the mechanisms that produce misuses³ and correct uses in areas such as

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² Doshisha University, Professor.

³ Whether incomplete or inappropriate expressions in images may be called "errors" is a matter of discussion in second language acquisition. In this study, however, we call such output forms of the usage of an image in a learner's illustration "misuses," while we deem complete or appropriate forms of the usage "correct uses."

images, which are difficult to verbalize, are still largely unclarified. Contrastive studies between two languages are expected to elucidate these aspects. On the contrary, common misuses have been identified even among learners from different languages and cultures, and some situations have emerged that cannot be complemented by contrastive studies. Selinker (1972) claimed that interlanguages operate in second language acquisition, and when we speak of second language acquisition theories today, we often refer to interlanguage studies. We also assume that the Japanese language class in Japan is a place where learners of several native languages gather to study and that interlanguage analysis is necessary to identify common misuses and correct uses. A comprehensive examination of visual images that appear in illustrations as a supplement to linguistic expressions allows us to observe and analyze them across several languages.

Sako and Yamauchi (2022a) presented a new approach to explore the process of language acquisition from an interlanguage perspective by **incorporating a composite of learners' written comments (linguistic information) and learners' illustrations (visual images)**. In fact, they argued that visual images should be incorporated into interlanguage analysis. The use of visual images in interlanguage analysis supposedly has the potential to complement language (speech, vocabulary, and grammar). Furthermore, it is a useful method to elucidate the multidimensional factors that shape the interlanguage system. For example, the transfer does not occur during native language acquisition but happens during second language acquisition and constitutes the **learner's interlanguage system**. Therefore, it seems reasonable to try to grasp the whole picture of the second language acquisition process by **analyzing aspects of transfers that appear in learners' visual images**. This study uses the methodology of Sako and Yamauchi (2022a, 2022b⁴, 2023) **to analyze learners' transfers**.

This study makes 19 native Japanese speakers evaluate illustrations by 43 intermediate- to advanced-level learners of Japanese. We quantitatively analyze the results for common factors in acquiring proverbs. Specifically, **Japanese proverbs, which have similar meanings to those in the learner's native language**, were selected, so that the transfer from the L1 would work well. As Koike (2003) pointed out, interlanguage analysis should focus not only on the aspects that learners cannot do (misuses) but also on those that they can do (correct uses). Accordingly, we concentrate on **learners' misuses and correct uses to capture the overall perspective in proverb acquisition**. Such an analysis makes it possible to grasp the

⁴ Sako and Yamauchi (2022b) acknowledged the lack of quantitative analysis as a future issue, but this study is improved.

general overview of proverb acquisition and speculate on the formation of interlanguage in acquisition in stages.

If we consider the acquisition of Japanese proverbs as one area of the second language acquisition process by learners, it is possible to attempt a study using interlanguage analysis. Notably, the interrelation **between learners' linguistic knowledge of their first language (L1) and** their target language (L2) and their cultural background has not been sufficiently investigated. This study presents an understanding process of **Japanese proverbs by combining learners' linguistic information with** visual images and analyzes their transfers at each stage of acquiring Japanese proverbs to grasp the whole picture in interlanguage. It forms part of a series of studies in which we elucidate the multidimensional factors involved in the interlanguage system of second language learners.

2. Previous research

2.1 Japanese proverbs in Japanese language education

In Japanese language education, Jeong (2011) pointed out that in the seven years of the Japanese-Language Proficiency Test (JLPT) from 2001 to 2007, there were only three questions in which Japanese proverbs were treated. Moreover, these questions did not test the knowledge of Japanese proverbs, but they appeared only in the question text. As Japanese proverbs are not included in the JLPT as knowledge questions, few Japanese language schools offer them as teaching materials. Some learners reported that they had listened to the proverb for the first time through conversations with Japanese students after entering university or in interaction with Japanese employees at their workplaces. Additionally, instructors in charge of Japanese language classes must decide what kind of proverbs to start with.

2.2 Japanese proverbs and second language acquisition

Japanese proverbs exhibit peculiar grammatical and semantic constructions of vocabulary and idioms because they are short sentences. As Jeong (2011: 186) demonstrated, they also present pragmatic **characteristics in that they contain “values, worldviews, and human perspectives.”** Considering Japanese proverbs acquisition from the perspective of general foreign language learning theory, to use a single proverb naturally, one must understand not only words and grammar (sentence structure) but also the whole sentence (mood) and then interpret and use the values, worldview, and human perspective (practical use). Therefore, Sako and Yamauchi (2022b) suggested the adequacy of starting to learn Japanese **proverbs, in which we can use L1's cultural** background, pieces of knowledge, and positive transfers.

2.3 Visual images

It is not easy for learners in the second language acquisition process to use Japanese proverbs in conversation or writing. If the learners make grammatical mistakes in their tasks of using proverbs, it is difficult to determine whether learners in the second language acquisition process do not understand a proverb or whether they understand it, but they are unable to produce sentences containing it. This study discusses their understanding of proverbs using visual images. Sako and Yamauchi (2022a: 186) defined a visual image as follows: “*Gakushūsha ga bun o yonda toki ni kokoro ni idaku imēji o ‘shinteki imēji’ to yobi, sono shinteki imēji ga irasuto to shite genshutsu sareta mono o shikaku kikan o tsukatte mirukoto ga dekiru mono toshite, ‘shikaku imēji’ to yobu*” [When reading a text, the image that the learner has in their mind is called a “mental image.” It is manifested as an illustration and can be seen using the visual organs. This is called a “visual image.”]

2.4 The stages of interlanguage

Sakoda (2002: 28) defined interlanguage as “*Bogo o tegakari to shite mokuhyō gengo heto mukatteiku samazamana dankai no aru jiten no gengo taiker*” [a language system in a period of various stages of progression from the native language as a clue to the target language]. **Sako and Yamauchi (2022b) stated that the learners’ illustrations, which could reveal mental images such as grammar and speech, are also composed of stages of interlanguage from L1 to L2. It is a new contribution to the treatment of visual images in interlanguage studies. Figure 1 depicts the authors’ modification of the interlanguage continuum (Sakoda 2002: 28).**

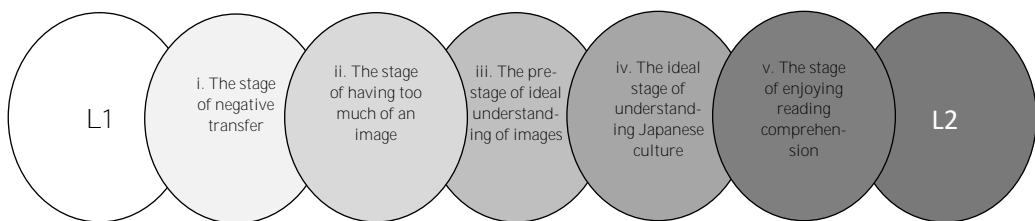


Figure 1. A continuum of interlanguages (Sakoda 2002: 28) with the names of the 5 stages added by using the approach based on Sako and Yamauchi (2022b)

For instance, Sako and Yamauchi (2022b) suggested that the stages of interlanguage can be as follows: Stage 1 is “the stage of negative transfer”; Stage 2 is “the stage of having too much of an image”; Stage 3 is “the stage of ideal understanding of images”; Stage 4 is “the ideal stage of understanding Japanese culture”; and Stage 5 is “the stage of enjoying reading comprehension.”

Based on these studies, Sako and Yamauchi (2023) conducted a survey on illustrations with an increased number of participants using Japanese folklore as a source of materials. Accordingly, Table 1 presents the relationship between language comprehension and images in Japanese folklore. Following a series of quantitative analyses in folklore, Sako and Yamauchi (2023) demonstrated the following relationship between language comprehension and images.

Table 1. The relationship between language comprehension and images in Japanese folklore in Sako and Yamauchi (2023: 50)

Stages	i	ii	iii	iv	v	vi
Language comprehension	Misinterpretation (Misuses)			Correct interpretation (Correct uses)		
Images	Insufficient images	Over-imagining	Pre-ideal understanding of images	Mostly enough images	Understanding Japanese culture	Enjoying reading comprehension

Based on the **analysis results of the features of learners’ illustrations** divided by frequency distribution tables, they present misinterpretation and correct interpretation in images. The gradation of images in **misinterpretation are as follows: “insufficient images,” “excessive images,” and “the preliminary stage of ideal comprehension of images.”** The correct interpretation of the images includes **“mostly enough images,” “enough images and understanding of the usage of proverbs in Japanese culture,” and “ideal images and understanding and enjoyment of the usage of proverbs in Japanese culture.”**

3. Outline

3.1. Purpose

We analyze and discuss how L1 knowledge and experience affect second language acquisition among learners of diverse native languages, using illustrations of Japanese proverbs and questionnaire responses from native Japanese speakers.

3.2. Participants

The survey was conducted on July 12, 2021, by Google Forms. The study participants were 43 intermediate- to advanced-level learners of Japanese (35 native Chinese speakers, seven native Korean speakers, and one native Norwegian speaker). They had Japanese language proficiency (equivalent to JLPT level 2 or higher) above the university entrance standard.

3.3. How to select Japanese proverbs

As Tokita and Yamaguchi (2020) offered many proverbs with similar meanings in other countries, our first task was to choose appropriate proverbs from the literature that could be expected to have a positive transfer. For data, we used 15 Japanese proverbs from a survey by Sako and Yamauchi (2022b). Table 2 presents the list of selected Japanese proverbs.

Table 2. 15 selected Japanese proverbs from Tokita and Yamaguchi (2020)⁵ and their meaning in Japanese

N	Japanese proverbs	Meaning in Japanese	Similar proverbs in English
1	<i>jakuniku kyōshoku</i> 弱肉強食 (Chinese classics) pp. 223-224	<i>Tsuyoi mono ga yowai mono o gisei ni shite haneisuru koto</i> [The strong thrive at the expense of the weak.]	Big fish eat little fish.
2	<i>isseki nichō</i> 一石二鳥 pp. 40-41	<i>Hitotsu no koto de futatsu no rieki o ageru koto</i> [It makes two profits by doing one thing.]	Kill two birds with one stone.
3	<i>jigō jitoku</i> 自業自得 p. 159	<i>Jibun ga shita warui okonai no mukui ga jibun no mini kaeru koto</i> [The rewards of your deeds will return to you.]	He that makes his bed ill, lies there.
4	<i>gishin anki</i> 疑心暗鬼 (Chinese classics) pp. 135-136	<i>Utagau kimochi ga aru to nandemonai mono made utagawashiku naru koto</i> [Doubt makes you suspicious of even the most innocuous things.]	Suspicion has double eyes.
5	<i>happō bijin</i> 八方美人 pp. 394-395	<i>Aite ni geigō shite dare ni taishite mo aisōyosage ni furumau koto</i> [Pander to others and act friendly to everyone.]	A friend to everybody is a friend to nobody.
6	<i>issun saki wa yami</i> 一寸先は闇 pp. 36-37	<i>Goku chikai mirai no koto demo ikisaki wa wakaranai to iu koto</i> [Even in the very near future, we do not know where we're going.]	One can never tell what the future will bring.
7	<i>taigan no kaji</i> 対岸の火事 pp. 269-279	<i>Tōjisha ni totte wa taihen demo jibun niwa higai ga oyobanu koto</i> [It may be difficult for the person concerned, but you will not be harmed.]	It is pleasant to look at the rain when one stands dry.
8	<i>kachū no kurio o hirou</i> 火中の栗を拾う (French) pp.111-112	<i>Tanin no tame ni wazawaza kiken o okasu koto</i> [To go out of your way to risk for others.]	Pull someone's chestnuts out of the fire.
9	<i>tazan no ishi</i> 他山の石 pp. 274-275	<i>Tsumaranai mono demo jibun o kōjō saseru mono ni wa naru koto</i> [Even trivial things can be things that improve you.]	The wise man corrects his own errors by observing those of others.
10	<i>atono matsuri</i> 後の祭り pp. 11-13	<i>Jiki o isshite teokure ni naru koto</i> [You miss the time, and it is too late now.]	After meat mustard.

⁵ Reference pages are listed after each proverb.

11	<i>nisoku no waraji</i> 二足の草鞋 pp. 360-362	<i>Kotonaru futatsu no shigoto o hitoride kaneru koto</i> [You work two different jobs at the same time.]	Wear two hats.
12	<i>kyushi ni isshyō</i> 九死に一生 pp. 140-141	<i>Zettai zetsumei no toki ni karōjite tasukaru koto</i> [You had a narrow escape from absolute desperation.]	There is no proverb with the same or similar meaning.
13	<i>oni ni kanabō</i> 鬼に金棒 pp. 82-83	<i>Tsuyoi mono ga sarani seiryoku o masu koto</i> [The strong gain more power.]	There is no proverb with the same or similar meaning.
14	<i>isogaba maware</i> 急がば回れ pp. 30-32	<i>Asette kiken na michi o iku yori tōmawari demo anzen na michi o ikuhō ga yoi to iu koto</i> [It is better to take the safe road, even if it is a long way, than to take the dangerous road in a hurry.]	Make haste slowly.
15	<i>tana kara botamochi</i> 棚から牡丹餅 pp. 282-220	<i>Nanimo sezu ni, omoigakenai kōun ga yattekuru koto</i> [You have unexpected good fortune which comes without doing anything.]	Pennies from heaven.

Then, we presented the 15 Japanese proverbs with Japanese explanations to the learners and asked them to choose 2 from among them. The learners chose 13 proverbs in total from the 15 we presented. Then, we instructed the learners to create an illustration⁶ of each proverb they chose and to write down an example of how they would use it.

3.4. Classification method of the illustrations

Subsequently, we evaluated the illustrations drawn by the learners. We asked 19 native Japanese speakers who were roughly the similar age as the learners to evaluate the illustrations. Table 3 describes the attributes of the evaluators.

Table 3. Attributes of evaluators of native Japanese speakers

Total numbers of evaluators	19
Average age	21.53
Residential areas	Osaka (3), Shiga (15), Ehime (2)
Gender	Male (8), Female (11)
Frequency of uses of proverbs (6-point scales)	Average: 2.42

The average age of the evaluators was 21.53 years, which indicates that the evaluators were generally young people who do not use proverbs very often. The mean of the 6-point scale for the question “Do you use proverbs very often?” was 2.42.

⁶ Some learners need more confidence to draw illustrations, so they took the free illustrations or photos from the Internet.

Thereafter, we asked the native Japanese speakers to assess the degree of misuses and correct uses of the visual images depicted in the illustrations and the meaning of the proverbs on a 6-point scale. Table 4 presents the evaluation scores.

Table 4. 6-point scales

Positive	Strongly agree (6)	Agree (5)	So-so agree (4)
Negative	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Not so much agree (3)

First, we discussed how the 6-point scale, as answered by the evaluators, was handled: the 6-point scale is represented in a boxplot in Figure 5. **It reveals the scatter of data of “*jakuniku kyōshoku*” and the median values with the black line on the boxplot, as follows:**

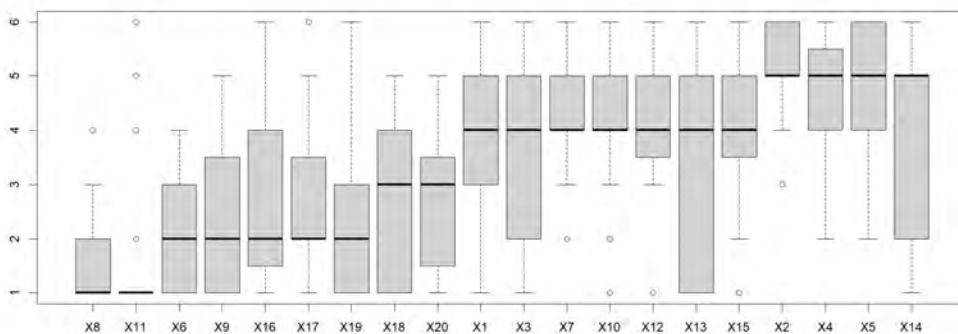

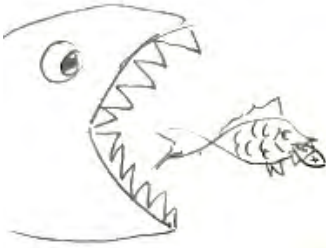


Figure 2. Boxplot of 20 illustrations






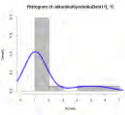
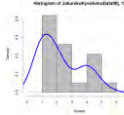
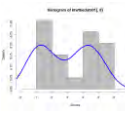
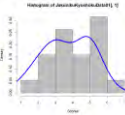
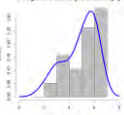
For example, the illustration with the number X8 has a median score of 1, a maximum score of 3, and a small variance of 1.00; therefore, there seems to be no problem in using the mean value as the overall rating for illustration X8. However, we need to be careful about those with a distribution of responses that straddles between 3 and 4, such as X13. (X13 has a large variance of 3.23.) For X13, even though the median of the evaluators is 4 and more than a majority of the evaluators positively **evaluated it as “So-so agree,” using the mean value, it becomes 3.35, which** is a more likely negative evaluation. Table 5 describes the examples of illustrations X8 and X13.

Table 5. Examples of illustration X8 and X13

Numbers	X8	X13
Illustrations		
Mean value	1.68	3.32
Variance	1.00	3.28
Median value	1	4
Mean deviation	0.79	1.60
Impression	Negative impression	Hard to judge this illustration

We paid particular attention to the variance that straddles the boundary between 3 and 4. Depending on the evaluator, some may give the same illustration a score of 1, while others may give it a score of 6. Human cognition varies from person to person, but at least it indicates that more than half of the evaluators put those scores when we take the median value. Table 6 presents the examples of the illustrations and histograms.

Table 6. Examples of the illustrations and histograms

Numbers	X11	X9	X18	X1	X5
Illustrations					
Histograms					
Distribution	Left-leaning distributions	Left-leaning distributions	Bimodal distribution	Right-leaning distributions	Right-leaning distributions

According to Kawahashi and Shojima (2014: 33), “When the distribution is hemmed to either the right or the left, the median value is used instead of the mean value to account for resistance.” Considering all of these factors together, the median value can be best used in this study.

3.5. Classification method of the reasons of evaluation scores

Sako and Yamauchi (2022a, 2022b, 2023) place special emphasis of reference on the interlanguage stage. Inspired by the six stages proposed, we created single questions about why you may choose the score in the survey. The following is a list of eight reasons:

Table 7. The list of positive and negative reasons with Sako and Yamauchi’s (2022b) approach

Stages	Numbers	Reasons
Stage 4	P1	It makes sense.
Stage 5	P2	It makes sense and matches the Japanese culture.
Stage 6	P3	It makes sense, matches the Japanese culture, and is interesting.
Stage 1, 2, 3	N1	It does not make sense.
Stage 1, 2, 3	N2	It does not match the Japanese culture.
Stage 1	N3	It is not a sufficiently good image. (Insufficient images)
Stage 2	N4	It is over-imagining. (Excessive images)
Not sure	Others	Others.

We asked the evaluators to select one of the closer reasons to form eight items to clarify why they chose that score. We prepared the selection box of positive and negative reasons on Google Forms. As positive reasons, **we created items such as “It makes sense,” “It makes sense and matches the Japanese culture,” and “It makes sense, matches the Japanese culture, and is interesting.”** The procedure was conducted in step-by-step items (reasons), by referring to Figures 2 and 3. For example, if an evaluator chooses 6 as the reason for a score of P3, then the illustration could be closer to Stage 6 of interlanguage. In contrast, as for items as negative reasons, the content of negative transfer was still not sure, so that we **prepared four independent items such as “It does not make sense,” “It does not match the Japanese culture,” “It is not a sufficiently good image,” and “It is over-imagining.”** We used this information to analyze the illustration’s features.

3.6. Classification method of the proverbs

First, using the classification method of Sako and Yamauchi (2022b), **we classified the Japanese proverbs into two groups: “proverbs containing *kanji* only (Group A)” and “proverbs requiring an understanding of Japanese grammar (Group B).”** In addition, the Group A proverbs were classified into **“proverbs in which both the word order of the *kanji* and the meaning contained in the *kanji* is the same as Chinese language” (Group A1) and “proverbs in which the word order is the same as the Chinese language, but each meaning differs” (Group A2).** Table 8 presents a list of the learners’ selected Japanese proverbs, organized by nationality and in total order.

Table 8. Japanese proverbs selected by the authors as targets and the ones chosen by the learners

Group	Japanese proverbs	Chinese	Korean	Norwegian	Total
A1	<i>jakuniku kyōshoku</i>	19	1	0	20
A1	<i>isseki nichō</i>	16	3	0	19
A2	<i>jigō jitoku</i>	10	3	0	13
B	<i>taigan no kaji</i>	4	2	0	6
B	<i>issun saki wa yami</i>	2	3	0	5
A2	<i>gishin anki</i>	4	1	0	5
B	<i>kyushi ni isshyō</i>	5	0	0	5
B	<i>kachū no kuri o hīrou</i>	3	0	0	3
B	<i>tazan no ishi</i>	3	0	0	3
B	<i>oni ni kanabō</i>	2	0	0	2
B	<i>atono matsuri</i>	0	1	1	2
A2	<i>happō bijin</i>	2	0	0	2
B	<i>isogaba maware</i>	0	0	1	1
B	<i>tana kara botamochi</i>	0	0	0	0
B	<i>nisoku no waraji</i>	0	0	0	0
	Total	70	14	2	86

4. Analysis

4.1. Correspondence analysis

We used the information in Table 8 to conduct a correspondence analysis using the statistical software R to visualize the selected proverbs by nationality.

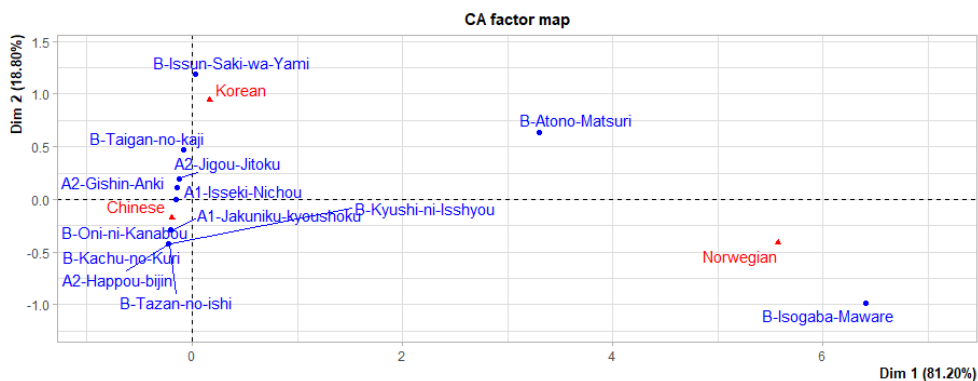


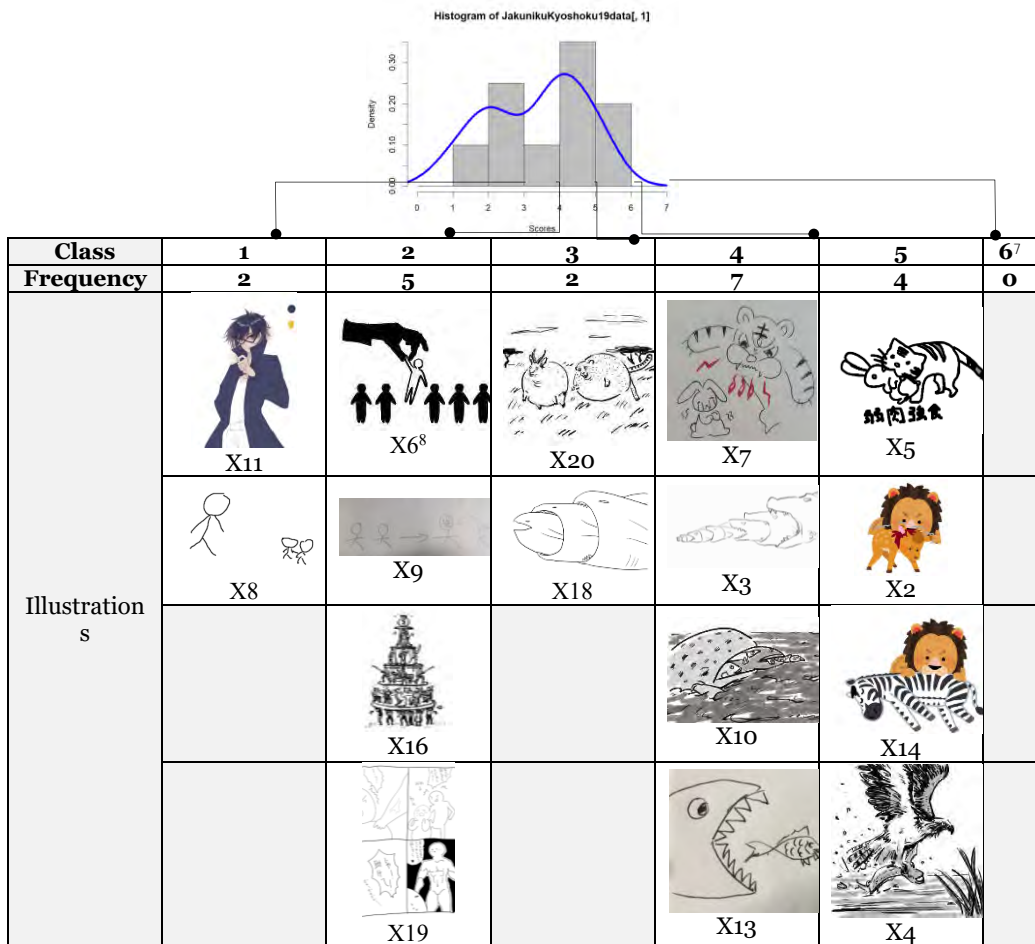
Figure 3. Examples of the learners' illustrations

Based on Figure 3, we found that there was strong correspondence by nationality (81.20%). Also, based on Table 8, learners from China chose proverbs in Group A1, “*jakuniku kyōshoku*” and “*isseki nichō*,” and some proverbs in Group A2. Correspondence was observed between learners from China and those from Korea in proverbs such as “*jigō jitoku*,” “*taigan no kaji*,” “*isseki nichō*,” and “*gishin anki*.” Comparatively, we discovered no correspondence between the proverbs chosen by learners

from China and Korea and those selected by learners from Norway. The number of Korean and Norwegian learners was not sufficient.

4.2. Analysis of histograms and distribution tables

We used each illustration's median score of 19 evaluators to create a distribution table to analyze the illustration's features. We explained the histogram and distribution table of “*jakuniku kyōshoku*” illustrations. Figure 4 presents the frequency distribution table in the 20 illustrations of “*jakuniku kyōshoku*” by the median scores of 19 evaluators.



⁷ Class 1 is absent because we have related data unavailable.

⁸ Note that the learners claim that they took these materials from free illustration sites and photos, but we are not able to determine the copyright status of the illustrations, so we ourselves drew them (X4, X6, X10, X12, X15, X16, X20) for imitation. When we conducted the survey, the illustrations were original ones the learner chose.





		 X17		 X12		
				 X15		
				 X1		

Figure 4. The frequency distribution table (FDT) in the 20 illustrations of “*jakuniku kyōshoku*” by the scores that are the median of 19 evaluators

Using the example of “*jakuniku kyōshoku*,” we described the correspondence between the features of the illustrations and the stages of interlanguage proposed by Sako and Yamauchi (2022b). According to Tokita and Yamaguchi (2020: 223), “*jakuniku kyōshoku*” is that “*tsuyoi mono ga yowai mono o gisei ni shite haneisuru koto*” [the situation in which the strong thrive at the expense of the weak]. Some examples come close to this meaning: illustrations in Class 5 in Figure 4 of large animals preying on smaller animals and those in Class 4 in Figure 4 are similar to the meaning implied by the proverb since humans are recalled. Moreover, illustrations in Class 4-3 in Figure 4—those depicting a large fish preying on a small fish—seem to have been influenced by the Chinese language. According to Tokita and Yamaguchi (2020: 170), the Chinese word for “*jakuniku kyōshoku*” also means “**big fish eat small fish, and small fish eat small shrimp**” (大鱼吃小鱼, 小鱼吃虾米), thus suggesting that the illustrations in Class 4-3 in Figure 4 are influenced by their L1. The group of illustrations is in a state of being influenced by their L1. **These illustrations can be assumed to represent different levels of learners’ understanding in the correct uses.** However, when learners drew **illustrations of proverbs such as “Big fish eat little fish,” they did not fully reflect the exact meaning.** Nevertheless, the evaluators seemed to judge that they matched some parts of illustrations within the larger framework of **“The strong thrive at the expense of the weak.”** (These illustrations had a median rating of roughly 3 to 4). It is evident that it works as a positive transfer from L1. However, these illustrations did not reach a score of **5 due to a lack of understanding of the proverb’s meaning in Japanese culture.** There are no Class 6 illustrations in Figure 4.

Meanwhile, Class 2 in Figure 4 has the illustration of people being plucked up by giant hands and the illustration depicting a hierarchy. At this stage, they had too much of an image sometimes. These visual images may represent different levels of learners’ **comprehension from misuses to correct uses**. Additionally, we demonstrated that it was **possible to quantify and objectively express the degree of learners’ understanding** as a continuous-type distribution by making native Japanese speakers evaluate the illustrations on six scales.

4.3. Analysis of the reasons for classes on “*jakuniku kyōshoku*”

Subsequently, we extracted eight reasons⁹ for the illustrations classified in each class of the frequency distribution table in “*jakuniku kyōshoku*” and sorted them by class in order of frequency. For example, the most common reason in Class 1 was N3: “It is not a good enough image.” In this way, we categorized each of the reasons for each class. The line graph (Figure 5) below shows the percentage of reasons for the classes.

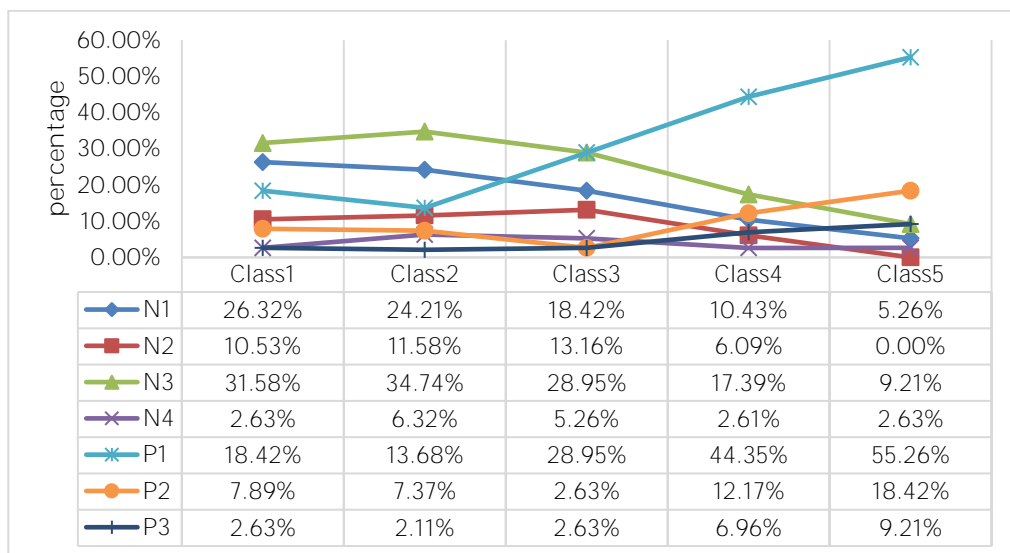


Figure 5. The percentage of each reason and feature of the class on the FBT of “*jakuniku kyōshoku*”

As this line graph illustrates, the percentage of negative reasons gradually decreases, and the percentage of positive reasons gradually increases with each class of positive reasons increasing in the frequency distribution table. For example, in Class 1, 18.42% of the respondents chose P1, but in Class 5, 55.26% chose P1. The results for P2 and P3 were

⁹ There are eight reasons, one of which is an “others” category; see Table 7.

analyzed then, with P2 increasing from 12.17% to 18.42% after Class 4. P3 was in the 2% range in Classes 1 through 3 and increased slightly after Class 4, from 6.96% to 9.21%. **Regarding the “*jakuniku kyōshoku*,”** there was no illustration in which the median value is 6, so that the analysis for the Class 6 case could not be performed, but it can be expected to continue to increase.

On the contrary, in Class 1, 26.32% of the respondents chose N1, but in Class 5, 5.26% of the respondents rarely chose N1. Subsequently, we analyzed N2 and N3, which appeared to increase slightly from Class 1 to 3 (ranging from 10% to 13%), but suddenly decreased to 6.09% when the evaluation reached Class 4, the positive use domain, and to 0% in Class 5. N3 was the reason for the highest percentage (31.58%) in Classes 1 and 2. **The evaluators attributed the reason to “It is not a good enough image” of the illustrations drawn by the learners. Specifically, in Sako and Yamauchi (2023), the stage of “insufficient images” was designated as Stage 1, and the learners’ reasoning in this study also indicated the same.** However, what differed from Sako and Yamauchi (2023) was a not negligible percentage of evaluators selected N3 in Classes 1-5 as the reason for their rating. **A deeper consideration of the “insufficient images” is to be sought.** Additionally, as Sako and Yamauchi (2023) pointed out, the N4 of “excessive images” appeared at a stage shortly before the middle of the stages as a result of a statistical analysis of the qualitative data.

We then applied a test of equal or given proportions (function *prop.test*) by statistical software R to the reason of each item in each class to test whether there is a significant difference. Table 9 represents the results.

Table 9. A test of equal or given proportions for negative reasons (total proportion of N1, N2, N3 and N4) and positive reasons (total proportion of P1, P2 and P3)

	Class 1 & 2		Class 2 & 3		Class 3 & 4		Class 4 & 5	
	C1	C2	C2	C3	C3	C4	C4	C5
Negative	71.05%	76.84%	76.84%	65.79%	65.79%	36.52%	36.52%	17.11%
Positive	28.95%	23.16%	23.16%	34.21%	34.21%	63.48%	63.48%	82.89%
<i>p</i> -value	0.634		0.276		0.003		0.006	
Effective size (function <i>ES.h</i>)	0.13		0.25		0.59		0.45	

There were no significant differences between Class 1 and Class 2 and Class 2 and Class 3, but we found significant differences among other classes. Overall, Classes 1 and 2 and Classes 2 and 3 had lower rating scores and more negative reasons, but each reason differed. However, it suggests that the evaluators had different impressions of the illustrations belonging to each class regarding more than Class 2 in the histogram.

4.4. Analysis of the reasons for scores

We mapped the seven reasons collected in section 3.4 to the 6-point scale. **For example, if one evaluator chose P3, which means “It makes sense, matches the Japanese culture, and is interesting,” as the reason for giving a score 6, it was assigned 6P3.** In total, 1,614 letter symbols were categorized and summarized into 42 patterns in Figure 6.

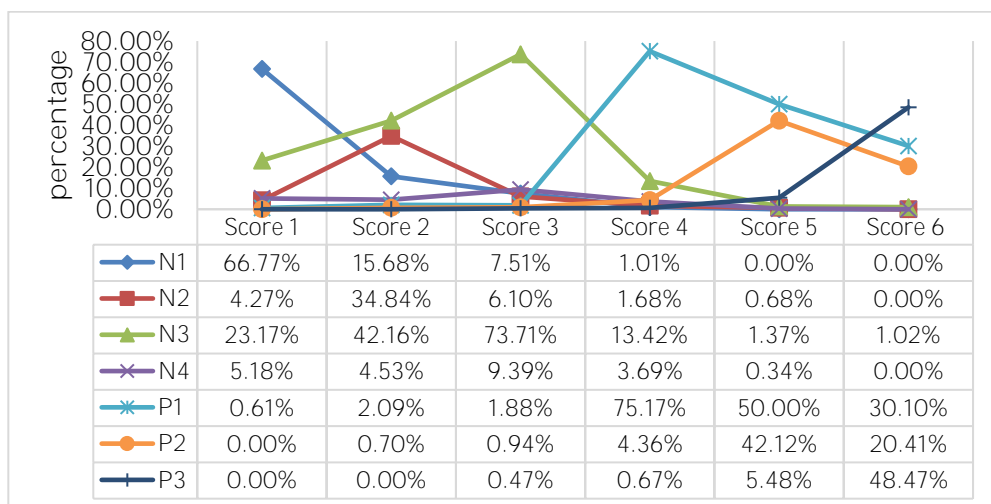


Figure 6. The percentage of each reason and features of the class on the FBT

The results classification of the evaluation scores given to the 86 illustrations by the 19 raters and the reasons for their ratings (Figure 8) were analyzed.

First, the most common reason for score 1 was N1 (66.77%); N3 came in second and accounted for 23.17%. We inferred that it occurred from a particular insufficient image among the reasons for not matching the meaning of the proverbs. Second, the most common reason for the score of 2 was N3 (42.16%), which was “insufficient images.” The second most common reason was N2 (34.84%), which was “It does not match the Japanese culture.” Third, the most frequent reason given for score 3 was “insufficient images” by N3 (73.71%), followed by an excessive image by N4 (9.39%). The lack or excess of an image was a characteristic of this stage. Fourth, the most common reason for the evaluation score 4 was P1 (75.17%), but some also cited image deficiency for N3 (13.42%). Even at stage 4, some evaluators still considered the image lacking. Fifth, at score 5, P1 (50.00%) was the most common reason, but P2 (42.12%) was also significantly more common than in score 4. Finally, with a score of 6, the most common reason was P3 (48.47%). Section 4.4 could not be analyzed because there were no illustrations with a median value of 6, but with this method, an analysis of reasons for score 6 could also be

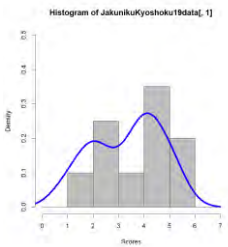
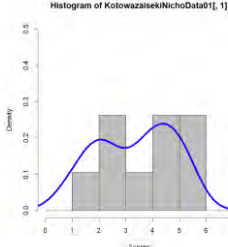
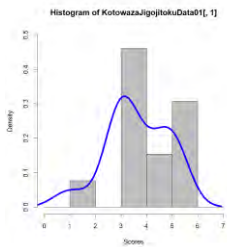
performed. We found that the evaluators considered the learners' illustrations both understanding Japanese culture and finding it interesting. Accordingly, P2 (20.41%) and P1 (30.10%), as the reasons for score 6, seemed to have decreased. Additionally, negative reasoning was virtually absent in score 6.

We summarized that the overall trend shows that as the score increased, we could find fewer negative and more positive reasons, similar to section 4.4.

4.5. Histograms in three Japanese proverbs

According to the classification method in section 4.3, we created the histogram of three proverbs with more than 10 illustrations, as in Table 10:

Table 10. The histograms of three Japanese proverbs

Proverb	<i>jakuniku kyōshoku</i>	<i>isseki nichō</i> ¹⁰	<i>jigō jitoku</i>
Histogram			
Numbers of illustrations	20	19	13
Mode value	4	2,4,5	3
Median value	4	4	3
Mean value	3.30	3.32	3.62

The illustration of a big fish eating a small fish in Figure 4 in “*jakuniku kyōshoku*” (score 3-4) showed that the learners were positively influenced by the meaning of proverbs in their native language to understand the meaning of Japanese proverbs. The distribution charts for “*isseki nichō*” and “*jakuniku kyōshoku*” had the same distribution trend¹¹ as that for “*jakuniku kyōshoku*,” which suggested that “*isseki nichō*” and “*jigō jitoku*” were also positively influenced by the learners’ native language. To summarize, it is possible that the learners’ L1 affects the understanding of Japanese proverbs.

¹⁰ As part of the feedbacks in the “Japan: Premodern, Modern and Contemporary” conference in Bucharest, a teacher asked us whether “*isseki nichō*” is a Romanian proverb which says “Shoot two rabbits with one bullet.” Yet, if a Romanian native speaker draws an illustration of the rabbits, their native language will influence them. We answered her that “*jakuniku kyōshoku*” and “*isseki nichō*” had similar distributional tendencies; if a Romanian native speaker drew an illustration of shooting two rabbits with one bullet, it would be positively evaluated, similar to the case of the fish in the frequency distribution table in Figure 4.

¹¹ There was no significant difference in a *t*-test among the three.

5. Findings

5.1. Results of the correspondence analysis

Let us consider the results of the analysis in section 4.1. Learners from China most likely selected Group A because they attempted to analogize the meaning of the proverb from the Chinese characters. Another reason that “*happō bijin*” was chosen not very often, although it is a four-character proverb, was that it has a different meaning in Chinese and Korean. Similarly, “*jakuniku kyōshoku*” had two meanings in Chinese, but one of the meanings was common enough to make it an easier choice. Learners from Norway did not select proverbs that contained only Chinese characters but those that used grammar such as the sentence patterns “**A no B**” (**B of A**) and “**A ba B**” (*ba*-form), which are studied at the elementary level. It can be inferred that the psychological barrier to learning proverbs would be lower if the proverbs included grammar items at the elementary level.

5.2. Three types of insufficient images

In Figure 8, the overall trend is that as the score increases, the number of negative reasons decreases, and the number of positive reasons increases. **For example, while N3 of “insufficient images (Not enough images)” accounted for 73.71% of the reasons in score 3, P1 of “it makes sense” for 75.17% in score 4.** In other words, for the score to change from negative to positive, “insufficient images” need to be resolved. N3 was also one of the major factors in Scores 1 and 2, thus suggesting that “insufficient images” may be a major factor preventing Japanese proverb acquisition. Therefore, it is necessary to acquire the correct image of each proverb.

When teaching Japanese proverbs to learners, it is better to show examples of proverbs and their meanings and illustrations or pictures of typical situations in which the proverbs are used. The first is “insufficient images” in a group of illustrations accompanied by a drawing such as a stick figure. The second is “insufficient images” in illustrations with sufficient detail, but in which the illustrator imagines a scene that is quite different from that of the proverb in question, such as score 1, 2, and 3 in Figure 6. For example, in X11, the learners drew only one person in “*jakuniku kyōshoku*,” yet, the proverb requires two objects to be imaged. From the X11, in which only one person is depicted, the image seems insufficient for the proverb describing the relationship between the two. The third is “insufficient images” in illustrations with enough detail, but they imagine a scene slightly different from the corresponding proverb. A positive evaluation with a score of 4 or higher was also observed in this case. Therefore, we inferred that the third reason for “insufficient images” was “Oh, something is a little missing.”

5.3. Excessive images

In Figures 7 and 8, the percentage of reasons for the “**excessive images (Having too much of an image)**” is lower than that for the “**insufficient images.**” We speculated that the evaluators were trying to find some similarity in the excessive images. They might have evaluated them as such if they found slight similarities and assigned a score. By increasing the number of questions asking the reason and allowing **multiple choices, it would be possible to analyze the evaluator’s conclusions more tangibly.**

5.4. L1 influence

The results in section 4.6 indicate that most learners had a sufficient **cultural understanding of these three proverbs of “*jakuniku kyōshoku*,” “*iseki nichō*” and “*jigō jitoku*” because the median of the evaluators’ score is above 3 and the histograms were distributed to the right.** Proverbs with the same meaning in L1 may have enabled them to utilize their knowledge of their L1 to understand the proverbs.

5.5. Function of visual images in the stages of interlanguage

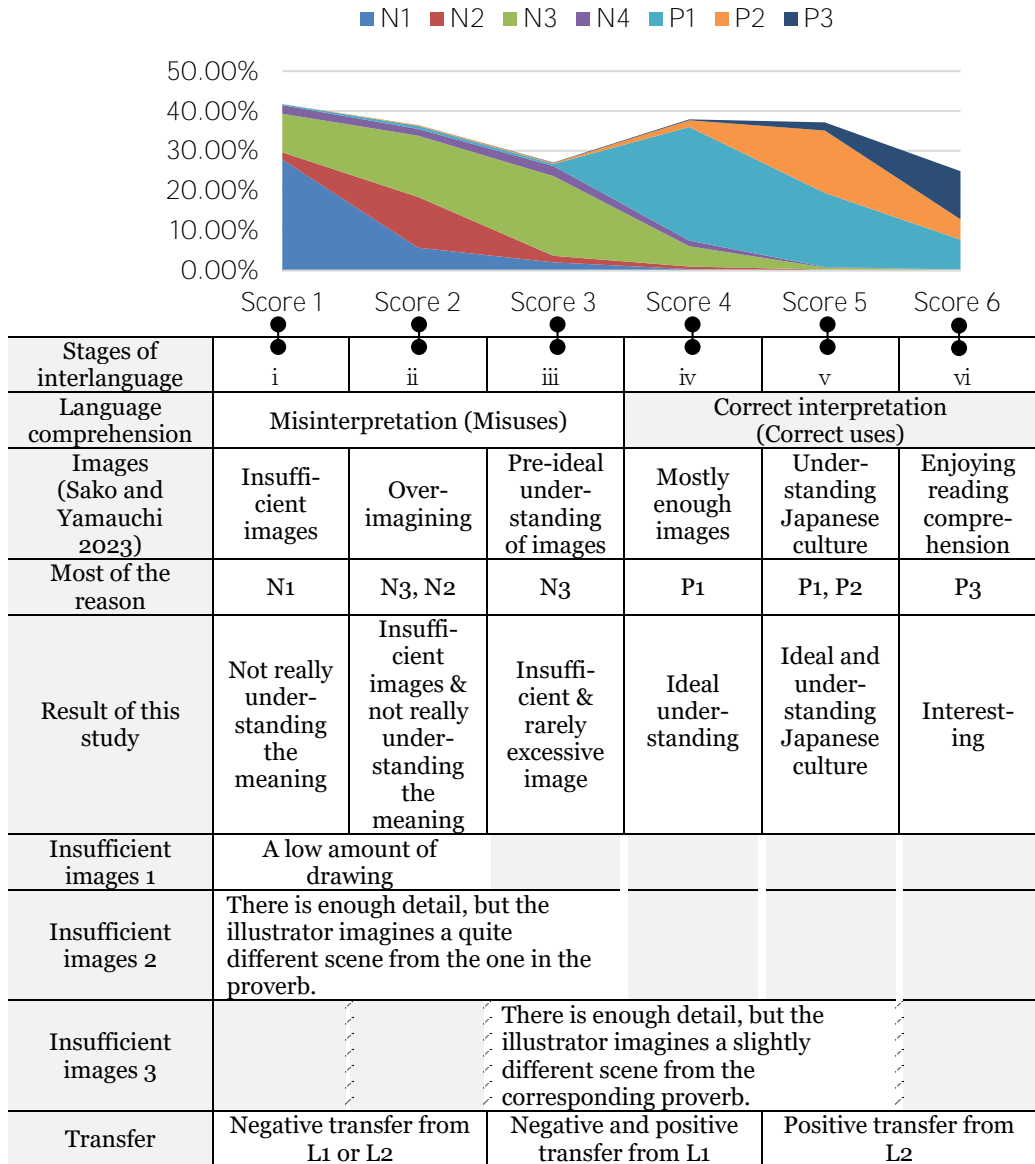
As Sako and Yamauchi (2022b) argued, it is reasonable to think that understanding can be supplemented by visual images—even in language acquisition—in proverbs that would be difficult to express in a normal approach.

Based on the illustrations by native Japanese speakers and the 6-score evaluation results and the reasons for giving those scores, we proposed 6 stages¹² of interlanguage: Stage 1, the stage of being influenced by L1 (insufficient images due to lack of understanding of the meaning of **proverbs**); **Stage 2, the stage of being influenced by L1’s cultural influence** (lack of understanding of Japanese culture); Stage 3, the stage before ideal understanding (understanding of Japanese culture has progressed, but some points of insufficient images and excessive images can be seen); Stage 4, the stage of ideal understanding (understanding of the meaning of proverbs); Stage 5, the stage of ideal understanding of Japanese culture; and Stage 6, the stage of enjoying the use of proverbs (strong L2 influence).

By analyzing the features of the illustrations belonging to each class, **it is plausible to derive some stages on a continuum in the learners’ interlanguage system.** We proposed the interlanguage stage and each **stage’s features in Table 11 below.**

¹² Note that the distribution of illustrations is dominated by scores 4 and above, and that the number of illustrations in some scores is insufficient for this study. These are issues to be addressed in the future.

Table 11. Correspondence among Sako and Yamuchi (2023), the results of this study, and the stage of interlanguage



Notably, “insufficient images” can be a major factor in misuses. In this study, the reasons for “insufficient images” are discussed with reference to the features of the illustrations divided by the frequency distribution table.

We also inferred that visual images have the following functions: (1) they reveal aspects of understanding that are difficult to verbalize in the learner’s second language; and (2) as Figure 4 illustrates, they can objectively measure and verify the degree of understanding.

5.6. Cultural diversity

Selinker (1972) and Sakoda (2002) claimed that an interlanguage system exists from L1 to L2 acquisition, but learners' interlanguage systems are difficult to generalize due to their idiosyncratic differences. **We proposed examining each class's features using the median illustration ratings by native Japanese speakers.** This method enabled us to objectively analyze the transition of misuses to correct uses in interlanguage studies and features in ambiguous realms between the two. Our research using visual images is a possibly promising approach in line with the trend in Japanese language education, which attempted to measure **learners' understanding through analyses of misuses and correct uses.** Additionally, it is a new research field that attempts to measure **language understanding from different aspects, thus affirming learners' diversity, sensitivity, and expressive potential in multilingual and multicultural environments.**

As this study, which drew on many findings on Asian students, uniquely focused on the possibilities of visual images in interlanguage studies, we assume that it can significantly contribute to promoting Japanese language education in terms of cultural diversity.

5.7. Positive transfers

Positive transfers of Japanese proverbs might be better-qualified learning items because they expose minimal, if any, disparities in **interpreting the proverbs in learners' L1.** We assume that this approach can be useful in revealing the stages of interlanguage in acquiring Japanese proverbs, thus allowing for a partial picture of the overall understanding of interlanguage studies drawn.

However, when utilizing knowledge of the L1, we must be careful to note the differences from the culture of the L2. For example, for an illustration that did not lead to a score 6, though not deemed a misuse **(such as “a big fish eats a small fish” in Figure 4), the evaluator in fact assigned a score of 4.** This demonstrates that the learner is seemingly making good progress in understanding a Japanese proverb by utilizing the culture of the L1. We must note, however, that a score of 4 is not yet at the stage of full mastery; it is at the stage of being understandable, with such subtle cultural differences noticeable. This slight difference from the **culture of the learner's L1 can be ascribed to Japanese culture.** Therefore, although it is useful to use knowledge of the L1, it is necessary to assist the learner to attain a solid understanding of Japanese culture, who can **acquire a Score 6's images.**

5.8. Future tasks

The proverbs were selected from these that have similar meanings **in the learners' countries**. Although the number of native Chinese speakers was unevenly distributed, those proverbs that showed correspondence between nationalities in the correspondence analysis were assumed to be those that could be easily adopted in Japanese classes in multilingual and multicultural environments. We will continue the survey and compile a list in the future, especially focusing on the distribution of proverbs which varies slightly depending on the type of proverbs. It is our subsequent task to create a statistical model of the gradation of understanding of proverbs in interlanguage. It is our future task, furthermore, to collect and elaborate more illustrations of Japanese proverbs, and then to conduct a more detailed interlanguage analysis. We will ask proverb experts to evaluate the illustrations. At the same time, **we will investigate learners' understanding of proverbs that do not exist** in their L1 as well as proverbs with multiple meanings.

6. Conclusion

We proposed a gradation of interlanguage by quantitatively analyzing the factors involved in the formation of interlanguage.

First, based on the continuous-type distribution data in which native Japanese speakers evaluated the illustrations on a 6-point scale, we made **a frequency distribution table for illustration scores of “*jakuniku kyōshoku*.”** Then, we analyzed the commonalities among the illustrations within each class. The results showed that the low-scoring illustration group had features that could not be described as Japanese culture (influence of L1), and that the high-scoring illustration group had features that could be described as Japanese culture (influence of L2). Second, an analysis of the eight reasons that the evaluators gave each score revealed that the factor of **“insufficient images” influenced the evaluation**. For example, the features **of illustrations containing “insufficient images” were classified into three** categories: (1) one had a low amount of drawing; (2) another had enough detail, but the meaning of the proverb was not exactly imagined; and (3) the other had the meaning of the proverb being mostly imagined, but something was a little lacking. Third, we divided the total positive and negative reasons among the classes and conducted a test of equal or given proportions of the positive and negative reasons for which the evaluators gave a score. The results indicated that there were no significant differences between the classes with low scores (between Classes 1 and 2, and 2 and 3), but that there was a significant difference between the classes with high scores (between Classes 3 and 4, and 4 and 5).

In conclusion, given that it was a continuous-type distribution data following a 6-point scale and that the illustrations of each class have

different features in the illustrations, we claimed that there is a continuum **of six stages in the learner's interlanguage**. Therefore, in the further study, we select Japanese proverbs with few cultural differences between L1 and L2 by using this unique approach and creating a list. Moreover, it should allow for some generalization of the order in which learners of Japanese learn proverbs.

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JAPANESE-LANGUAGE MANCHURIAN LITERATURE IN TWO ANTHOLOGIES: ART AND POLITICS FOR MANCHUKUO¹

*Joshua SOLOMON*²

*Abstract: Conventional assessments regarding Japanese-language Manchurian literature have divided the literary community into north and south, nationalist and critical-realist camps. More recently, scholars have challenged this as an oversimplification, offering a variety of political and demographic lenses from which to view literary production stretching from the early years of the Liaodong leasehold through the end of World War II and forced repatriation. This article examines a series of such trans-regional and sometimes translingual literary texts originating in Manchuria but republished for metropolitan Japanese audiences in two anthologies: Asami Fukashi's *Miyaohoi: Manshū sakka kyūnin shū* (Temple Festival: Nine Manchurian Writers) (1940) and *Nichi-Man-Ro zai Man sakka tanpen senshū* (Selected works by Japanese, Manchu, and Russian writers in Manchuria) (1940). The article approaches its subject from both contextual and thematic perspectives, contrasting the stated political stance of their editors and the thematic contents of their literary works. **By illuminating the literary and political context of the anthologies' genesis, it explicates some of the functions of the anthology as a technology of national formation in general, as well as its specific relation to the development of Japanese Manchuria.***

Keywords: Japanese literature, Manchuria, Manchukuo, anthology, settler literature

Takagi Kyōzō (1903–1987) was a writer active in the Japanese continental literature scene during the imperial period. He is best known for his writing related to his rural hometown in Tsugaru, Aomori prefecture, and nearly all of the extant scholarship on him completely overlooks or minimizes his 18-year sojourn in Manchuria and his prolific repatriate writing from that period and beyond. A perusal of his writing from that time reveals a dismal portrait of a man with a self-perception of a complete lack of agency, blown about by historical forces like a grain of yellow continental sand (loess) or a dried-up heap of leaves—two images conjured again and again in his prose and poetry. One of Takagi's Manchurian period short stories in particular stands out, encapsulating

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this image perfectly: a tale called “Dust in the Wind” (*Fūjin*), originally published in 1939 (see Takagi 1983, Takagi 2000).

How was this work, which was clearly pessimistic about the role of the Japanese in Manchuria, received by Takagi’s contemporaries? Did the context of ever-increasing Japanese aggression on the continent (it was published two years after the Marco Polo Bridge Incident and beginning of the Second Sino-Japanese War) sour its reception? Perhaps surprisingly, the story was well-received and enjoyed almost immediate republication in an anthology of Japanese-language Manchurian literature. The purpose of that anthology, as I demonstrate in the following pages, was to construct a uniquely “Manchurian” and unabashedly pro-Japan Japanese-language literature. The blatant dissonance between the anthology project and aspects of the literature included therein prompt the question of how we understand the role of literary anthologies in the context of Japanese Manchuria and Manchukuo.

This article examines two anthologies published in 1940: *Miyaohoi: Manshū sakka kyūnin shū* (Temple Festival: Nine Manchurian Writers), which was the first to reprint Takagi’s story, as well as *Nichi-Man-Ro zai Man sakka tanpen senshū* (Selected Works by Japanese, Manchu, and Russian writers in Manchuria), which was developed in close conversation with the first. In her entry on *Nichi-Man-Ro zai Man sakka tanpen senshū* and its editor Yamada Seizaburō in Nishida’s *Annotated Bibliography of Culture in Manchukuo*, Tanimoto suggests that “The works collected in this anthology are unrelated to singing the praises of the foundational principles of ‘Manchukuo’” (*osamerareta sakuhin wa ‘Manshūkoku’ rinen no kōshō towa muen*) (Nishida 2005: 687). A critical reading, however, suggests that this interpretation misses the mark. The circumstances surrounding the creation of these anthologies, the relationship between their editors and writers, as well as the publications’ outward political stances combine to tell one story of Japanese-language literature in Manchuria. At the same time, reading the works contained therein reveals a more complicated picture and some of the mixed messaging between the political vision and literary effects of the anthologies as a whole.³

Setting the Stage: Takagi’s “Dust in the Wind”

“Dust in the Wind” is the story of Saruwatari Heisuke, a man who abandons his wife and child in the metropole to seek greater fortunes in Manchuria. There, he seizes the house of a local family during the chaos surrounding the founding of Manchukuo and earns a living as an

³ The relevant themes and imagery discussed in this article were not exclusive to these two anthologies. Other works, such as some of Aoki Minoru’s Manchurian works (Aoki 1980) and Akihara Katsuji’s stories (Akihara 2012), could easily be discussed in tandem, given sufficient space.

unlicensed doctor and landlord. The story follows his relationship with his three Japanese tenants and his new family in Manchuria, focusing on his failure as a patriarch as expressed through the figures of his modern, willful, and independent daughter and his son, a truant who has taken up with a multi-ethnic gang of hoodlums. By the end of the story, Saruwatari's apartment is burned down in a freak accident and his closest friend is immobilized by a case of terminal syphilis, but he finds himself saved as if by manna from heaven in the form of a job offer in the outer reaches of northern Manchuria, delivered unprompted by his daughter and received with an air of nonchalance and entitlement.

It is a depressing work, providing levity only in a ridiculous scene of drunken violence between Saruwatari and his tenants, and Takagi's lugubrious self-deprecatory depiction of his ever-emasculated stand-in protagonist. But it is this constant looming threat of failure—symbolized by the ever-present turgid skies full of yellow sands—that also constitutes his implicit critique of the Japanese Manchurian project.

What makes “Dust in the Wind” compelling is not the sheer weight and negativity of the portrayal of Manchurian culture and everyday life, but the fact that Takagi paints it as an irresistible force against which Japanese settlers must ultimately succumb. Saruwatari initially blames the “environment” for the delinquency of his son, before reflecting again that “I suppose this ‘environment’ has had an effect on me, too...” (Takagi 1983: 105). In an uncharacteristically patriotic verse, penned for the occasion of the tenth anniversary of Manchukuo's founding, Takagi describes his sons' futures as great trees forming the landscape of the continent. At the same time, he maintains the pessimistic and passive view that he himself “shall grow old in the manner of a plant,” wither, and disappear in death (cited in Ino 2005: 144). This plantlike man is literally a “colonist”—in Japanese, a *nyūshokusha*, or “planted person.”

It also bears noting that “Dust in the Wind” appeared not only in the pages of *Sakubun* (Compositions), the most central and established coterie journal of southern Manchuria, but it was also immediately republished in the anthology *Miyaohoi* in Tokyo in 1940 and then again in a collection called *Manshūkoku kaku minzoku sōsakushū 1* (Collected works by various ethnic groups in Manchuria) in 1942, from the publisher Sōgensha in Osaka. Thus, even as late as 1942, Takagi's pessimistic vision of Japanese Manchuria was not directly subjected to censorship, either on the Asian continent or back home in the metropole.

Introduction to Japanese-Language Literature in Manchuria

To better appreciate the climate into which the two anthologies were introduced, I will begin by giving an overview of the Japanese-language

Manchurian literature scene. “Dust in the Wind,” for example, first appeared in the representative platform for Japanese-language literature in southern Manchukuo: *Sakubun*, a coterie journal published in Dalian. *Sakubun* was founded by Aoki Minoru in 1932 and lasted until the promulgation of the Arts Prospectus (*geibun shidō yōkō*) in 1942, when it was reformed under government direction into the journal *Geibun* (Arts). *Sakubun* was supported for a time by the Manshū bunwa kai (Manchurian association for literary discussion), founded in 1937 Dalian, which moved north in 1940 during the rise in top-down culture control from the government in Xinjing (Jp. Shinkyō). Contributors to *Sakubun* were largely amateur writers, often employees of the ubiquitous South Manchurian Railway Company (SMR).

Dalian, the primary home of *Sakubun*, was a major regional city located on the Liaodong Peninsula, which was formally leased to Japan following its victory in the Russo-Japanese War in 1905. SMR, created at that time as a semi-public venture, was an inescapable presence throughout the history of Japanese Manchuria. Between 1932–1941 it was consistently the largest recipient of Japanese investment in comparison to heavy industries, industrial banking, private corporations, and the Manchukuo government itself (Young 1998: 125). It was involved not only in rail transportation, but poured massive funds into cultural production, research, public welfare, and more—Takagi even went to medical school on an SMR scholarship. With the concentration of settlers in the SMR zone from the beginnings of formal Japanese occupation of Manchuria, it is unsurprising that it should have become a hub for the early literary communities there.

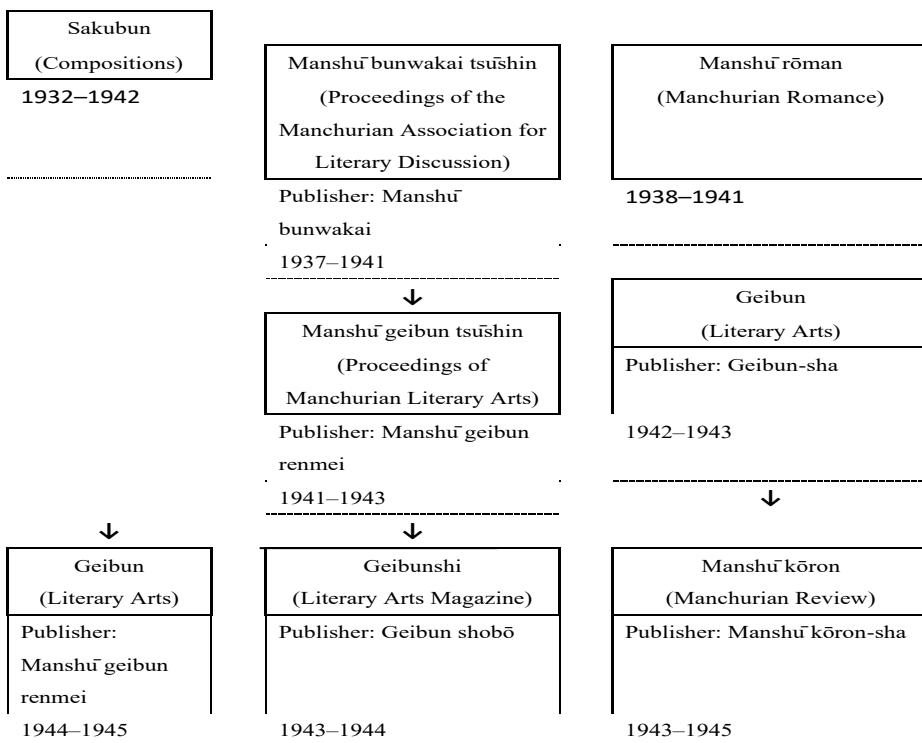
The southern school, symbolized by but not limited to *Sakubun* contributions, has been noted for its deployment of artistic realism to depict everyday life, including that of non-Japanese Manchurian subjects. *Sakubun* critiqued government policy and the ravages of history, at times leveling barbs against the Concordia Association’s mottos of “Kingly Way” (*ōdō rakudo*), alluding to Manchukuo’s supposedly pan-Asian Confucian values; and “harmony among the five races” (*gozoku kyōwa*), an ideal—never meaningfully realized—of peacefully and equitably uniting the Manchurians, Chinese, Japanese, Mongolians, and Koreans under one national banner. This slogan was said to be represented literally by the five colors of the national banner itself, four colored bars on a field of yellow.

Contemporary scholars tend to place *Sakubun* in juxtaposition with the short-lived literary journal *Manshū Rōman* (Manchurian Romance), published between 1938–1941 in Xinjing, the capital of Manchukuo in the center of the region. This coterie journal was founded by Kitamura

Kenjirō (1904–1982), himself a prolific writer. In contrast to *Sakubun*'s realist critique of the project of Manchukuo, *Manshū Rōman* featured works of prose and poetry more amenable to state ideology, said to be often brimming with “a zeal for state foundation” (*kenkoku seishin*).

These two central literary platforms were succeeded by two separate journals by the name *Geibun* (Arts). This followed the government-mandated centralization of the literary community, disbanding the *Manshū bunwa kai* and creating the *Manshū geibun renmei* (Manchurian literary alliance) to which all writers were expected to belong. The government intervention into the literary scene and unclear relationship between the journals and the *kōhōsho* (propaganda bureau) had twofold consequences: first, a more direct form of censorial control over publications—although Japanese writers in Manchuria typically retained more freedoms than those in the metropole (Kawamura 1998: 41–2); and second, greater institutional financial support for publication. Perhaps as a result, the two *Geibun* became the first proper Japanese-language literary journals of Manchukuo, as opposed to the earlier coterie journals mentioned above. The following chart, adapted from Nishihara et al. (2004: 4), provides a visual summary of this timeline:

Figure 1: Timeline of major Japanese literary journals in Manchukuo



Scholars have made a number of instructive attempts to systematically analyze the literature featured in these publications. Perhaps the most popular approach extrapolates the pre-Prospectus north-south divide, splitting the literary community between the critical realists of *Sakubun* and the romantic Manchukuo supporters of *Manshū Rōman*. Okada Hideki and others have dubbed these two strains of writing “Dalian ideology” (*Dairen ideorogū*), associated with the SMR zone, and “Xinjing ideology” (*Shinkyō ideorogū*), associated with the Manchukuo capital in the north. The former was characterized by individualism and, most importantly, a devotion to stark realist accounts of life on the continent. By contrast, the latter entailed a literature politically supportive of the Manchukuo state. This ideological/geographic divide is supported by some evidence. For example, several scholars have pointed out how a number of reformed leftists or “recanters” (*tenkōsha*) moved from the metropole to Xinjing and propagated ideological literature to demonstrate their allegiance to the state (Okada, 2014: 463–468; Culver, 2013; Nishihara, Okada, and Nishita, 2004).

Kawamura Minato, an influential contributor to Manchurian literary studies, takes a different approach. His perspective emphasizes the status of the writers themselves, rather than the content of their work. He does so by dividing continental literature into travel literature (such as that written by Natsume Sōseki and Kawabata Yasunari), settler/colonist writing (as the works in the anthologies), and repatriate literature (a veritable literary genre unto itself, also including a number of writers from the anthologies) (1990: 23–25).

The usefulness of these schemes has been questioned, however. Writers tended to be mobile, traveling both between northern and southern Manchukuo as well as between Manchuria and the metropole. Furthermore, there was significant cross-pollination in the pages of both northern and southern literary journals. And, indeed, at least one contribution to *Manshū Rōman* can be found extolling the virtues of realism (Kizaki 2002). A more convincing approach to Japanese-language Manchurian literature, focusing exclusively on literary content, can be found in the pages of *Manshū Rōman* itself. In his essay, Nishimura Shin’ichirō delineated between mainstream (*shuryū*) writers who reproduced metropolitan literary forms, constructionist (*kensetsu ha*) writers supportive of Manchukuo state ideology, and realist (*genjitsu ha*) writers who rejected romanticism (Kono 2010: Ch. 5; Nishimura 2002).⁴

⁴ It is important to note that none of the above approaches emphasize non-Japanese language literature. Japanese readers historically had relatively little access to Chinese or Korean language literature in translation in Manchukuo. This dearth of translations is currently slowly being remedied, in particular by the efforts of contributors to the *Shokuminchi bunka kenkyū jōnan*.

Given the broadly-acknowledged role of a national literary identity as one facet of a modern nation state, the organization of the literary field is both historically relevant to parties invested in the foundation of Manchukuo and useful today as a lens for evaluating the literature produced within it. Thus, the diversity of methods for organizing Japanese literary production during the Manchukuo period speaks to a certain complexity of this field. As Mack (2010) argues, market economies and literary and entertainment values can strengthen national identity. He focuses especially on mass publishing and its contribution to cultural knowledge within “three powerful dichotomies: modern against premodern, the Japanese nation or linguistic community against non-Japanese communities, and literature against less worthy forms of writing” (3). He goes on to examine, in part, the production of a series of contemporary “complete” collections of Japanese literature. While the anthologies discussed in this article do not rise to the level, quantitatively, of collections attempting to delineate the whole of modern Japanese-language literature, they share the same function of supporting the formation of a national consciousness via constructing its literary history. Indeed, the words and official actions of the anthologies’ editors speak to this very intent, as will be discussed in further detail in the section below.

Critical Background of the Anthologies

The two aspects of *Miyaohoi* and *Nichi-Man-Ro zai Man sakka tanpen senshū*—the context of their creation and the actual works held between their covers—are exemplary of the diversity of the literary field. I shall turn to the former topic first.

Miyaohoi was edited by Asami Fukashi and published in May 1940. Regarding the framing of the collection, Asami claims in the postscript that “This is the first collection of works by ethnic-Japanese Manchurian writers (*Nikkei Manshū sakka*)” (Asami 2000: 261). Note that while Asami uses the term “ethnic-Japanese Manchurian writers” in the postscript, the subtitle of the collection merely says “Manchurian writers” (*Manshū sakka*). Thus, this opening foray into “Manchurian literature” by “Manchurian writers” assumes a Japanese perspective. This positioning speaks to Asami’s interest in the foundation (or, perhaps the recording of the foundation) of a Manchurian literature distinct from Japanese literature. As the title suggests, all nine authors (plus Asami) were ethnic Japanese, including Takeuchi Shōichi, Aoki Minoru, Yoshino Haruo, Akihara Katsuji, Takagi Kyōzō, Tomita Hisashi, Machihara Kōji, Miyake Toyoko, and Hinata Nobuo, with the most established writer and founder of *Sakubun*, Aoki Minoru, given the first author credit. While all of these authors are significant for their inclusion in this anthology, and most

played active roles in the Japanese-language Manchurian literary scene, their renown did not as a rule greatly exceed their time on the continent. Indeed, information today on most is scarce at best. The publisher, Takemura shobō, on the other hand was prolific and handled a number of authors during the 1930s and 40s who have stood the test of time, including leftists like Kobayashi Takiji and Nakano Shigeharu.

The title of the anthology, which refers to indigenous Buddhist temple or Taoist shrine festivals, supports this reading in an interesting way. I Romanize the characters 廟会 as *miyaohoi*, following the Japanese transliteration provided in the book itself. However, the Japanese pronunciation of these characters would be *byōei*, whereas the Pinyin would be *miao hui*. In other words, Asami's representation of Japanese-language Manchurian literature borrows the Sinified pronunciation of an indigenous practice translated into Japanese syllabary, gesturing toward its independence from metropolitan national language and literature. This decision follows Anzai Fuyuei (1898–1965) and Takiguchi Takeshi's (1904–1982) earlier attempts to create an independent Japanese-language Manchurian poetry. Their most exemplary work took the form of the literary journal *A*, written using the character 亞 (*a*), meaning Asia. *A*, published in Dalian between 1924–1927, is generally recognized as the first major consolidation of Japanese poets in Manchuria. It is also significant for incorporating modernist techniques such as blank space, bullet points, and other marks, as well as for adopting a highly-Sinified vocabulary distinct from contemporary poetry in the metropole (Kurata 1982).

Nichi-Man-Ro zai Man sakka tanpen senshū, Yamada Seizaburō's anthology, appeared shortly after *Miyaohoi*: a mere seven months later, in December 1940, to be exact. It was published by Shun'yōdō, where Asami worked as an editor. Shun'yōdō's catalogue of writers was somewhat less prestigious than that of Takemura's. However, Shun'yōdō published a more diverse linguistic range of books—primarily in Japanese, but also a number in Chinese, German, Mongolian, Russian, Spanish, English, French, and Latin during the 1930s and 40s. It was then perhaps an appropriate venue for Yamada's anthology, which, as the name suggests, brings together Japanese, Manchu (Chinese), and Russian writers all under a single title (although all of the stories are translated into Japanese). In addition to a foreword by the editor, Yamada, there are stories by Kitamura Kenjirō (Japanese), Wiktorija Jankowska (Russian, trans. Uewaki Susumu), Jueqing (Jp. Shakusei, “Manchu,” trans. Andō Satoshi), Suzuki Keisakichi (Japanese), Takeuchi Shōichi (Japanese), Arseny Nesmelov (Russian, trans. Uewaki Susumu), Ushijima Haruko (Japanese), and Wuying (Jp. Goei, “Manchu,” trans. Moriya Yūji). Takeuchi is the only writer to appear in both collections.

While this anthology clearly represents itself as a symbol of ethnic diversity in the Manchukuoan literary scene, the plurality of Japanese writers (four versus two Manchu and two Russian) still speaks to a vision of Japan as protagonist of the new Manchukuoan culture. Additionally, the lack of Mongolian, Korean, or “Chinese” (at the time referred to as “*Shi*” or “*Shinajin*”) is problematic, considering the state’s theoretical vision of “harmony among the five races,” mentioned above. I list Jueqing and Wuying as “Manchu” in quotation marks, as they are simply identified as “Man” 滿 in the table of contents. Both were born and raised in Manchuria, but their ethnicity (Manchu or Han Chinese) is not clarified in the text—in actuality, Jueqing was born to a (presumably Banner) Han family in Manchuria. As the definition of “Manchu” has changed and adapted drastically throughout history (Shao 2011), we cannot necessarily assume their identities one way or another. However, what is clear is that the collection does not attempt to create numeric parity between Japanese and other ethnic groups, nor does it incorporate members of every one of those ethnic groups within its pages.

Some of the difficulties arising from conceptualizing a collection around writers’ ethnicity are related to a lack of communication, access, and clarity in categorization. For example, in *Manshū Rōman*, Kitamura describes an awkward summit between Japanese and Manchu writers, in which only a tiny minority has the linguistic capacity to hold any meaningful exchange (Kitamura 1939). While writers sometimes include snippets of Chinese, typically glossed with Japanese *kana* pronunciation, in their prose, there is little evidence that the literary community in general had a close relationship with their Chinese colleagues. Furthermore, while there were a number of active Chinese authors in Manchukuo, Japan’s open warfare against China beginning in 1937 may have provided sufficient reason to exclude them from the anthologies, both of which were published in metropolitan Japan. On the other hand, the character “Man” may well refer to “Manjin,” a category which at times incorporated both Han Chinese and Manchurians (Tamanoi 2000: 253–55). The historical imprecision of the language of ethnic and national categories continues to confound analysis in the present.

The lack of Korean (Jp. *Chōsenjin* or *senjin*) in the anthologies may similarly be explained away by Japan’s annexation of Korea: Koreans at the time were Japanese nationals. In some ways, especially with compulsory Japanese language education and the practice of adopting Japanese names (*sōshi kaimei*), they may have been able to assimilate into a “Japanese” identity, although ethnicity was still used as the basis for discrimination in daily life (Solomon 2022). Ultimately, the insistence on ethnicity rather than nationality in its characterization muddies the presentation of the anthology, raising more questions than it answers.

The Anthology Editors

The specific context of the editors—the two men who brought about compilation in the first place—is critical for understanding the anthologies as cultural and political projects. And to understand the motivations behind these two men’s literary actions, it may be instructive to consider first their professional affiliations.

Asami and Yamada were both members of the Japanese Patriotic Literature Group (*Nihon bungaku hōkoku kai*), which was absorbed by the Literary Arts Forum for Continental Development (*kaitaku bungei konwa kai*) soon after the latter’s founding in 1939. The Literary Arts Forum for Continental Development was comprised of approximately 40 members based in metropolitan Japan. The forum took field trips to pioneer training camps in the metropole and would on several occasions send members on fact-finding missions to Manchuria to support their literary activities. These activities, given in the group’s mission statement, included to “Form a group of literati who are concerned with continental development, and through regular communication with the proper authorities, contribute to part of the fulfillment of the national project, and offer up the fruits of writing in the national spirit” (*tairiku kaitaku ni kanshin o yūsuru bungakusha no kaigō ni shite, kankei tōkyoku to kinmitsu naru renraku teikei no moto ni, kokka teki jigyō tassei no ichijo ni sankō shite, bunshō hōkoku no mi o aguru*) (Kondō 2017 [1943]: 149–153). Note that the term used for “development,” *kaitaku*, is literally used in reference to the conversion of untamed lands into economically productive places. In the context of imperial Japan, *kaitaku* was inextricably linked with Japanese settlement and de facto colonialism. The deployment of *kaitaku* in a literary context thus strongly implies a lack of extant literary or cultural traditions on the continent.

The strong connection between the government interests and civilian activities aligns with the increase in government intervention including the forced centralization of literary activities resulting in the creation of the *Geibun* magazines, the promulgation of the Prospectus, and at times increased financial support, that was set in motion in Manchuria around that time (Okada 2016: 475, Egawa 2010: 430). The 1940 publications of *Miyaohoi* and *Nichi-Man-Ro zai Man sakka tanpen senshū* coincide with this increase in government intervention while additionally marking the approach to the tenth anniversary of the founding of Manchukuo.

The Literary Arts Forum for Continental Development members included Wada Tsutō, author of the novella “*Ōhinata Village*” (*Ōhinata mura*), and Yuasa Katsuei, author of the novel *Below the One and Only Sun* (*Futatsu naki taiyō no moto ni*). Both of these works depict the

triumphal implementation of village-division immigration plans, in which entire villages are split in half in order to establish a sister village on the continent (Wada 1964 [1939], Yuasa 2017 [1942]). Another member was Tokunaga Sunao, author of the well-received short story “Advance Unit” (*Senkentai*), a narrative about an advance pioneer unit member suffering from PTSD who must relearn the importance of the Japanese mission in Manchuria, and who ultimately rejoins the effort by immigrating as a civilian (Tokunaga 2012 [1939]). The forum was founded by Kondō Haruo, who lists himself among its ordinary members when describing its activities in one chapter of his book-length overview of *An Outline for Continental Japanese Culture (Tairiku Nippon no bunka kōsō)*. His book begins with an extended appeal to diplomatic and trade relations with Manchuria stretching back to antiquity and established during the rule of the Bōhai Kingdom. This history clearly lays the foundation for a case for contemporary Japanese occupation (Kondō 2017 [1943]: Ch. 1). Although these works constitute just a brief sample of the group’s products, they demonstrate how its members, at least in part, brought its nationalistic goals into action.

Asami’s afterword and Yamada’s introduction both reflect political positions in line with their patriotic literary organization. Asami’s anthology has been described as representing the spirit of the southern Manchurian Dalian ideology and its drive to produce *Manshū* as a new Japanese homeland (Kawamura 1998: 63–74). Asami’s afterword opens with a statement to this effect: “Of the nine writers living in Manchuria included in this collection, most were raised with Manchuria as their home (*furusato*). They are furthermore people who hold a strong desire to become the soil of Manchuria (*Manshū no tsuchi ni kasen koto*)” (2000: 259). Additionally, he directly cites Yamada’s “Current State of the Manchurian Literary World” (*Manshū no bungakukai no genjō*), which places the origin, via agricultural metaphor, of “Manchurian” literature in the hands of amateur writers—specifically, the Japanese South Manchuria Railway employees living in and around Dalian. The agricultural metaphor, which arises time and again in Japanese-language Manchurian literature again invokes the notion of transplantation rather than a superficial and temporary movement of Japanese to the continent. Asami concurs that the literature is yet “immature,” “unsophisticated” (*somatsu*), and “journalistic.” However, it is a more authentic continental literature than that produced by travelers, because it comes from writers’ everyday lives, “works incubated in the soil of Manchuria.” Later, he writes “It would be wonderful if this work (of editing the volume) should constitute even the smallest of steppingstones toward a burgeoning Manchurian literature” (2000: 261). Asami’s investment in the idea of a

Manchurian literature connected to place, producing and reaffirming his image of Japanese Manchuria, could hardly be clearer.

Yamada similarly explains some of the circumstances surrounding to the conception of *Nichi-Man-Ro zai Man sakka tanpen senshū* in his editor's introduction. He emphasizes that he was a new arrival on the continent, where he was invited to work for the *Manshū Shinbun* newspaper to aid in "fostering Manchurian culture and working towards Japan-Manchuria cultural exchange" (Yamada 2001: 1). He writes of ambitions of improving relations between "writers of each ethnicity" (*kaku minzoku no bungakusha*) and realizing the "multiethnic nation" (*fukugō minzoku kokka*) with "writers of an unrelated physical heritage" (*chi o i ni suru kaku sakka*) through literary activities and cooperation with the Concordia association (2). Thus, the entire anthology is framed as a project in service of establishing and refining Manchurian national literature. At the same time, it is clear that the project was guided by a newcomer to the continent and relative outsider to the extant local literary community, who seemed to direct the product's message more toward metropolitan Japan than Manchuria. In addition to using contemporary discourse on Manchurian nationalism in this way, he also mentions Asami, who both provided a connection to Shun'yōdō and encouraged Yamada to compile and edit the anthology in the first place (3).

The relationship between Asami and Yamada—characterized by their mutual citation, professional affiliations, and the closeness of the development of their respective anthologies—as well as the relationships between the editors and their authors are important for understanding how the collections came into being. In fact, there is a third party perhaps equally important for the creation of the two books: Takeuchi Shōichi. Asami's position as editor was realized through the efforts of his long-time friend Takeuchi, who would also contribute one short story to each of the anthologies. Asami and Takeuchi had met at university in the metropole and maintained ties even as the latter immigrated to Manchuria. Asami had observed *Sakubun*, the coterie journal affiliated with SMR, and strongly felt the necessity for a mature regional literature representing the working class. It was through Takeuchi that he sought to bring it to fruition.

The literary association that supported *Sakubun* before its move to Xinjing would also reprint the 1941 Arts Prospectus in its newsletter. The Prospectus laid out demands for a national Manchurian literature, appealing to ethnic harmony while placing Japanese language as a central pillar of the culture. When the association was shortly reconstituted in Xinjing by the openly pro-state *Geibun-sha*, it was led by none other than Yamada Seizaburō. Yamada's stance at that time aligned art and politics, asserting that culture must mean "culture as strength" (Ino 2004: 60).

It is speculated that Yamada's jingoism may have been the result of his status as a recanter of leftist politics (Nishida 2005: 687). Yamada's rise to prominence in the continental literary establishment, occurring around the time of the anthology's publication, seems directly connected to his taking the lead in the organization and production of direct, unfiltered propaganda.

The Short Stories

The social and professional organization behind the two anthologies constitutes merely one part of the picture. In the following paragraphs I will turn to the works contained therein to evaluate their congruences with and divergences from their editors' mission.

Chronic illness plays a significant role in a number of the works. Takeuchi's "Homeless Wandering" (*Ryūri*) depicts a once-prosperous Jewish family in decline: the mother is dead, the father is sick, the son is nearsighted, and the family suffers from conditions of poverty (Takeuchi 2000). Yoshino Haruo's "House of Ivan" (*Iwan no ie*) is told from the point of view of a Japanese man renting a room in the invalid Ivan's dilapidated house (Yoshino 2000). Tomita Hisashi's "Grass and Dunes" (*Sasōchi*), is narrated from the point of view of a Mongolian youth whose dissolute father wavers between alcoholism and chronic illness (Tomita 2000). Machihara Kōji's "A Town with Camels" (*Rakuda no iru machi*) takes a brief tour of a town in the far-flung Manchurian countryside. The protagonist, a tourist himself, wants to see a camel—the symbol of Mongolia—in person, only to have to settle for a staged photo next to a sickly, dying creature (Machihara 2000). And Miyake Toyoko's "Until Spring" (*Yuki itaru*)—singular both for having a female author and for its disinterest in anything specifically continental—follows two Japanese couples' struggles with raising families. One couple is unable to conceive and the husband is in a half-body caste recovering from a serious illness (Miyake 2000).

The stories abound in interpersonal and inter-ethnic conflict as well. Domestic discord features in Takagi's "Dust in the Wind," as well as most of the other stories mentioned above. Akihara Katsuji's "Grass" (*Kusa*) portrays domestic conflict between Japanese and Chinese workers (Akihara 2000). Tomita's story centralizes conflict between Mongolians and Chinese. Hinata Nobuo's "Distant Spring *Hutong*" (*Shunen fūton*) portrays a Chinese railway worker's tribulations as he cheats on his wife, becomes embroiled in money problems, and is ultimately the target of blackmail by a fellow employee (Hinata 2000). Finally, Aoki Minoru's "A Farmer" (*Ichī nōfu*) tells the story of a Chinese farmer who after getting drunk in town finds himself caught up with a group of bandits and has his son's vital eye medication stolen (Aoki 2000).

As succinct as this overview is, it illuminates several key themes being presented to readers. As discussed above, *Miyaohoi* was written exclusively by Japanese authors. However, they attempt to portray Manchuria as a multiethnic nation, with only a third of the stories primarily about Japanese characters, and the rest about Jewish, Russian, Chinese, and Mongolian families. On the other hand, whereas one may expect the Manchukuo Concordia ideal to reflect a growing nation empowered by its ethnic diversity, there is little if anything positive to be found in these stories. Characters' bodies are degraded, often either by sickness, alcoholism, or extreme poverty. The houses they occupy are ramshackle. Fathers (or potential fathers, in the case of Miyake's story) in particular are economically, socially, and politically impotent. Westerners who reject Japanese language and Mongolians who reject the "rational" culture of modernity are doomed to a laconic or decadent existence, somewhat redolent of Japanese stereotypes leveled at Koreans at the time as well (Atkins 2010). While each story paints a different picture, they are all shaded with similar hues of ethnic conflict, domestic squalor, and physical degradation.

Nichi-Man-Ro zai Man sakka tanpen senshū's offerings are comparable on the whole. Families fall apart violently, particularly due to the lack of a stable patriarch, sometimes again associated with illness. Jankowska's "Godless and Without Order" (*Kami mo naku, sadame mo nashi*) is an exemplary deranged tale of a chronically dysfunctional Russian family. Over the course of thirty some pages, the reader witnesses acts of infidelity, blasphemy, lies, violence and murder, ethnic conflict, and, ultimately, the father's rapid descent into insanity and physical debilitation (Jankowska 2001). This is followed by Jueqing's "Daikan'en" (Ch. *Daguan yuan*), a reference to the Prospect Garden in *Dream of the Red Chamber*. However, this ironic appropriation of the name twists it, using it to label the seediest, "ulcerous" (*uran*) underbelly of the city—purged from street maps, the narrator imagines, due to liberal bribes from the tourism bureau (Jueqing 2001: 77). The plot follows a naïve young Chinese man, abandoned in the countryside as a child, who seeks out his missing father in the eponymous den of squalor. Rather than being rewarded for his filial piety, the man is quickly and unknowingly dragged into a life of crime and finding friendship only with a virtuous-seeming prostitute. Wuying's "White Bones" (*Hakkotsu*) depicts an inter-generational Chinese family's struggle between the master's hollow pronouncements of ethics and values and the terminally ill mistress's acts of personal kindness and charity. The family is falling apart; adopted and biological daughters hold disparate values (Wuying 2001).

The theme of ethnic conflict arises again in this collection, although at times in more blatant nationalistic colors. Nesmeerov's "Red Lenka" (*Akage no Renka*) is about a Russian ex-prostitute, fleeing the Bolsheviks, who finds herself the victim of both Korean and Chinese sexual violence. Her degradation ultimately leads her to work in an opium-smuggling operation (Nesmeerov 2001). Ushijima's "A Man Named Shuku" (*Shuku to iu otoko*) is a lauded work showing a model colonial, "Shuku," who assimilates into Japanese culture, taking a Japanese wife, learning the language, and acting as a valuable translator and confidant to the deputy prefectural mayor. Shuku's depiction, including his use of Japanese, is complex and requires more detailed analysis than can be provided here; however, for present purposes it is sufficient to understand that he partners with his Japanese boss to root out corruption, including among the local Manchu police (Ushijima 2001).

Other discord depicted in these stories can be characterized more generally as arising from the conditions of modernity itself. Kitamura's "Fulling Block" (*Kinuta*) tells the story of two sexually and financially independent Japanese women who attempt to liberate themselves from dependence on the men in their lives, only to find themselves ultimately capitulating to their suitors (Kitamura 2001). Suzuki's "Lightning" (*Inazuma*) portrays the plight of Chinese factory workers. They are pitted against each other by the capitalist factory machine and against a background of family drama in which the traditional Chinese family structure is represented as unsustainable and harmful (Suzuki 2001). Takeuchi's "Hometown" (*Kokyō*) is something of an outlier in that it focuses on internal rather than interpersonal conflict. The story depicts the process of a Japanese man rationalizing the formal cutting off of ties—legal and spiritual—with the land of his parents, so that he can realize Manchuria as his one true homeland (Takeuchi 2001).

As with the description of *Miyaohoi*, this overview brings into view just some of the nuance and depth of these stories; but, again, sets some common themes into relief. Chinese and Russian fathers here are again intransigent, set in old ways which bring ruin onto once prosperous families. Otherwise, families are broken by violence, poverty, or apathy. Japanese writers also feel comfortable here writing about the experiences of different ethnic groups from different social classes, condemning corruption, alcohol, and opium usage, while also not necessarily painting their Japanese subjects in a positive light. Like the streets of Daikan'en, the anthology is messy and chaotic and hardly comparable to the squeaky-clean, ultra modern, and often dreamlike image of Manchuria and Manchukuo propagated by the Concordia Association.

Conclusion

These two anthologies offer some insight into Japanese-language Manchurian literature during the Manchukuo period in at least two ways. First, anthologized works can help identify the underlying values contouring that corner of the literary field—in other words, clarifying some of the picture of how Manchukuo’s Japanese national literature was constructed. Second, understanding the background of these two particular anthologies is informative regarding the form of the literary field at the time, illuminating how close-knit the networks between writers, editors, and literary groups and associations were, while also creating an opportunity to point out various dissonances between the political stance and literary qualities of the juxtaposed works.

One additional consideration is the recognition of the included authors within the literary field—specifically, here, via the institution of literary prizes. Mack argues that the Akutagawa Prize “provides direct insight into the multiple literary value systems...and reveals the absence of consensus and the contingency not only of the extraliterary factors behind such acts of cultural authority, but also of the literary factors themselves” (2010: 182). We can see this play out in the case of Japanese-language Manchurian literature, despite the fact that, as previously mentioned, the force of this extraliterary value did not continue long into the postwar period. For example, four writers from the anthologies would be nominated for the Akutagawa Prize, the highest honor in what is called Japanese “pure literature”: Tomita Hisashi (1940), Kitamura Kenjirō (1940), Hinata Nobuo (1941), and Ushijima Haruko (1940). Ushijima’s was the most successful bid of the group, attaining runner-up status. Additionally, her nomination was raised by none other than Yamada Seizaburō. In this way, we can see in part how the metropolitan Japanese literary establishment responded to the interests of Manchurian writers and their cheerleaders, like Yamada, by considering them for this prestigious recognition. On the other hand, Kawamura indicates how the prizes did not seem to distinguish strongly between “Manchurian writers” (the writers of the anthologies) and “Japanese writers of Manchuria” (in a more general sense), expressing more general interest in *gaichi bungaku*, literature concerning places beyond the Japanese metropole. Indeed, the inaugural prize went to Hino Ashihei in 1937 rather than to a continental settler. Subsequent awards followed suit, appraising works set—but not necessarily written—throughout the Japanese empire (Kawamura 1990: 140–146). Indeed, none of the writers in the anthologies actually wound up receiving the prize. Still, one effect of this looking outwards from the metropole for examples of Japanese literary merit was to expand the domain of “Japanese literature,” a sort of cultural

colonialism incorporating Manchuria and other colonial spaces into the conceptual realm of “Japanese literature.”

The Akutagawa Prize was far from the only mark of literary merit. Acting as the head of the government-directed *Manshū bungeika kyōkai* (Manchurian writer’s association), Yamada’s signature was also on the recommendation for the *Bungei Seikei* award for Chinese-language Manchurian literature, beginning in 1936 (Murata 2014: 498–499). In addition, the *Manshū bunwa kai* prizes went to three of the authors from the anthologies: the inaugural prizes in 1941 to Takagi Kyōzō (for a poetry collection) and Hinata Nobuo (for a novel), and the following year again to Kitamura Kenjirō (for prose writing). These continental literary prizes shaped an important region of the literary field—not completely cut off from metropolitan Japan or the field of “Japanese-language literature,” but perhaps in a contested space, a contact zone between Japanese and Manchukuoan literature. They, along with others including the National (Manchukuo) Foundation Literary Arts Prize (*kenkoku kinen bungei shō*) and Manchuria Ministry of Civil Affairs Ministerial Prize (*Manshū kokumin seibu daijin shō*) contributed to the delineation of a Manchurian national literature seeking legitimacy and, for some, independence from Japanese national literature.

Recall Tanimoto’s assertion, cited in the introduction above, that the works in Yamada’s anthology had no connection to the founding principles of Manchukuo. On a superficial level, this appears to be a reasonable reading which applies equally to Yamada and Asami’s respective collections: neither book seems interested in reproducing the familiar line about Manchuria as utopia, or even about the ideals of universalized East Asian co-prosperity. They instead draw a variety of dark portraits of life on the continent for peoples of all ethnicities and all walks of life. They seem to buck the state-ideology motivated northern Romantic style of Xinjing ideology.

That said, I believe that the details laid out in the paragraphs above demonstrate that, on a more fundamental level, Tanimoto is misreading the literature. Both Asami and Yamada had professional affiliations with Japanese and Manchukuo government offices, and Yamada would rise to become a leader in the literary establishment in Manchukuo soon after the publication of his anthology. **In their short afterword and editor’s introduction**, both men attest via their choice of words to their interest in contributing to the establishment of a Japanese-language Manchurian literature. I will now complete the argument that they did so through these two anthologies specifically through their negative depictions of continental life.

Consider the genres of conflict in the stories mentioned above. Ethnic discord between Mongolians, Chinese, Koreans, and Russians abounds. Moreover, the theme of impotent or chronically ill patriarchal figures and disintegrating families is repeated, and particularly among non-Japanese characters, the hope for the future of the ethnic group or clan is shown resting on the shoulders only of the youth who attempt to escape it. Indeed, by showing the failings of the older generations and traditional Asian society, many of these stories make an argument for change—specifically, for Japanese-led modernization. Japanese leadership here is crucial. The Prospectus on Literary Arts would clarify the following year: **“The basis of Our Nation’s arts is the spirit of national foundation... the arts of the Japanese who have transplanted (*ishoku saretaru*) here shall be the warp, the various native ethnic groups’ original arts shall be the woof...”** (cited in Okada 2014: 492). This directive, supplemented by explanation from Mutō Tomio (head of the Kōhōsho propaganda bureau), was interpreted at the time by Kondō Haruo, founder of the Literary Arts Forum for Continental Development discussed earlier, to mean that the **Japanese are the “leading ethnicity” (*shidō minzoku*)**, and that therefore **the creation and support of the Manchurian nation is “a product of their natural disposition” (*seijōteki seisanbutsu*)**. It was **considered Japan’s duty to lead Manchuria and, indeed all Greater East Asia, onto the world stage as a leader in the arts** (Kondō 2017: 70–71).

The usefulness of these two anthologies for the Japanese imperial project becomes readily apparent. By portraying myriad failings of the continental people, the backwardness of their traditions, and their low **“culture level” (*mindō*)**, these anthologies, taken together, make a case for the necessity of Japanese leadership in the region. Even the pitiful example of the **Japanese protagonist of Takagi’s “Dust in the Wind,”** lamenting that both he and his family have been negatively affected by the **nebulous “environment,” attests to the necessity for Japan to rectify and improve the quality of the land, culture, politics, and ethnic relations. Similarly, Miyake’s impotent modern urban Japanese and Kitamura’s liberated Japanese women both point toward an urgent need to rein in the rampant excesses of western-style modernity and to comply with a novel East Asian modernity.** Thus, I conclude the argument that these two anthologies encapsulate how the messiness of their messaging—working against the ideal Concordia and Manchukuo imagery—demonstrates how even southern Dalian ideology could play in service to the nationalistic project.

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REFUSAL STRATEGIES OF HUNGARIAN SPEAKERS OF JAPANESE IN COMPARISON WITH NATIVE SPEAKERS

Júlia SOMODI¹

Abstract : The present research is a comparative study of the refusal strategies of Hungarian speakers of Japanese and native speakers. It is a pilot study based on the I-JAS International Corpus of Japanese as a Second Language.

When learning or teaching a second language, the pragmatic features of a language cannot be neglected. In order to communicate successfully, second language learners have to focus not only on the grammatical aspects of a language, but the pragmatic aspects should also be emphasised. The speech act of refusal can be described as one of the more complex speech acts. Moreover, different cultures may have different strategies for refusing the interlocutor. However, when communicating in another language, we often tend to follow the pragmatic patterns of our mother tongue. This can lead to misunderstandings or unsuccessful communication. Textbooks focus only partially on refusal strategies, and one can often notice textbooklike strategies in the refusals produced by students.

In the present study we analysed four role plays of Hungarian learners of Japanese who have already been to Japan and role plays of four students who have studied the language in Hungary. The results were compared with four role plays of native Japanese speakers. The study focused on the pragmatic strategies used by the participants.

The aim of the study was twofold: 1) to compare the refusal strategies of Hungarian Japanese speakers and native speakers 2) to highlight the pragmatic competences that need to be developed in order to facilitate effective communication.

The results showed that Hungarian speakers did not use direct strategies expressed by performatives. In terms of indirect strategies, the analysed examples from the corpus showed that only four of the eleven indirect strategies mentioned by Beebe et al. (1990) were used, and one extra category was found, namely negotiation. The most striking difference between the Hungarian and the native Japanese speakers was found in the use of adjuncts.

Keywords: pragmatics, speech act of refusal, Japanese language learning

Introduction

"Kyou wa chotto" ("I am a bit busy today") or "yakusoku ga aru kara" ("I have an appointment") are common phrases used by Japanese learners (and not only) in a situation where they have to refuse a request or invitation. If we look at Japanese textbooks, we can find short role plays in which one of the interlocutors has to refuse his partner's invitation to

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go to the cinema or on a trip. Although we all know that it is not pleasant to refuse someone, this task can be said to be easy, if we consider that our interlocutor is one of our friends or classmates and the situation is going to the cinema. In this case, we can use various excuses to refuse, such as "an exam on the next day", "a previous appointment", "homework" or "overtime". However, when we are studying or working abroad, we may face more complex situations, where the person we are talking to may be more senior or older than us, and an answer such as "kyou wa chotto" is not appropriate in the given situation.

How can we prepare our students for such situations? How can our students deal with such situations with the skills they have acquired during their studies? These questions motivated this study.

Pragmatics

For many years, learning a foreign language was equated with grammatical accuracy. Later, however, as communicative competence gained ground, the ability to understand and produce language appropriate to communicative situations in accordance with specific socio-cultural parameters gained importance in language learning.

Pragmatics is a branch of linguistics that has been defined as "the study of language from the point of view of users, especially the choices they make, the constraints they face in using language in social interaction, and the effects their use of language has on other participants in the act of communication." (Crystal 1997: 301)

According to Bialystok (1993), pragmatic competence includes 1) the speaker's ability to use language for different purposes; 2) the listener's ability to look beyond the language and understand the speaker's real intentions (e.g. indirect speech acts, irony and sarcasm); and 3) the mastery of the rules by which utterances come together to form discourse.

Pragmatic competence is an essential part of communicating in a foreign language. When we teach a foreign language, we teach learners how to invite, offer, request, thank or refuse, in other words, we are teaching them pragmatic strategies. These pragmatic features can vary among languages and cultures, and even more so, when we are talking about two countries that are geographically and culturally distant.

The pragmatic competence of foreign or second language learners is usually studied using the tools of interlanguage pragmatics. Interlanguage pragmatics has thus been defined as "the study of the use and acquisition of linguistic action patterns in a second language by non-native speakers." (Kasper and Blum-Kulka 1993: 3). It is concerned with pragmatic comprehension, the development of pragmatic competence, positive and negative pragmatic transfer (Kasper and Blum-Kulka 1993).

Contrastive pragmatics also involves the comparative study of pragmatic phenomena from a foreign language perspective and contributes to language learning. (Aimer 2011). It is linked to parallel corpora in order to study similarities and differences between languages (Aimer 2020). In general, research based on contrastive pragmatics examines the data obtained from the corpora and draws conclusions about the language use of the particular language-speaking community.

Cross-cultural pragmatics is based on ancillary research (interviews, questionnaires, translations), tests validity and determines what is worth comparing (House and Kadar 2021).

Our study can be described as a mixture of these methods, as it is based on parallel corpora, it is an empirical study based on qualitative research and not on beliefs or personal intuitions. Although the study presents some of the results of prior research, it draws conclusions about the language use of Hungarian learners of Japanese based on the results of the present corpora.

The corpus

The present study is based on the I-JAS International Corpus of Japanese as a Second Language². The corpus contains data of 1000 students of Japanese from 12 different countries. It also contains recorded speech data and compositions of the participants. The participants were asked to take Japanese proficiency tests, so we know their J-CAT test scores, their proficiency level, and whether or not they have been to Japan. The data were recorded between 2016 and 2020.

For the present study, we used role plays to investigate the refusal strategies of Hungarian learners of Japanese. There are 51 recorded role plays from which we selected data of eight Hungarian participants. As control data we used role plays of native Japanese speakers, also from the I-JAS corpus. The corpus contains 50 role plays from which we selected four for our research.

The role plays contained refusals to a superior's request. The participants in the recorded role plays were a student and a native speaker. The setting was natural in the sense that it was a conversation with a native speaker and not between two students of Japanese. The situation in the role play was as follows: *You work part-time in a Japanese restaurant. As a waiter or waitress, you take orders and deliver food to customers. The manager tells you that one of the cooks has quit, so he wants you to take over the cooking job from next month. You want to refuse because you are not a good cook and you want a job where you can talk to*

² <https://www2.ninjal.ac.jp/jll/lsaj/ihome2-en.html>

Japanese people. Talk to the manager about turning down the cooking job in a roundabout way so that you can keep your current job.

Eight Hungarian Japanese learners between the ages of 20 and 28 participated in the survey, six females and two males, four of whom had previously been to Japan and four of whom had studied Japanese in Hungary. Their Japanese language proficiency level according to the J-CAT test scores was between 138-301 points, their level was between pre-intermediate and advanced. The role plays were recorded and published in the form of MP3 files and text files. Table 1. shows the data about the participants. The examples were collected manually from the corpus.

Table 1. The participants

Participants	Age	Sex	Have been to Japan	J-CAT scores and proficiency level
1	24	F	yes	282, pre-advanced
2	25	F	yes	288, pre-advanced
3	24	F	yes	205, intermediate-high
4	28	F	yes	301, advanced
5	20	F	no	166, intermediate
6	22	M	no	138, pre-intermediate
7	28	F	no	224, intermediate-high
8	24	M	no	172, pre-intermediate

The speech act of refusal

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), every speech act has the possibility of **threatening the addressee's face**. The act of refusal is even more face-threatening, since it contradicts the speaker's expectations.

It is easy to define the speech act of refusal: the speaker expresses that he or she will not follow the interlocutor's plan of action (Chen-Ye-Zhang 1995). However, it is the most complex speech act because the speaker is not the initiator, but only tries to react to the interlocutor's plan of action. Thus, the speaker does not have the opportunity to plan or think about his or her reactions beforehand, as in the case of an invitation or an expression of gratitude. It is therefore one of the most exciting speech acts from the point of view of cross-cultural or interlanguage pragmatics.

Beebe et al. (1990: 56) argue that refusals are a major cross-cultural "sticking point for many non-native speakers" and it is therefore very important for second language teachers and others involved in cross-cultural communication to provide authentic examples for second language learners. Refusals are also sensitive to sociolinguistic variables such as the status of the interlocutor. In the Japanese language hierarchy, *uchi-soto* relationships also play a prominent role.

Discussion

The present study is a pilot study and is more of a qualitative description of the results. The refusal strategies gained from the corpus were categorised according to Beebe, Takahashi, Uliss's taxonomy, to which some further subcategories were added according to the examples gained from the corpus. Beebe et al. (1990) mention direct refusal strategies, indirect refusal strategies and adjuncts.

The authors (Beebe et al.) used a Discourse Completion Test (DCT) to investigate how Japanese learners of English refuse requests, invitations, offers and suggestions.

Beebe et al. mention the following categories:

- 1) **Direct strategies, in which the speaker refuses directly the interlocutor using performative (e.g. "I refuse") or non-performative (e.g. "I can't") statement.**
- 2) **Indirect strategies consisting of eleven semantic formulas, like statement of regret, wish, excuse, reason, explanation, statement of alternative, avoidance, etc.**
- 3) **Adjuncts, that cannot express refusal on their own, but only act to soften or emphasise the refusal strategy they are following. (e.g. statement of positive opinion/feeling of agreement, statement of empathy, pause fillers, appreciation).**

Before talking about the refusal strategies found in the corpus, it should be mentioned that two of the Hungarian and two of the Japanese speakers accepted the offer, even though the task was to refuse their superior. This does not seem to be related to language competence or time spent in Japan. The two acceptances of the Hungarian speakers were followed by negotiation strategies. Sentence a) in the following examples represents the original utterance from the corpus, while sentence b) is the English translation.

- 1a) "Sou desu ka, eeto, de, yatte mitara, dame ni nattara mata, ano waitress no shigoto ni modoreru kana. "
- 1b) "I see... , **uh, so, I'll try it, and if it doesn't work out, uh, can I go back to being a waitress?"**
- 2a) "A, sou desuka, jaa kantan na tabemono, tsukurimasu ne, tsukuru tsukutte, e, ee, mitai (tsukuttemitai). Demo, demo shachou tabun kyuuryou ni tsuite soudan shimashou."
- 2b) "I see. **Well I'll do some simple cooking, I would like to make, make, but, boss, maybe we should have a word about the salary.**"

The use of direct strategies

A surprising result was the fact that direct strategies using performatives were used by one of the native Japanese speakers

("O kotowari shitai ... n desu kedo" / "I'd like to refuse"). The speaker used the verb (kotowaru=to refuse). By using the *-tai*-form of the verb (meaning I would like) together with an incomplete, elliptical sentences with *-kedo* at the end, the force of the refusal was softened.

Direct refusal using non-performatives was used by two Hungarian speakers. One of them using unfinished sentence with *-kedo* (meaning "but") at the end (ex. 4.), softening the force of the refusal. The other speaker (ex. 3.) uses a finished sentence, inherent in Hungarian communication.

3a) "Ee, sore wa chotto dekimasen."

3b) "Ehh, I cannot do that."

4a) "Chotto muri desu kedo."

4b) "It's a bit impossible."

One native speaker also used the word "*muri*."

The use of indirect strategies

Table 2. illustrates the indirect strategies used by Hungarian and native Japanese speakers. H stands for Hungarian speakers, while J for native speakers.

Negotiation was a new factor that was not present in the native speakers' dialogues, while it was present in two of the Hungarian dialogues. One of them negotiating the salary, in case of accepting the offer, the other negotiating the return to her original job, if she could not perform her tasks in the kitchen properly. Negotiation is mentioned by Sztatrowski (1993), who studied requests and responses to requests in natural telephone conversations of native Japanese speakers.

Table 2. Indirect strategies

	H1	H2	H3	H4	H5	H6	H7	H8	J1	J2	J3	J4
J-CAT	282	288	205	301	166	138	224	172				
Regret												
Wish												
Explanation	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o
Apology	2o	o							o	4o		
Alternative							o	o			o	
Promise of future acceptance												
Principles												
Philosophy												
Dissuading the interlocutor	o	o		o			o					
Acceptance as refusal										o		
Avoidance												
Negotiation		o (acc)						o (acc)				

In terms of indirect strategies, there was only one strategy that was found in all role plays, namely giving an explanation or a reason. Refusal is seen as a face-threatening speech act, so giving explanations or reasons is acceptable, even required, in both cultures. Previous research (Mádli and Maróti 2003) also mentions that giving explanations was used equally by Hungarian and Japanese respondents. Kanemoto (1993) also argues that Japanese speakers tend to give fictitious reasons for their refusal. The reasons or explanations given by the participants were:

- 5a) "Umakunai n desu."
- 5b) "I'm not good at it."
- 6a) "Ima no shigoto yori yaku ni tateru."
- 6b) "I can be more useful in my current job."
- 7a) "Zenzen ryouri ga dekinai kara."
- 7b) "I cannot cook at all."
- 8a) "**Keiken mo nakute...**"
- 8b) "I have no experience."
- 9a) "Watashi wa totemo heta desu kara."
- 9b) "I'm very bad at it."

Most of the excuses given relate to their cooking skills. It is worth mentioning that from five speakers three used unfinished sentences, which are natural in Japanese communication.

Four of the speakers even tried to dissuade the interlocutor.

- 10a) "**Tsukureba, watashi wa itsumo jiko ni atte...**"
- 10b) "I always cause accidents, when I make food."
- 11a) "Nanka ryouri demo shippai shitara, komarimasu yo ne, o mise **mo...**"
- 11b) "If something goes wrong with the food, we're in trouble, and so is the restaurant."
- 12a) "Ano misu de (warai), nanka, eeto, hitsuyou nai, ano zairyuu wo **iretara...**"
- 12b) "**Um, by mistake (laugh) I use um ingredients that are um not necessary.**"

We can see here that the speakers who tried to dissuade their interlocutor were those with the highest of proficiency level. This could be explained by the fact that they were at a linguistic level, that allowed them to produce longer sequences.

Each participant emphasised that they really enjoyed working at their current job, that they wanted to communicate more with Japanese customers and that they wanted to improve their Japanese. This was their aim with this job and they would like to continue working as waiters or waitresses.

13a) "A, tada, sono, maa, okyakusan to hanashita hou ga watashi ga, kou, ma, ryouri yori umaku yareru kana, to omoimasu node."

13b) "Um, well, I think um I can do better um by talking to customers."

14a) "Watashi wa ima no shigoto ga, eeto, kekkou manzoku shiteimasu shi, un, eeto, okyakusan to, ano, chanto wa, kaiwa, surukoto **mo sukidesu shi...**"

14b) "I'm quite satisfied um with my current job, and um I like talking to my customers."

15a) "Watashi wa ee zettai ni nihonjin to, hanasu kikai ga aru shigoto wo shitai to omoimasu."

15b) "I would um really like to have a job where I can talk to Japanese people."

16a) "Hall de hataraitete hai, tto koukyaku no koto mo yoku shirimasu shi, nihongo wo n, benkyou, suru kara, n, n, nihonjin no okyakusan, n-to hanasu koto ga hai, n, n, dekimashita, n kara, ko, n **waitress no shigoto wo suru ketai (tsuduketai)...** "

16b) "I work in the hall, yes, so I know the customers well; I learn Japanese, so I can talk to Japanese customers, now I want to continue working as a waiter."

Interestingly, giving alternatives was used by two speakers who had not been to Japan and had lower language skills. One of them offered to introduce her friend, who was very good at cooking. The other participant emphasised that he really loved working as a waiter, and as an alternative - and perhaps also in search of harmony - offered to do both: continue to work as a waiter, but also do the work in the kitchen. So, he actually accepted the job offer. This strategy was present in the role play of only one native speaker. Taking into account the language learning experience and proficiency level of the speakers, this strategy does not seem to be closely related to the number of years spent in Japan or to their proficiency level.

Apology is also worth mentioning. It was used by only two Hungarian speakers (one of them accepted the offer), while among the native speakers three used this strategy (one of them four times), the one who did not use it, eventually accepted the offer. The use of apology as a strategy is a factor that should be emphasised when teaching refusal strategies in the classroom.

The use of adjuncts

Table 2. shows the use of adjuncts in the role plays.

Table 2. Adjuncts

	H1	H2	H3	H4	H5	H6	H7	H8	J1	J2	J3	J4
J-CAT score	282	288	205	301	166	138	224	172				
Positive opinion												
Empathy				o						o		
Pause fillers/hesitation	o	o	o	o					o	o	o	o
Softeners	o				o (chotto)	o (chotto)			o	o	o	o
Elliptical sentence	o	o					o		o	o	o	o
Gratitude												

Softeners and elliptical or unfinished sentences originally were not included into the category of adjuncts, however the use of these elements are typical in the case of Japanese communication and were found in each role play of the native speakers. It has long been assumed that Japanese native speakers tend to leave the sentences unfinished (Mizutani 1980).

From Table 2. we can conclude that there was a spectacular difference between the Hungarian and Japanese speakers in the use of adjuncts.

Showing empathy or solidarity with the boss was not typical. Only one of the participants used it (Taihen desu ne/"It's hard"). In the control group, empathy was also used by one person, but he used several utterances showing empathy towards the interlocutor:

17a) "Hontou ni inakute komatteru you dattara, watashi mo, ganbaritai desu kedo."

17b) "If you're really struggling to find someone, I'll do my best."

18a) " Mochiron ano o tetsudai shitai no wa yamayama nan desu keredo..."

18b) "Of course um I **would like to help you very much, but...**"

It is worth noting that the native speakers' dialogues were characterised by a search for harmony. Three speakers used this strategy, two of whom eventually accepted the job.

19a) "Sou desu ne, ano chotto o tameshi de, hairutte yuu no wa kanou nan desu keredo, dou nan deshou ne, anmari jishin ga nai desu ne."

19b) "Um, it's possible to try it out, um, but I don't know, um, I'm not too sure. "

Some previous research also suggest that features such as harmony are prioritised by Japanese interlocutors (Clancy 1986; Picken 1982) in contrast to Western cultures where a clear message may be more important.

A spectacular difference can be observed in the use of hesitation and pause fillers, such as "ano", "eto", which were used by advanced, pre-advanced and intermediate learners and ignored by learners with lower J-CAT scores. Meanwhile, hesitation was used by all native speakers. This may be a pragmatic transfer, since in Hungarian hesitation is

considered a phenomenon to be avoided. The fact that speakers who had already been to Japan and had a higher level of proficiency used these words, also supports this view.

Softeners such as "chotto", "moshi", "dekireba", "dekitara" were frequently used by the natives, but were rarely present in the dialogues of the Hungarians. "Chotto" was used by six Hungarians, but "dekireba" was used only by the two advanced speakers, "moshi" once by one of them. On the other hand, "chotto" and "dekireba" or "dekitara" were used several times in each dialogue by each native speaker. **"Chotto" was used eight times**, while "dekireba" was used four times and "dekitara" once. This phenomenon shows that softeners are mainly used by speakers who have already been to Japan and have a higher level of proficiency. As a second language teacher, one should draw students' attention to the use of these terms when formulating their refusals.

Elliptical or incomplete sentences ending with "keredomo", "kana", "-te" were very common among Japanese speakers, while they were used by only four pre-advanced or intermediate Hungarian speakers. Again, this can be explained by pragmatic transfer from their mother tongue.

Long sequences of exchange were present in the dialogues of the native speakers with the exception of one participant.

The use of honorifics should also be mentioned, as the conversation took place between a student or employee and his boss, the employer. Taking into account the age and social status or position of the interlocutors, it was expected that the students would use honorific language (keigo). However, only one Hungarian speaker at pre-advanced level used keigo, the others did not ("Tsudukerasete itadakereba"/ "I would like you to allow me to continue."). Meanwhile, all the native Japanese speakers used keigo several times in their utterances. ("Isshou kenmei yarashite itadaiteimasu"/"I do my best (thanks to you)"; "moushi wakenai"/; "I am sorry" (a very polite form); "sasete itadaite"/"I would like you to let me do it").

Conclusion

The present research reflects on the refusal strategies of Japanese language learners in Hungary. The study focused on a single situation of refusal, namely refusing the **superior's request**. The examples gained from **the corpus were categorised based on Beebe et al.'s (1990) taxonomy**: direct and indirect refusal strategies and adjuncts.

Previous research (Szili 2004) on Hungarian speakers shows that Hungarians, when using their mother tongue, used non-performative direct refusals, expressing regret and giving explanations. That is, they did not use the verb "I refuse", but expressed themselves with negative

willingness/ability, such as "I do not want", "I am not hungry". Szili argues that expressing regret was a frequently used strategy, especially when the interlocutor was in a higher position. This observation was made about Hungarians using their mother tongue. Mándli and Maróti (2003) also mention the use of regret and apology by Hungarians when speaking in their mother tongue.

The present study shows that Hungarians mainly used indirect refusal strategies, but contrary to Szili's findings, they did not show regret towards the interlocutor. Instead, they gave explanations and tried to convince their interlocutor of their inability to do the requested job. This phenomenon can be explained by the fact that they were speaking a foreign language and following different models than those usually used in their mother tongue. Another explanation could be the linguistic and cultural difference between the meaning of the Hungarian verb for apology "sajnálom" and the Japanese "sumimasen".

In summary, only four of the indirect strategies mentioned by Beebe et al. (1990) were found in the corpus, and one new strategy, negotiation, was added.

It should be noted that the strategy of trying to dissuade the interlocutor was present only in the case of Hungarian speakers. Negotiation was also a characteristic of Hungarian speakers.

The use of adjuncts also shows interesting results. Showing empathy towards the interlocutor was not characteristic of the dialogues. Moreover, the use of hesitation, softening and incomplete sentences, which can weaken the strength of the illocutionary act of refusal, could be related to the proficiency level or socio-cultural competence of the participants.

Japanese speakers used much more elaborated sentences and longer dialogues, more complex strategies through which their utterance conveyed more empathy and harmony with the interlocutor.

20a) "Sou desu ka, ano, sou desu ne, jitsu wa, ryouri ga ne, kekkou, nigate na hou da to omoimashite, dekireba, sekkyaku de kono mama tsudukitai to omottetan desu keredomo."

20b) "I see... well, actually, I'm not very good at cooking, and I was **hoping to stay in customer service if it's possible.**"

20a) "Ee, ano mochiron ano, hontouni inakute komatteru you dattara, watashi mo, ganbaritai desu kedo, mou somosomo ie demo nani **mo shinai type de eeto...**"

20b) "Yes, well of course, um, if there is no one to help, and you are in trouble, I would do my best, but I'm the type of person who doesn't do anything at home, so... "

Data from Beebe-Takahashi-Uliss-Weltz (1990) show that Japanese are sensitive to the social factors that determine interactions. Japanese

speakers said no to those above them in position or age in a much more indirect and roundabout way. They used more varied formulations of rejection and softened their rejection by using adjuncts reflecting empathy with the interlocutor. Mándli and Maróti's (2003) study also found that Japanese speakers used many more strategies and expressed their refusal in longer utterances than the Hungarians.

The results show us which competences of the Hungarian speakers of Japanese should be developed. With the help of supplementary teaching materials, such as anime, films, natural conversations, etc., second language teachers could make students aware of the importance of these strategies.

Tasks for the future

The present study focused on refusals to requests in a situation where one of the interlocutors was in a higher position and older than the other interlocutor. In the future, the research should be repeated with other situations, such as refusing an invitation, etc., with participants of different social status. Retrospective interviews with the participants should also be conducted after the role plays have been recorded. Quantitative research should also be carried out on a larger corpus.

Another task for the future is to analyse how the refusal strategies are presented in the Japanese textbooks commonly used in Hungary and to compare the results with refusals from natural conversations.

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JAPANESE LITERATURE PRESENTED BY YONE NOGUCHI IN 1904: FROM BORROWED KNOWLEDGE

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Abstract: *The poet and writer Noguchi Yonejirō (1875–1947) began his literary work during his stay in the United States of America and in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland between 1893 and 1904. After starting a career in poetry, he took up a new role as a Japanese who provided rare information about his native culture to Westerners. This led him to start a writing project in English, in which he approached different cultural elements in order to improve the contemporary image of Japan.*

This paper focuses on his first writings on Japanese literature, especially prose literature, published in periodicals and newspapers in 1904, before he returned to Japan in September. The paper will discuss two main questions. On one hand, it will show the works that Noguchi used as sources for his articles. On the other hand, it will shed light on how Noguchi attempted to position Japanese literature and Japan as a country in a Western-centred cultural hierarchy.

This paper contributes to the research on the international flow of information that shaped the image and improved the understanding of Japanese culture at the beginning of the 20th century.

Keywords: *Noguchi, literature, Aston, Ōkuma, women*

1. Introduction

Yone Noguchi (born as Noguchi Yonejirō, 1875–1947) was first known as a Japanese poet writing in English from his debut in 1896. He made his debut while living overseas, mainly in the United States of America between 1893 and 1904. During these years, Noguchi came to **realise that Westerners’ knowledge of Japan was either lacking or exaggerated**, resulting in an unrealistic image, despite an emerging curiosity for the culture. Thus, he decided to immerse himself in a project of prose and essay writing on Japanese culture and offered himself as a **“native” source of information**. These writings became the right framework for him to present elements of Japanese culture, with an aim of obtaining **Western intellectuals’ validation of a high value in the contemporary cultural hierarchy**. For the purpose of presenting a positive image of Japan as a developed country, these works clearly show how

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Noguchi was searching for the best elements to write about and capture the interest of his English-speaking readers.

Noguchi's project of presenting cultural elements first took shape between 1903 and 1904, focusing on the topics of theatre, painting, and literature. In September 1904, he returned to Japan, where he could access genuine sources and information on the culture, but he wrote a series of articles about Japanese literature in the first half of 1904, before he could access such sources. This paper focuses on this series of articles, **starting from "A Proposal to American Poets"**² briefly advocating haiku poetry, followed by "Melon Thief – Kiogen, Japanese Comedy of the Middle Age,"³ "The Evolution of Modern Japanese Literature,"⁴ "Modern Japanese Women Writers,"⁵ "Japanese Humour and Caricature"⁶ and "Japanese Women in Literature."⁷ These articles intended to give a new description of Japanese literature, from a Western viewpoint, showing the **results of the Meiji era's (1868–1912) Civilisation and Enlightenment** (*bunmeikaika*) movement.

However, in order to be able to measure the size of the impact that Noguchi could give to his contemporaries, or to understand what image of Japan he propagated, it is important to thoroughly investigate the information that Noguchi delivered to his readers, and the sources he possibly used. **This paper emphasises that in Noguchi's case researchers** need to consider that even as a native, Noguchi spent only his first eighteen years in Japan, and although he remained in connection with the Japanese diaspora overseas, the volume of his knowledge on his culture should be considered critically.

For that reason, this paper aims to complement and support the research on Noguchi and the contemporary information flow shaping **Japan's image, by examining Noguchi's early articles on Japanese** literature. It will show that Noguchi relied on borrowed knowledge to describe Japanese literature and define its place according to the contemporary idea of cultural hierarchy based on West-centrism.

2. First attempts

The first two articles on Japanese literature written by Noguchi will be discussed first, focusing on their common points.

Noguchi's first writing dedicated to Japanese poetry was titled "A Proposal to American Poets" (Noguchi 1904a). As the title suggests,

² Noguchi, Yone. 1904a. A Proposal to American Poets. *The Reader* 3(3). 248.

³ Noguchi, Yone. 1904b. Melon Thief - Kiogen, Japanese Comedy of the Middle Age. *Poet Lore* 15(1). 40-42.

⁴ Noguchi, Yone. 1904c. The Evolution of Modern Japanese Literature. *The Critic* 44(3). 260-263.

⁵ Noguchi, Yone. 1904d. Modern Japanese Women Writers. *The Critic* 44. 429-432.

⁶ Noguchi, Yone. 1904e. Japanese Humour and Caricature. *The Bookman* 19. 472-475.

⁷ Noguchi, Yone. 1904f. Japanese Women in Literature. *Poet Lore* 15. 88-91.

Noguchi as a Japanese poet, addressed American poets, asking them to take haiku into consideration. However, researchers fail to note that in this early work, he does not give a detailed explanation on the topic of haiku, nor on Japanese poetry. Noguchi wrote this essay after visiting the UK between the 20th of November 1902 and March 1903. He started to publish essays on Japanese cultural elements after this short visit, which also shows the impact and motivation that he received during those few months in London. Furthermore, at that time Noguchi started to publish his essays not only in American and English newspapers and journals, but also in the English section of Japanese papers. As Marx noted, one reason for his decision to suddenly promote haiku might be that haiku had already been introduced to British people at the time (2019: 274). Another reason might be that he came to know the works of orientalist writers like Basil Hall Chamberlain (1850–1935), who had already published detailed explanations and translations in English. Nevertheless, the fact that as a poet Noguchi did not show an intent to write on Japanese poetry in a detailed or scientific manner further suggests that until 1904 Noguchi did not possess enough knowledge or reference material to do so.

Following his **note on haiku**, **Noguchi decided to write on kyōgen**, a theatre genre developed during the Kamakura era (1185–1333), that was **performed as an individual play on the nō stage or as an interval during a nō play**. In **“Melon Thief Kiogen”** (Noguchi 1904b), **Noguchi mentioned kyōgen for the first time in his writings**. **The article presents Noguchi’s own English translation of a kyōgen play, “Uri nusubito” (Melon Thief), but begins with a paragraph meant to define kyōgen’s place and importance in Japanese literature for the readers.**

Our literature (how little it is known to the world!) would be a grey waste as far as comedy is concerned, if the ‘kiogen’ (farce, the word meaning ‘crazy language’) did not rescue us. It developed fully in the Middle Age simultaneously with the growth of ‘No’ (operatic performance) which was based invariably on Tragedy. The number of Kiogen on record is said to be over two hundred. Alas! their authors are not known. The themes were freely taken from folk-lore and old stories. The dramatic characters are an ignorant lord, forgetful servants, boorish farmers, a coward, fakirs, or such like. Their aim was laughter. The Kiogen may be regarded as a comical outburst of the national temperament. Many a humorist of later centuries adapted them, completely losing, however, the innocent irresistibility of the original. (Noguchi 1904b: 40)

The way Noguchi emphasizes the importance of kyōgen is similar to his introduction to haiku poetry, writing that “Hokku (seventeen-syllable poem) is like a tiny star, mind you, carrying the whole sky at its back. It is like a slightly-open door, where you may steal into the realm of poesy” (Noguchi 1904a). Furthermore, both articles have the structure of a brief

definition of the genre followed by an example. In other words, both are lacking a detailed explanation and elaboration on their respective subjects.

It must be noted that in the quote, Noguchi's definition of *nō* and *kyōgen* resembles Algernon Mitford's (1837–1916) definition of *nō* as "a kind of classical opera" (1871: 108) and of *kyōgen* as "light farces" (1871: 114). W.G. Aston (1841–1911) also calls *kyōgen* "farces" in his book *A History of Japanese Literature* (1899), in which he also reveals to his readers that he knows about the existence of two hundred *kyōgen* plays (1899: 214), the same number used by Noguchi. In addition, Aston discusses *nō* as classical literature (Slavov 2014: 61), critically valuing it as prose literature (1899: 201) and stated that "[a]s dramas the No have little value" (1899: 203). As this clearly shows, it was difficult for contemporary Western scholars to define *nō*. Noguchi simplified this question, but his definition did not reflect the complexity of the genre and was clearly made to fit a Western literary point of view, focusing on the combination of tragedy and comedy drama, while possibly using the English descriptions of orientalist.

In short, Noguchi's early articles on poetry and comedy do not show more than a basic knowledge on the topics already explored to an extent by Westerners. Thus, these articles can be seen as brief reactions to Westerners' interest, but it is not enough to prove that Noguchi himself had reliable and adequate knowledge on these topics.

3. On Prose Literature

Following those two brief attempts of promoting Japanese literature to a Western readership, Noguchi wrote his first articles with detailed scholarly information on not just Japanese literature, but also on Japanese culture. This chapter will discuss the sources for these writings.

An important decision was made by Noguchi when he decided to rely on accessible sources written by contemporary scholars. This turn is evident in his third article, titled "The Evolution of Modern Japanese Literature" (Noguchi 1904c) (See the literary figures and their works mentioned in his article in Appendix (1)). It was written from a Western point of view, clearly aiming to improve its readers' perceptions about the process and current state of the reception of Western literature in Japan. Here, Noguchi focuses on the Meiji era and structures the article around the topic of adaptation of Western literature and ideas in Japan, emphasizing her cultural development.

This article, however, is clearly based on the chapter "Tokio period (1867–1898) – Some Recent Developments Under European Influence" from Aston's book *A History of Japanese Literature* (1899). As its subtitle indicates, in his book Aston discusses the development of literature

during the Meiji era. He describes the era by focusing on Japanese writers whose works adapted European literary writing and presenting the Japanese people from a Western literary hierarchical viewpoint.

In the next few examples from both writers, I will show how Noguchi had the ability to modify an article enough so as to present it as his own knowledge and writing, while he did not name his sources or suggested to have used any. The first examples are discussing the start of the Meiji era.

About this time the nation was seized with a passion for more extensive European learning. In spite of many difficulties, numbers of young men of good family made their way to Europe or America for study, or were not ashamed to take service in the households of foreign residents in Japan in order to have an opportunity of learning English, even a slight knowledge of which was a sure passport to official positions and emoluments. (...) Presently a group of writers came forward who did their best by translations and original works to meet the general demand for information as to the learning, customs, laws, and institutions of Europe. Of these, Fukuzawa, **with his *Seiyo Jijo* (“Condition of Western Countries”), was the most distinguished. Nakamura’s translations of Smiles’ *Self-Help* and Mill’s *Liberty* also deserve mention. Kant and Herbert Spencer followed somewhat later.** (Aston 1899: 385)

“*Seiyo Jizo*” (“Affairs of Western Countries”) by Fukuzawa—the greatest educator of Japan, the late head of “*Keiogijiku*”—and Nakamura’s translation of Smiles’s “*Self-Help*,” or Mill’s “*Liberty*,” were the harbingers of the modern literature. Kant and Herbert Spencer were known before any English grammar was introduced. (...) It was in the days when even a bare knowledge of Wilson’s *First Reader* was a sure passport to a government office. It would be better if you could understand Quackenbos’s “*American History*.” The students carried a “*Western-Sea*” book through the streets with a supreme air. People turned their heads often toward America, wishing to be told something about their blue-eyed “brethren” and their idea. (Noguchi 1904c: 260)

Noguchi began his article by listing the same literary figures and works as Aston did, not adding any new information to it. Noguchi also did not correct the incomplete titles or names used by Aston. Nevertheless, **Noguchi’s ability to rephrase** Aston in a convincing way reflects the results of a decade he spent learning the English language and engaging with literary circles. This can also be seen in his choice of powerful words such as **“harbingers”, or in his ability to change the translations of the *Seiyo Jizo* from “Condition” to “Affairs”.**

Nevertheless, there is also some new information in Noguchi’s article, such as mentioning the *First Reader* (1860) or the *American history for schools* (1878). *The First Reader*, for example, reappears in **several of Noguchi’s writings, as he himself learned English from this book as a child** (Noguchi 1914: 2). But despite these mentions, Noguchi

does not supplement Aston's list of works, and instead he complements the borrowed scholarly writing with small descriptions humanising his version. His description of the Japanese atmosphere, with proud students on the street, etc., **not only reflects young Noguchi's intention to bring his readers closer to the Japanese experience, but it also complements Aston's description of the Japanese passion for learning about Europe.** However, as Noguchi did not mention any sources, it can be suggested that such a description rather aimed to prove to the reader that Noguchi himself is the original source-- a source that possesses not only knowledge, but also experience.

These patterns of Noguchi attempting to borrow Aston's information and present it as his own continue throughout the article. Noguchi follows **Aston's way of dividing the Meiji period's timeline into time sections based on different movements and characteristics.** The period of the **"harbingers" is followed by the first Western writers and novels translated into Japanese.** Concerning these, Noguchi repeated the same seven writers that Aston mentioned. However, Aston only pointed out Lord **Lytton's *Ernest Maltravers* (1838, published in Japan in 1878)** in his main text and placed the other examples in the same footnote, while Noguchi placed everything in the main body of the text. **Noguchi's method can only be realised by taking Aston's footnote into consideration.** Nevertheless, Noguchi does not elaborate on any these works, which further indicates his lack of knowledge.

Similar changes can be seen in Noguchi's text regarding Nansui Sudō's (1857–1920) description, who was introduced as a Japanese writer employing Western literary ideas. **Aston wrote that Sudō "belongs to the progressive party in politics and social science" and elaborated on his political novel, *Ladies of New Style* (1887) (1899: 387).** He described the novel's plot as **"[i]t is a novel of the future, when Tokio shall have become a great port, with all the appliances of an advanced civilisation, such as wharves, docks, tramways, and smoking factory chimneys" (1899: 387).** **Noguchi summarised Aston's words as "[t]he book was a sheer absurdity. It was a wild exposition of Western progress" (Noguchi 1904c: 261).** The novel's heroine was a dairymaid, which meant that she was **"in the forefront of the progressive movement",** as Aston tells us, **"[f]ormerly cow's milk was not used as food in Japan, and when this novel appeared none but a truly enlightened person would dare to affront the old-fashioned prejudices against it" (1899: 388).** **Based on Aston's words, Noguchi wrote "[i]t inspired a revolution among Japanese ladyhood. The heroine was in the van of the progressive movement. She taught that labour was sacred. She became a dairymaid. (How new it was if you consider that we didn't use milk in those days!)" (Noguchi 1904c: 261).**

The information that the novel was an inspiration for working women **might appear to draw on Noguchi's own knowledge, as it was not worded this way by Aston, but from Aston's description of the heroine being a working and educated woman representing the progressive movement, Noguchi could have easily deduced this information too.**

It is important to note that Sudō's writing contains European elements and represents a European-centred cultural hierarchy for Japanese readers, which was the reason for Aston to write about him. Aston introduced Sudō's writing for presenting European cultural elements, and for representing a European-centred cultural hierarchy for Japanese readers. Regarding the "Ladies of New Style", Aston notes that the character of the Chinese cook was "naturally assigned the role of a subordinate villain" (1899: 388). Here, Aston expressed his agreement with Sudō's choice to position Chinese people below Japanese, while lifting the Japanese people close to the position of Europeans. He concludes the summary of the novel by praising its Chinese element, "which is so prominent at the present time" (1899: 388–389). Aston is probably referring to the Japanese victory of the First Sino-Japanese War (1895), expressing his standpoint on the contemporary power struggle between Japan and China for East-Asia's leading position (Katō 2016: 82). Noguchi chose not to write about Chinese people, but he did follow Aston's writing style in reflecting on contemporary events. Thus, he borrowed from Aston's summary the fact that the novel described "a balloon ascent and a dynamite explosion" and deduced that "[i]t would be plain in what direction the Japanese intellectual taste of those days was aspiring when such a book met with a mighty reception" (Noguchi 1904c: 261). Similar to Aston's words four years after the First Sino-Japanese War, Noguchi seems to implicitly indicate that it was inevitable for Japan to militarise, as he is writing the above one month after the Russo-Japanese War broke out, in February 1904.

In other words, Noguchi could have **written about Sudō's novel without reading it, by following Aston's description.** The only new information that Noguchi could supplement was about Sudō becoming forgotten and a serial writer, because the readers' interest in literature had changed. (It is also possible, that future research will find a source for this information.) However, **Noguchi's aim to show a developed Japan that adopted Western ideas, in this case literary ideas, did correspond with Aston's written contents, illustrated with Sudō's novel that depicted a developed, European-based Japanese culture.**

It is important to note that in the 1907 edition of his book Aston **deleted the last paragraph of his praising words on Sudō, and instead wrote that "Sudō's novels have the merit of being amusing, but I am bound**

to add that his own countrymen do not take him seriously. They rank him among **third-class writers of fiction** (1907: 389–390). It is possible that Noguchi might have influenced Aston to rewrite his previous evaluation, however Aston does not mention Noguchi in the bibliography.

Regardless, it can be said that Noguchi provided some new information in his article compared to Aston. **Another example is Ryūkei Yano (1851–1931). Noguchi borrowed Aston’s description of Yano and his political novel “Keikoku Bidan” (1883, 1884), and supplemented it with a note on another political novel, “Ukishiro Monogatari” (1890). Noguchi described the latter as a “juvenile adventurous story” that was “a Japanese edition of Jules Verne” (1828–1905) (Noguchi 1904c: 261). Noguchi did not mention the accusation of Yano plagiarising Verne, but did remark that the work was not well received. However, his remark could reflect Noguchi’s consideration for the novel’s plot, that describes Western colonists expelled from South-Asia with Japanese help. Nevertheless, this information matched Aston’s European-centred views, but it could also indicate Noguchi’s own literary interest in his juvenile years.** Having said that, it must be noted that Noguchi deliberately picked to write about political novels at the beginning of the Russo-Japanese War.

Contrary to the above, however, Noguchi contradicted Aston about the Genroku era (1688–1704), which was revisited by Meiji literary figures. **“It was in the Genroku era under the Feudalism, two hundred years ago, that the knights, wearing a long sword, doubtless rusty within its sheath, lazily roamed beneath the flowers, and all the civilians drank of prosperity and love. The literature was the life of that time” (Noguchi 1904c: 262). Here, Noguchi described a utopian era of “prosperity and love,” which was peaceful and rich in literature.** His simplified definition is in sharp contrast to Aston, who did give the subtitle “Revival of Learning” to the chapter discussing the Tokugawa period, but he maintained a critical stance not only on its literature, but also on its societal factors and problems.

In spite of Noguchi’s unscientific description, he almost sounds like he is providing excuses to his Western readers for the Japanese scholars of the Meiji era turning toward the Genroku era’s literature, instead of the Western one. He reasons that these writers “themselves did not grasp the real meaning of English literature” (Noguchi 1904c: 262). This critical tone shows again how Noguchi adopted the same standpoint in his article as Aston did in his book, with the subtle difference that Noguchi defined not only European, but Western literature as something the Japanese should aim to acquire in order to become a more developed culture.

However, **Aston did not write on the Meiji period’s movement towards Genroku, presenting Saikaku Ihara (1642–1693) only in the**

chapter on “Yedo Period”, and Rohan Kōda (1867–1947) and Kōyō Ozaki (1868–1903) in the Meiji chapter. On the other hand, Noguchi complemented Aston by calling attention to the revival and research of Saikaku’s works lead by Kōda and Kōyō, which he placed between 1891 and 1896. Today this period is counted from 1887, while both writers published their first work on Saikaku in 1890. Noguchi stated that the era starts with Kōda’s discovery of Saikaku, not taking note on Kangetsu Awashima (1859–1926), who recommended Saikaku’s work to both Kōda and Kōyō, resulting in Saikaku’s influence on their works. It is also not clear why Noguchi picked 1891, the same year he started his higher education in Tokyo (Marx 2019: 62). However, 1891 was also the year when the serialisation of Kōda’s novella “The Five-Storeyed Pagoda” started, bringing him literary recognition. This story likely appealed to the young Noguchi in many ways, from its plot revolving around an artisan’s accomplishments to its approach to Buddhism (Slavov 2019: 46).

Regarding Kōyō, Noguchi remarks that his “work was founded on the Western idea at [its] bottom”, repeating Aston’s argument, who describes *Tajō Takon* (1896) as a work applying knowledge from both the *Genji Monogatari* and Western literature. However, Noguchi did not complement the information provided by Aston with any mention of Kōyō’s last and unfinished work *Konjiki Yasha* (1897–1902), which describes the aftermath of the Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895). On the contrary, he expressed his regret for Kōda relying mainly on Eastern literature. This was not noted by Aston, who highly praised Kōda, adding only very little criticism. Noguchi suggests that the literary worth of Kōda is the fact that “[t]he best essence of the Eastern literature could meet with the best spirit of the Western letters upon equal terms” (Noguchi 1904c: 262). This description could be also inspired by Aston, as it subtly reflects his note on Kōyō’s use of Japanese words written in Chinese characters to represent the sound of an English word (1899: 390). Nevertheless, it shows again Noguchi’s approach to literature as representing the contemporary cultural hierarchy, and his conviction that Japan has valuable works to offer.

Next, Noguchi discusses the change towards literary “[c]ommericalism” made by new young writers between 1899 and 1900, which led to the period between 1901 and 1904 with poor quality novels, characterized by a lack of literary events and a disappearing interest in modern novels. He also concluded that the same phenomenon can be seen in the US. With this parallel, he suggested that “Japan is also up and down, more or less, with the wordly literary tide” (Noguchi 1904c: 263), and has reached a point of synchronicity with the Western literary world. According to Noguchi, who also read Japanese newspapers while he was abroad,

intellectuals turned from commercialised novels to newspapers, which **became influential in “the last ten years”**. His words here again show **similarity with Aston’s, who wrote that “[a]nother sign of the renewed avidity for knowledge was the rise of a newspaper press and of a magazine literature” between 1872 and 1894 (1899: 385)**. It is however difficult to make a connection between the words of Noguchi and Aston, because the information borrowed from Aston can be found at a different place in the **order of Noguchi’s argument**.

In view of the chosen order of the topics in Noguchi’s article reveal a The place of another topic in the order of Noguchi’s argument reveals a different decision of Noguchi. The topic of commercialism in Noguchi’s article is positioned at the same place as where Aston wrote in his book about his critical views on Japanese writers’ lack of quantity and quality in writings about history, naming Sōhō Tokutomi as an exception (1863–1957) (Aston 1899: 392). Noguchi however, did not mention the problems of history writing, and instead presented critical views about the lack of quality brought about by commercialism. He connected this topic with intellectuals turning toward newspapers, for which he also gave Tokutomi as an example.

This selective method can also be seen at the end of Noguchi’s article. Aston finished his chapter and book by criticising Japan’s lack of adapting Christianity in its literature (1899: 398–99), while Noguchi takes a non-critical stance, announcing that the Japanese public had come to accept the superiority of Western writing by 1903.

And the public discovered only a year or so ago that the reading of Western novels was the very way to feed their minds spiritually. They are ready to admit their immeasurable superiority to the native writing. (Noguchi 1904c: 263.)

As proof, Noguchi reports that approximately fifty Western novels were translated in 1903.

On the whole it can be concluded that Noguchi mainly wrote his article presenting Japanese literature based on Aston’s scholarly work. The two works align not only in topics, but in the way they take contemporary cultural hierarchy as their bases, where acquiring Western literary elements is the foremost aim, and Japanese literature is seen as naturally being in a lower position than European literature. However, Noguchi avoids some topics and is less critical in order to support his aims. These are firstly, to promote Japanese (and Eastern) literature to Westerners. **Secondly, to strengthen Noguchi’s new image of a Japanese intellectual who can offer knowledge about Japanese culture.** Lastly, to fill the gap between the positioning of Japan as inferior to the West in a

cultural hierarchy, by showing the process of Japanese people adopting modern Western literature. **Finally, it must be noted that Noguchi's** choices for supplements or topics of literature already show an influence of nationalism.

Another article by Noguchi appeared in May, with a similar objective **and topic, titled “Modern Japanese Women Writers” (Noguchi 1904d; See Appendix (2)).** Although there is a time difference of two months between the two articles, the Advance Sheet of this article had been written and read aloud at a charity event at **Barnard College's Reading Room on April 16** (The Lounger: 305–6). It is possible that after the charity event, Noguchi revised the writing based on comments, before sending it to the magazine *The Critic* for publication.

This article clearly complements the previous one, focusing on the topic of women writers in the Meiji era. It was also written from the standard viewpoint of placing Western literature in a superior position. **In contrast to his previous article, “Modern Japanese Women Writers”** mentions only seven writers and the works discussed are relatively few. A possible reason for this can be seen in the description of the writers. Instead of presenting their works, Noguchi mostly attempts to prove their worth with three kinds of information. **One is the writer's status in Japanese society, provided by a family member's educated background,** noble rank or relation to politics. Another one is the ability to write Chinese poems. Lastly, it is the legitimization by the Empress of Japan or by Westerners. **For example, Shōen Nakajima (1864–1901)** was depicted as the wife of a politician, writing Chinese poems. Likewise, Kaho Tanabe (1868–1943) was depicted as the daughter of the poet Taichi Tanabe (1831–1915), her works praised by the Empress herself. Similarly, Shizuko Wakamatsu (1864–1896) was noted to be highly educated, with many foreign acquaintances. The way Noguchi emphasized these points in **contrast to his previous article's description of male writers' accomplishments and influence on literature,** it strongly suggests the contemporary difference between the situation of men and women writers. **Highlighting women writers' education and relation to high society in order to gain the attention and recognition of his Western readers,** can be described as an elitist viewpoint, that Noguchi could have learned from Aton too.

However, it is important to note that this article was not based on **Aston's book, because he did not write about the Meiji era's women** writers in the 1899 or 1903 editions. Not even Alice Mabel Bacon (1858–1918) mentioned any names in her pioneer work, *Japanese Girls and Women* (1891). By 1904, well-**known orientalist scholars' writings in** English rather focused on the position, the image or the education of the

Meiji women. On the contrary, **Noguchi's article does not discuss any of** these topics. It is so far not clear what was the source for the information in his article, which also contains three pictures of women writers. Based on how he borrowed knowledge for his early articles, this article could have an English or a Japanese source too, but this has not been found yet. It is also possible that he received the photos and information through correspondence with Japanese friends or acquaintances.

In the description of Shizuko Wakamatsu, Noguchi mentioned **Sakurai Ōson (1872–1929)** as the editor of *The Student*, who helped Wakamatsu publish a collection of her works. In 1899, Sakurai visited America, and from 1900, he began to teach at the Japanese school for women, Joshi Eigaku Juku (today as Tsuda University), and published the book *Gendai Onna Katagi* (1900), following in Alice M. **Bacon's steps by** describing Japanese women. *The Student* was a new semi-monthly English-Japanese periodical, that started under the editorship of **Professor Inazō Nitobe (1862–1933)** in July 1903. Its seventh volume in **October of 1903 was dedicated to Noguchi's poetry and even some of Noguchi's own writings made their appearance here.** Noguchi himself advertised *The Student* in some of his articles, for example in the one discussed above (Noguchi 1904c: 263). *The Student* occasionally promoted Japanese women writers; an example of that is the serialised **English translation of Higuchi Ichiyō's (1872–1896) "Jūsanya" (1895).**

Furthermore, it is difficult to determine from **Noguchi's article** whether he had read any of the listed works. On one hand, all the works are from the 1890s, when he was a student in Tokyo or had some access to Japanese newspapers in San Francisco. On the other hand, the only two works he gave a detailed **description of are Usurai Kitada's (1876–1900) short story "Oni senbiki" (1895), and Ichiyō's "Jūsanya" (Noguchi 1904d: 429).** *The Student* published the **English translation of Ichiyō's novel** together with the original Japanese text between April 1 and December of 1904, so the possibility of Noguchi receiving a copy of *The Student* issues and a description of the novel from a correspondent, should be taken into consideration. Although *The Student* published no article depicting Meiji women writers by May of 1904, Noguchi could have asked for photos and information from his correspondent, potentially Sakurai, who was especially mentioned in the article.

All things considered however, regardless of whether he used a Japanese source or not, Noguchi maintained the same viewpoint as in his previous article. He gives short accounts on writers and works, depicting **Nakajima as a "revolutionist" (Noguchi 1904d: 430) or Wakamatsu as a "new type of Japanese woman, the rarest combination of American knowledge and Japanese refinement" (Noguchi 1904d: 431).** This shows

his attempt to present these seven writers as proof of Japan's literary development, to show that she could produce her own modern women writers. In contrast to his previous article (Noguchi 1904c), he also encouraged Westerners to translate Japanese works. **However, Noguchi's final remark contradicted this as he expressed his distaste with modern poetry written by women, stating that "there are a hundred poetesses, though none of them has achieved any distinction" (Noguchi 1904d: 432).** Nevertheless, the article fulfils its objective, shedding light on early modern feminist developments in Japanese literature.

We can so far draw the conclusion that in the first half of 1904 Noguchi published four articles on Japanese literature that complemented each other. However, these articles together could not yet give a summary on the full scope of a topic or an era. Despite Noguchi himself being a poet, his accounts on poetry are not numerous, as he wrote only briefly on haiku poetry, noted *shintaiishi* (new style) poetry after Aston (Noguchi 1904c: 394), and expressed his displeasure with modern women's poetry. As for writing about *kyōgen*, **Noguchi mainly presented a translated *kyōgen* play with a brief description of the genre.** Finally, he wrote separately on men and women writers of the Meiji era, with the same purpose of presenting Japanese writers who adopted Western ideas. Nevertheless, the sole reason for Noguchi to be able to write a detailed presentation on Japanese literature for the first time was because he relied on Aston's knowledge and presented it as his own. He did not write on literature in such detail before his article published in March, and it is clear that he plagiarised Aston. Noguchi depicted Japan as a nation that could reach by 1904 a quite developed position in the ranks of the contemporary cultural hierarchy, preceding China and approaching the Western countries.

4. July – Corrections

In July 1904, Noguchi published two new articles on literature, reflecting a clear turn in his viewpoint. This chapter will discuss the points that reflect the change in his approach, while shedding light on how Noguchi continued to present himself as a literary intellectual, while at the same time borrowing ideas from other sources.

First, in the article titled "Japanese Humour and Caricature" (Noguchi 1904e; See Appendix (3)), he firmly states that "Japan has no literature of laughter and humour. She was and is the country of tragedy and tears" (Noguchi 1904e: 473). This is in stark contrast with his previous article on the *kyōgen*, which presented the genre as the single outstanding representative of Japanese comedy literature. It is likely that **Noguchi received critical feedback, or read further contemporary scholars' evaluations of the genre after his first *kyōgen* translation was published,**

which made him acknowledge in this new writing that kyōgen is “attaining no high value of literature” (Noguchi 1904e: 474) like some Western humorous literary writings do. This shows that he continued to evaluate **Japanese literature from a Western viewpoint, according to which kyōgen** could not fulfil the purpose of putting Japanese literature on an equal footing with its Western counterpart.

Similarly, in July Noguchi attempted to mend another error from his first writings. **Therefore, he dedicated the article “Japanese Women in Literature” (Noguchi 1904f; See Appendix (4)) to the purpose of overwriting his first description of women’s position and ability in the literary world of Japan, presenting it as more captivating.** For this reason, he chose to mainly present the literary achievements of women in the Heian period. **Noguchi’s article however reflects borrowed and rephrased ideas from two main sources, but contrary to earlier works, in this article, Noguchi points out that he has used outside sources: “a critic” and an “eminent foreign critic” (Noguchi 1904f: 88).**

One of these sources, the “critic”, was Shigenobu Ōkuma (1838–1922), who gave the lecture “The Position of Women in Japanese Literature” with the help of an interpreter for the foreign members of the Ladies Monday Club in November 1903. This lecture was printed in *The Student’s December issue*, in which two of Noguchi’s writings and his correspondence with Thomas Hardy were also published, so he most likely had a copy.

Ōkuma’s lecture explains the importance of women’s role in creating **Japan’s literature.** He lists his critical opinions regarding the divided literature of men and women, **emphasising women’s responsibility and encouraging them to take part in the creation of a new Japanese literature together with men.** Noguchi used methods similar to the ones already **mentioned in this paper to borrow Ōkuma’s words, as we can see in the following example:**

In my opinion all women are to some extent literary. Their nervous system is framed more delicately than men’s: they are more highly sensitive and perceive things more by intuition. Moreover, the sentiments of women are more developed: they can better sympathise with others. In Europe, this fact has long been recognised, and one often comes across such names as the “Fair sex” or the “Softer sex.” (Ōkuma 1903: 336)

These lines are seen in Noguchi's opening paragraph rephrased as **“Japanese women have been literary from an age unknown. (...) Their skill in phraseology and their delicacy of sentiment was far superior to the men’s.” He also uses the expression “weaker sex” in the second paragraph (Noguchi 1904f: 88).**

In a similar example, Noguchi describes the Heian period, **rephrasing Ōkuma's sentences.**

Literature was in its life. The writers were mostly court-ladies, and the Imperial Palace was the rendezvous of all literary geniuses. The empresses and their followers began to rise in power, naturally to the gradual decline of the emperors. The word of the women was the law. They exercised an immense power. (Noguchi 1904f: 90)

In those days the Empresses and court-ladies were beginning to rise to power, to the gradual decline of that of the Emperors. This was indeed the Golden Age of woman, and the court was the rendezvous of all literary geniuses. (...) The Empress who enjoyed in some senses greater power than her Imperial consort, was surrounded by clever and accomplished women who also had an ample share of authority. (Ōkuma 1903: 337)

The examples above clearly show that Noguchi borrowed Ōkuma's ideas. In addition, Noguchi again turned toward Aston's *A History of Japanese Literature*, which is his second main source and corresponds to the "eminent foreign critic" mentioned in his article. It can be assumed that Noguchi needed to borrow information from Aston to write on **historical women writers, because Ōkuma's lecture did not offer detailed information on the topic.** The following example describes the Temple of Ishiyama, where Murasaki Shikibu supposedly wrote her novel, the *Genji Monogatari* (1008).

... with the ink-slab which the author used, and a Buddhist Sutra in her hand-writing, which, if they do not satisfy the critic, still are sufficient to carry conviction to the minds of ordinary visitors to the temple. (Aston 1899: 93)

We make pilgrimages to see the very chamber where the story of the Genji was written, — the chamber with the ink-slab which the author used, and a Buddhist Sutra in her handwriting. (Noguchi 1904f: 88–89)

The quotes above clearly indicate that Noguchi borrowed Aston's words. Although in this article Noguchi refers to the fact that he used sources, he does not clarify who these sources are; it is also important to point out that he did not clearly separate the borrowed ideas or expressions in the text from his own. Regarding Aston, Noguchi borrowed information from Chapter IV on *Genji Monogatari* or Chapter V on *Makura Zōshi*. **From the latter he cited passages from Aston's translation of Sei Shōnagon; without naming Aston as his source, the article might lead anyone who did not know Aston's work to believe that Noguchi was the translator.**

In sum, Noguchi's article built on these two sources to present the classical Japanese literature as being on par with Western literature. For this, he took Ōkuma's explanation about the fact that Japanese women

writers of the Heian era preceded their Western counterparts; also, just as **Ōkuma had pointed out that Japanese women took part in the history of Japan's literature**, Noguchi too attempted to make a similar argument by using information borrowed from Aston. As the article continues with a **mixture of Ōkuma's and Aston's thoughts, there is, however, one original nuance**. As mentioned before, Aston did not write on Meiji era's women writers, and Ōkuma finished his lecture by criticising the education and written language of women, both based on classic Japanese literature. **Above all, Ōkuma encouraged Meiji women to write**, but did not mention any contemporary women writers. Noguchi, on the other hand, refuted **Ōkuma's main message, stating that Japanese women will not worship classics anymore**, because they already made foreign literature their own. To prove his point, Noguchi mentioned some women writers again, drawing on his previous article on women. In other words, Noguchi refuted **Ōkuma's criticism of the modern education for women, showing an image of Japan as a pioneer of literature during the Heian era, in decline from the Kamakura era, but finally enlightened again in the Meiji era, during which she was able to embrace Western literature successfully**. Noguchi went as **far to correct himself as to write that "there are a thousand poetesses"** (Noguchi 1904f: 91) in Japan, leaving out his previous criticism on the topic of Meiji women in literature. Finally, he criticised the lack of acknowledgment of Japanese women writers in the US.

To conclude, Noguchi's new articles have a more holistic approach to the development of Japanese literature, in which Japan is taking a new position in the cultural hierarchy, by being a pioneer of literature, with her historical women writers comparable to their Western counterpart. Nevertheless, Noguchi continued to position Japanese literature in relation to the Western one. **Moreover, by using Ōkuma's lecture as a structure for his article and colouring it with content from Aston's book**, he could further build his image as an intellectual and a literary person.

5. Conclusion

This paper examined **six of Noguchi's English essays about Japanese literature** that were published overseas in 1904, just before he moved back to Japan in September of that year. All his texts show two common points: one is the writing style that Noguchi adopted, of examining a topic from a Western-centred cultural approach, which shows a strong similarity with pioneer orientalist writers, like Aston or Pierre Loti (1850–1923). **The second one is Noguchi's aim to present Japan to his readers as a country that has reached the same or a similar level as that of Western countries in the cultural hierarchy of the time**. In this point Noguchi differs from orientalist writers, who wrote about Japan in a more or less critical way,

pointing out her shortcomings. These articles also show that Noguchi cleverly avoided delicate topics such as the criticism of colonisation, **religion, or the women's situation in Japan**. In addition, while he made efforts to change the position of Japan in the contemporaneous cultural hierarchy, he did not directly confront this worldview, but instead made it his own, and tried to mend the situation within the limits of this hierarchical ideology. This stance of wanting to fulfil the Western idea of a developed nation could have also been his reason to omit specific topics.

As shown in this paper, Noguchi can be counted as another example **of the “native informant” argued by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, for the reason that Noguchi had in fact no personal significant information on his chosen topics, but instead relied on the knowledge of already established scholars.** Noguchi does not elaborate on the topics of comedy literature or *haiku*, which suggests his lack of knowledge and sources on the matter. In contrast, it is clear that for his later articles that needed exact information, he chose to plagiarize from scholars such as Aston by rephrasing ideas and changing the order of sentences or topics. In his first detailed English articles on Japanese literature, he chose to keep the **structure he borrowed from Aston and Ōkuma, while also delivering his own message of a Japan that was able to achieve Western modernisation in its literature.**

Therefore, when considering Noguchi's possible effect with these articles on his foreign readership, it must be noted that most of the “authentic” information delivered by him about Japanese literature was from Aston. Thus, Noguchi's articles as a “native informant” could only confirm Aston's. While orientalist writers and scholars referred to their sources, Noguchi did not, using their knowledge as his own. In addition to literary data borrowed from unmentioned sources, there are also **descriptions of feelings and real experience in Noguchi's writings, which make his image as a native informant more authentic.**

Noguchi's methods changed from September 1904, when he moved back to Japan and had genuine sources available to present to his reader inside and outside Japan. Still, he continued for a time to plagiarize without references, and his deliberately manipulative writing style does match **Marx's definition of a trickster (2019: 31)**. There are still many possibilities for plagiarized sources in the numerous writings of Noguchi, and it cannot be concluded that the articles examined in this essay are based only on the ones I was able to identify. **By analysing Noguchi's way of presenting the information from these sources researchers will have a better understanding of the information flow that shaped the image of Japan during Noguchi's times.**

Noguchi could have had several aims to prove the value of Japanese literature, from which the biggest one was to find a topic that could represent Japan as a developed nation. Another one could have been to **make Japan's literary achievements known for Western intellectuals**. At the same time, all of Noguchi's articles also aimed to further build his own image as a Japanese intellectual.

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The mark (“ ”) refers to the original note.

Mentioned Writers	Mentioned Works
(1) Evolution of Modern Japanese Literature (Noguchi 1904c)	
Yukichi Fukuzawa 福沢諭吉 (1835–1901)	Seiyō Jijō 西洋事情 (1866) (“Seiyo Jizo”)
Keiū Nakamura 中村敬宇 (1832–1891)	
Samuel Smiles (1812–1904)	Self-Help; with Illustrations of Character and Conduct (1859)
John Stuart Mill (1806–1873)	On Liberty (1859)
Immanuel Kant (1724–1804)	
Herbert Spencer (1820–1903)	Education (1861)
Edward Bulwer-Lytton (1803–1873) (“Lord Lytton”)	Ernest Maltravers (1838)
Alexander Dumas (1802–1870)	Camille (1848)
Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra (1547–1616)	
Jules Verne (1828–1905)	
François Fénelon (1651–1715)	Les aventures de Télémaque, fils d’Ulysse (1699)
Daniel Defoe (1660–1731)	The Life and Strange Surprising Adventours of Robinson Crusoe, of York, Mariner (1719) (“Robinson Crusoe”)
Rider Haggard (1856–1925)	King Solomon’s Mine (1885)
Marcius Willson (1813–1905)	The First Reader of The School and Family Series (1860)
Quackenbos George Payn (1826–1881)	American history for schools (1878) (“American History”)
Harriet M. Skidmore (1837–1904)	Beside the Western Sea (1877) (“Western-Sea”) *The essay writer’s suggestion for Noguchi’s noted title. However, it is also possible he remembered the title incorrectly, thus his note might refer to the book <i>American history for school’s</i> (1878) Chapter I. The Western Continent.
Nansui Sudō 須藤南翠 (1857–1920)	Shinsō no Kajin 新粧之佳人 (1887) (“Ladies of New Style”)
	Ryokusadan 緑簑談 (1887) (“Local Self-Government”)
Daniel O’Connell (1775–1847) *The essay writer’s suggestion.	
William Ewart Gladstone (1809–1898)	

Ryūkei Yano 矢野龍溪 (1851–1931) ("Fumio Yano")	Seebe Meishi Keikoku Bidan 齊武名士經 国美談 (1883–1884) ("Keikoku Bidan")
	Houchiibun Ukishiro Monogatari 報知異 聞浮城物語 (1890) ("Ukishiro Monogatari")
Shōyō Tsubouchi 坪内逍遙 (1859–1935) ("Professor Yuzo Tsubouchi")	Shōsetsu Shinzui 小説神髓 (1885) ("Spirit of Fiction", "1886")
	Tōseishoseikatagi 当世書生氣質 (1885) ("Shosei Katagi ("Types of Students"), "1887")
	Maki no Kata 牧の方 (1896) ("Makino Kata", "1897")
	Kiri Hitoha 桐一葉 (1894) ("1898")
John Milton (1608–1674)	Paradise Lost (1667)
Bakin Takizawa 曲亭馬琴 (1767–1848)	
Bimyō Yamada 山田美妙 (1868–1910) ("Taketarō Yamada")	Natsu Kodachi 夏木立 (1888) ("Summer Forest")
Rohan Kōda 幸田露伴 (1867–1947) ("Roban Koda")	
Saikaku Ihara 井原西鶴 (1642–1693)	
Kōyō Ozaki 尾崎紅葉 (1868–1903)	Tajō Takon 多情多恨 (1896) ("Much Passion, Much Enmity")
John Webster (1580–1632)	Appius and Virginia (1654)
Émile Zola (1840–1902)	
Ōgai Mori 森鷗外 (1862–1922)	
Sōhō Tokutomi 徳富蘇峰 (1863–1957)	
Katsunan Kuga 陸羯南 (1857–1907) ("Minoru Kuga")	
Victor Hugo (1802–1885)	Notre Dame (1831)
Alphonse Daudet (1840–1897)	The Nabob (1877)
George Eliot (1819–1880)	Romola (1862–1863)
Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804–1864)	Scarlet Letter (1850)
Maurice Maeterlinck (1862–1949)	
Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882)	
Thomas Carlyle (1795–1881)	
(2) Modern Japanese Women Writers (Noguchi 1904d)	
Ichiyō Higuchi 樋口一葉 (1872–1896)	Nigorie にごりえ (1895) ("Nigoriye (Dusty Pool)")
	Warekara われから (1896) ("From Myself")
	Jūsanya 十三夜 (1895) ("The Thirteenth Night")
Sei Shōnagon 清少納言 (966–1025) ("Seisho Nagon")	
Nakajima Shōen 中島湘煙 (1864–1901) ("Baroness Nakajima")	

Shizuko Wakamatsu 若松賤子 (1864–1896) (“Mrs. Iwamoto”)	
Ōson Sakurai 桜井鷗村 (1872–1929) (“Hikoichiro Sakurai”)	
Francis Hodgson Burnett (1849–1924) (“Mrs. Brunett”)	Little Lord Fauntleroy (1886)
Alfred Tennyson (1809–1892)	Enoch Arden (1864)
Adelaide Anne Procter (1825–1864) (“Mrs. Procter”)	Sailor Boy (1858)
Kaho Miyake 三宅花圃 (1868–1943) (“Kaho Tanabe”)	
Usurai Kitada 北田薄氷 (1876–1900) (“Usurai Kajita”)	Oni senbiki 鬼千疋 (1894) (“The Thousand Devils”)
Naoko Ōtsuka 大塚楠緒子 (1875–1910) (“Mrs. Otsuka”)	
Kimiko Koganei 小金井喜美子 (1871–1956)	
(3) Japanese Humour and Caricature (Noguchi 1904e)	
Monzaemon Chikamatsu 近松門左衛門 (1653–1725) (“Monzayemon Chikamatsu”)	
Bakin Takizawa 滝谷馬琴 (1767–1848)	
Ikku Jippensha 十返舎一九 (1765–1831)	
Sanba Shikitei 式亭三馬 (1776–1822)	
Shinji Minami 南新二 (1835–1895)	
Tokuchi Kōdō 幸堂得知 (1843–1913)	
Kōson Aeba 饗庭篁村 (1855–1922) (“Koso Ageba”)	
(4) Japanese Women in Literature (Noguchi 1904f)	
	Manyōshū 万葉集 (“Manyoshiu”, “Collection of Ten Thousand Leaves”)
Murasaki Shikibu 紫式部	Genji Monogatari 源氏物語 (1008)
Henry Fielding (1707–1754)	
Samuel Richardson (1689–1761)	
William Makepeace Thackeray (1811–1863)	
Sei Shōnagon 清少納言 (966–1025) (“Seisho Nagon”)	Makura no Sōshi 枕草子 (1001) (“Makura Zoshi (Pillow Sketches)”)
Ono no Komachi 小野小町	
Izumi Shikibu 和泉式部 (“Tsumi Shikibu”)	
Ki no Tsurayuki 紀貫之 (“Kino Tsurayuki”)	Tosa Nikki 土佐日記 (594) (“Tosa Nikko”)
	Ōkagami 大鏡
	Masukagami 増鏡

	Mizukagami 水鏡
Abutsu-ni 阿仏尼 (1222–1283) (“Lady Abutsu”)	Izayoi Nikki 十六夜日記 (“1277”)
Matsuo Bashō 松尾 芭蕉 (1644–1694)	
Kaga no Chiyo 加賀千代 (1703–1775) (“Chiyo of Kaga”)	
Chigetsu-ni 智月尼 (1633–1718) (“nun Chigetsu”)	
Ichiyō Higuchi 樋口一葉 (1872–1896)	
Kimiko Koganei 小金井喜美子 (1871–1956) (“Kimi Koganei”)	
Kaho Miyake 三宅花圃 (1868–1943) (“Kaho”)	