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Reading the Literary Language of Japan's Long 1930s

By Brian Riley Hurley

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Japanese Language

in

the Graduate Division

of the

University of California, Berkeley

Committee in Charge:

Professor Alan Tansman, Chair
Professor Dan O'Neill
Professor Andrew Barshay
Professor Harry Harootunian

Fall 2014

Abstract

Reading the Literary Language of Japan's Long 1930s

by

Brian Riley Hurley

Doctor of Philosophy in Japanese Language

University of California, Berkeley

Professor Alan Tansman, Chair

This dissertation examines the cultural politics of literary language in Japan from the 1920s through the 1940s. It focuses on how writers in these years gave concrete verbal form to abstract ideas and otherwise unarticulated sensibilities circulating in the ideological field of the time. My analysis builds toward the claim that close readings of literary language from the period can guide a broader rethinking of a moment in Japanese cultural history that is often understood in relation to a cataclysmic endpoint. Looking back, the collapse of the Japanese empire, the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and the Japanese surrender that ended the Pacific War all seem to indicate that the Japanese defeat in 1945 signaled a nearly totalized end of an era that began in the 1920s, when my study commences. And in many ways, of course, *it did*. But because the sense of an ending to this period is so seemingly obvious, so indisputable, it threatens to make disappear the wider range of cultural possibilities and political perils that writers of that earlier time had sensed, if not fully understood. As a way of bringing some of these possibilities (and their perils) to light, I set aside the sense of an ending in 1945, and examine how literary language took shape within the unresolved tensions and unsettled borders of a past present unaware of its future. This approach leads me to work outside the linear models of literary history that have framed texts within a chronology of events whose ending is always pending, and to instead focus on how literary language indexed thoughts and feelings that circulated within a synchronic cultural field that I call "Japan's long 1930s."

My analysis is structured around three dialogues, each one of which features an author and an intellectual. My readings of these dialogues begin by examining the cultural criticism of the literary luminary alongside that of the politically allied public intellectual. By combining the perspectives of writers and thinkers, I show how the problems of literary practice and language were variously implicated in broader understandings of the cultural and political crises of the period. In the latter half of each analysis, I examine how the featured literary writer used the medium of aesthetic language to "redistribute the sensible," as Jacques Rancière would have it, giving form to the sensations of new communal configurations, emotional economies and cultural sensibilities that expository writing of the time could describe, but never evoke. I treat these literary utterances as events rather than as artifacts, and examine how they bring forth a way of sensing the cultural possibilities and political perils that cultural actors of the moment perceived.

Across the three dialogues examined in this dissertation, then, the tie that binds is the question of how the literary imagination of 1920s-1940s Japan simultaneously elucidated and circulated various forms of cultural politics in literary language. In chapter one, I examine how linguist Yamada Yoshio (1875-1958) and novelist Tanizaki Jun'ichirō (1886-1965) understood classical Japanese language to preserve an otherwise inaccessible native cultural essence. Their critiques held that by the 1930s, the Japanese language had become an Anglicized aberration almost entirely cut off from centuries of more authentic and auratic usages. I argue that in response, they sought to counteract what they viewed as the inauthenticity of contemporary language (*genbun-itchi*) by constructing a classically patterned alternative modern vernacular in their 1939 modern translation of *Genji monogatari* (*The Tale of Genji*, 11th c.).

In chapter two, I analyze how Marxist philosopher Tosaka Jun (1900-1945) and Marxist poet Nakano Shigeharu (1902-1979) argued that "cultural fascists" had corrupted language in order to counterfeit a philosophy of Japanese superiority. I focus on their criticism of philology and hermeneutics, noting that this aspect of their thought put them into implicit conversation with their contemporaries Mikhail Bakhtin and Theodor Adorno, and at odds with Tanizaki and Yamada. I then analyze how Nakano's poetry countered the jargon of Japanese fascism with a language rooted in everyday life.

Chapters three and four focus on how philosopher Miki Kiyoshi (1897-1945) and novelist Yokomitsu Riichi (1898-1947) conceptualized a new literary language as part of their broader visions of a cosmopolitan colonial modernity. I split my analysis of their writings into two separate but related chapters in order to indicate that their dialogue was somewhat looser than those between Tanizaki and Yamada, Tosaka and Nakano, without, at the same time, allowing the differences in their writings to occlude the deeper similarities in their sensibilities. In chapter three, I focus on how Miki's and Yokomitsu's expository writings conceptualized poetic language in terms of an avowedly non-national, supposedly apolitical humanism. I observe that their writings on the logos and pathos of poetic language pointed to a cosmopolitan notion of culture unbounded by national allegiance and ideological dogma.

Next, in chapter four, I read Yokomitsu's long novel *Ryoshū* (*The Melancholy of Travel*, 1937-46) as an aesthetic evocation of the cosmopolitan humanism described by their essays, noting that Miki's contemporaneous writings for the Shōwa Kenkyūkai mobilized the same concept in the name of Japanese colonial dominion over greater East Asia.

In the Epilogue, finally, I consider the 1950s afterlife of the literary and intellectual culture described in the four preceding chapters by examining how Edwin McClellan's 1957 English translation of Natsume Sōseki's *Kokoro* (1914) was received by a circle of conservative intellectuals in America who knew little about Japan. I bring this study to a close by noting that the reception of McClellan's translation of *Kokoro* in 1950s America suggests that in the ever new forms of cultural and intellectual life, the ever same imbrications of literary aesthetics and cultural ideology endured, carried forth in acts of reading and writing that never climax or culminate, but rather undulate in the currents of their own contemporary present.

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents.

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In my first year of graduate school, Dennis Washburn's seminar on *Genji monogatari* and Mack Horton's on *renga* laid the foundation for the first chapter of this dissertation; in my last year, Keith Vincent's suggestions for revising and expanding a conference paper guided the work that has become its Epilogue. I count myself lucky to have been able to develop my ideas in dialogue with these scholars. My *senpai* at Berkeley Andrew Leong, Pat Noonan and Paul Roquet provided examples of the best sorts of scholarly sensibility without which my graduate student experience would have been much poorer. I also thank Tony Chambers for his support over the years.

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I have often leaned on the kindness of friends as I have worked on this project. Elizabeth Roig provided much support, and I send my thanks to her. I also thank the Kino family in Hakusan for always greeting me warmly in Japan. I am grateful for the friendship and encouragement of George Lazopoulos, John Creamer, Jeff Koller and Max Ward. Special thanks go to Namiko Kunimoto for always being supportive, and for always having time to read another draft of my writing. I also send my thanks to my fellow graduate students at Berkeley, and in particular to Michael Craig, Marianne Tarcov, David Humphrey, Lisa Reade and Chelsea Ward. Avy Valladares and Daisuke Muro, my neighbors on Shattuck Avenue during my last year at

Berkeley, provided much needed distractions, each one of which brought to light more of their charming idiosyncrasies.

To Shelby Oxenford—you're the best, and I'll just leave it at that.

I dedicate this dissertation to my parents, Tom and Peg Hurley, who are both teachers by trade and selfless souls by nature. I thank them for their gentle inspiration.

Having thanked several of those who have helped me with this dissertation, I must also note that any weakness of argumentation and errors of analysis in the pages that follow remain my responsibility, and mine alone.

Parts of this dissertation have already been published. An earlier version of chapter one appeared under the title "Toward a New Modern Vernacular: Tanizaki Jun'ichirō, Yamada Yoshio and Shōwa Restoration Thought" in *The Journal of Japanese Studies* 39:2 (Summer 2013). A version of the Epilogue appeared in Japanese translation under the title *Seishokusha to yogensha: Sōseki no kigo o yomu* ("The Priest and the Prophet: Reading the Sign of 'Sōseki'") in *Bungaku* (November-December 2014).

Unless otherwise noted, all translations are my own.

Introduction:

Reading the Literary Language of Japan's Long 1930s

This dissertation examines the cultural politics of literary language in Japan from the 1920s through the 1940s. It focuses on how writers in these years gave concrete verbal form to abstract ideas and otherwise unarticulated sensibilities circulating in the ideological field of the time. My analysis builds toward the claim that close readings of literary language from the period can guide a broader rethinking of a moment in Japanese cultural history that is often understood in relation to a cataclysmic endpoint. Looking back, the collapse of the Japanese empire, the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and the Japanese surrender that ended the Pacific War all seem to indicate that the Japanese defeat in 1945 signaled a nearly totalized end of an era that began in the 1920s, when my study commences. And in many ways, of course, *it did*. But because the sense of an ending to this period is so seemingly obvious, so indisputable, it threatens to make disappear the wider range of cultural possibilities and political perils that writers of that earlier time had sensed, if not fully understood. As a way of bringing some of these possibilities (and their perils) to light, I set aside the sense of an ending in 1945, and examine how literary language took shape within the unresolved tensions and unsettled borders of a past present unaware of its future. This approach leads me to work outside the linear models of literary history that have framed texts within a chronology of events whose ending is always pending, and to instead focus on how literary language indexed thoughts and feelings that circulated within a synchronic cultural field that I call "Japan's long 1930s."

As a study of literature and cultural politics in 1920s-1940s Japan, this dissertation is part of a larger conversation to which several other studies have also contributed. Surveying this vast and various body of scholarship, a more or less stable interpretive line seems to emerge: namely, that the liberal ideals of the late 19th century Meiji Enlightenment, which promised greater affluence, human freedom and civilizational development in the modern era, produced irresolvable tensions that had by the 1920s become unbearable, and that in response, a range of cultural actors in the 1930s tried to "overcome modernity" through appeals to various forms of nationalistic and fascistic collectivism, all of which paved the way to war and, ultimately, defeat in 1945. In more concise terms, Alan Tansman has described the crisis of 1920s-1930s Japan as a "revolt against modernity" enacted by cultural actors who felt that they had been "betrayed by modernity's promise."[1]

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[1] Tansman has summarized the "revolt against modernity" as follows:

> In the 1930s, the 1920s ideology of cosmopolitan liberalism and its ideal of the integrity of the free individual were already losing ground to a political ideal of communitarians and a rhetoric of authenticity that called for restoring a sense of true "Japaneseness." Intellectuals argued for the abandonment of the belief in individuality—an abstract, modern notion that festered at the core of the crisis—and searched for an identity grounded in native culture and life or mediated through absolute identification with the "people (*minzoku*)" and the state. The individual was viewed not only as selfish, but also as an inadequate source of meaning, while the "people" and the sate became idealized as the sources of

The literary occupies a central place in studies of this period because part of the "revolt against modernity" associated with the age (and some might argue the greater part) was a revolt that aimed to resolve a crisis of representation. In 1920s Japan, as elsewhere, writers and intellectuals lost faith in the capacity of received representational forms to meaningfully render lived experience in the modern world. They sensed that language and narrative, symbol and image, memory and perception had all fractured under the strain of the discontinuities borne by the destabilizing experience of "modern life" and of modernist art.[2] As Harry Harootunian has pointed out, the "crisis of modernity" that gripped Japan in the 1920s-1940s was a crisis "over the stability and reliability of forms of representation" and over "the forms most capable of relaying and communicating the lived experience—the experience of genuine difference—and securing accessibility to a memory that was being shattered into splinters by speed, shock, and sensation."[3] In this context, the literary, and the literati, became directly implicated in the search for new verbal forms that might authentically represent lived experience, and in the widespread desire to rebuild cultural meaning within a new aesthetic idiom. For it was in part the fashioners of words, and the makers of narrative, who promised to render contemporary life in rejuvenated, even enchanted ways that might soothe the spirit and psyche of an age "overcome by modernity."

As a way of building on earlier studies that have established this scholarly consensus, this dissertation brings new materials and methods to bear on our collective conversation about the relationship between literary language and cultural politics in this period. In the chapters that follow, my close readings of literary writing are guided by a group of rarely studied essays about aesthetic language that were composed by a range of prominent writers and thinkers. These expository writings about literature shed light on how public intellectuals, philosophers, novelists and poets of various ideological orientations forged an implicit dialogue as contemporaries concerned with the question of how literary language mediated and metabolized the cultural crises of their moment.[4] They also elucidate previously unremarked upon dialogues between

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meaningful action and identity. Intellectuals critiqued modernity as an insufficient vehicle for either national or personal identity: it had led to a dead end that needed to be overcome. The revolt against modernity registered by writers was a revolt of writers betrayed by modernity's promise." (Alan Tansman. "Introduction: The Culture of Japanese Fascism," in *The Culture of Japanese Fascism*, Alan Tansman, ed., (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2009), pp. 8-9).

[2] Harry Harootunian, among others, has described the experience and fantasy of "modern life" in terms of fracture and discontinuity: "In Japan and elsewhere, modernity was seen as a spectacle of ceaseless change (the narrative of historical progress and law of capitalist expansion) and the specter of unrelieved uncertainty introduced by a dominant historical culture no longer anchored in fixed values but in fantasy and desire." (Harootunian, Harry. *Overcome By Modernity: History, Culture, and Community in Interwar Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), p. xix.). See Harootunian, "The Fantasy of Modern Life," in *Overcome by Modernity: History Culture and Community in Interwar Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), pp. 3-33.

[3] Harootunian, Harry. *Overcome By Modernity: History, Culture, and Community in Interwar Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), p. xxv.

[4] One study that guides my grouping together of contemporaries that are not always considered in the same context is Harootunian's *Overcome by Modernity: History, Culture and Community*

writers working in the aesthetic sphere and the agents of empire working for the wartime state, and therefore show that in addition to the atmospheric complicity of literary aesthetics with wartime ideology, there were also concrete connections between the dynamos of the literary world and the intellectuals who authored the narratives of empire for the imperial regime.

As I examine the confluence of politics and poetics in the imaginations of contemporaries, I read their writings within the contextual coordinates of what I call "Japan's long 1930s." This appellation refers to an indeterminate cultural temporality in 1920s-1940s Japan without identifying any concrete moment of beginning or ending. It therefore frames my analyses of texts and ideas in relation to what Mary Favret has called a "a *sense* of time that, caught in the most unsettled sort of present, without knowledge of its outcome, cannot know its own borders."[5] Reading in the context of Japan's long 1930s trains my analyses on the instability of a past present, rather than on the metered chronology of a closed and complete period whose ending is always pending. It figures the world of the contemporaries that I examine in the chapters that follow as a planar cultural field populated by co-present possibilities, rather than as a linear timeline bounded by a catalytic beginning and a known-in-advance ending. The payoff of this approach is a reckoning with how the cultural promise that writers and thinkers of the time perceived emerged from the same plane of possibilities as did the most dangerous cultural politics of the age. The remainder of this introduction describes in greater detail how I put expository writings about literature, as well as literary practices *per se*, into dialogue with the methods of non-linear scholarly narrative.

Literary Writing: Theory and Practice, Politics and Poetics

A little more than a century ago, Japanese novelist Natsume Sōseki (1867-1916) completed the treatise *Bungakuron* (A Theory of Literature, 1907), in which he set out to define what literature is and does. Knowing that he would have to explain the poetics of literary language with only the prosaic mechanisms of expository argument, Sōseki recalled that before he began to write *Bungakuron*, he "shut away all of my books of literature in a wicker trunk. I believed that to read literature in order to know what kind of a thing literature is would be a method akin to washing blood with blood."[6] Sōseki suggested that expository writing about

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in Interwar Japan (2000), which Harootunian described in part as an effort "to juxtapose writers and texts to each other that until now have not been put into such relationships, even though they were all contemporaries, in either Japanese or non-Japanese writing. More often than not, they have been treated as if they occupied different spaces and even temporalities, restricted to narrow discursive and disciplinary domains. By placing them into direct relationship with each other because of their concerns for the question of modernity, they reaffirm the premise that modernity itself is our primary temporalizing category." (xxxi).

[5] Favret, Mary A. *War at a Distance: Romanticism and the Making of Modern Wartime* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), p. 18.

[6] Natsume Sōseki. *Bungakuron*, in *Natsume Sōseki zenshū* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1995), vol. 14, p. 9. Daniel Cuong O'Neill has framed this quotation as a point of departure for his analysis of Sōseki's *Bungakuron*, noting that it indicates Sōseki's sense that the "mastery of literature is to be had, we are told in the preface [to *Bungakuron*], by stepping outside of literature into the domain of criticism." See D. Cuong O'Neill, "Tragedy, Masochism, and Other Worldly Pleasures: Reading Natsume Sōseki's *Bungakuron*," in *Discourse* (Spring and Fall 2006) 28.2 & 3, pp. 78-97.

literature, or *bungakuron*, is a circular paradox because it happens in the same medium (language) as does the aesthetic expression that it aims to critique (literature). From this perspective, the literary theorist, critic or historian who uses language to talk about language engages in a self-exhausting exercise trapped in its own circuit of self-reference. If this was true even for Sōseki, who was himself a master of the literary craft and possessed of a rarified aesthetic imagination, then expository writing about literature would appear to be a hopeless narrative endeavor.

Sōseki's comments might seem to mark an inauspicious point of departure for a dissertation about the literary imagination of 1920s-1940s Japan. One of the premises of this study, though, is that the tensions of using language to talk about language that vexed Sōseki can in fact be understood as productive instead of paralyzing. For the insights of Sōseki's *Bungakuron* stand beside those of other intellectuals, cultural critics and literary writers who have worked within the paradoxes of literary theory and criticism to great effect, suggesting that a degree of self-contradiction ("washing blood with blood") does not prevent expository writing about literature from becoming a meaningful narrative mode in dialogue with literary practice *per se*. With this in mind, I examine how expository reflections on literary language that were composed by novelists and poets, philosophers and intellectuals in 1920s-1940s Japan can inform close readings of contemporaneous literary texts.

My analysis is structured around three dialogues, each one of which features an author and an intellectual. My readings of these dialogues begin by examining the cultural criticism of the literary luminary alongside that of the politically allied public intellectual. By combining the perspectives of writers and thinkers, I show how the problems of literary practice and language were variously implicated in broader understandings of the cultural and political crises of the period. In the latter half of each analysis, I examine how the featured literary writer used the medium of aesthetic language to "redistribute the sensible," as Jacques Rancière would have it, giving form to the sensations of new communal configurations, emotional economies and cultural sensibilities that expository writing of the time could describe, but never evoke.[7] I treat these literary utterances as events rather than as artifacts, and examine how they bring forth a

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[7] In *Dissensus: On Politics and Aesthetics*, Rancière described aesthetic expression as a way of bringing forth new ways of thinking, feeling and seeing—in short, of *sensing*—the reality of social life and history. In this context, art "redistributes the sensible" by breaking apart the received grammar that had previously allowed culture, society and history to make sense, and then reformulating it in new ways that allow for the relations among representation and reality, self and society, time and space to be sensed anew.

As Rancière put it: "What characterizes the mainstream fiction of the police order is that it passes itself off as the real, that it feigns to draw a clear-cut line between what belongs to the self-evidence of the real and what belongs to the field of appearances, representations, opinions and utopias. Consensus means precisely that the sensory is given as univocal. Political and artistic fictions introduce dissensus by hollowing out that 'real' and multiplying it in a polemical way. The practice of fiction undoes, and then re-articulates, connections between signs and images, images and times, and signs and spaces, framing a given sense of reality, a given 'common sense'. It is a practice that invents new trajectories between what can be seen, and what can be said and what can be done."(Jacques Rancière. *Dissensus: On Politics and Aesthetics*, Steven Corcoran, trans. (London: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2010) p. 149).

way of sensing the cultural possibilities and political perils that cultural actors of the moment perceived.

Across the three dialogues examined in the pages that follow, then, the tie that binds is the question of how the literary imagination of 1920s-1940s Japan simultaneously elucidated and circulated various forms of cultural politics in literary language. In chapter one, I examine how linguist Yamada Yoshio (1875-1958) and novelist Tanizaki Jun'ichirō (1886-1965) understood classical Japanese language to preserve an otherwise inaccessible native cultural essence. Their critiques held that by the 1930s, the Japanese language had become an Anglicized aberration almost entirely cut off from centuries of more authentic and auratic usages. I argue that in response, they sought to counteract what they viewed as the inauthenticity of contemporary language (*genbun-itchi*) by constructing a classically patterned alternative modern vernacular in their 1939 modern translation of *Genji monogatari* (*The Tale of Genji*, 11th c.). In chapter two, I analyze how Marxist philosopher Tosaka Jun (1900-1945) and Marxist poet Nakano Shigeharu (1902-1979) argued that "cultural fascists" had corrupted language in order to counterfeit a philosophy of Japanese superiority. I focus on their criticism of philology and hermeneutics, noting that this aspect of their thought put them into implicit conversation with their contemporaries Mikhail Bakhtin and Theodor Adorno, and at odds with Tanizaki and Yamada. I then analyze how Nakano's poetry countered the jargon of Japanese fascism with a language rooted in everyday life.

Chapters three and four focus on how philosopher Miki Kiyoshi (1897-1945) and novelist Yokomitsu Riichi (1898-1947) conceptualized a new literary language as part of their broader visions of a cosmopolitan colonial modernity. I split my analysis of their writings into two separate but related chapters in order to indicate that their dialogue was somewhat looser than those between Tanizaki and Yamada, Tosaka and Nakano, without, at the same time, allowing the differences in their writings to occlude the deeper similarities in their sensibilities. In chapter three, I focus on how Miki's and Yokomitsu's expository writings conceptualized poetic language in terms of an avowedly non-national, supposedly apolitical humanism. I observe that their writings on the logos and pathos of poetic language pointed to a cosmopolitan notion of culture unbounded by national allegiance and ideological dogma. Next, in chapter four, I read Yokomitsu's long novel *Ryoshū* (*The Melancholy of Travel*, 1937-46) as an aesthetic evocation of the cosmopolitan humanism described by their essays, noting that Miki's contemporaneous writings for the Shōwa Kenkyūkai mobilized the same concept in the name of Japanese colonial dominion over greater East Asia. This analysis leads into the Epilogue, in which I consider the 1950s afterlife of the literary and intellectual culture described in the four preceding chapters by examining how Edwin McClellan's 1957 English translation of Natsume Sōseki's *Kokoro* (1914) was received by a circle of conservative intellectuals in America who knew little about Japan.

Each of the four chapters shows that its paired figures forged a coherent dialogue about how language mediated the cultural political crises that shaped the critical and aesthetic imaginations of the time. But given their differences in background and political investment, not one of them would have recognized his own work to have been part of a larger cultural endeavor shared by all five of the others. After all, their identities ranged from nativist to cosmopolitan, and Marxist to nationalist, and many of their texts that I examine combine aspects of more than one of these and other ideological orientations. Amidst this plurality of perspective, I bring these six figures together because their differences in political and aesthetic orientation allow me to broadly consider Rancière's hypothesis that literary fictions are not merely fictional, but are rather structures that make meaning in a polemical, and therefore political, way. As Rancière has

observed: "Fiction, as re-framed by the aesthetic regime of art, means far more than the constructing of an imaginary world[…]. It is not a term that designates the imaginary as opposed to the real; it involves the re-framing of the 'real', or the framing of a dissensus. Fiction is a way of changing existing modes of sensory presentations and forms of enunciation; of varying frames, scales and rhythms; and of building a new relationships between reality and appearance, the individual and the collective."[8] From this perspective, the politics of literature has to do not only (or even primarily) with the personal investments of an author, but with the ways in which the author's language variously reveals and conceals aspects of the sensible, the "real," bringing forth "new trajectories between what can be seen, what can be said and what can be done."[9] Working from this perspective, my focus is on how the literary imaginations of six contemporaries mapped the distributions of the sensible within their shared present, and on how their writings on language and politics colluded and collided as coeval (rather than coterminous) utterances within the same dialogic sphere.

In the writings of a Marxist poet like Nakano and a modernist cosmopolitan like Yokomitsu, a concern with language and politics may well be obvious. But the same cannot be said of the others: Tanizaki has almost never been discussed as a participant in the political dialogues of his age, and Yamada has rarely been studied in any context; Tosaka and Miki, by contrast, are both well-known thinkers who are always understood to have been deeply involved in the politics of their moment, but neither has often been read as a lucid critic of language and literature. Nevertheless, I bring these six figures together out of the conviction that they were all sensitive interpreters of how literary signs circulate cultural ideology. In different ways, their writings on literary culture all implicitly proceeded from the conceptual premise, enumerated by Mikhail Bakhtin, that we should understand "language not as a system of abstract grammatical categories, but rather language conceived as ideologically saturated, language as a world view, even as a concrete opinion[.]"[10] Bakhtin elaborated on this point under the pseudonym "V.N. Volosinov," noting that language is necessarily implicated in the politics of a cultural field "outside itself":

> A sign does not simply exist as a part of a reality—it reflects and refracts another reality. Therefore, it may distort that reality or be true to it, or may perceive it from a special point of view, and so forth. Every sign is subject to the criteria of ideological evaluation (i.e., whether it is true, false, correct, fair, good, etc.) The domain of ideology coincides with the domain of signs. They equate with one another. Wherever a sign is present, ideology is present, too. *Everything ideological possesses semiotic value.*[11]

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[8] Rancière, Jacques. *Dissensus: On Politics and Aesthetics*, Steven Corcoran, trans. (London: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2010), p. 141.
[9] Rancière, Jacques. *Dissensus: On Politics and Aesthetics*, Steven Corcoran, trans. (London: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2010), p. 149.
[10] Bakhtin, Mikhail. "Discourse in the Novel," in *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, Michael Holquist, ed., Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist, trans. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), p. 271.
[11] As Bakhtin has pointed out under the penname "V.N Volosinov": "Everything ideological possesses meaning: it represents, depicts, or stands for something lying outside itself. In other words, it is a *sign*. *Without signs there is no ideology*." Volosinov, V.N. *Marxism and the*

Bakhtin suggests that the verbal signs that make up language are not at any secondary remove from the political (as if language were merely a complicit catalyst that leads to real politics); rather, he suggests that language is one place where politics happen *per se*. Taking up the implications of Bakhtin's observation, I examine how six contemporaries in 1920s-1940s Japan "subjected" the signs of literary language "to the criteria of ideological evaluation," and then I do the same to their own writings. As I read their essays about the literary next to concrete literary practices, I understand the artistic valence of aesthetic writing and the ideological aspect of literary language to be mutually constitutive. In turn, this approach to reading the relations between language and politics in 1920s-1940s Japan leads to the larger arguments of this dissertation about how to think about and narrate the broader dynamics of a cultural field that I refer to as "Japan's long 1930s."

Reading in the Context of Cataclysm: Japan's Long 1930s

In other studies, the tendency has been to describe the relationship between the literary history and cultural politics of interwar Japan in terms of a diachronic movement that begins with 1920s modernism and courses through 1930s nationalism and/or fascism on a trajectory headed for the catastrophes of 1945. For example, Tansman's *The Aesthetics of Japanese Fascism* (2009) focuses on the beauty and danger of "fascist moments" in 1930s Japanese literature, which he argues emerged from "Modernist Beginnings" in the fragmented, musical language of Akutagawa Ryūnosuke's writings of the 1920s. Seiji Lippit's *Topographies of Japanese Modernism* (2002) also begins by analyzing an anxious modernist moment in the 1920s, and his approach proceeds through analyses of Akutagawa's writing on an analytical trajectory leading toward what Lippit calls the "melancholic nationalism" of Yokomitsu's last novel, *Ryoshū* (The Melancholy of Travel, 1937-1946). Working in a different (though related) vein, Leslie Pincus' *Authenticating Culture in Imperial Japan: Kuki Shūzō and the Rise of National Aesthetics* (1996) has pointed to the complex 1920s dialogue between philosopher Kuki Shūzō and his European counterparts, a dialogue that she argues subsequently contributed to the "rise of national aesthetics" in the 1930s that placed itself at the disposal of Japanese fascism.

All of these studies powerfully inform my own understanding of literature and politics in 1920s-1940s Japan, and in most cases, the arguments that I make relate to those of other scholars by degrees of adjacency, not contrast. In chapter one, for example, I examine writers who were anxious about the onslaughts of "the West" in ways that resonate with Pincus' analysis of Kuki Shūzō, and in chapter three, I focus on cosmopolitan figures whose writings at times contributed to what Tansman has described as an ambience of cultural fascism. In the course of my own analyses, though, I also aim to complement the approaches of Pincus, Lippit, Tansman and other scholars who have narrated the literary and cultural political history of this period in terms of a diachronic transition that began with 1920s modernism and ended with 1930s nationalism or fascism. Moving in a different direction, I take up some of the implications of Harootunian's observation that "modernism and fascism were contemporary to each other, sharing the temporality of simultaneity and constantly imbricating each other in such a way as to constitute a

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Philosophy of Language, trans., Ladislav Matejka and I.R. Titunik (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973), p. 9. Emphasis in original. The block quotation is from Volosinov, V.N. *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, trans., Ladislav Matejka and I.R. Titunik (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973), p. 10. Emphasis in original.

network of thick intertexts."[12] Harootunian has argued that "fascism provided a kind of inner lining to modernism" in 1920s-1940s Japan, and in my own study of literature and politics in this period, I examine how fascism and modernism—along with their contemporaries nationalism, Marxism and cosmopolitanism—acted on the literary imagination of the time as mutually imbricated, contemporaneous cultural sensibilities.[13]

In order to frame the confluence of possibility and peril that these sensibilities circulated within the literary culture of 1920s-1940s Japan, I refer to this period as "Japan's long 1930s." As a method of periodization, "Japan's long 1930s" sets aside the linear implications of the more familiar appellations "interwar" and "prewar," which necessarily imply a sense of an ending in 1945 because they refer to a chronology that concludes with the Japanese military defeat and the end of the Pacific War. To be sure, thinking of these years as a "prewar" or "interwar" period bounded by Japan's defeat in 1945 is not unreasonable: after all, what we know about the course of history we cannot unknow, and the privileges of retrospection—of knowing how it all turned out *in the end*—cannot but inform the scholarly imagination. But at the same time, it is also true that many cultural actors of the period understood their present as one of radical open-endedness, and they wrote and thought with the contingencies of their own contemporary moment in mind. From their perspective, the very notion of a "prewar" or "interwar" period would be an anachronism inasmuch as these appellations are the products of a retrospective gaze sensing an ending in 1945 which never would have been sensible to writers living in the moment. As a corrective, "Japan's long 1930s" provides an interpretive frame that puts texts and ideas into simultaneous dialogue with one anther, rather than locating them within a temporal hierarchy of earlier cause and subsequent effect. It foregrounds the contemporaneity of vastly different cultural critiques, and the coevality of various literary aesthetic expressions, and therefore guards against the temptation to evaluate the implications of literary writing in relation to the known-in-advance endpoint of a "prewar" or "interwar" period.

My conception of Japan's long 1930s draws on a broader critique of teleological thinking and narrative closure that has developed in a range of other contexts. In his iconic essay "The Storyteller," Walter Benjamin suggested that smooth narration between beginnings and endings is only possible after the fact, once the indeterminacy of lived experience has been eliminated by the finality of a stable endpoint—such as death. In response to the statement "a man who dies at the age of thirty-five is at every point of his life a man who dies at the age of thirty-five," Benjamin wrote:

> Nothing is more dubious than this sentence—but for the sole reason that the tense is wrong. A man—so says the truth that was meant here—who died at thirty-five will appear to *remembrance* at every point in his life as a man who dies at the age of thirty-five. In other words, the statement that makes no sense for real life becomes indisputable for remembered life.[14]

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[12] Harootunian, Harry. *Overcome by Modernity: History Culture and Community in Interwar Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), p. xxxi.
[13] Harootunian, Harry. *Overcome by Modernity: History Culture and Community in Interwar Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), p. xxiii.
[14] Benjamin, Walter. "The Storyteller," in *Illuminations*, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken Books, 1968), p. 100. Emphasis in original.

Benjamin's point was that narrative endings tend to wield great authority and explanatory power, sometimes to an excessive extent. In his view, diachronic narratives may trace a convincing trajectory toward an inarguable moment of closure—such as death—but in so doing, they sometimes obscure the contingent life experience of their explanatory object. When this happens, "the statement that makes no sense for real life becomes indisputable for remembered life."

Benjamin's observations in "The Storyteller" resonate with Frank Kermode's critique of linear narration in the novel, which identified the compulsion to link beginnings and endings in sequential relation as part of the "bad faith" of novelistic form itself. In *The Sense of an Ending: Studies in the Theory of Fiction*, Kermode pointed out that "it seems […] that in 'making sense' of the world we still feel a need, harder than ever to satisfy because of an accumulated skepticism, to experience that concordance of beginning, middle, and end which is the essence of our explanatory fictions[.]"[15] Kermode drew attention to the uncomfortable truth that the pleasure afforded by linear narrative concordance is founded on uneasy compromises. In particular, he pointed out that the drive for narrative order produces, rather than resolves, a tension between "paradigmatic form and contingent reality." Endings may provide pleasing narrative consonance, but Kermode pointed out that such pleasure was the product of "bad faith" (Jean-Paul Sartre's *mauvaise foi*) insofar as it derived from the false stability of representation over any authentic feeling for real life. Kermode's critique suggests that the "sense of an ending" that affords narrative order also results in distorting the contingency of experience. In some cases, then, the "sense of an ending" makes no sense at all.

Benjamin and Kermode focused on narrative in the novel, but their insights carry implications for cultural historical accounts, too. Their critiques would caution that in both cases, indisputable endings can absorb earlier feelings of indeterminacy and instability into a line of sequential and certain progress. When this happens, endings sometimes stop being just endings, and become foregone conclusions—the only outcomes that were ever really possible all along. From this perspective, the problem with narratives structured in relation to conclusive closures is not that they are unconvincing, but rather the opposite: that they can be so convincing that they obliterate a field of possibilities that were alive but subsequently died, of perceived perils that seemed real but never actually materialized, and of imagined futures that were once feasible but which ultimately never came to pass. Judged against the contingencies of lived experience in the present, stable narrative structures and conclusive endings are sometimes altogether *too convincing*.

One of the tasks of this study, then, is to find a method for mitigating the corrosive influence of narrative and historiographical endpoints as I read the literary language of a period whose own cataclysmic ending is nearly inescapable. As a point of departure, I draw on the insights of literary critics Gary Saul Morson and Michael André Bernstein, who have proposed "sideshadowing" (a neologism that they coined in opposition to "*fore*shadowing") as a way of working through the methods of literary criticism to represent aspects of the contingency of historical experience. Morson and Bernstein have explained sideshadowing as a critical sensibility that works against the fallacies of teleological thinking by remaining attuned to the conflicting possibilities and indeterminate temporality of moments that seem in retrospect to be bounded by indisputable endings. Whereas the logic of *fore*shadowing fixes meaning to a stable narrative endpoint, consolidating explanatory power in moments of climax and conclusion,

[15] Kermode, Frank. *The Sense of an Ending: Studies in the Theory of Fiction* (Cary, NC: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 35-36.

sideshadowing understands the past as an open-ended kind of present whose future remains deferred, and whose life course unfolds without any determinate trajectory.[16] As Bernstein has observed, sideshadowing does not propose to treat an historical moment as "a monad, unconnected to what preceded or followed," and neither does it "argue against relationships and consequences evolving over time; it only says that few of these consequences are either necessary or consistently predictable, and it urges that the multiple choices of action available at a given moment, and the realization that the present contains the seeds of diverse and mutually exclusive possible futures, be included in one's understanding of what any single moment entails."[17] In a complementary observation, Morson has noted that "sideshadowing suggests that to understand any moment is to grasp its field of possibilities."[18] For both scholars, sideshadowing blends the methods of literary criticism with historiographical sensibilities in order to represent the feelings of contingency, synchronicity and possibility that known-in-advance endpoints tend to obscure.[19]

Drawing on the notion of sideshadowing that Morson and Bernstein have developed, as well as on Benjamin's and Kermode's critiques of the paradoxes of narrative structure, my approach to Japan's long 1930s explores not only texts and ideas, but also the interpretive opportunities that open up in a multidirectional reckoning with this moment of cataclysm. One of the most important of these opportunities is to develop Morson's and Bernstein's notions of sideshadowing as a readerly sensibility that is attuned to the darkness of the mid-twentieth century. For these scholars, sideshadowing is an approach to texts and language that disrupts the rhetoric of authoritarians and fascists, whose faith in linear narratives of "progress" and erasures of the historical present led to catastrophe and violence throughout the global 1930s-1940s. Morson, for example, has called sideshadowing the "anti-utopian" response of a literary critic writing at "the end of a terrible century, one that has witnessed the horrors of utopians in power"

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[16] Bernstein has pointed out that "[i]n narrative terms, sideshadowing is best understood in opposition to the familiar technique of foreshadowing, a technique whose enactment can vary tremendously in its degree of intricacy, but whose logic must always value the present, not for itself, but as the harbinger of an already determined future." (Michael André Bernstein. *Foregone Conclusions: Against Apocalyptic History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), pp. 1-2.).

[17] Bernstein, Michael André. *Foregone Conclusions: Against Apocalyptic History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), pp. 31-32.

[18] Morson, Gary Saul. *Narrative and Freedom: The Shadows of Time* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994), p. 120.

[19] As Bernstein has pointed out: "Although we usually think of them as discrete categories, there are intimate and mutually elucidating similarities in how we make sense of literary fictions, historical events, and individual biographies. These similarities are both formal (a book's language and structure) and ethical (its significance in human terms). Hence, applying the same analytic scrutiny to historical accounts and literary texts provides a powerful way to understand the underlying principles governing both kinds of writing. And because the kinds of stories we tell ourselves and one another are a central portion, perhaps even the core, of who we are and, more technically, because the ways we narrate and order those stories are as significant in their effect as in their thematic content, the implications of foreshadowing go far beyond what strictly formalist literary considerations suggest." (Michael André Bernstein. *Foregone Conclusions: Against Apocalyptic History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), p. 2).

whose absolutist thought and action "admit[ted] no sideshadows."[20] In a similar vein, Bernstein has pointed out that his collaboration with Morson in conceptualizing "sideshadowing" as a literary critical approach is part of a "newly emerging critical counter-tradition that unites ethics and exegesis from an anti-utopian and anti-systematic perspective."[21] For these scholars, then, sideshadowing is more than an argumentative framework; it is also an attempt to mobilize readerly sensibility and the tools of academic inquiry in opposition to the bad politics that teleological thinking tends to animate.

My own methods join in this mobilization. But as I extend aspects of Morson's and Bernstein's critique to the context of Japan's long 1930s, I never forget that sideshadowing has its perils. Pursued uncritically, sideshadowing Japan's long 1930s could run the risk of producing an excessively optimistic narrative that overemphasizes perceived possibilities over the lived experience of real violence in the period. It could also motivate a misguided attempt to rescue a depoliticized notion of cultural possibility from a disastrous moment in history. These dangers owe in part to how Morson has described sideshadowing as a way of recovering "human freedom" from the structures and strictures of narrative form, and to the fact that his conservative notion of "human freedom" does not fully account for the mechanisms of human bondage in the context of Japan's long 1930s.[22] In light of these limitations, I do not think of sideshadowing as a fully formed theory to be applied from above to the texts and contexts of Japan's long 1930s, but rather as a working premise that might be adapted to the dynamics of the material under consideration in the chapters that follow. All of which is to say that the kind of sideshadowing

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[20] Morson, Gary Saul. *Narrative and Freedom: The Shadows of Time* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), p. 14.

[21] Bernstein, Michael André. *Foregone Conclusions: Against Apocalyptic History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), p. 129.

[22] If sideshadowing implies a non-threatening vision of equal representation and universal freedom, Morson's critics might argue that this is because his is a liberal-democratic perspective that does not fully account for the ideological and socio-historical constraints on human freedom. A noted scholar and translator of the writings of Mikhail Bakhtin, Morson has been criticized for dismissing what some view as the Marxist-materialist implications of the Russian theorist's work, and for presenting Bakhtin instead as an apolitical humanist. In this regard, Tom Cohen has argued that "highly interpretive decisions by Bakhtin's editors have taken a subtle toll, particularly as their own roles shift from being translators to defensive priests of ideological truf." In particular, Cohen has alleged that some of Morson's writing on Bakhtin "represent an American Bakhtin as humanist poetician[.]" (Cohen, Tom. "The Ideology of Dialogue: The Bakhtin/De Man (Dis)Connection," in *Cultural Critique*, no. 33 (Spring, 1996), pp. 41-42). Michael Bernard-Donals, moreover, has suggested that Morson dismisses what some view as the Marxist-materialist aspects of Bakhtin's writings out of a more general disdain for Marxism and "high-theory" in general. Bernard-Donals has recalled a lecture given by Morson at a conference in 1992 in which, according to Bernard-Donals, Morson's comments "suggested that there were tenured radicals under every desk in academe and that literature departments were being held hostage by ideologues of the type Bakhtin was working against in the early years of Soviet Russia." Bernard-Donals concludes that perhaps Morson resists Marxist and materialist readings of Bakhtin out of an antipathy for "high theory" in general. (See Michael Bernard-Donals, "Bakhtin and Phenomenology: A Reply to Gary Saul Morson" in *South Central Review*, vol. 12, no. 2 (Summer, 1995), pp. 52-53).

that I practice in this study is a critical sideshadowing that seeks to refine and develop the methods of non-linear scholarly narrative, taking up some aspects of the sensibility that Morson and Bernstein have articulated while leaving aside others.

With this in mind, my own analysis follows from the conviction that in the specific context of Japan's long 1930s, the "anti-utopian" implications of sideshadowing can be most forcefully articulated if we set aside the notion of "human freedom" that Morson has discussed, and recall instead the place of possibility in Tosaka Jun's critique of culture and politics in modern Japan. Tosaka made clear that the very sense of open-ended possibility that sideshadowing promises to access was, in fact, what fueled the fascist imagination in the global 1930s. In *The Japanese Ideology* (*Nihon ideorogii ron*, 1936), he argued that Japanese fascism emerged from a modern imagination that had been conditioned by the influence of classic liberalism (*jiyūshugi*) to believe in the unbounded possibility for ever greater human freedom in the modern age of democracy and capitalism. Harootunian has pointed out that one of Tosaka's most important insights was that liberalism explained away the baleful effects of capitalism by trafficking in the illusory notion that culture is an idealized realm of pure possibility.[23] This led to the delusional belief that the aruaticized realm of culture would provide a surrogate for the political freedoms that liberalism had foreclosed: in a world of pervasive class tension and social conflict, liberalism promised that culture would soothe the soul of modern man that had been wounded by the onslaughts of capitalist modernity, even as it also, and at the same time, continued to sanction the business as usual of market forces which were in fact the causes of those wounds in the first place.[24] Tosaka concluded that the liberal ideal of cultural possibility was at the core of 1930s fascism, a political modernism that promised an idealized form of freedom through culture even as it also accelerated the corrosive forces of capitalist modernity that culture was supposed to overcome.

Tosaka's critique of Japanese fascism elucidates some of the darker implications of the possibilities that my critical sideshadowing of literary life in Japan's long 1930s seeks to uncover. First and foremost, it demonstrates that writers' and thinkers' perceptions of their present as a radically open-ended moment of immense possibility was in fact the precondition for fascist visions of cultural freedom, for it was in the indeterminate space of contingency and fantasy that the fascist form took shape. Working from this perspective, this study does not understand the open-ended promise of culture that sideshadowing recovers to be a good in and of itself. Rather, I understand writers' and thinkers' perceptions of cultural promise to have been one source of political peril, and view the contingent cultural field of Japan's long 1930s as an ambivalent structure that fueled literary triumphs and political tragedies with equal vigor.

In this sense, Tosaka's critique provides an interpretive rubric that informs this dissertation as a whole. In the following chapters, I examine how some of the most lucid critiques and sophisticated usages of literary language in Japan's long 1930s emerged from the same space of perceived possibility that Tosaka associated with fascist ideation: chapters one, three and four focus on texts that contributed in different ways to what Tosaka thought of as a

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[23] Harootunian, Harry. "The Postwar Critique of Fascism, and Tosaka Jun's Prewar Critique of Liberalism," in *The Journal of Pacific Asia* (1995), p. 104. As part of this argument, Harootunian observed that "Tosaka worried that liberalism, as a philosophic system, had opened the way to incorporate and spawn any conceivable idea. It proliferated pluralism."

[24] See Harry Harootunian. "The Postwar Critique of Fascism, and Tosaka Jun's Prewar Critique of Liberalism," in *The Journal of Pacific Asia* (1995), pp. 104-105.

fascist cultural climate, and chapter two examines his and Nakano's response to their contemporaries, and the possibility of countering the "fascistization" of language with a poetry of everyday life. In the Epilogue, I return to Tosaka, examining his 1936 critique of what he called "Sōsekian culture" (*Sōseki bunka*) and its afterlife in 1950s America. Taken together, these analyses point to how expository writings about the literary and concrete practices of literary language itself can be read as an index of the synchronic relations between possibility and peril in Japan's long 1930s.

Chapter One:

Toward a New Modern Vernacular: Tanizaki Jun'ichirō, Yamada Yoshio and Shōwa Restoration Thought

In 1939, Japanese publishing giant Chūō Kōronsha began releasing a 3,391-page modern translation (*gendaigoyaku*) of *Genji monogatari* (*The Tale of Genji*, 11th c.) that would sell some 175,000 copies, more than triple what the publisher had expected.[1] The producers of the translation were well known: editor Yamada Yoshio (1875-1958), a public intellectual and historical linguist once employed by the Ministry of Education (Monbushō), and translator Tanizaki Jun'ichirō (1886-1965), an eminent novelist known for his interest in neo-classicism, endowed the translation with scholarly and literary bona fides. The reputations of Yamada and Tanizaki today, however, would suggest that they were an unlikely pairing: Yamada's "ultranationalism" and "war responsibility" are almost as well known now as his scholarship, whereas Tanizaki's purported opposition to the war has been emphasized by many critics.[2]

Tanizaki and Yamada, in fact, had much in common during the 1930s even though their postwar reputations differ radically, and recent Japanese scholarship has made even Tanizaki's war support unambiguous: he voiced his support of the war several times, as in 1942, when he took to the national radio airwaves to deliver a speech commending the Japanese military victory in Singapore and calling Japan's mission a holy war (*seisen*) for the "liberation of all East Asia."[3] Yamada's cultural nationalism has always been well-known: he wrote and lectured on

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[1] Mizukami Tsutomu and Chiba Shunji, eds., *Tanizaki Sensei no shokan: aru shuppansha shachō e no tegami o yomu* (Tokyo: Chūō Kōron Shinsha, 2008), p. 380.

[2] Donald Keene, for example, has noted that "almost every well-known writer of the day was involved [in the production of war literature between 1937-1945]," qualifying this statement with the following endnote: "Among the authors who were not involved were Nagai Kafū and Tanizaki Jun'ichirō." (Donald Keene, *Dawn to the West* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1984), p. 909). Anthony Chambers has argued in his essay "*The Makioka Sisters* as a Political Novel" that that novel typifies Tanizaki's opposition to the war (Anthony H. Chambers, "*The Makioka Sisters* as a Political Novel," in Adriana Boscaro and Anthony H. Chambers, eds., *A Tanizaki Feast: The International Symposium in Venice* (Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, The University of Michigan, 1998) pp.133-138). Similarly, Hosoe Hikaru has quoted Kuroda Hidetoshi as arguing that *Sasameyuki* (*The Makioka Sisters*, 1943-48) represents Tanizaki's opposition to the war and non-cooperation with the state (Hosoe Hikaru, *Tanizaki Jun'ichirō shinsō retorikku* (Osaka: Izumi Shoin, 2004), p. 487).

[3] Tanizaki Jun'ichirō, *Tanizaki Jun'ichirō zenshū* (Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1966-70), vol. 22, pp. 348-9. (Hereafter, *TJZ*. All translations are my own). As Hosoe Hikaru has pointed out, furthermore, Tanizaki wrote in 1935 that he was "happy about the broadening of the empire and eager for there to be an augmented Japanese cultural sphere. The earning potential for a writer will no doubt become only greater." (cited by Hosoe, *Tanizaki*. Ibid., p. 495). Hosoe has also noted that in the original version of *Kinō kyō* (*Then and Now*) published in June-November 1942, Tanizaki refers to the "glorious [*kagayakashii*] greater East Asian war."(Hosoe, *Tanizaki*. Ibid., p. 503). For other citations of Tanizaki's support of the war, please see Hosoe Hikaru, "Tanizaki Jun'ichirō to sensō," in Hosoe, *Tanizaki*. Ibid., pp. 487-525.

the divine origins of the Japanese islands, people and language, became president in 1940 of Jingū kōgakkan daigaku (Shinto Imperial University), an Ise research institute that promoted state Shinto, and coauthored the most important government-issued ideological tract of twentieth century Japan, *Kokutai no hongi* (*The Essence of Our National Polity*, 1937).[4] Although Tanizaki and Yamada were different sorts of writers, their understandings of the relationships among language, cultural identity and empire in fact often intersected, as Tanizaki made clear in 1942:

> As Professor Yamada Yoshio mentioned in the September issue of *Bungei shunjū* regarding the essence of our language (*kokugo no honshitsu*), 'It is a travesty of the very traditional spirit of Japan to indiscriminately declare this usage or that more convenient, and thereby rashly alter our language.' He is exactly right, considering that as we try to increase the number of Japanese speakers abroad, there are such ludicrous notions as simplifying our language to be easier for foreigners to grasp […]. The proverb tells us "When in Rome, do as the Romans," but the English, quite to the contrary, refuse to change their ways wherever they go and instead force themselves and their customs on indigenous peoples the world over. We would do well to imitate their audacity.[5]

In the 1930s, Tanizaki and Yamada sought to resurrect what they thought of as authentic cultural forms in order to counteract the fracture that they thought accompanied Japanese modernization. They shared with some of their contemporaries a fear of "modern life," or the anxiety that modern commodities and the urban social sphere would dissolve what they viewed as an authentic cultural identity. Harry Harootunian has described how a fantasy of "modern life" emerged in the urban centers of early 20th century Japan that "dramatize[d] the production of desire inspired by a new life promising new commodities for consumption, new social relationships, identities, and experience."[6] For many intellectuals and writers, the novelty, spectacle and shock of "modern life" became synonymous with dislocation from familiar social patterns, alienation from traditional cultural values, and subsumption into a homogenized global idiom of commoditized surfaces devoid of spiritual depths. In this sense, modernity marked for many the erasure of ethnic identity and cultural distinction, and became, in short, "a form of forgetting."[7]

In turn, various forms of premodern Japanese aesthetic culture offered, for some, the antidote to modern alienation as unique expressions of purely Japanese experience and existence. Against the disjuncture of "modern life," premodern aesthetic culture promised communal

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[4] Ibuki Kazuko and G.G. Rowley, "The 'Tanizaki Genji': Inception, Process, and Afterthoughts," in Luisa Bienati and Bonaventura Ruperti, eds., *The Grand Old Man and the Great Tradition: Essays on Tanizaki Jun'ichirō in Honor of Adriana Boscaro* (Ann Arbor, MI: Center For Japanese Studies, The University of Michigan, 2009), p. 27.
[5] Tanizaki Jun'ichirō, *TJZ*. Ibid., vol. 14, p. 493.
[6] Harootunian, Harry. *Overcome by Modernity: History, Culture, and Community in Interwar Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), p. 13
[7] Harootunian has noted that "[a]bove all else, modernity was everywhere a form of forgetting at the level of social experience and the repressing of history into the cultural unconscious." Harootunian, *Overcome*. Ibid., p. 210.

catharsis—if only it could be recovered. Kevin Doak, for example, has observed that Yasuda Yojūrō's (1910-1981) essay *Nihon no hashi* (*Japanese Bridges*, 1936) articulated Yasuda's "hope that he will actually be transported back to the ancient past through this aesthetic analysis of Japanese bridges, or at least regain some remote sense of the culture that gave birth to them" even though Yasuda seemed to realize that "modern Japan cannot escape from the same principles and standards as the West."[8] In addition, Leslie Pincus has pointed out that Kuki Shūzō's (1888-1941) essay on Edo aesthetics, *Iki no kōzō* (*The Structure of* Iki, 1930), was richly informed by European methods (especially hermeneutics) and sources, even though the essay purported to document a Japanese aesthetic that "[transcended] the philosophical logic and ethical limits of the West".[9] As these examples suggest, recovering an imagined premodern wholeness through aesthetics often proved a paradoxical and melancholic undertaking for writers in Japan's long 1930s: in their search for auratic premodern cultural forms unburdened by modern fracture, they often confronted Western intellectual and cultural influence as a debilitating fait accompli.

The crises of "modern life" made Tanizaki and Yamada feel alienated from the past, anxious about the future, and nostalgic for premodern aesthetic culture for much the same reasons as it did Yasuda, Kuki and others. But unlike many of their contemporaries, Tanizaki and Yamada were not paralyzed by a paradoxical or melancholic yearning for the imagined comfort of a prior collectivity; rather, they discovered in language a bastion of premodern, uniquely Japanese cultural bonds that they thought could still be saved, and set about to do so. Although Tanizaki and Yamada conceded that material culture proceeded on an irreversible telos of "modern progress" by which newer cultural forms continuously supplanted earlier forms, they averred, in their separate writings and by implication in their translation of *Genji*, that the "authentically Japanese" referential patters of premodern language could survive in the twentieth century in only slightly modified form despite the onslaughts of "modern life."

For Tanizaki and Yamada, repairing modern language became an urgent task because they thought that referential modes circulated affective expressions of culturally conditioned sensibilities and ethnic identity. Their expository writings revealed that they believed that the modern degeneration of "purely Japanese" language through contact with the West threatened the ability of modern language to circulate the traditional aesthetic common sense that they thought had previously bound the Japanese as an ethnic collective. For them, foreign loan words, simplified usages and modern orthography (*gendai kanazukai*) had all replaced an "authentically Japanese" aesthetic common sense with Western preferences for rationality, homogeneity and efficiency. The believed that changes to the Japanese language following the Meiji Restoration refracted the intrusions of an alien sensibility inimical to the Japanese national character (*kokuminsei*). In response, they sought to restore the virtues of premodern modes of meaning to modern language. When they translated *Genji* in the late 1930s, they endeavored to construct a new modern vernacular perfectly congruent in lexicon, syntax, style and aesthetic sensibility to that of Murasaki Shikibu's early eleventh century prose, which they argued was the archetype of Japanese prose style (*wabun*). Their translation, in other words, was to present the language of

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[8] Doak, Kevin. *Dreams of Difference: The Japan Romantic School and the Crisis of Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), pp. 12-3; 14.

[9] Pincus, Leslie. *Authenticating Culture in Imperial Japan: Kuki Shūzō and the Rise of National Aesthetics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), p. 137. See also Pincus, "A Rare Trinity: The Paradoxes of Particularity" in *Authenticating Culture*. Ibid., pp. 135-139.

an alternative modern culture in which the cataclysm of Meiji modernization never happened, and in which the Japanese language developed from *Genji* through the twentieth century absent any foreign contact. The language of their translation was their proof that modern language could be rehabilitated to forge cultural bonds congruent to those of a premodern collective.

In this chapter, I seek to show how Tanizaki and Yamada understood themselves to be undertaking an urgent cultural renaissance by treating their writings and 1939 *Genji* translation as part of what might be called "Shōwa Restoration thought." The term "Shōwa Restoration" (Shōwa *ishin*) is most often associated with the extremists responsible for the infamous failed coup d'état of February 1936 (also known as the "2/26 incident" (*ni ni roku jiken*)) because they called for a "Shōwa Restoration" as they attempted to "restore" the emperor to direct rule.[10] These radical, self-identifying "Shōwa Restorationists" were not widely influential, but their unease with what they perceived to have been the subsumption of Japanese culture and social life into the Western ambit, and their conviction that a new modern culture could be achieved through decisive action that would realign the trajectory of modern Japan with the age-old sensibilities of the Japanese *kokuminsei*, achieved mainstream acceptance in Japan's long 1930s. Reading Tanizaki's and Yamada's critiques of modern language in the context of "Shōwa Restoration thought" will suggest that their understandings of language and politics gathered in the same cultural field as did the convictions of a broader range of seemingly unrelated cultural actors. From this perspective, Tanizaki's and Yamada's writings on language and 1939 *Genji* translation can be understood to distribute sensibilities that were sometimes shared by their more violent contemporaries.

"Shōwa Restoration thought" refers to the broad stream of intellectual and cultural activity that can be defined by two salient characteristics common to the self-identifying Shōwa Restorationist revolutionaries and also more moderate, mainstream voices of cultural renewal: first, a rigorous investigation into how modern intrusions from abroad corrupted cultural bonds among Japanese, and second, a utopian vision of an new modern culture cleansed of fracture to be initiated through interventions that might restore some trait or mode of premodern Japan thought to suit the Japanese *kokuminsei*. The content of "Shōwa Restoration thought" was produced by self-identifying Shōwa Restorationist radicals, writers who trafficked in the term "Shōwa Restoration" (Shōwa *ishin*) in popular journals of the 1930s, and also by other less obviously activist thinkers (like Tanizaki and Yamada) who never used the term Shōwa *ishin* but who nevertheless attempted to restore premodern cultural bonds in order to repair the fracture wrought by collision with the West and "modern life." In my usage, then, "Shōwa Restoration

[10] On February 26, 1936, approximately 1400 troops took control of Tokyo and assassinated several officials. Hoping that the Emperor would validate their movement and announce a "Shōwa Restoration," these soldiers and young officers sought to remove by assassination his cabinet advisors, whom they viewed as manipulative and corrupt. Their other demands varied, but often included a speedy rearmament of Japan, the removal of advisors to the Emperor, and the appointment of General Mazaki Jinzaburō as Prime Minister. Isobe Asaichi, one of the ringleaders, was clearly under the influence of Kita when, as Herbert Bix has noted, he demanded a Shōwa Restoration defined by "state consolidation of the economy together with completing the Meiji restoration and developing it into a world restoration" (Herbert P. Bix, *Hirohito and the Making of Modern Japan* (New York: Perennial, 2000), p. 302). Far from sympathetic, the Emperor was outraged, and in the absence of any viable post coup strategy, the "Restorationists" relented on February 29.

thought" denotes a vision of cultural renewal produced by intellectuals, activists and litterateurs committed to the urgent task of rehabilitating collective wholeness, and marks the antidote to the melancholy and malaise that gripped some writers and intellectuals of the period.

As an interpretive paradigm, furthermore, "Shōwa Restoration thought" encourages an understanding of Japan's long 1930s through what Michael Bernstein and Gary Saul Morson have called "sideshadowing."[11] As described in the Introduction, I take up aspects of their notion of sideshadowing as way of bringing focus to the coevality of seemingly disparate, though in fact contemporaneous ideas and actions in Japan's long 1930s. This approach elucidates the submerged relations among variously articulated sensibilities, and therefore provides a paradigm for mapping the adjacency of writings and concepts, feelings and sensations that circulated simultaneously within the cultural and ideological field of a past present. In this chapter, sideshadowing reveals that Tanizaki and Yamada were part of a wide range of thinkers who would seem to have had little in common in Japan's long 1930s, but who in fact responded at around the same time to the problems wrought by "modern life," albeit in different ways.

In particular, the "Shōwa Restorationists" who attempted to overthrow the state in February 1936, would appear to have shared little with Tanizaki and Yamada because they intended to transform modern culture and social life in Japan through direct political agitation, and only rarely discussed matters related to aesthetic culture. Instead of attempting to construct a new modern vernacular (as did Tanizaki and Yamada), self-identifying Shōwa Restorationist radicals intended to implement Kita Ikki's (1883-1937) revolutionary reform plan described in his *Kokka kaizōan genri taikō* (*An Outline of Principles for State Reorganization*, 1919). Kita sounded an early call to revolt against Western thought in order to initiate a new modernity, and his *Kokka kaizōan* responded to basic problems that attained mainstream relevance in the 1930s—even if Kita's extremism never did. Kita argued in *Kokka kaizōan* that, if unchecked, Western imperialists and capitalists would territorialize the entire globe: "With the slightest miscalculation, the nation our forefathers built will vanish, and therefore, the dangers we now face domestically and internationally may be regarded as the second coming of those that visited the late-Tokugawa (*bakumatsu*) and [Meiji] Restoration years [1853-1868]"[12] He argued that constitutional democracy, a method of government imported from the West during the Meiji years, did not suit the Japanese national character (*kokuminsei*) because it had no precedent in Japanese history. He advocated instead suspension of the constitution, dissolution of the houses of diet, and coup d'état in order to restore the emperor as autocratic ruler of Japan. Through a reorganization of the Japanese state and economy, Kita hoped to recalibrate the trajectory of contemporary history by reviving what he thought of as indigenous patterns of government, and by displacing Western notions rapidly imported in the late nineteenth century. He hoped that this would rescue Japan from the hegemony of "Western thought" and initiate the emergence of a politically autonomous and culturally Japanese sphere of influence stretching from Siberia to Australia.

Kita's ideas only directly influenced a small cadre of radicals, but *Kokka kaizōan* remained influential to them for over a decade, and provided the ideological foundation for study groups, activist cells, revolutionary conspiracies and attempted coup d'état. More importantly,

[11] For more on sideshadowing, see: Michael André Bernstein. *Foregone Conclusions: Against Apocalyptic History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994) and Gary Saul Morson. *Narrative and Freedom: The Shadows of Time* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994).
[12] Kita Ikki, *Kita Ikki chōsakushū dai 2-kan* (Tokyo: Misuzu Shobō, 1959) p. 219.

Kokka kaizōan was one of the clearest calls of its time to inaugurate a new modern cultural, social and economic configuration that would be cleansed of Anglo-European influence. By the late-1920s and early-1930s, a chorus of journalists, intellectuals and writers contributed to discussions of a "Shōwa Restoration" that appeared in several mainstream journals.[13] This suggests that although Kita won himself few followers among mainstream intellectuals, the unease with the specter of foreign hegemony over Japan and the calls to inaugurate an new cultural episteme that characterized *Kokka kaizōan* extended beyond extremist circles in the form of a broader stream of Shōwa Restoration thought in Japan's long 1930s.

Tanizaki and Yamada did not knowingly responded to Kita, nor were they of a kind with political extremists who called themselves "Shōwa Restorationists"; yet, Tanizaki's and Yamada's writings implicitly responded to similar problems and evinced a similar sense of unprecedented cultural crisis as did Kita in his *Kokka kaizōan*. Yamada, Tanizaki and Kita all considered "Western thought" to have been inimical to the Japanese cultural identity, assumed that belligerent Anglo-European imperialists sought to subsume East Asia into its sphere of influence, and agreed that left unchecked, the commodities and sensibilities of a Eurocentric "modern life" would obliterate the Japanese ethnic identity and structure a homogeneous global culture. Their methods for resolving these problems, however, could hardly have been more different. Even though they all hoped to restore premodern modes that they thought were suited to the Japanese *kokuminsei* as a bulwark against the West, Tanizaki and Yamada conceptualized aesthetic culture and language as the mechanisms by which to reconfigure modern sensibility in Japan, whereas Kita advocated for coup d'état and socialism. While Kita inspired political activists, Tanizaki and Yamada never embraced the violence of Kita's avowed epigones, the self-identifying "Shōwa Restorationists," and instead attempted to diagnose and cure the problems of "modern life" in the seemingly benign intellectual domains of language and aesthetics. That intellectuals and activists attempted to enact a Shōwa Restoration by different means, however, should not occlude the fact that each group responded to a more or less stable problematic with a similar urgency. In other words, Tanizaki's and Yamada's visions of a Shōwa Restoration did not contradict other visions (such as Kita's); rather, they expanded the existing range of Shōwa Restoration thought to include language and literary aesthetics.

A close reading of their writings on language reveals that even Tanizaki and Yamada—who had much in common—at times still differed from one another in method and conclusion.

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[13] As Miyazawa Seiichi has pointed out, the Shōwa Emperor Hirohito called for "raising a plan for restoration" (*ishin no kōbo o ken'yō* [*se yo*]) a mere three days into his reign in 1926. A publishing boom on the subject followed. The magazine *Nihon oyobi nihonjin* issued a special edition dedicated to the Shōwa Restoration the following year in which more than fifty intellectuals described their hopes for the Shōwa period. Fujiwara Ainosuke, for example, called for a second restoration in Shōwa to complete the work of the Meiji Restoration. Others called for "reorganization" (*kaizō*), an East Asian league (*tōa renmei*) and a grand restoration of Asia (*ajia no ichidai ishin*)—all echoing Kita's plan. In addition, Kita's brother Reikichi published *Shōwa Ishin* (*The Shōwa Restoration*) in 1927. (Miyazawa Seiishi, *Meiji Ishin no saisōzō: Kindai Nihon "kigen shinwa"* (Tokyo: Aoki Shoten, 2005), pp. 111-12). More broadly, an urge to restore "authentic" culture gripped several writers of the period. As Kevin Doak has pointed out, for example, the period from 1932-1935 was known as "the period of cultural renaissance" (*bungei fukko ki*) led by Romanticist Hayashi Fusao (1903-1975), who, according to Doak, coined the term "cultural renaissance" (Doak, *Dreams of Difference*. Ibid., pp. 107-08).

Yamada revived the *kokugaku* (nativist) tradition of Motoori Norinaga (1730-1801) and Hirata Atsutane (1776-1843) as he sought to demonstrate that Japanese was a unique and divine language because it originated with the indigenous Japanese gods (*kami*). For Yamada, using authentic Japanese language reproduced the link between modern Japanese, their ancestors throughout time, and the *kami* that created the Japanese islands, people and language in prehistory. The degeneration of modern Japanese language that Yamada believed had been caused by contact with European grammar and syntax, and by Monbushō's changes to orthography (*kanazukai*), signaled for him the dawn of a postlapsarian age in which Japanese were cut off from their divine ancestry and assimilated into a secular, global idiom. *Kokugaku*, he argued, could rescue Japan from foreign influence and modern cultural malaise by explaining the exclusive divinity of authentic Japanese language and how it united the Japanese people (*kokumin*) with the gods in a cosmic schema. *Kokugaku* therefore offered Yamada a bulwark against foreign intrusion and promised to salve the fractured consciousness of Japan's long 1930s by returning modern cultural practice to a divine, exclusively Japanese topos.

Tanizaki, by contrast, analyzed in his essays the seeming minutia of everyday speech and material culture in order to understand how alien sensibilities had increasingly infiltrated Japanese thought and consciousness since the Meiji Restoration. For Tanizaki, the Japanese language was not a "divine" or even "superior" language, but rather an aesthetic and utilitarian code refined throughout Japanese history. Tanizaki believed that the speakers of any language developed culturally specific referential patterns suited to their national character (*kokuminsei*). Over the course of centuries, these culturally conditioned ways of speaking and writing calcified into an aesthetics of language and became part of the common sense that defined speakers' *kokuminsei*. He argued in *Bunshō tokuhon* (*A Manual on Style*, 1934) that by the 1930s, the Japanese language had assimilated so many foreign elements that it had become an Anglicized, artificial language, suffocating the aesthetic sensibilities that historically bound the Japanese as a *kokumin*: the proliferation of superfluous pronouns, modern verb declensions (such as Meiji inventions *de aru* and its abbreviation, *da*, which translate "to be" into Japanese) and a general tendency toward precise instead of capacious language all signaled the mortgaging of cultural sovereignty. In response, his writings on language advocated the restoration of premodern referential patterns in order to counteract the "Westernization" of Japanese language and thought. Tanizaki's writings on language, therefore, differed from Yamada's: instead of searching for the prehistoric, divine origins of language, he focused on the seeming minutia of modern syntax and diction even as he sought to restore classical modes of meaning. These differences, however, did not place Tanizaki and Yamada in different ideological camps. Rather, their writings expanded the discursive range of Shōwa Restoration thought in different directions, suggesting two conceptualizations of how to progress from a problematic present to a cathartic future by resurrecting various aspects of premodern language.

Yamada's Reading of *Renga*

Yamada was born in Toyama in 1875. Straitened family circumstances forced him to end his formal schooling in 1888 after only one year of middle school, and he is the only subject of this dissertation to lack an elite education. After leaving school, he took up *kokugaku* (nativist studies) with a tutor in Toyama in preparation for the educators' licensing exam. In 1891, he received his teaching license at the age of 17—still so young, in fact, that he needed a forged birth certificate just to sit the exam. From 1892-1896, Yamada taught Japanese language and

literature at elementary and middle schools in Toyama, and he later taught high school Japanese language (*kokugo*) courses elsewhere.

Yamada began publishing in the first decade of the twentieth century. His first work, *Nihon bunpō ron jōkan* (On Japanese Grammar: Vol. 1) appeared in 1902, and pedagogical manuals, textbooks, and histories of the Japanese language followed. In 1907, he was appointed ancillary committee member of the Ministry of Education's National Language Research Council, on which he served as the committee's specialist on historical linguistics. The end of his tenure at the Ministry was punctuated by a public war of (and over) words. Ever the cultural conservator, Yamada vigorously opposed the Ministry's proposed measures to modernize Japanese orthography, or *gendai kanazukai*. In several articles published in magazines and journals, he made clear that he wished the Ministry would preserve Japan's written language instead of printing new textbooks to inculcate the next generation with modern spellings and orthography. In one exchange, he said he thought the Ministry's functionaries had "gone insane" (*hakkyō*) when he heard that they planned to put *gendai kanazukai* in textbooks.

Yamada held an appointment at Tōhoku Imperial University in Sendai from 1925-1933. Much of his scholarship in the 1930s on *renga* (examined below) was based on his lectures given at Tōhoku during this time, and his attention also turned to *Genji monogatari* in the 1930s: he published *Genji monogatari no ongaku* (Music in *The Tale of Genji*) in 1934, and collaborated with Tanizaki from 1935-1939 on a modern Japanese translation (*gendaigoyaku*) of the classic. Around this time, too, Yamada's involvement in creating and disseminating Japan's wartime ideology deepened. He co-authored *Kokutai no hongi* (The Essence of Our National Polity) in 1937, and it would become the most infamous and widely read piece of government propaganda in the history of modern Japan. In 1940, the Ministry of Education appointed Yamada president of Jingū kōgakkan daigaku, an institute in Ise dedicated to the promotion of state Shintō. He served there until the Japanese surrender in 1945, after which Yamada was blacklisted from jobs in government and education for having crafted parts of the wartime ideology and collaborated with the wartime regime. He was awarded the Order of Cultural Merit just before his death in 1958, by which time Yamada had penned more than seventy major works, and hundreds more articles, essays and treatises.[14]

Within his vast corpus of scholarship stretching over the course of decades, Yamada's writings on *renga* (linked-verse poetry) most clearly reveal the characteristics of what he considered to have been a uniquely Japanese, prelapsarian economy of language. These writings suggest that he found in the words and syntax, the feelings and forms of *renga* sequences the perfect antidote to the broken language that he thought characterized his own idiom. In *Renga oyobi rengashi* (Renga *and Its History*, 1932) and *Renga gaisetsu* (*An Introduction to* Renga, 1937), he described how language, social history and divinity amalgamated in *renga* sequences

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[14] This biographical sketch is informed by the following sources: Ōiwa Masanaka, "Yamada Yoshio den: sono ichi," *Bunpō*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (November 1968), pp. 136-139; Ōiwa Masanaka, "Yamada Yoshio den: sono ni," *Bunpō*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (December 1968), pp. 140-143; Ōiwa Masanaka, "Yamada Yoshio den: sono san," *Bunpō*, Vol. 1, No. 3 (January 1969), pp. 132-135; Ōiwa Masanaka, "Yamada Yoshio den: sono yon," *Bunpō*, Vol. 1, No. 4 (February 1969), pp. 128-131; Ōiwa Masanaka, "Yamada Yoshio den: sono go: kan," *Bunpō*, Vol. 1, No. 5 (March 1969), pp. 126-129; Ōta Eitarō, *Yamada Yoshio omoide no ki* (Toyama-shi: Toyama Shimin Bunka Jigyōdan, 1985).

to form a referential field nearly congruent to the pure language of the gods (*kami*). These texts also exemplified his engagement with Shōwa Restoration thought through their three central claims: first, that *renga*, and the classics generally, revealed the spiritual and psychic lives (*seishin seikatsu*) of the ancients, thereby reconnecting modern Japanese with their indigenous roots; second, that the nativist hermeneutic he revived was, by his definition, always dedicated to elucidating and resurrecting the ancient way, the source of all things Japanese; and third, that the Japanese language was divine because it originated with the gods (*kami*).[15] In making these claims, Yamada's writings on *renga* comprised a matrix of lexical archaeology, cultural restoration and theology.

For Yamada, the purity of language in *renga* derived from its precise diction and communal production. One of the foundational assumptions of Yamada's theory of *renga* was that the medieval reorganization of poetic expression from 5-7-5-7-7 waka composed by a single poet to dialogic 5-7-5 and 7-7 *renga* hemistiches composed by several poets catalyzed the emergence of a new economy of signification characterized by "essential meanings" (*hon'i*).[16] The dialogized form and sociality of *renga* composition, in Yamada's formulation, produced the most precise, purely Japanese mode of linguistic expression possible, a mode predicated upon *hon'i*. In *Renga gaisetsu*, Yamada defined *hon'i* as follows:

> What is hon'i? Every word and the ambiance of every verse (*kugara*) are laden with *hon'i*, which is described in *Shihōshō* [The Greatest Renga Treasure] [17]. The explanation is rather lengthy, but here is the main point:
>
> > *There is something called* hon'i *in renga. In spring, for example, the winds may be strong and the rains may be great, but spring rains and winds are portrayed as tranquil. Spring days may be*

[15] Yamada Yoshio, *Renga oyobi rengashi* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1932) and Yamada Yoshio, *Renga gaisetsu* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1937).

[16] Yamada noted in *Renga gaisetsu* that the "treatment" (*toriatsukaikata*) of words (even the same words) is different in *renga* than in waka:

> The lexicons of *renga* and waka are not much different. The treatment of those lexicons and the ambiance of a given *ku* (*kugara*), however, are indeed much different in *renga* than in waka. In waka, words are construed by the poet and listener simply to mean what they mean (*i no mama ni mochi'i*[*ru*]), and one can therefore get by just accepting words for what they seem to say. In *renga*, by contrast, each word is attached in a concrete way to the previous *ku*, and must link on the level of ambiance (*kugara*) as well. One must therefore carefully consider the essential meaning (*hon'i*) of each term. If one is to compose on a given season, one must choose words based on their affinities with that season such that one can sense exactly what that season is. [. . .]. In the case of *renga*, one has always had to roll over in one's mind just what the essential meaning of each and every word is, and in the case of words related to the seasons, just exactly what meaning the term expresses vis-à-vis the season. (Yamada, *Gaisetsu*. Ibid., p. 129).

[17] A *renga* commentary written by *renga* poet and critic Satomura Jōha (?1524-1602), the full name of which is *Renga shihōshō* (*The Greatest Renga Treasure*, 1585).

> *brief for whatever reason, but we have become accustomed to describing them as ever so long.*
>
> Therefore, the *hon'i* of "spring" encompasses tranquility, repose and calm. Which is to say that a *renga* verse about spring should embody this *hon'i* and express the sensation of spring (*harurashiki kokochi*) on the level of diction as well as on the level of ambiance. This is precisely how the *hon'i* of spring is captured in a *ku*. A *ku* that simply uses the word "spring," or words that are associated with the season without expressing the *hon'i* of spring cannot be called a good *ku*.[18]

For Yamada, then, *hon'i* transmitted feeling: the diction of a precisely crafted *ku* about spring did not merely signify meaning, but rather affected the listener (or reader) with the essence of vernal "tranquility, repose and calm."

Yamada made a similar argument in *Renga oyobi rengashi*, adding that *hon'i* became the centerpiece of the language of *renga* only as the genre came into its golden age around the fifteenth century. He claimed that before Shinkei (1406-1475) and Sōgi (1421-1502), *renga* composers favored word-based links (*kotobazuke*) and superficial punning. The guiding virtue for linking verses from the time of Shinkei and Sōgi on, Yamada argued, was *yūgen*, an abstract term that signifies something of a mix of subtlety, profundity and mystery. Yamada evoked *yūgen* as a way of suggesting that in the fifteenth century, drawing links between *ku* became a profound art above and beyond mere word-based links, which would have been little more than a matter of memory (albeit prodigious) for any serious *renga* composer of the day. By contrast, *yūgen* links called upon the composer to discern the *hon'i* of the previous *ku* and then to devise another *ku* that articulated its own independent poetic notion (which articulated the *hon'i* of its object perfectly) while simultaneously responding to the *hon'i* of the previous *ku* in a *yūgen* way. Yamada sensed that concomitant with the dialogized *yūgen* aesthetic of mature linked-verse was an awareness of the essential meaning of words and how they linked together on the most subtle and profound level. In his mind, *yūgen* links made the language of *renga* the closest thing to pure language since the age of the gods.

Yamada's writings often related the prominence of *hon'i* in the language economy of *renga* to the unique sociality of the genre. A *renga* sequence was a pristine economy of representation for Yamada because its language emanated from the social collective; individual composers always remained ancillary to a grander form of communal expression. In fact, he argued in *Renga gaisetsu* that a *renga* sequence was not made as much as it was born because the poet who gave the first link, or *hokku*, could not anticipate how the sequence would evolve, nor could other composers anticipate the final form of the completed sequence. Yamada understood the unique sociality of *renga* composition to produce an economy of language that amalgamated the aesthetic common sense of the ancients with modes of representation organic to their isolated cultural and ethnic community, allowing a collective soul to fossilize in the clay of *kotoba* (words):

> A *renga* sequence can be none other than the literary product birthed from the spiritual consonance (*seishin no kyōmei*) of the group who participates in its composition. In this regard, *renga* really is a literary art without peer

[18] Yamada, *Gaisetsu*. Ibid., pp. 130-1.

> in the world and truly is the produce of the spirit of the Japanese race (*Nihon minzoku no seishin*). [In *renga*], the spirits of individuals amalgamate to form a single spirit of the race (*minzoku seishin*).[19]

The language of *renga* became for Yamada a beacon of cultural, linguistic and racial purity, the pinnacle from which the modern Japanese people and language had fallen. For him, the communal consciousness, shared language, pure referentiality and ethnic spirit embodied by *renga* had all been overcome by modern fracture, hybridity and artifice. In response, his greatest goal during in the long 1930s became repairing modern language in order to restore that which he thought had been lost.

Much of Yamada's understanding of his own work as "restorationist" followed from his revival of an earlier hermeneutical tradition: *kokugaku* (nativist studies or nativism). Most often associated with Motoori Norinaga (1730-1801), *kokugaku* originated in the Tokugawa period (1600-1867) as an approach to textual scholarship that rejected Chinese (and especially Confucian) perspectives and instead sought to interpret Japanese texts (including *Kojiki* (*Record of Ancient Matters*, 712) and *Man'yōshū* (*Collection of Ten-Thousand Leaves*, ca. 759) as "purely Japanese" expressions of feeling. Peter Nosco has pointed out that "the intention of [*kokugaku*] studies was first, to reenter the past and to reconstruct the 'ancient Way,' and second to reanimate the dormant 'true heart' and thereby to reclaim within the fallen present those beatific qualities [that nativist scholars] believed to have characterized life in the primordially distant past."[20] In other words, *kokugaku* proceeded from the assumption that the present was a "fallen age," and that understanding the "true heart" of the past through exegesis of ancient texts could restore authenticity to the present, thereby redeeming it.

Yamada aligned himself with this earlier interpretive paradigm in his attempt to expunge foreign influence from his own era and to restore "purely Japanese" language to what he viewed as a hybridized epoch. In *Kokugaku no hongi* (*The Essence of Nativist Studies*, 1942), Yamada explained that the study of Japanese letters always implied a larger restorative *kokugaku* project:

> That which upholds the national essence (*kokutai*) and eternally brings forth new life is what is called the single exalted Way that extends from ancient times through to the present. This Way takes several forms, appearing as Shinto, the spirit of the people (*kokumin seishin*), the morals of the people (*kokumin dōtoku*), and the national essence (*kokutai*). *Kokugakusha* [nativists] from ancient times to the present have completely devoted themselves to their research for the purpose of illuminating this one great Way.
>
> […]. One can never forget, therefore, that clarifying the meaning of a single term, researching a single artistic form, and appreciating a single thing handed down from antiquity are all single parts of this larger purpose.[21]

Later in *Kokugaku no hongi*, Yamada described one goal of *kokugaku* as finding "a theory of the psychic and emotional lives of the Japanese people (*kokuminteki seishin seikatsu no genri*) from

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[19] Yamada, *Gaisetsu*. Ibid., p. 173.

[20] Peter Nosco, *Remembering Paradise: Nativism and Nostalgia in Eighteenth-Century Japan* (Cambridge, MA: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University Press, 1990), p. xii.

[21] Yamada Yoshio, *Kokugaku no hongi* (Tokyo: Unebi Shobō, 1942), p. 58.

ancient times to the present."[22] Yamada's *renga* studies of the previous decade followed from this hermeneutical perspective and allowed him to formulate a theory of the unique linguistic economy of linked-verse by which a modern scholar (like himself) might learn about the "psychic and emotional lives" (*seishin seikatsu*) of the individuals (and collective) that composed a given sequence. In theory and practice, then, Yamada understood himself as a latter-day *kokugakusha* (nativist scholar), devoted to explaining language as material history and to restoring to his own age what he viewed as prior and authentic.[23]

Yamada engaged the *kokugaku* hermeneutic in order to uncover a purity of expression materialized in language that he thought ultimately originated with indigenous divinities (*kami*). He sensed that in the same way that an archaeologist studies a material relic (pottery or ruins, for example) in order to learn of the ancient civilization that produced it, *kokugaku* scholars moved beyond the materiality of *kotoba* to uncover the divine origins of the Japanese language and civilization. In this sense, *kokugaku* was a theology for Yamada because he thought that by studying ancient texts and authentic language, one could discover the pure and eternal link between the gods that birthed Japan and modern Japanese people. He argued that certain unsullied texts—such as fifteenth century *renga* sequences, for example—were material histories that expressed culturally authentic modes of cognition born of a superior purity of heart (*magokoro*), and even acted as a conduit promising communion with indigenous *kami*. In Yamada's writing, then, the *kokugaku* hermeneutic transformed *kotoba* into an auratic amber that preserved the divine endowment of the Japanese *kokumin*.

All of which is to say that for Yamada, *kokugaku* was more than scholarship; it was also a religious devotion that clarified the Way of the Ancients (*kodō*) and the Way of the Gods (*shintō*), as he described in *Shintō shisōshi* (*A History of Shinto Thought,* 1943):

> That which is peculiar to our nation constitutes the Way called Shinto. Shinto is not simply a narrow path dictating rituals in praise of the Gods; it is the great origin (*daihon*) of our politics, ethics and myriad other things. [. . .]. Shinto is expressed through the dignity of our ceaseless national essence (*kokutai*). These are the conclusions of the *kokugakusha* based on rigorous research of ancient language (*kogo*) and dedicated inquiries into our history. They hastily declared nothing. Norinaga's research completely eliminated Confucianism and Buddhism in favor of expressions of the ancient heart (*kokoro*) of our Emperors' sovereign realm, and it is therefore naturally trustworthy.[24]

Similarly, he argued in *Hirata Atsutane* (1943) that "the principal goal of *kokugaku* is to revivify (*fukkō*) the teachings of the Emperors and Gods—which is to say the Ancient Way. In such an endeavor, only *kokugaku* will suffice."[25]

Spiritual purification was central to Yamada's theorization of *kokugaku* because he viewed Japanese history as a constant struggle between two antagonistic poles: indigenous,

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[22] Yamada, *Kokugaku*. Ibid., p. 84.

[23] Tanizaki even mentioned that upon first meeting Yamada in 1935 (eight years before Yamada's biography of Hirata Atsutane was published), he gave "the impression of a great man of the nation (*kokushi*) of the old Hirata Atsutane mold." (Tanizaki, *TJZ*. Ibid., vol. 23, p. 357).

[24] Yamada Yoshio, *Shintō shisōshi* (Tokyo: Meiseidō Shoten, 1943), p. 105.

[25] Yamada Yoshio, *Hirata Atsutane* (Tokyo: Hōbunkan, 1943), p. 179.

divine purity and foreign, corrosive hybridity. Yamada argued that *kokugaku* had always been a purifying agent in Japanese history, with the implication that it could effect a cultural and spiritual restoration in the 1930s just as it had in other eras. The eighteenth century *kokugakusha* (nativist scholar) Hirata Atsutane (1776-1843), in one of Yamada's examples, was a hero of Japanese history because he united the heterodox sects of Shinto by reviving the purity of the faith and by eliminating all foreign elements. As Yamada observed, "this effected a true restoration (*fukko*) in the history of Shinto, and this restoration derived from his ancient studies (*kogaku*) [. . .]."[26] In Yamada's history, purifying Shinto led directly to the Meiji Restoration because it exposed the illegitimacy of mutually antagonistic feudal domains, encouraged a unified sense of a national people and spirit (*Nihon kokumin no seishin*) through heightened consciousness of a shared cultural heritage, and repositioned the Emperor as the divine head of the nation. In other words, it swung the pendulum of Japanese cultural history away from hybridity and back toward spiritual unification. In Yamada's formulation, uniting Japanese spiritually paved the way for the emergence of the modern nation state, which had until then been thwarted by feudal disputes between mutually antagonistic domains. It followed naturally that the Meiji state enshrined Shinto as state religious orthodoxy. In Yamada's reading of Japanese history, *kokugaku* provided the textual-hermeneutical basis for such a spiritual, cultural and national restoration—one that he hoped to replicate in the 1930s.

Yamada's writings on language positioned Japan within a world-historical paradigm that combined textual hermeneutics, theology and a theory of historical process between the two antagonistic poles of divine, indigenous authenticity and foreign aberration. They revealed his vision of a cultural renaissance defined by a cosmic obligation to realign modern Japan with the common aesthetic and linguistic sensibilities of prehistoric gods and ancient ancestors. For Tanizaki, on the other hand, cultural renaissance meant expelling even the slightest of Western influences over Japanese language so that Japanese thought, consciousness and tastes might resist subsumption into a global, Eurocentric culture. Furthermore, whereas Yamada's writings described the divine origins of native language, Tanizaki's essays detailed the aesthetics of Japanese words, syntax and style in secular, semiotic terms. For Tanizaki, languages signified in different ways: the lexicon, syntax and cultural history of a given language placed limits on what that language could articulate, and how. Beauty in language, for him, followed from adhering to traditional modes of signification in order to coax maximal meaning out of each expression. He argued in *Bunshō tokuhon* (*A Manual on Style*, 1934) that Japanese was most beautiful and most meaningful when it tended toward the allusive and capacious, instead of toward the explicit and precise. Tanizaki ascribed the correlation between allusive language and aesthetic beauty to the tastes of the Japanese national character (*kokuminsei*); unlike Yamada, however, Tanizaki stopped short of calling Japanese a "divine" or even "superior" language. Whereas Yamada wrote about Japanese as a language created by the gods, Tanizaki wrote about the ways in which Japanese words (*kotoba*) signified in comparison with those of other languages (especially English, in which he was fluent).

Tanizaki's Critique of the Anglicization of the Japanese Language

In his writings about Japanese aesthetics, Tanizaki conceded that commodity culture and rapid technological innovation—the very agents powering the onslaughts of "modern life"—would inevitably overcome traditional Japanese material culture. But he also conceived of

[26] Yamada, *Hirata*. Ibid., p. 333.

language in these writings as the last bastion of Japanese aesthetics that could be saved from subsumption into a homogeneous global culture. Tanizaki understood the traditional aesthetics of Japanese daily life to have been produced by forms of material culture and language characterized by shadows and understatement. He argued that the dim interior spaces created by traditional Japanese architecture and the allusive gaps left in Japanese verbal expression, for example, were underwritten by the same timeless, uniquely Japanese common aesthetic sensibility. Yet, Tanizaki detected in Western technology, modern commodities and the Anglicization of the Japanese vernacular (*genbun-itchi*) a threatening alien preference for luminescence, efficiency and rationality.

In his most famous essay on Japanese aesthetics, *In'ei raisan* (*In Praise of Shadows*, 1933-34), Tanizaki described the basic problematic of Japanese modernity as the conflict between a traditional aesthetic of shadows that intuitively appealed to the Japanese national character (*kokuminsei*) and the irresistible convenience of efficient modern commodities imported from the West that inculcated a foreign taste for rationality. The essay staged Tanizaki's hypothetical struggle to build a Japanese house that preserved what he understood to have been the aesthetics and materiality of premodern Japanese daily life: in the essay, for example, he fantasized about a dim, candlelit dining room in which he could ponder the murky depths of miso soup served in a black lacquer bowl. Yet, Tanizaki also conceded throughout *In'ei raisan* that the shadowy aesthetic produced by the materiality of premodern Japanese daily life had been irreversibly displaced by more convenient and efficient modern commodities imported from the West: he admitted that candlelight would never overcome the practical virtues of light bulbs even though electricity obliterated shadows, for example, and that a modern white-tiled bathroom with a Western porcelain toilet was irrefutably more sanitary than the wood-planked outhouse of his dreams, whatever the aesthetic compromise. Although Tanizaki indulged in an aesthetic fantasy at some length in *In'ei raisan*, he ultimately upheld the pragmatic appeal of modern amenities, suggesting that much of the essay was more of a eulogy for a past that could not ever be recalled than a restorationist manifesto.

Nevertheless, *In'ei raisan* described the fundamental problematic of Japanese modernity that informed Tanizaki's attempt to restore authentic language. The crux of *In'ei raisan* was that the inassimilable aesthetic sensibilities of Japanese and Anglo-Europeans had become ground zero of a racial conflict of world-historical proportions—a conflict that threatened to destroy the Japanese ethnic identity for all time. In *In'ei raisan*, Tanizaki conceived of cultural aesthetics as a metonym for ethnic identity: the shadowy aesthetic favored in Japan, he wrote, was linked to Japanese skin, which "no matter how white, is blotted by faint shadows within its whiteness," whereas Anglo-Europeans' preference for brightness followed from their complexion, which, Tanizaki argued, "even if turbid on the surface, has a bright clarity underneath. Nowhere are Western bodies tinged by dingy shadows [of the sort that characterize the Japanese complexion]."[27] He argued that Anglo-Europeans' preference for brightness reflected an aggressively racist "psychology that in the past made the white races despise the colored races," as during the American Civil War, when, according to Tanizaki, "whites' hatred and contempt was not directed only at blacks, but extended even to the mixed-race children of interracial couples, the mixed-race children of mixed-race parents, and the mixed-race children born to one white parent and one mixed-race parent. Whites relentlessly sought to track down and persecute

[27] Tanizaki, *TJZ*. Ibid., vol. 20, pp. 547-8.

anyone with the slightest trace of black blood, including those who were half black, a quarter black, an eighth, a sixteenth, a thirty-second."[28]

Throughout *In'ei raisan*, Tanizaki portrayed white Westerners as racist conquerors attempting to exterminate all traces of "darkness"—his metonym for the cultural, ethnic and spiritual sovereignty of non-whites—and to incorporate the "colored races" into a homogenous Eurocentric ambit: "The progressive Westerner always presses for improvement. From candlelight to kerosene lamplight, kerosene lamplight to gaslight, gaslight to electric light, the Westerner quests unceasingly for greater and greater luminescence, straining himself to eliminate even the faintest shadows."[29] Beneath Tanizaki's pose as a defeated antiquarian in *In'ei raisan*, then, was his conviction that 1930s Japan was witnessing a cataclysmic struggle between the inassimilable aesthetic sensibilities of whites and non-whites. His most important conclusion was that only by protecting Japanese aesthetics could the possibility for ethnic difference survive in an increasingly homogenized global culture. The shadowy aesthetic of Japanese daily life was therefore more than a Japanese—or even Asian—property for Tanizaki; rather, it metonymically signified in *In'ei raisan* the ethnic identities of non-whites that Tanizaki understood the commodities of a Eurocentric "modern life" to suffocate.

According to *In'ei raisan*, then, the aesthetics of material culture and language engaged sensibilities that differentiated and defined various ethnic identities around the world. Tanizaki hoped that protecting an authentically Japanese aesthetic would ensure the survival of an autonomous Japanese collectivity impervious to the onslaughts of a soulless, Eurocentric "modern life." Yet, as *In'ei raisan* revealed, Tanizaki conceded that traditional Japanese material culture had already succumbed to the convenience of Western commodities by the 1930s. Language, therefore, became for him the last bastion of Japanese aesthetics and ethnic autonomy because he thought that language, unlike material culture, could yet be rehabilitated to conform to the intuitive tastes of the Japanese *kokuminsei*. An alternative modern Japanese vernacular that maintained the referential patterns of premodern language, in other words, promised to resolve the dilemma that Tanizaki faced in *In'ei raisan* of negotiating between an inaccessible Japanese past characterized by authenticity and a convenient modern commodity culture characterized by soulless utility.

At the conclusion of *In'ei raisan*, Tanizaki called language and literature—domains less susceptible to technological and material change—the last "sanctuary" (*dendō*) for the threatened Japanese ethnic identity:

> […] Whatever may be said now, Japan has already stepped into alignment with Western culture, and there is nothing to be done but to leave the elder generation behind and proceed steadfastly. Yet, we must be aware that, as long as the color of our skin remains unchanged, we shall forever bear the burden of a loss known to us alone. My hope in writing this is that somehow there might yet remain a way of compensating for that loss—perhaps through literature and the arts. I would like to call back the world of shadows that we are losing at least in the domain of literature. For the sanctuary of literature, I would like to make the eaves deep and the walls dark; I would like to push back into the darkness that which is too plainly visible; I would like to remove the useless décor from the

[28] Tanizaki, *TJZ*. Ibid., vol. 20, p. 548.
[29] Tanizaki, *TJZ*. Ibid., vol. 20, p. 547.

> interior. I would not insist on this everywhere, for it would suffice if but one such sanctuary remained to us. What might we find, once we try turning off the lights?[30]

Tanizaki's writings on language responded to the same problematic of Japanese modernity that he described in *In'ei raisan* —namely, that the convenience of modern commodities imported from the West inculcated an alien sensibility that threatened to destroy the Japanese ethnic identity—but with the crucial difference that language could overcome that problematic whereas material culture had succumbed to it. Tanizaki's writings on language also transposed the shadowy aesthetic of premodern material culture described in *In'ei raisan* to an aesthetic of language that he called *ganchiku* (which might be translated as "allusive depths" or "nuance and implication"). Like shadows in *In'ei raisan*, *ganchiku* became a metonym for cultural identity in Tanziaki's writings on language; unlike the shadows of *In'ei raisan*, however, Tanizaki argued that the *ganchiku* aesthetic that defined authentic language could be preserved.

Tanizaki's critique of modern Japanese language began in an essay called *Gendai kōgobun no ketten ni tsuite* (On the Shortcomings of Modern Vernacular Japanese, 1929) and he expanded and modified his argument in *Bunshō tokuhon* (A Manual on Style, 1934). In these works, Tanizaki criticized modern vernacular Japanese as an aberrational break from what he called the reticent and retiring Japanese national character. He insisted that the Japanese language could most skillfully, and most beautifully, negotiate suggestive, nuance-laden expressions, and that it became clumsy and awkward when used like Western languages that, he argued, strictly delimited meanings and prized precision. He argued that the Westernization of modern vernacular Japanese threatened the best of Japanese style because it encouraged Anglicized usages and verbosity for which Japanese lexemes, orthography and syntax—not to mention the Japanese national character—were poorly suited. At its worst, he argued, assimilating Western patterns of signification impinged upon Japanese cultural autonomy, rendering a modern Japanese culture autonomous from Anglophone influence impossible. In response, he called for an aesthetic revival in language: "The urgent matter of the day is to tighten up the loose usages of modern vernacular Japanese by simplifying it as much as possible. Ultimately, however, this amounts to revivifying the spirit of classical language."[31]

For Tanizaki, the modern vernacular Japanese (*gembun-itchi*, *kōgotai* or *kōgobun*) that developed in the late nineteenth century was an artificial language that corrupted traditional usages for the sake of accommodating Western terms and imitating (usually by translation) European and American stylistics: "The Meiji years were in every regard a period of imitating Western culture (*seiyō bunbutsu no mohō jidai*), and so I suppose it was inevitable that even our grammar would come to be taught as if it were no more than a direct translation (*chokuyaku*) of English or French […]."[32] Tanizaki's critique of modern Japanese was predicated upon his disagreement with the standard history of *gembun-itchi*, the late nineteenth and early twentieth century movement aimed at creating an official vernacular written language. He argued in *Gendai kōgobun* that modern vernacular Japanese did not (as was popularly imagined) organically develop as a language based on a Tokyo or Edo dialect. Rather, Tanizaki called *gembun-itchi* an artificial language designed to disguise the provincial roots of newly

[30] Tanizaki, *TJZ*. Ibid., vol. 20, p. 557.
[31] Tanizaki, *TJZ*. Ibid., vol. 21, p. 102.
[32] Tanizaki, *TJZ*. Ibid., vol. 20, p. 194-5.

enfranchised Meiji bureaucrats who hailed largely from outside Tokyo. For him, modern vernacular Japanese emerged from an aberrational break with the stylistics and usages that organically evolved over centuries in league with the Japanese *kokuminsei*. From this perspective, *gembun-itchi* was a rootless philistine's tongue because it cut off the speaker from centuries of traditional usages and cultivation: "Ideally, we could make the most of those parts of classical grammar that are still useful in the modern idiom, but it is my belief that the present vernacular style (*kōgotai*) completely annihilates the unique virtues and advantages of the Japanese language."[33] In Tanizaki's mind, then, g*embun-itchi* marked a fall: premodern writing before it was for Tanizaki an unsullied, prelapsarian referential system, while later styles and reforms were voguish, alienating and inorganic.

For Tanizaki, the best evidence that modern vernacular Japanese broke with the intuitive tastes of the native *kokuminsei* was lexical. He understood the increase in Western loan words in the Japanese lexicon during and after Meiji to have been a corrosive development because the two functioned in fundamentally different and inassimilable ways. He argued in *Bunshō tokuhon* that Japanese lexemes were "elastic" (*yutori no aru kotoba*), meaning that a single term could encompass various nuances, meanings and implications. By contrast, he argued that the "robustness" of Western lexicons limited the signifying range of each term to a small group of direct referents. As he described in *Bunshō tokuhon*, good style in Western languages dictated delimiting the signifying range of each term in order to speak or write with precision—the very opposite of what he thought of as good style in Japanese:

> Instead of expending useless energy [piling up descriptors, like Theodore Dreiser and other Western writers], we Japanese writers purposely use words with elasticity (*yutori no aru kotoba*), broad terms that accommodate several meanings. Thereafter, we compensate with the sensuous elements of each word, including their tone, written appearance (*jizura*) and rhythm. This is what I meant when I said earlier that in classical stylistics, each term has a shadowy depth like the halo surrounding the moon. To put it differently, a modicum of words becomes a suggestion that arouses the reader's imagination, forcing the reader to compensate for any insufficiencies. The writer's brush is used only to invite the reader's imagination. Such is the spirit of classical writing. In the Western style of writing, one must delimit meaning to the most precise range possible, for the slightest shadows are forbidden and a writer reserves no domain for readers' imagination.[34]

Tanizaki's praise of the "shadowy" aesthetics of Japanese language coalesced in a term that he claimed articulated the paramount virtue of native language: *ganchiku* ("nuance and implication"). In *Bunshō tokuhon*, he defined *ganchiku* as "avoiding verbosity" (*jōzetsu o tsutsushimu koto*), "avoiding excessive description" (*amari hakkiri saseyō to senu koto*), and "leaving gaps in chains of signification" (*imi no tsunagari ni sukima o oku koto*). Tanizaki's essays figured *ganchiku* as an aesthetic of language that resulted from pithy, suggestive usages that stopped short of telling all. Allusive, "shadowy" usage was beautiful for Tanizaki because it came closest to exhausting the expressive capacities of native language. For Tanizaki, the

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[33] Tanizaki, *TJZ*. Ibid., vol. 20, p. 183.
[34] Tanizaki, *TJZ*. Ibid., vol. 21, pp. 126-7.

language of *Genji* was exemplary in this regard: a single term (such as *sabishii*, a term that denotes something like "an elegant if melancholic desolation") under Murasaki Shikibu's masterful control could be deployed so as to encompass the entirety of an experience. More generally, Tanizaki's understanding of *ganchiku* suggested a corollary between truth and beauty: he claimed that as the maximal expressive capacities of native words were exhausted, language moved closer to truth, becoming more beautiful, or as he put it, more *ganchiku*. Which is to say that Tanizaki understood the beauty of *ganchiku* to intuitively appeal to the Japanese *kokuminsei* because it indicated usages of native language that expressed truth.

Tanizaki's sense of *ganchiku* was similar to Yamada's of *hon'i*. In each case, the respective essential quality of Japanese—*ganchiku* for Tanizaki and *hon'i* for Yamada—defined proper lexical usage suited to the national character. *Ganchiku* and *hon'i* were concepts that characterized absolute lexical values that emerged long before the 19th century emergence of nation states, scientific rationality, commodity culture and other hallmarks of global modernity. Language characterized by *ganchiku* and *hon'i* was the maximally distilled expression of Japanese cultural subjectivity and collectivity; it was a language of sublime beauty that bound all Japanese throughout the ages to one another as well as (for Yamada) to the gods. Conversely, modern vernacular Japanese, for Yamada and Tanizaki, was marked by the hybridity that replaced pure referentiality and cultural collectivity with hollow, imported intellectual concepts. Modern vernacular Japanese, they argued, severed the bonds among Japanese and their (for Yamada, divine) ancestors in a misguided attempt to instead bind Japanese with Westerners. In short, they regarded modern vernacular Japanese as aberrational because it broke with the historical organicism of the national character, robbing native language of its age-old beauty (for Tanizaki) and divinity (for Yamada).

Tanizaki argued that Japanese expression became only more verbose and trite—the opposites of *ganchiku*—as it imitated European languages. In *Gendai kōgobun*, for example, he criticized writers who followed the example of novelist Arishima Takeo (1878-1923) by first composing in English and then translating into Japanese: "While such were spirited efforts at devising a fresh style, to be honest, we were merely forsaking beautiful, rhythmic literary style for, first and foremost, a literary style that appeared Western. […]. 'Would a Westerner use this turn of phrase?' What would a Westerner think if he read this?' Such were the concerns uppermost in many writers' minds."[35] Tanizaki argued that this sort of imitation of Western writers introduced several superfluous formal elements to literary and daily language that violated his *ganchiku* aesthetic. He argued, for example, that the subjectless sentence, commonplace in classical Japanese style, had become less and less familiar to readers since the Meiji years as writers attempted to strictly delimit the signifying range of each utterance, thereby forsaking more allusive modes of meaning. According to Tanizaki, the appearance of other stylistic elements unknown or uncommon in classical Japanese (such as quotation marks, attributing quotations, avoidance of run-on sentences and paragraph breaks) also suggested the Westernization of native language.

For Tanizaki, these stylistic and formal alterations to language evidenced the corruption not only of language, but of cultural consciousness:

> Our vocabulary has suddenly grown as we have added Chinese and Western terms, and now finally we have gone so far as to add translated terms (*hon'yakugo*). As

[35] Tanizaki, *TJZ*. Ibid., vol. 20, p. 204.

> I have mentioned repeatedly, because of these additions, we have come to rely on the power of words too greatly, we have become given to verbosity, and we have forgotten the effects of silence.
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> The language of a nation is inseparably linked to that nation's character (*kokuminsei*). That the Japanese language has a meager vocabulary does not mean that our culture is inferior to that of the West or of China. Rather, it is evidence that by nature, our national character (*kokuminsei*) is not given to verbosity.[36]

In sum, Tanizaki, like Yamada, structured his expository writings on language as an intervention that might prevent the further degeneration of language. Against the calcification of Japanese lexemes and syntax into a shallow, foreign-influenced jargon, Tanizaki, like Yamada, attempted to elucidate the superior referential capacity of authentic language suited to the Japanese *kokuminsei*.

Tanizaki's and Yamada's 1939 *Genji* Translation

Whereas Tanizaki's and Yamada's expository writings attempted to diagnose the modern problems of the Japanese language, their 1939 translation of *Genji* endeavored to resurrect—by constructing a new modern Japanese vernacular—the common aesthetic sensibility that they imagined had unified Murasaki Shikibu's eleventh century court. Through the translation, Tanizaki and Yamada implicitly envisioned the vernacular of a hypothetical, alternative modern culture in which the Japanese language had descended directly from that of *Genji* without any Anglo-European interference. The language of their translation, in other words, was to be cognate with the referential patterns, lexicon and aesthetic sensibilities that they thought characterized the language of *Genji* and the world of the eleventh century Heian court. For Yamada, such a language would immerse modern readers in the affective currents of the classic, allowing them to "feel" (*ajiwau*) a communal aesthetic experience as the ancients had. For Tanizaki, the language of the translation would redeem to modernity a premodern ethnic and national bond capable of uniting the Japanese *kokumin* as a society resistant to subsumption into the Western ambit. In translating *Genij*, then, Tanizaki and Yamada not only endeavored to render the classic readable; they also attempted to deliver readers to an alternative modern cultural idiom untouched by the West, one in which *ganchiku* and *hon'i* still governed linguistic expression and in which capacious, affective *kotoba* never ceded their pride of place to foreign lexical interlopers.

In fact, Yamada's and Tanizaki's faith in the affective power of the language of *Genji* overcame their substantial misgivings about the content of the classic. Chief among Yamada's concerns was that Genji, although technically a "commoner" (meaning that he had been removed from the line of imperial succession), witnesses his son ascend to the throne, indicating that the royal (and for Yamada, holy) bloodlines of the Imperial Family had been sullied. The suggestion, even in fiction, that the royal blood was impure amounted to no less than blasphemy for Yamada, making the translation a threat to the public morality. Even though Genji is barred from becoming emperor himself, furthermore, he nevertheless rises to a fictional status tantamount to emperor (*jun daijō tennō*). Yamada thought that Genji's pseudo-sovereignty undermined the actual divinity of the throne, further complicating his collaboration with Tanizaki on the 1939

[36] Tanizaki, *TJZ*. Ibid., vol. 21, p. 118.

translation. Reflecting these misgivings, Yamada noted in 1939 that parts of *Genji* "offend the national essence," adding that he was dissatisfied with *Genji* as a canonical classic.[37] In the preface to his *Genji monogatari no ongaku*, Yamada reiterated his disgust with some of the content of the classic, whatever its other virtues: "My sense of morality (*dōgishin*) makes it difficult to approve of *Genji monogatari* […]."[38]

For different reasons, Tanizaki was also displeased with some aspects of *Genji*. He noted in *Nikumareguchi* (*Some Malicious Remarks*, 1965) that he found Murasaki Shikibu's unbounded sympathy for Genji tiresome, and that he considered many of Genji's amorous escapades to be superficial and implausible. At one point, for example, Genji simultaneously pursues a secret affair with Fujitsubo, the consort of his father (who is emperor), and another clandestine liaison with Oborozukiyo, a woman aligned with a rival political faction. When his affair with Oborozukiyo is discovered, Genji goes into exile, though he proclaims his innocence throughout and benefits from the good graces of the gods. The narration of Genji's exile is unambiguously sympathetic to the hero, which galled Tanizaki:

> I suppose that if viewed as an evocation of the pathos of the human condition (*mono no aware*), one might be able to sympathize with Genji's secret liaison with his father's lover [Fujitsubo]—that is, the consort of the ruler of the realm. And yet, even allowing for that, I just cannot forgive him for then simply taking another lover [Oborozukiyo] and showering sweet nothings upon her. I am a feminist, and so I am overly sensitive to these things. If the gender roles were reversed, perhaps I would not feel as I do, but when I read *Genji*, I have always found this point unpalatable.[39]

Furthermore, although his fiction is often associated with several famous *Genji* tropes—including amorous voyeurism (*kaimami*), longing for mother and replacement of the ideal woman—Tanizaki's expository writings rarely discussed any aspects of the classic other than its language and style. He at times even presented an ambivalent attitude toward *Genji*: when asked after completing the 1939 translation where he thought *Genji* ranked among masterpieces, for example, Tanizaki strangely responded: "I do not actually find it to be much of a masterpiece."[40]

Nevertheless, it remained possible for Yamada and Tanizaki to translate *Genji* without violating their senses of propriety because their misgivings, however sincere, primarily regarded the content, not literary style, of the classic. In the 1939 translation, the "blasphemous" portions to which Yamada objected were expurgated, and though Genji's "unpalatable" qualities could

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[37] Yamada Yoshio, "Tanizaki shi to *Genji monogatari*: kōetsusha no kotoba," *Chūō Kōron* (January 1939), p. 335

[38] Yamada Yoshio, *Genji monogatari no ongaku* (Tokyo: Hōbunkan, 1934), p. 1.

[39] Tanizaki, *TJZ*. Ibid., vol. 21, p. 518. Here, and elsewhere, Tanizaki uses the term "feminist" to mean something like "woman worshipper," or a man devoted to a single woman. Genji's philandering made him the opposite of a Tanizakian Feminist (one who worships a single woman with absolute devotion) because Genji made overtures to several women at once and, in Tanizaki's opinion, treated them as mere playthings.

[40] Hosokawa Mitsuhiro, "'Tanizaki Genji' no hiyayakasa," in Chiba Shunji, ed., *Kōza Genji monogatari kenkyū dai 6-kan: Kindai bungaku ni okeru Genji monogatari* (Tokyo: Ōfū, 2006), p. 164.

hardly be sanitized, the translation still offered Tanizaki a highly visible venue in which to construct a new modern vernacular that inherited the style and sensibilities of the Heian court.[41] Whatever discomfort there may have been with the content of *Genji*, moreover, the genesis of the 1939 translation unambiguously reveals that transposing the referential patterns of Murasaki Shikibu's eleventh century prose to the contemporary idiom was always the primary objective of the publisher Chūō Kōronsha, Tanizaki and Yamada. In the wake of Arthur Waley's literary translation of *Genji* into English (published in six parts from 1925-1933), Shimanaka Yūsaku, President of Chūō Kōronsha, lamented that a similarly readable, literary translation did not exist in Japanese.[42] He petitioned Tanizaki, by then well known for his skillful imitation of classical literary stylistics, meditations on classical Japanese aesthetics and a recent string of bestselling neo-classical novellas, to undertake the translation. Tanizaki agreed, but requested the help of an editor (*kōetsusha*) to assure that the translation would accurately replicate the precise nuance and rhythm of the original. Chūō Kōronsha paired him with Yamada, a scholar known for his expertise in the history of the Japanese language. Yamada reviewed Tanizaki's drafts and consulted with the novelist about ambiguous passages in order for the translation to present a modern language as closely aligned with classical precedent as possible. Upon the release of the translation in 1939, Shimanaka praised Tanizaki's "impeccable" ability as a novelist to artistically render the "fragrance, elegance and nuance" of the original in modern Japanese, adding that Yamada's scholarly contributions made their "transplantation" (*ishoku*) of eleventh century language and style into twentieth century prose "beyond critique even from the perspective of linguistics."[43]

For Tanizaki, the language of *Genji* offered an antidote to what he viewed as the degenerate modern vernacular of post-Meiji Restoration writing because it defined authentic Japanese prose style (*wabun*) generally. In *Bunshō tokuhon*, for example, he wrote:

> Just as drinking companions might split between those who prefer sweet drinks and those who prefer bitter, so, too, in matters of style, do those who prefer the authentic Japanese writing style (*wabun*) and the Chinese writing style (*kanbun*) part ways. Such is also the fault line along which appreciations of the *Genji* divide. The same divide exists in today's vernacular fiction. Even in the case of *gembun-itchi* writing (*gembun-itchi no bunshō*), on close inspection, some writers communicate the warmth of Japanese literary stylistics (*wabun no yasashisa*) while others favor the tight precision of Chinese style writing (*kanbun*). [. . .]. In

[41] Nishino Atsushi has written about the expurgations of the 1939 translation in detail. Please see Nishino, "Hai o yoseatsumeru: Yamada Yoshio to Tanizaki Jun'ichirō yaku *Genji monogatari*," in Chiba Shunji, ed., *Kōza Genji monogatari kenkyū, dai 6-kan: Kindai bungaku ni okeru Genji monogatari* (Tokyo: Ōfū, 2007). Ibuki Kazuko and G.G. Rowley have also described the expurgations. Please see Ibuki Kazuko and G.G. Rowley, "The 'Tanizaki Genji'". Ibid., pp. 34-36.

[42] Shimanaka Yūsaku, "*Genji monogatari* no kankō ni atatte," *Chūo Kōron* (January, 1939), p. 328. For a detailed commentary on the genesis of the 1939 Tanizaki-Yamada *Genji*, including analysis of its relationship to Waley's translation, please see Mizukami and Chiba, eds., *Tanizaki no shokan*. Ibid., pp. 346-351, and Ibuki Kazuko and G.G. Rowley, "The 'Tanizaki Genji.'" Ibid., pp. 25-36.

[43] Shimanaka Yūsaku, "*Genji monogatari*." Ibid., p. 329.

> short, there are two stylistic factions: the *Genji monogatari* side and the non-*Genji monogatari* side.[44]

Tanizaki considered the 1939 *Genji* translation as an example of how *wabun* writing patterned on the prose style of *Genji* and suited to the Japanese *kokuminsei* was still possible in modern Japanese.

Since the translation would maintain the *wabun* virtues of the original even in modern language, furthermore, Tanizaki thought of it as merely the latest "edition" of Murasaki Shikibu's classic, and not as a modern adaptation of the original. He mentioned in a letter to Yamada dated December 11th, 1936, that Chūō Kōronsha wanted to avoid giving the impression that the translation was a *kaisaku* (reworking), *hon'an* (adaptation) or *shōyaku* (translated passages) of *Genji*, and that the publisher suggested branding it simply "*Genji monogatari*." Tanizaki suggested to Yamada that they instead label the translation *Kintai Genji monogatari* (*The Tale of Genji* in Modern Form) or *Shōwa bon Genji monogatari* (The Shōwa Edition of *The Tale of Genji*).[45] This suggests that he understood his translation to "transplant" the entire *Genji* idiom—its aesthetic tastes, the shape of its language and style—to that of contemporary Japan; framing the translation as the "modern form" or "Shōwa edition" of *Genji* would seem to indicate that Tanizaki envisioned it as an uncorrupted descendent of the *wabun* archetype. Implicit in Tanizaki's conception of the translation as the "modern form" of the eleventh century classic was his understanding of language and literature as the last bastion—or "sanctuary," as he called it at the conclusion of *In'ei raisan*—of authentically Japanese aesthetic taste that might be protected against the Eurocentrism of "modern life."

For Yamada, on the other hand, the language of the translation was to immerse modern readers in a field of communal catharsis impossible to access through the contemporary vernacular language, which he considered to have been Anglicized and therefore inauthentic. Yamada understood classical language in *Genji* to have been an axis connecting modern readers to a history of Japanese feeling, and he thought that the 1939 translation would reproduce this ancient aesthetic code in a congruent modern vernacular. As editor, he consulted with Tanizaki about how best to "transplant" the referential patterns of the original so that contemporary readers could "feel" (*ajiwau*), instead of merely understand, the text even in modern translation. He wrote in 1939, for example, that "not only does *Genji* attest to the transcendent skill of the Japanese literary arts, but it also offers a nuanced portrait of the humanity of we Japanese (*kokumin no ninjō*) and does so with warmth and elegance. It is therefore something we should be proud of before the world. In working with this great classic, my desire for modern people to feel (*ajiwau*) it with intimacy, to experience its refined beauty, has never strayed from my mind."[46]

Yamada claimed that modern readers could only "feel" *Genji* when immersed in the affective valence of its language, including its "way of speaking" (*iikata*), "rhythm" (*bunsei*) and "narrative pacing" (*jojutsu no kankyū*):

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[44] Tanizaki, *TJZ*. Ibid., vol. 21, pp. 148-9.

[45] This letter is housed at the Yamada Yoshio Bunko (The Yamada Yoshio Special Collection) at the Toyama City Library.

[46] Yamada, "Tanizaki shi to *Genji*." Ibid., p. 336.

> I need not even mention that this work of Tanizaki's is not a translation into the contemporary vernacular, nor is it a literal, word-for-word translation. Nor is his a work that wantonly departs from the language of the original. At times, the language has been altered or adjusted, and the number of words in some passages has at times been increased; yet, we have tried to feature the way of speaking of the original and its rhythm so that even its narrative pacing becomes able to be felt (*ajiwaiuru yō ni natteiru*).[47]

For Yamada, then, the translation was an attempt to reproduce the language of the original (*genbun*) not merely as a semantic code signifying specific referents, but as a material marker of an aesthetic common sense that intuitively appealed to exclusively Japanese affective receptors. Constructing a modern language hypothetically descended from Murasaki Shikibu's eleventh century court promised for Yamada to immerse modern readers in an affective field identical to that created by the original language.

The foregoing suggests that Tanizaki and Yamada understood the feeling produced by the aesthetic sensibilities encoded in the language of *Genji* to have been the true meaning of the classic. They agreed that the language of *Genji* was an inalienably Japanese property that resisted the Western gaze—so given to cold rationality and lucid explanation—because the truth of the *wabun* archetype derived from the untranslatable referential patterns of authentic Japanese language, and not from its mere semantics. Yet, they recognized that translating *Genji* into the existing vernacular (*genbun-itchi*) would have corrupted the affective valence of the original language, yielding a translation of meaning but not of feeling. In order to convey the feeling and aesthetics of an approximately nine hundred-year-old language to modern readers, Tanizaki and Yamada implicitly undertook the task of constructing an alternative modern vernacular, as suggested in *Bunshō tokuhon* by Tanizaki's critique of Waley's recently published translation of *Genji* into English. In particular, Tanizaki's analysis of Waley's translation of the opening lines of the "Suma" chapter—especially the phrase *furusato obotsukanakaru beshi* ("[His] home faded"; this refers to Genji's emotional state upon being exiled from the capital for offending a political rival)—offered evidence of how the language of *Genji* informed Tanizaki's and Yamada's vision of a more authentic—and less Anglicized—alternative modern vernacular.

Tanizaki first addressed the clarity of Waley's language:

> [Waley's] English prose is more detailed and descriptive than the original, and leaves nothing unclear. Whereas the original endeavors to leave unsaid that which could be understood without being stated explicitly, the English translation explicates over and over even that which is clear enough already.[48]

Tanizaki implied that in Waley's English translation of *Genji*, the Japanese preference for allusive shadows was overcome by the Western taste for rational precision—a repetition of what Tanizaki described in *In'ei raisan* as the basic problematic of Japanese modernity. Tanizaki's point, however, was not that Waley's translation was poor (he in fact praised it elsewhere); rather, his implicit argument was that translating *Genji* into English or Anglicized Japanese inevitably

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[47] Yamada, "Tanizaki shi to *Genji*." Ibid., p. 338.
[48] Tanizaki, *TJZ*. Ibid., vol. 21, p. 126.

vitiated the shadowy aesthetics of language (*ganchiku*) that defined the nuance and appeal of the original.

For Tanizaki, then, Waley's translation demonstrated how the aesthetics of authentic Japanese language could never be assimilated (or translated) into a Western idiom because, as Tanizaki pointed out next, the English language itself could not accurately reproduce the referential patterns of Murasaki Shikibu's eleventh century prose:

> Yet, even the original language is not necessarily unclear. Certainly, it would be easier to understand [Waley's translation] "The prospect of being separated from all those whose society he liked best was not at all inviting," than [the original] "His home faded" [*furusato obotsukanakaru beshi*], but the sense of the original has to do with more than simply Genji's sadness at being far removed from the capital and his loved ones there. Reading the original, one feels all manner of helplessness (*kokoro bososa*), melancholy (*sabishisa*) and disconsolation (*yarusenasa*). The original consolidates all of these emotions into the single phrase "His home faded" (*furusato obotsukanakaru beshi*). [Waley's] English is more clear, but at the expense of limiting meaning and becoming shallow.[49]

According to Tanizaki, Waley's translation evidenced how Westerners' preference for clarity limited the referential capacities of English locutions: Waley's desire for precise semantics delimited the signifying range of the language of his translation, yielding an explicit but superficial summary of the mere meaning of the original Japanese. Tanizaki implied that any translation of *Genji* into a Western language or into Anglicized Japanese would fail because the expansive referential patterns of authentic Japanese were inexpressible in any Anglophonic vernacular.

For Tanizaki, Waley's translation therefore revealed how Westerners' incessant drive for clarity corrupted the intuitive appeal of *Genji*:

> If one were to scrutinize the myriad emotions collected under this one term ["His home faded," *furusato obotsukanakaru beshi*] and sought to name them all one by one, one would wind up with something like my translation of [Theodore] Dreiser's prose: the piling up of descriptors would not only make things more opaque, but one would very likely find that no matter how many words one had piled up, there would never be a moment of satisfaction at which each and every emotion had been stated. On close inspection, one finds that the sadness of this passage is limitless, and it is therefore only natural that one cannot explicitly and completely articulate its contours.[50]

According to Tanizaki, prolix descriptions in Japanese that mimicked the shallow referentiality of English became a confused amalgam of inchoate, isolated adjectives—each with their own discrete signifying domain—that prohibited a unified, totalized expression. Alternatively, a single authentic *wabun* expression sufficed to articulate the entirety of a situation. As an

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[49] Tanizaki, *TJZ*. Ibid., vol. 21, p. 126.
[50] Tanizaki, *TJZ*. Ibid., vol. 21, p. 126.

illustrative example, Tanizaki cited Waley's translation of the opening lines of the "Suma" chapter, in which Genji's feelings on being exiled from the capital form a matrix of emotion that Tanizaki argued English adjectives could only paraphrase. The phrase *furusato obotsukanakaru beshi* ("His home faded"), conversely, marked a unified expression of this complex of emotions in whole language. Tanizaki's critique of Waley's translation suggested that at the core of the 1939 translation was an attempt to revive an archetypically Japanese aesthetics of language: English and Anglicized Japanese could paraphrase the semantic value of Murasaki Shikibu's prose, but only an authentic Japanese rendering could preserve its intuitive appeal. This suggests, more generally, that Tanizaki's and Yamada's 1939 translation endeavored to demonstrate how the allusive referential patterns of premodern Japanese language could inform the construction of a new modern Japanese vernacular untouched by Anglophonic influence.

Although the disasters of war and defeat would truncate the course of their restoration of authentic language, Tanizaki's and Yamada's 1939 translation of *Genji* marked an incremental advancement toward a less Anglicized, more classically patterned modern Japanese vernacular. Their idealistic vision of an alternative modern Japanese vernacular clearly informed the actual language and style of their translation, suggesting that writing in a modern Japanese vernacular more closely—if not perfectly—aligned with the syntax, diction and rhythm of Murasaki Shikibu's prose was yet possible in the late 1930s. The following is an excerpt of Tanizaki's and Yamada's translation of the same "Suma" passage upon which Tanizaki based his critique of Waley's translation in *Bunshō tokuhon*. The non-italicized text denotes portions of the original that Tanizaki and Yamada preserved, and the italicized portions represent their departures from the original:

> Ano Suma *to iu tokoro* wa, mukashi koso hito no sumika nado mo atta monono, ima wa *taisō* hitozato o hanareta, *mono* sugoi *tochi ni natteite*, ama no ie sae mare de aru to kiiteoide ni naru keredomo, *amari ningen no deiri no hageshii*, *ōbirana atari ni* sumai *o suru no* wa *fu*hon'i *de arushi*, sōka to itte miyako o tōku satte iku no mo, furusato *no koto ga kigakari de arōshi nado to*, *hata no miru me mo kimari ga* warui *hodo omayoi asobashite*, kishikata *no koto ya*, yukusue *no koto ya*, yorozu no koto o oomoitsuzuke ni nari, samazama no kanashimi ga *mune ippai ni onari ni naru.*[51]

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[51] Tanizaki Jun'ichirō, trans., Yamada Yoshio, ed., *Genji monogatari* (Tokyo: Chūō Kōron, 1939-1941), vol. 5, pp. 1-2. Although there are variant editions of *Genji*, I refer to the text found in Kaneko Motoomi, ed., *Teihon Genji monogatari shinkai: jō* (Tokyo: Meiji Shoin, 1925) as the "original" (*genbun*) in order to indicate the version of *Genji* that Tanizaki and Yamada likely referred to as they completed their 1939 translation. Although I have not been able to conclude with certainty that this was the version that they both used, Nishino Atsushi has shown that there is a strong correlation between Yamada's notations in his personal copy of this edition of *Genji* (housed in the Yamada Yoshio Bunko at the Toyama City Library) and the expurgations of the 1939 translation, suggesting that this may well have been the version upon which he and Tanizaki based their 1939 translation. (Nishino. "Hai o yoseatsumeru." Ibid., pp. 143-44.).

I have considered verb endings that Tanizaki and Yamada modernized to have been insignificant departures from the original because such alterations were inevitable in a modern translation. For example, whereas the original text of the first line of this excerpt reads "*hito no sumi ka nado mo arikere*" and Tanizaki and Yamada translated the verb "*arikere*" as "*atta*," I do

In Waley's translation, the same passage reads:

> There was Suma. It might not be such a bad place to choose. There had indeed once been some houses there; but it was now a long way to the nearest village and the coast wore a very deserted aspect. Apart from a few fishermen's huts there was not anywhere a sign of life. This did not matter, for a thickly populated, noisy place was not at all what he wanted; but even Suma was a terribly long way from the Capital, and the prospect of being separated from all those whose society he liked best was not at all inviting. His life hitherto had been one long series of disasters. As for the future, it did not bear thinking of![52]

In many cases, Tanizaki's and Yamada's 1939 translation preserved the same or nearly equivalent diction as found in the original. Even when they altered the diction, moreover, they often succeeded in maintaining much of the allusiveness of the original. For example, the phrase that Tanizaki lauded as exemplary of the *ganchiku* aesthetic in *Bunshō tokuhon*, *furusato obotsukanakaru beshi* ("[His] home faded"), became *furusato no koto ga kigakari de arōshi nadoshi* ("Thoughts of home surely made him uneasy"). Tanizaki's and Yamada's translation maintained the term *furusato* (which connotes one's native place, home and, in this case, the capital and imperial court) and the expression *kigakari* ("fear," "anxiety") maintained the senses of vague foreboding and unnamed anxiety that Tanizaki praised in the original locution, *obotsukanakaru beshi* ("faded," "became vague or unclear"). The speculative verb *arō*, like *beshi* in the original, suggested that Genji "must have been" anxious, and thereby replicated the conjectural nature of the original narration. Adding *shi* and *nado* (each meaning something like "etcetera") implied a constellation of anxieties that are unnamed but exist, further strengthening the allusive implication of Tanizaki's and Yamada's prose in much the same way that Tanizaki argued the original language expressed a limitless expanse of anxiety, disquiet and unease. The success of this translation in modernizing several formal elements of the original, preserving much of the original diction and creatively reworking seemingly untranslatable archaisms supported Tanizaki's and Yamada's belief that a linguistic revival realigning modern Japanese language with premodern usage, lexicon and syntax was yet possible in the late 1930s.

The stylistic flaws of Tanizaki's and Yamada's translation, however, revealed that the language they constructed remained an imperfect, experimental prototype of the new modern Japanese vernacular that they had described in expository writings. Yamada's and Tanizaki's translation often succeeded by their lexical restorationist standards, but it also sometimes vitiated the rhythm of the original that Yamada had described as indispensible for readers to "feel" (*ajiwau*) its language, and that Tanizaki had described as fundamental to the *ganchiku* aesthetic

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not consider this to have been a meaningful departure from the original since Tanizaki's and Yamada's only intervention was to modernize the verb conjugation. In other cases, however, they added circumlocutions, changed the vocabulary or otherwise significantly altered the original. For example, they added "*to iu tokoro*" in the first line, which lengthens the expression and alters its rhythm. I count these sorts of alterations as significant and discretionary departures from the original.

[52] Lady Murasaki, *The Tale of Genji: A Novel in Six Parts* (New York: The Modern Library, 1960), Arthur Waley, trans., p. 229.

that he thought defined the classic. Their translation of the "Suma" excerpt, for example, was (ironically) far longer than the original and Waley's supposedly "verbose" English translation. By my count, the original (*genbun*) contained 169 syllables, Waley's translation 165 and Tanizaki's and Yamada's—by far the longest—244.[53] Tanizaki's and Yamada's prose in the "Suma" excerpt, furthermore, was padded with circumlocutions and additions such as *to iu tokoro* ("a place such as [Suma]") and *no koto ya* ("and so on") that slowed its rhythm and diluted its density of expression—two things that vitiated *ganchiku* and altered the rhythm of the original. They also concretized some dense, *ganchiku* expressions, thereby reproducing the very tendency to sacrifice concision for clarity for which Tanizaki criticized Waley. *Hito shigeku*, for example, is a perfectly clear, pithy classical locution describing a place with "lots of people" that would be simple to modernize with a few syllables (*hito ga ōi*, for example), but it became *amari ningen no deiri no hageshii* (a place where "the comings and goings of individuals are much too furious") in Tanizaki's and Yamada's more prolix modern prose.

In sum, the language of Tanizaki's and Yamada's translation successfully transplanted several allusive referential patterns from Murasaki Shikibu's eleventh century prose to the contemporary idiom, but it also retained some vestiges of contemporary modern language that they had criticized. Since the Japanese surrender in 1945 effectively ended Shōwa Restoration thought—and with it, any chance for Yamada and Tanizaki to refine their construction of a new modern vernacular—their 1939 translation remains an incomplete evocation of what the language of an alternative modern culture might have been. As an unfinished construction, more generally, the language of their translation heuristically suggests the myriad multidirectional possibilities of the 1930s that were to remain unfulfilled. In 1939, however, Tanizaki and Yamada considered their translation to be a significant contribution to a broader cultural restoration that they thought was on the cusp of remaking modern Japan. They believed that a revitalized language similar to that of their translation could rejuvenate an enchanted form of feeling previously blocked by the alienation wrought by the commoditized surfaces of "modern life." In the new modern culture of the future that they assumed their translation to presage, an autonomous aesthetic sensibility encoded in language would differentiate the Japanese cultural sphere from others, marking an ethnic enclave liberated from the Eurocentrism of "modern life." Tanizaki's preface to the translation, in fact, explicitly revealed his optimism that what he viewed as a Japanese renaissance underway in the 1930s was succeeding, and that the 1939 *Genji* translation was part of a broader reformation in East Asia:

> Looking back, our society has changed incredibly in the four years [1935-1939] that I've been working on this translation. Today, our nation from top to bottom is cooperating in rebuilding East Asia (*tōa saiken*). In such an age, to introduce to the modern world anew the crystallization of our illustrious classical canon, a work which we believe stands against any in the world, might also signal some sort of opportunity.[54]

As these comments suggest, Tanizaki's and Yamada's efforts to construct a new modern Japanese vernacular were coeval with a complex and expansive Shōwa Restoration that seized

[53] I am grateful to Anthony Chambers for pointing out to me that Tanizaki's and Yamada's translation contained far more syllables than both the original and Waley's English translation.
[54] Tanizaki, *TJZ*. Ibid., vol. 23, pp. 168-9.

on the perceived "opportunity" to "rebuild East Asia." In 1939, Tanizaki and Yamada were optimistic that the aesthetics of language that undergirded their *Genji* translation would also inform the new vernacular of a coming alternative cultural orthodoxy. The actual course of history, however, was to prove otherwise. As the cataclysms of war and defeat truncated the trajectory of the Shōwa Restoration, establishing a modern vernacular perfectly cognate with that of *Genji* became another unrealized possibility of Japan's long 1930s.

Coda: The Postwar Lives of Tanizaki and Yamada

The conclusion of the Pacific War in 1945 also marked the end of Shōwa Restoration thought for all practical purposes. Thereafter, Tanizaki and Yamada entered new phases of their careers that could hardly have been more different. Tanizaki obscured his earlier war support by criticizing the militarists immediately after the surrender, and this allowed him to escape censure and to remain a hugely popular, commercially successful novelist until his death in 1965. By contrast, Yamada refused to disavow his service to the wartime regime because he believed that the politics of *kokugaku* had always been justified, even righteous, and this led him to be branded by "war responsibility" and ostracized from the intellectual mainstream after 1945. Extending my analysis into the Occupation Years (1945-1952) and beyond will elucidate the contingency of rightist political positions in Japan's long 1930s, revealing that some writers (such as Tanizaki) who clearly contributed to the ideologies of imperialism and wartime violence did not always fully understand their own allegiances, whereas others (such as Yamada) encountered the world historical conflicts of the long 1930s as but one occasion among many to articulate their unchanging nativist convictions. This will suggest that the coeval positions of nativst cultural actors like Tanizaki and Yamada in Japan's long 1930s were not necessarily coterminous, but rather moved in various directions even as they were structured by shared sensibilities.

The period from the end of the Pacific War to his death in 1965 was prosperous and successful for Tanizaki. He retained an interest in the classics, as evidenced by two postwar translations of *Genji* and a novella partially inspired by that classic, *Yume no ukihashi* (*The Bridge of Dreams*, 1959), but he was not wedded to the classics: the narratologically complex and adventurous *Kagi* (*The Key*, 1956), for example, chronicled the sex lives of a Kyoto professor, his wife and her younger lover in the form of dueling diaries. As Ibuki Kazuko has recounted, *Kagi* was such an "explosive bestseller" that when its publisher Chūō Kōronsha constructed a new headquarters in Tokyo after its serialization ended, gossipers called it "the house that *Kagi* built" (*kagi biru*), as if profits from Tanizaki's novella alone had funded the entire construction.[55] He was also one of the first Japanese writers translated into English after the war under the ambitious plan of Harold Strauss, of publisher Alfred Knopf, to promote a Japanese writer for the Nobel Prize. It was awarded to Kawabata Yasunari (1899-1972) in 1968 (three years after Tanizaki's death), although some speculate that it would have gone to Tanizaki had he then been alive. At any rate, Tanizaki's postwar career seems not to have suffered at all for his earlier war support.

Tanizaki escaped association with the war effort in part because he criticized the wartime regime in the years following the surrender. Although he positioned the 1939 *Genji* translation as a labor of restorationist love, he revealed after the war that military pressures and censorship greatly influenced how he translated, at times forcing him to knowingly do violence to the

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[55] Ibuki Kazuko, *Ware yori hoka ni: Tanizaki Jun'ichirō siago no jūninen*. (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1994), p. 182.

original. In the preface to his second *Genji gendaigoyaku*, published in 1951-1954, Tanizaki blamed the militarists for deficiencies in the first translation, which he lamented had to be strategically altered to overcome wartime publishing restrictions:

> The clumsy style of the first translation was not the only thing that left me dissatisfied. It was published in an era when the bigoted ideologies of militarist nationalism were rampant. In order to avoid the censure of ignorant militarists, I was forced to minimally twist, cut, adjust and color the original story. Additionally, in the five or six years I worked on the project, the state of affairs gradually worsened and military coercion intensified, and so I was left with no alternative but to expurgate and distort even more of the original than I had at first anticipated. [. . .]. Knowing that the dark age of war could not continue forever, I privately waited expectantly for the inevitable return to an era of freedom (*jiyū na jidai*). Thereafter, our nation recklessly plunged into the Greater East Asian War, but as a result of meeting with calamitous defeat, the era of freedom for which I had hoped came sooner than I had anticipated.[56]

Tanizaki's displeasure with the militarists also surfaced in a 1962 poem to American translator Edward Seidensticker: "My hometown [Tokyo], overcome and plundered by provincial warriors, bears not a speck of resemblance to the Edo of old."[57] He even blamed the death of his publisher Shimanaka Yūsaku in 1949 on wartime harassment from the military to censor publications.[58]

Tanizaki's postwar criticism of the wartime leadership reflected his disillusionment with the development of the very nationalist sentiment to which he himself had earlier contributed. Although he operated in the cultural sphere, the nationalist sensibilities of his rhetoric—especially in the form of his frequent appeals to a mythical "national character" (*kokuminsei*)—often coincided with those of more explicitly political actors on the right (such as Yamada, who produced statist ideological tracts, and the self-identifying Shōwa Restorationists, who attempted direct political agitation through violent means). Tanizaki's essays therefore revealed his affinities with a range of cultural and political workers who, by (at times radically) varying means, actively opposed what they perceived as the subsumption of modern Japanese culture into a homogenized, Euro-American idiom. In this sense, Tanizaki's cultural work as a fiction writer, translator and essayist distributed sensibilities that contributed to the nationalist fervor of Japan's long 1930s in ways different from—but nevertheless as notable as—the actions of avowedly political actors. Crucially, however, Tanizaki's war support and nativist cultural production primarily engaged the latent potential of nationalism to transform Japanese modernity not into a fascistic totalitarian police state, but into an alternative cultural sphere bound by what he thought of as authentically Japanese aesthetic sensibilities.

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[56] Tanizaki, *TJZ*. Ibid., vol. 23, p. 253.

[57] Tanizaki, *TJZ*. vol. 24, p. 701.

[58] In a message of condolence after Shimanaka's passing in 1949, Tanizaki wrote: "As one who witnessed his [Shimanaka's] resistance of military authorities' coercion during the war, I know that he was a man of integrity. Yet, the spiritual and physical suffering that he subjected himself to as a result clearly became an indirect cause of his contracting a terminal illness." (Tanizaki, *TJZ*. Ibid., vol. 23, p. 235).

Whatever its potential, the nationalistic fervor produced by a range of cultural and political agents developed in ways that Tanizaki never anticipated or condoned. He never wished for the oppressive regime that came to power, nor did he ever hope for censorship of publishing, radio and film, nor did he ever intend to support the expansive authority of the military, whose leaders he viewed as philistines. As his disgust after the war made clear, Tanizaki viewed totalitarianism, state controls on culture and militarist rule as unnecessary and deplorable developments that marked the terrifying victory of politics over culture. Its cultural transformative potential betrayed, nationalism had became an insurmountable obstruction that disrupted the telos toward aesthetic utopia implied in Tanizaki's writings on language. Which is to say that Tanizaki's aesthetic ambitions were ultimately undone by the unforeseen outgrowths of the very national chauvinism to which he himself had earlier contributed. In the end, the totalitarian wartime regime rendered cultural restoration and the achievement of a new modern culture no more than latent possibilities of the period—possibilities that were to become submerged beneath the subsequent course of history.

Fortunately for Tanizaki, the indirect prism of aesthetics protected him after the war from being associated with wartime sloganeering. In fact, he received the Imperial Award for Cultural Merit in 1949, a time when Yamada was still blacklisted from jobs in government and education. Unlike Yamada, Tanizaki never held any government post, nor did he ever write or speak of the behalf of anyone but himself. His support of the war, in other words, had never been official—and much of it was buried in personal letters and peripheral writings of little interest to most readers. Furthermore, many of Tanizaki's immediate postwar publications obscured his earlier support of *kokutai* ideology by critiquing the state, lamenting the ravages of war, and turning inward toward the domestic sphere instead of outward to empire. His occupation-era literary writings *Sasameyuki* (*The Makioka Sisters*, 1943-48), *Shōshō Shigemoto no haha* (*Captain Shigemoto's Mother*, 1949-50) and *Miyakowasure no ki* (*Record of the Asters*, 1947), for example, featured flowery imagery, domesticity and family relationships, further distancing him from the wartime regime. Tanizaki's critique of the militarists and string of pacifist works immediately after the war ensured that his name would rarely be associated with *kokutai* ideology during his lifetime, or after.

By contrast, Yamada's career was broken by the defeat. Whereas Tanizaki's wartime writings endorsed *kokutai* ideology indirectly through aesthetics, Yamada's support of the war effort was unmistakable and official: he occupied a government post in Ise as president of Jingū kōgakkan daigaku (Shinto Imperial University), an institute dedicated to the promotion of state Shinto, and wrote on behalf of the state as co-author of *Kokutai no hongi*. After the war, the American occupation closed Jingū kōgakkan daigaku and Yamada was blacklisted from jobs in education and government for his wartime associations. Yamada's personal contributions to the war effort, moreover, left him financially, as well as emotionally, destroyed after the surrender.[59] Only the kind offices of Abe Jirō (1883-1959), then professor at Tōhoku University, where Yamada had worked decades earlier, spared him: Abe invited Yamada back to Sendai, where the linguist installed himself once more, this time as a consultant (*komon*) at the Abe Center for Japanese Cultural Research (*Abe Nihon bunka kenkyūjo*) in 1949. Just before he died in 1958, Yamada was awarded the Imperial Award for Cultural Merit.

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[59] Ōiwa Masanaka, "Yamada Yoshio den: sono go: kan," *Bunpō* Vol. 1, no. 5 (March 1969), p. 128.

Yamada accepted Tanizaki's offer to edit a second *Genji gendaigoyaku*, released from 1951-1954. Their second *Genji* translation restored the expurgated passages that Yamada and others had earlier considered injurious to the national polity. Yamada's partnership in repairing the expurgated passages led Tanizaki to claim that Yamada's ultranationalism was exaggerated and that he had learned to change with the times.[60] It would be hard to agree. Until his death, Yamada remained devoted to what he called the "essences" of Japan, and the American occupation seems to have only excited his jingoism. In the September 1955 issue of *Shinron*, for example, he claimed that the occupation years threatened to "destroy like a toy the ancient and traditional cultural system [of Japan]," adding that if the Japanese were to accept language reforms proposed by the American occupying force, "then it must be said that the occupiers have done so [altered the Japanese language] to kill Japan spiritually, for such would mark the ultimate end of Japanese culture."[61] He continued to publish on and edit volumes of the central texts of the *kokugaku* canon, committed, as before the war, to restoring "authentic" texts and language to the twentieth century.

The similarities between Yamada's pre- and post-surrender writings imply an integrity to his methods and perspective absent in Tanizaki's writings across the same divide. Whereas defeat signaled the failure of politics generally for Tanizaki, nativism remained for Yamada as philosophically sound and intellectually defensible after defeat as it had been earlier. For Yamada, nativism was a religio-philosophical device that sanctioned Japanese nationalism and totalitarian rule as the core elements of a righteous struggle to defend the divine cultural essence of Japan against foreign enemies. From at least the 1930s until his death in 1958, nativism was also the lens through which Yamada understood his own obligation to serve the state. From his perspective, Anglo-European aggression in East Asia and the Pacific War demanded a call to arms by the stewards of the divine Japanese cultural essence, necessitated loyal service to the state and sanctioned aggressive opposition to the secular imperialists from abroad. Although defeat marked the failure of the Japanese state and its patriotic servants, it did not signal the failure of nativism itself for Yamada. In fact, defeat, if anything, increased the relevance and urgency of nativism by demonstrating the fallibility of those charged with protecting the divine essence of the Japanese spirit, as well as the potency of their enemies. For Yamada, nativism did not fail to accurately represent the problems of the 1930s, nor did it make misleading appeals in support of dangerous leaders; rather, it offered a philosophical explanation of a world-historical crisis to which totalitarian rule, armed confrontation and nationalistic sentiment were all justifiable—even righteous—responses. Yamada never recanted his nationalistic wartime associations because, in his mind, he had never erred: even if the war had ended in defeat, nativism still sanctioned his service to the state and his efforts to clarify the national essence as noble interventions on behalf of a divine cultural endowment.

More generally, Yamada's and Tanizaki's political differences suggest the ideological heterogeneity and historical contingency of the political positions available to cultural actors in Japan's long 1930s. Their responses to defeat evoke the irreducible plurality of method and motivation even among those who clearly contributed to the nationalistic fervor of the times, and make clear that nativist-nationalist convictions in the period were not inevitable, but were, rather, subject to and mediated by a dense web of contingencies. Which is not to deny that they contributed to a violent nationalist fervor—they did, as their zealous, explicit support of the war

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[60] Tanizaki, *TJZ*. Ibid., vol. 23, pp. 357-8.
[61] Yamada Yoshio, "Kanazukai no konran o sukue," *Shinron* (September 1955), pp. 58-9.

and imperialism shows. This chapter, however, has endeavored to recover their writings on language as complex and valuable—if flawed—contributions to a past present with an uncertain future, an open-ended moment in literary and intellectual history when a new modern culture seemed possible, and when a literary language promised to inaugurate it. In the next chapter, I examine two of Yamada's and Tanizaki's contemporaries who became the most lucid critics of the sorts of nativism, philology and neo-classicism examined in this chapter.

Chapter Two:

Toward a Language of Everyday Life: Tosaka Jun, Nakano Shigeharu and the Jargon of Japanese Fascism

The Shared Sphere of Communication in Japan's Long 1930s

Marxist philosopher Tosaka Jun (1900-1945) and Marxist poet Nakano Shigeharu (1902-1979) formulated a critique of contemporary language that contrasted with Tanizaki's and Yamada's. For Tosaka and Nakano, ethnocentric conceptualizations of language (such as those described by Tanizaki's and Yamada's writings) were not only unfounded intellectually, but also dangerous politically and culturally. In particular, they argued that their nativist contemporaries' philological analyses and cultural essentialism combined to transform isolated native words (*kotoba*) into an auratic jargon of authenticity—the master code, in other words, of Japanese fascism. In opposition to what they viewed as the auraticization of native language, Tosaka and Nakano tried to reconnect the value of words and narrative to the social ground of everyday life. They believed that by understanding language within the material and social plane of lived experience, they might disrupt the fascist politics of their jingoistic contemporaries, and reinscribe language with the textures of contemporary history, rather than allowing it to be flattened out into the clichés of Japanist mythology.

This chapter treats the writings of Nakano and Tosaka as contemporaneous with those of Tanizaki and Yamada in order to emphasize that these writers all shared a common communicative sphere, and to allow for an analysis of the cultural-political positions of their respective writings in relation to one another. This, however, is not to imply that Tosaka and Nakano confronted their cultural and political rivals on an even playing field: like many Marxists and suspected communists in 1930s Japan, Tosaka and Nakano were imprisoned often, operated under regular police surveillance and attempted to publish despite heavy censorship. While noting this, I am less concerned with the modes of authority that policed the left than with understanding how Nakano's and Tosaka's writings distributed their political investments in antagonistic relation to other circulating sensibilities. In particular, this chapter examines how their writings countered what they called the fascistization (*fasshoka*) of language—a process whose origins they located in the sort of nativist idealism championed by Tanizaki and Yamada, in the "magical" literary aesthetics of the Nihon Roman-ha (Japan Romantic School), and elsewhere. Through an examination of Tosaka's and Nakano's expository reflections on language and politics, this chapter builds toward a reading of how the verbal ideology structured (or "semioticized") by Nakano's poetry redistributed cultural sensibility in ways that countered other forms of politics-in-language circulating at the same time.

I begin by analyzing Tosaka's and Nakano's essays, focusing on how they understood the alienation of language from life to open the representational gap that a fascist jargon would fill. Their expository writings point to how a corrosive idealism was carried by the seemingly moderate signs of mainstream culture, and elucidate how romantic sentiments had gradually calcified language into hardened clichés unrelated to the dynamics of lived experience. I then read Nakano's poetry within the conceptual plane mapped by their essays. I focus on how his poetry used "journalism" as a poetic trope that put his and Tosaka's visions of a materialist language rooted in the experience of everyday life (*jour*nalism) into tension with the alienating

effects of fascist jargon and nationalist clichés. In these poems, the newspaper becomes a concrete correlative to the "ready-made language" (*dekiai no kotoba*) that Nakano's and Tosaka's essays associated with the fascist ideologies of the global 1930s. My analysis builds toward a reading of how Nakano's poetry competed against fascist utterances through a language that both begot and was begotten by a socio-cultural sensibility attuned to "everydayness" (*nichijōsei*).[1] Taken together, these analyses point to how the language of Nakano's poetry indexed the dynamics of lived experience that he and Tosaka believed were being overwritten by the jargon of Japanese fascism.

Tosaka Jun and the Jargon of Japanese Fascism

Tosaka's life and career were short. Born in 1900 and schooled in philosophy at Kyoto Imperial University, he began to make is mark on the intellectual scene around 1930. His writings reckoned with culture and politics high and low, ranging over topics from censorship to journalism, theories of science and ideology to criticism of cinema and literature. He led the *Yuibutsuron kenkyūkai* (Society for Materialist Research), and its eponymous journal proved a force in disseminating the increasingly suppressed methods of materialist social critique from 1932-1938. Tosaka's recognition that conditions in 1930s Japan inflected a broader fascistization (*fasshoka*) of culture worldwide is remembered as one of the most penetrating insights into Japanese modernity; more broadly, his sensibilities and intellectual range put him into implicit dialogue with his great contemporaries writing on the problems of politics and culture half a world away, including especially Walter Benjamin, Theodor Adorno and Mikhail Bakhtin. All of this, from a life and career that were cut short by the very forces that Tosaka unstintingly critiqued—censorship and fascism. After the close of 1937, he spent the rest of his days banned from writing, frequently incarcerated, and in declining health. He died in a Nagano prison on August 9th 1945, the same day as the atomic bombing of Nagasaki, and only five days before the Japanese surrender that ended the Pacific War.

My analysis of Tosaka's thought focuses on how his *magnum opus*, *Nihon ideorogii ron* (The Japanese Ideology, 1935), described Japanese fascism as an ideological force that gathered its power in mythological language alienated from lived experience.[2] His critique of language

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[1] This approach draws on the work of Michael Silverstein, who in a different context has analyzed "different kinds of knowledge that are, on the one hand, the begetters of communicative form and, on the other, the begotten results of communication having taken the particular form it did in precipitating textuality-in-context." (Michael Silverstein. "How Knowledge Begets Communication Begets Knowledge: Textuality and Contextuality in Knowing and Learning," in *Intercultural Communication Review* (Tokyo; 2007) 5, .p. 250). Silverstein has shown how certain forms of socio-cultural knowledge lead to certain semiotic and lexical (often deictic) expressions, which themselves, in turn, convey specific kinds of socio-cultural knowledge. He has called this process "indexically creative": "It requires analysis as part of the fractionantion of any so-called language into a union of registers […]. It is in these terms that the language users experience language from the indexical variability that is both the essential condition of all socio-empirical knowledge and, dialectically, its emergent product." (Michael Silverstein, "How Knowledge Begets Communication Begets Knowledge: Textuality and Conextuality in Knowing and Learning," ibid., p. 59).

[2] Some of the groundwork for this mapping has already been laid by Harootunian's writings on *Nihon ideorogii ron*. For example, Harootunian has pointed out that hermeneutics and philology

and politics implicitly corroborated the conclusion of his contemporary V.N. Volosinov/Mikhail Bakthin, who argued at around the same time that Tosaka was writing that "[e]verything ideological possesses *meaning*: it represents, depicts, or stands for something lying outside itself. In other words, it is a *sign*. *Without signs there is no ideology*."[3] After glossing the more-or-less straightforward question of *what* Tosaka thought the politics of his age were (fascist), I focus on one of the places *where* he thought such politics were to be located (language), asking: what kind of a socio-cultural unconscious did Tosaka think had produced what kind of language in 1930s Japan, and in turn, how did Tosaka understand that language to beget fascist ideation? These questions lead me to view several seemingly disparate aspects of Tosaka's thought as in fact the syncretic parts of a unified critique of fascist language. Like Volosinov/Bakthin, Tosaka believed that language molded actual thoughts and feelings, and his critique suggested that an auratic jargon of authenticity had brought forth fascist consciousness in Japan's long 1930s.[4]

The jargon of Japanese fascism came into full flower only in the 1930s, but Tosaka argued that its seeds (like those of Japanese fascism itself) were sown decades earlier, in the Meiji period (1868-1912). As Harry Harootunian has pointed out, the main thesis of *Nihon* was that a self-effacing liberal ideology took hold in Japan in the late 19th century, ordering the modern imagination and providing the idealistic ground out of which Japanese fascism emerged by the 1930s.[5] As described in the Introduction, Tosaka believed that as Japan emerged as a modern nation in the Meiji years, the sensibilities of liberal thought became an unacknowledged (and therefore unquestioned) "common sense" (*jōshiki*) according to which the individual was a free agent unencumbered by social stratification, the exploitations of the market, and the controls of the state. Tosaka detected in the liberal imagination of modern Japan a boundless faith in

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figured prominently in Tosaka's classic critique of Japanese fascism, and that liberalism offered an idealistic "common sense" that informed the fascist imagination (See Harootunian, "The Postwar Genealogy of Fascism and Tosaka Jun's Prewar Critique of Liberalism," *The Journal of Pacific Asia* 2 (1994), especially pp. 104-112). Alan Tansman has also insightfully written about Tosaka's critique of fascism as a problem related to language. See Alan Tansman. "Introduction: The Culture of Japanese Fascism," in *The Culture of Japanese Fascism*, Alan Tansman, ed., (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2009), pp. 2-4.

[3] Volosinov, V.N. *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, trans., Ladislav Matejka and I.R. Titunik (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973), p. 9. Emphasis in original.
Scholars seem to agree that "Volosinov" was likely a penname for Bakhtin, and for this reason, I refer to the author of *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* as "Volosinov/Bakhtin."

[4] Volosinov/Bakthin argued that "*consciousness itself can arise and become a viable fact only in the material embodiment of signs*[,]" adding that "[c]onsciousness takes shape and being in the material signs created by an organized group in the process of its social intercourse. The individual consciousness is nurtured on signs; it derives its growth from them; it reflects their logic and laws. The logic of consciousness is the logic of ideological communication, of the semiotic interaction of a social group. If we deprive consciousness of its semiotic, ideological content, it would have absolutely nothing left. Consciousness can harbor only in the image, the word, the meaningful gesture, and so forth." (Volosinov, V.N. *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, trans., Ladislav Matejka and I.R. Titunik (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973), p. 11, p. 13. Emphasis in original).

[5] See Harootunian, "The Postwar Genealogy of Fascism and Tosaka Jun's Prewar Critique of Liberalism," *The Journal of Pacific Asia* 2 (1994), pp. 95-112.

possibility and progress, which owed primarily to the presumption that capitalism and democracy would lead to ever-greater affluence and freedom for all. The truth, according to Tosaka, was very different. He argued that the freedoms and possibilities that ruled the liberal imagination functioned as an ideological alibi for bourgeois hegemony because they concealed the true mechanisms responsible for the vagaries of capitalist modernity with false promises of inexorable improvement, cultivation and progress. For this reason, he called liberalism an "escape from reality" that obscured the real conditions of modern social bondage.[6]

Tosaka thought that the liberal sleight of hand was successful because liberalism effaced its own historicity and bourgeois allegiances by posing, instead, as an apolitical, ahistorical expression of "culture."[7] In *Nihon*, Tosaka used the term "cultural liberalism" (*bunkateki jiyūshugi*) to refer to a "more general, higher-level consciousness different from economic or political consciousness […]."[8] Whereas the political implications (bourgeois democracy) and economic aspect (free market capitalism) of liberalism only influenced those discrete domains, "cultural liberalism" referred to a broader social unconscious alienated from history, politics, scientific rationality and the material conditions of everyday life. For him, the realm of cultural liberalism was the realm of unbridled possibility, a space of fantasy and romance unapproachable through the mechanisms of empirical investigation. Cultural liberalism foreclosed the possibility of understanding modern life as an historically contextualized, politically contentious experience, and instead naturalized the cultural status quo as an apolitical, ahistorical and ethically good condition.[9]

Tosaka claimed that these sorts of political and historical blinders allowed cultural liberalism to traffic in a mythical telos (*mokutekiron*) progressing toward the forever-deferred ideals of perfect human freedom and self-cultivation. He warned that it was precisely this teleological fantasy that made liberalism dangerous because it explained away contemporary history as but one minor stage in the purportedly incontrovertible progress of a unilinear cultural

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[6] Tosaka Jun. *Tosaka Jun zenshū* (Tokyo: Keisō Shobō, 1966-79), vol. 2, p. 228.

[7] As Tosaka put it, "[l]iberalism, as a historical category, can obviously be nothing other than bourgeois ideology—a product of capitalist culture—but when liberalism becomes an ethical category, it is thought to be free of any fixed class character and specific ideological quality. Liberalism as an ethical category can therefore take on an extremely agile (*bengi*) form capable of incorporating as necessary any content it pleases. (Tosaka Jun. *Tosaka Jun zenshū* (Tokyo: Keisō Shobō, 1966-79), vol. 2, p. 395). In *Nihon*, Tosaka argued that liberalism originated as a philosophy that defined the modern marketplace as an autonomous domain beyond the influence of religious and political authorities where merchants were free to trade and compete as equals. He observed that liberalism later suffused the political sphere in the form of democratic ideals such as universal equality. Tosaka concluded that by philosophically sanctioning the emergence of free market capitalism and bourgeois democracy, liberalism catalyzed the world-historical transition from medieval feudalism to capitalist modernity.

[8] Tosaka Jun. *Tosaka Jun zenshū* (Tokyo: Keisō Shobō, 1966-79), vol. 2, p. 394.

[9] As Harootunian has pointed out, liberalism erased its own class origins and "naturalize[d] the historical": "In TOSAKA's catalogue of contemporary Japanism, we can find spiritualism, agrarianism, Asianism, and more, all grounded in an hermeneutics and its interest to naturalize the historical and induce the image of repetition of the same." (Harootunian, "The Postwar Genealogy of Fascism and Tosaka Jun's Prewar Critique of Liberalism," *The Journal of Pacific Asia* 2 (1994), p. 106, 110).

mythology. As he pointed out in *Nihon*, the liberal telos toward cultural utopia could make anything seem "progressive" (*shinpōteki*), even fascism:

> At present, the quality of progress (*shinpōsei*) is commonly associated with the prosperity and improvement of the so-called masses, or of what is called "society" or of something called "the world." The defining characteristic of social phenomena that are thought by the masses to be good is that they are thought by the masses to have some progressive implication for society. Since Japan has made inroads into Manchuria, the masses feel that things have improved a bit. "If we run out of food on the home islands (*naichi*), we can just go to Manchuria. In Manchuria, there will be jobs. Given the tension of our military situation, military industries will surely boom. Job openings will increase, as will wages. Even on the farm, agricultural industrialization will become possible." Such seems to be the social consciousness today as informed by the common sense of the so-called "masses" (and of course, most of this common sense is constructed and disseminated by the bourgeoisie, military men, politicians, journalists, educators and the like). The temper of the times, simply put, has made Japanese fascism into something progressive, or at least made fascism seem like that which will solve Japan's problems, build hopes and dreams for the near future and allow Japan to develop.[10]

For Tosaka, then, the fascist imagination formed its fantasies in relation to the temporal logic of teleology (*mokutekiron*): it evacuated the present of any significance except as an intermediary node within a "progressive" narrative, and filled the cultural space it emptied with romantic visions of future grandeur. By this logic, the violent means of the present were justified by mythic ends to come. The main thesis of Tosaka's *Nihon*, then, was that Meiji liberalism and 1930s fascism emerged from the common ground of teleological idealism, which culminated in an ideological counterfeiting when fascism passed off its insidious schemes as apolitical forms of cultural progress.

Beyond its most central argument, the explanatory power of *Nihon* also gathers in a submerged commentary on how literary language coerced fascist ideation in 1930s Japan. I call this a "submerged commentary" because language does not always come to the fore of Tosaka's larger critique of fascism, liberalism and culture. In their isolated occurrences, Tosaka's comments on language might appear to have been no more than minor aspects of his larger critical project; but taken together, they reveal how he understood the politics of the period to materialize in concrete verbal signs. In this sense, Tosaka's reflections on language and politics shared with Volosinov/Bakthin's roughly contemporaneous *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* (1929) the premise that ideology does not exist only or even primarily in the amorphous realm of consciousness, but rather becomes real in the concrete semiotics of language itself. The submerged commentary about language and ideology in *Nihon* implies the argument that Volosinov/Bakhtin made explicitly: "*everything ideological possesses semiotic value*" and "*the word is* [therefore] *the ideological phenomenon par excellence*."[11]

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[10] Tosaka Jun. *Tosaka Jun zenshū* (Tokyo: Keisō Shobō, 1966-79), vol. 2, p. 420.
[11] Volosinov, V.N. *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, trans., Ladislav Matejka and I.R. Titunik (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973), p. 10, p. 13. Emphasis in original.

In direct opposition to the writings of Tanizaki, Yamada and the Nihon Roman-ha, Tosaka argued that there was a *surplus* of enchanted literary language circulating in 1930s Japan. In the same way that he believed the idealism of liberal thought had overflowed the discrete realms of free market economics and bourgeois democracy to become an unbounded cultural unconscious, he also believed that the literary aura that nativists and Romanticists ascribed to isolated Japanese words (*kotoba*) had overflowed the previously circumscribed domain of "the literary" *per se* to suffuse even the non-literary genres of philosophy, journalism and state messages. As language in these varied verbal registers came to function primarily as a literary aesthetic device, Tosaka feared that the communicative sphere of 1930s Japan devolved into a closed circuit of merely literary images. As he pointed out in a terse passage of *Nihon*, he sensed that language was coming to refer only to other language in a circular symbology without any real world referent:

> It should be noted that literature will always represent the content of the ideas it expresses through combinations of concrete (*gutaiteki*) literary symbols. This is obvious, and neither good nor bad. But what I wish to presently draw attention to is the fact that *symbols* are by no means *concepts*. That is, just because one borrows literary symbols does not make the concepts that they refer to literary. Concepts […] are always necessarily scientific and philosophical—actual and objective. […]. In the fields of idealism (*kannenron*), metaphysics and hermeneutics today, however, the organization of fundamental scientific and philosophical concepts—which is to say materialism—has ceased to be the mechanism of ideas. Through the infiltration of literary symbols, materialism has been replaced by the logic of fundamentally literary concepts.[12]

This dense passage crystallizes Tosaka's understanding of the crisis of representation in 1930s Japan. Stating that "*symbols* are by no means *concepts*," Tosaka insisted that language should dialogically represent material reality without being confused for reality themselves. His point was that literary symbols were metaphors whose value emerged in their dialogue with lived experience—with a concrete social reality external to representational form. By contrast, the free association of literary symbols within an aesthetic vacuum could only produce a merely literary—which is to say, fantastical—form of meaning. Tosaka's larger argument, then, was that language was meaningless in isolation and could only signify through interactional engagement with an "actual and objective" world.

Tosaka's understanding in *Nihon* of how words make meaning implicitly corroborates the thesis of Volosinov/Bakhtin's roughly contemporaneous *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* (1929). Volosinov/Bakhtin critiqued the Saussurian school of linguistics for understanding language as a complete constellation of unitary verbal forms (words, syntax, punctuation, etc.) attached to unchanging dictionary definitions. He claimed that this approach ignored the social and historical imperatives that determined the value of an utterance. Instead of treating language as a complete system of symbols whose stable meanings were always self-evident to speakers, Volosinov/Bakhtin thought of language as a stream whose ceaseless flow of utterances produced fresh meaning within each unique social and historical circumstance. From

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[12] Tosaka Jun. *Tosaka Jun zenshū* (Tokyo: Keisō Shobō, 1966-79), vol. 2, p. 410. Emphasis in original.

his perspective, the isolated, monologic word meant nothing; it was, rather, the dialogic intercourse between concrete socio-historical contexts and common verbal forms that produced meaning.[13] As Volosinov/Bakhtin put it, language signified only within the concrete socio-historical context of "verbal intercourse": "[Verbal signification] is like an electric spark that occurs only when two different terminals are hooked together. […]. Only the current of verbal intercourse endows a word with the light of meaning."[14]

To be sure, it seems that Tosaka did not know of Volosinov/Bakhtin's writings, and he therefore could not have understood himself to have been in dialogue with his Soviet contemporary. But this in fact makes the similarities between their critiques all the more striking, and suggests that their perspectives resonate because they were thinkers writing at the same time about what happens to language under the pressures of cultural fascism, whether in Tosaka's Japan or in Bakhtin's Soviet Union. For both figures, too, locating the value of language in relation to the verbal intercourse of everyday life became a conceptual keystone holding together their critical responses to the fascistization of language. For them, the fascist imagination had the effect of silencing the conflicts and cacophony of a stratified society in the name of constructing the mythic image of consensual, collective progress. By contrast, they understood the language of everyday life to register difference: it is full of indexical markers pointing to distinctions in race and class, for example, as well as differences in gender and generation, all of

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[13]Volosinov, V.N. *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, trans., Ladislav Matejka and I.R. Titunik (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973), pp. 102-103). Volosinov/Bakhtin made this claim in the following context:

> Therefore, there is no reason for saying that meaning belongs to a word as such. In essence, meaning belongs to a word in its position between speakers […]. [Verbal signification] is like an electric spark that occurs only when two different terminals are hooked together. Those who ignore theme […] and who, in attempting to define the meaning of a word, approach its lower, stable, self-identical limit [its "meaning"], want, in effect, to turn on a light bulb after having switched off the current. Only the current of verbal intercourse endows a word with the light of meaning.

As an alternative to Saussure's "sign" and "signified," Volosinov/Bakhtin argued that the value of an utterance should be considered in terms of its "theme" and "meaning." In this context, "theme" indicated the "thematic unity" of an entire utterance, particularly as regarded the dialogue between the socio-historical frame of an utterance and its generic structural elements (words, syntax, intonation, etc.). The "meaning" of an utterance referred to formal structures, such as the dictionary definitions of words, the regular patterns of grammar and the orthodox morphological features of the utterance. For Volosinov, the theme of an utterance was irreproducible and indivisible because it was the product of a unique confluence of social, historical and linguistic factors; meaning, on the other hand, was entirely reproducible, unitary and divisible because it was composed of the generic linguistic structures (words, grammar and syntax, for example) that speakers recycled in wide-ranging circumstances.

[14] Volosinov, V.N. *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, trans., Ladislav Matejka and I.R. Titunik (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973), pp. 102-103).

which add up to a textured, "heteroglossic" language full of competing voices in dialogue with one another.[15]

In the 1930s, however, Tosaka feared that the possibility of a contemporary Japanese language rooted in everyday life was succumbing to the insidious expansions of a hyperliterary imagination that he called "literaturism" (*bungakushugi*). By Tosaka's definition, literaturism was a "special form of hermeneutics" that substituted "fantastic literary symbols and images" for lived experience, "passing off unadulterated literary symbols and images as philosophical, logical concepts. As a result, an organization of categories of interpretation suitable for linking [literary] images to other [literary] images has replaced the organization of actual categories based on the actual order of things (*genjitsu no chitsujo*)[.]"[16] In other words, "literaturism" referred in Tosaka's writing to a sensibility that understood the objective world, the real, as a merely rhetorical construct that only existed within the forms of language itself. By Tosaka's reckoning, the literaturistic imagination could only evaluate the significance of social, economic, political and other problems in terms of literary aesthetic values, rather than through the empirical modes of scientific reasoning.[17] In this sense, literaturism was for him a form of cultural idealism that sprang from the liberal endowment. It supplied concrete verbal structures

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[15] Harootunian has suggested that "everydayness" (*nichijōsei*) constituted a form of "disquiet" in Tosaka's thought that disrupted the tendency of the fascist imagination to erase historical consciousness with flat teleologies, and to homogenize the dynamics of social life through appeals to an undifferentiated collectivity. Drawing on the writings of Tosaka Jun, Walter Benjamin and others, Harootunian has observed that everydayness disrupts teleologies and recovers aspects of historical experience that would otherwise be paved over by idealized masternarratives: "As I have conceived it, everydayness is a form of disquiet, a moment suspended; it is a new present, a 'historic situation' that violently interrupted tradition and suspended the line and movement of the past." (Harry Harootunian. *History's Disquiet* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), p. 21). According to Harootunian, approaching history through the aperture of eveyrdayness sheds light on "how contemporaries organized their lived experience at a certain historical moment and named it and how that moment was historically stored for later interpreters." (Harootunian. *Hisotry's Disquiet*, ibid., p. 6).

[16] Tosaka Jun. *Tosaka Jun zenshū* (Tokyo: Keisō Shobō, 1966-79), vol. 2, p. 230.

[17] James Dorsey has translated Tosaka's coinage, *bungakushugi*, as "literary aestheticism," and noted that "[i]n Tosaka's eyes this critical perspective [*bungakushugi*] inverts the proper hierarchy of objective realty over literary representation, and subjugates material realities to the fictional whims of literature. Real-world issues are being evaluated purely in terms of literary aesthetics." (James Dorsey. *Critical Aesthetics: Kobayashi Hideo, Modernity, and Wartime Japan* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Pres, 2009), p. 151).

Alan Tansman translates *bungakushugi* in Tosaka's thought as "ideologies of literature": "Dominating Japanese letters in 1936, critics such as Kobayashi lent their works to smoothing over the economic, political, social, cultural and class conflicts that wracked Japanese society. To Tosaka, it was no coincidence that such ideological work was being done by literature, and it was particularly dangerous that it was being done so, because literary ideas, he argued, easily became 'ideologies of literature (*bungakushugi*)' that rejected positivism and logic and then served up aesthetic models for the social world." (Alan Tansman. "Introduction: The Culture of Japanese Fascism," in *The Culture of Japanese Fascism*, Alan Tansman, ed., (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2009), p. 3).

which, to borrow Alan Tansman's words, "made fascism palatable to liberal-thinking people who did not like fascism as a 'mode' of being or thinking but found it attractive when associated with words like 'love,' art,' or 'tradition.'"[18]

Tosaka feared that literaturism could paralyze language in 1930s Japan in the same way that liberalism had tranquilized modern consciousness since the 19th century, forcing verbal signs to serve a mythic telos that is already closed and complete rather than communing with the indeterminate temporality and unresolved experience of everyday life. He argued that the process of transmuting the contingency of historical experience into the stability of mythic signs was most clearly in evidence in the ways that some intellectuals tried to understand modernity through the methods of philology.[19] Tosaka allowed that philology might elucidate the meaning of a word embedded in the fixed context of an ancient text, but he thought that trying to understand the more expansive problems of an evolving modernity through formal analyses of isolated native words (*kotoba*) could only lead to a circular ethnoncentrism. This was so because philological fetishes, he claimed, divorced language from life, and transformed the parochial signifying range of native *kotoba* into a universalized jargon of authenticity.

On this point, Tosaka's reading of eminent philosopher Watsuji Tetsurō's (1889-1960) *Ningen no gaku toshite no rinrigaku* (*The Study of Ethics as Anthropology*, 1934), offered one of the best examples of how he understood literaturism and philology to authorize specious philosophies of Japanese ethnic superiority. Tosaka critiqued Watsuji's arguments that figured the etymology, orthography, character compound and other aspects of a Japanese word as evidence that the Japanese themselves possessed an innate sensibility, ethical wisdom and communitarian bonds. For example, he rejected Watsuji's claim that the Japanese word for "ethics," *rinri* (倫理), implied that Japanese people possessed an intuitive sense of collectivity (*kyōdōtai*). For Tosaka, Watsuji mistook the Japanese word for "ethics" for the actual, philosophical concept of "ethics" itself. He therefore concluded that Watsuji's philological philosophy, like literaturism, constructed an imaginary "Japanese reality" accessible only through a parochial native symbology. For Tosaka, then, Watsuji's philological philosophy was an example of how the literaturistic imagination alienated language from life, allowing a closed circuit of native verbal forms to counterfeit meaning.[20]

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[18] Tansman, Alan. "Introduction: The Culture of Japanese Fascism," in *The Culture of Japanese Fascism*, Alan Tansman, ed., (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2009), p. 3.

[19] In this regard, Tosaka implicitly concurred with Volosinov's/Bakhtin's insight that philology treated the word as a "defunct, monologic utterance" and an "isolated monument." In *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* (1929), Volosinov/Bakhtin claimed that "[g]uided by philological need, linguistics has always taken as its point of departure the finished monologic utterance—the ancient written monument, considering it the ultimate realium," but he added that by understanding language as a group of complete, self-identical forms (or "monuments"), "the philologist-linguist tears the monument out of [the] real domain and views it as if it were a self-sufficient, isolated entity." (Volosinov, V.N. *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, trans., Ladislav Matejka and I.R. Titunik (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973). P. 72, p. 73). Without having read Volosinov's/Bakhtin's thesis, Tosaka recognized in the 1930s that the literaturistic imagination had its roots in the philological fetishization of native words, and he sensed that it represented modern life as if it were as stable as an ancient text.

[20] Tosaka made this point explicitly in *Nihon*:

Tosaka concluded that Watsuji's philological philosophy was not only erroneous, but dangerous, too, because it encouraged the mistaken impression that the Japanese idiom—its history, people, language and, worst of all for Tosaka, spirit—represented the pinnacle of humanity: "[Watsuji's argument] creates the excitement, atmosphere and feeling that Japanese social life built on collectivity (*kyōdōtai*) is the model for all societies (that is, for the ethics of all mankind). To be true, this would ultimately require that Japan possesses something resembling the most exalted, peerless national polity (*kokutai*) in the world."[21] Elsewhere in *Nihon*, Tosaka elaborated on the inherent ethnocentrism of Watsuji's approach, claiming that philology inevitably gave the impression that the Japanese embodied the ideals of "ethics," "humanity" and "being":

> Philological interpretations based on words always place the thing being interpreted within the confines of a national language (*kokugo*). The Japanese words for "ethics" (*rinri*), "humanity" (*ningen*) and "being" (*sonzai*) all exemplify this. It follows that not only will the things called "ethics," "humanity" and "being" be interpreted only as they occur in Japan, but it also becomes inevitable that the Japanese instances of these things will become the standards [for interpretation]. This is because although things like "ethics," "humanity" and "being" can be completely understood internationally, when the international and Japanese senses of these terms collide, philological interpretation will of course always figure the Japanese valence as the most central. The result is a normative logic: when, for example, "ethics" becomes something that can only be expressed in one nation's language (*kokugo*), and when "ethics" is, moreover, interpreted through philological examination, then the circular conclusion (*dōgi hanfukuteki na ketsuron*) will emphasize the Japanese-ness (*Nihonsei*) of not only the word "ethics," but of the very thing called "ethics" itself. In this way, relying on philological interpretations based on one national language soon yields theories of "Japanese ethics" and "Eastern ethics." Needless to say, "Japanese ethics" implies that ethicality achieves its most exalted state as something Japanese [.][22]

Tosaka concluded that by confusing the forms of native language for universal philosophical content, Watsuji's writing normativized the Japanese cultural perspective, resulting in an ethnocentric pseudo-philosophy that transformed "the study of Japanese people into the study of

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> If literaturism operates by an interpretive method that replaces philosophical categories based on reality with literary categories based on literary images, then philology is based exclusively on etymological and exegetical interpretations of texts and language instead of [on interpretations of] real things. In the most extreme cases, this native word and that are capriciously selected and passed off as philosophical concepts. Literaturism passes symbols off as concepts, and philology passes words off as concepts. (Tosaka Jun. *Tosaka Jun zenshū* (Tokyo: Keisō Shobō, 1966-79), vol. 2, p. 231).

[21] Tosaka Jun. *Tosaka Jun zenshū* (Tokyo: Keisō Shobō, 1966-79), vol. 2, p. 302.

[22] Tosaka Jun. *Tosaka Jun zenshū* (Tokyo: Keisō Shobō, 1966-79), vol. 2, p. 301.

model humans, which is to say the study of the model race, or even a study pointing to the ethical model for all peoples of the world."[23]

More broadly, Tosaka's critique of Watsuji's philological philosophy recalls some of the insights of their contemporary Theodor Adorno. In *The Jargon of Authenticity* (1964), Adorno argued that romantic philosophical writings on phenomenology and ontology in the 1920s and 1930s had emptied out language of everyday values, and transformed mundane words into a "jargon of authenticity" imbued with a poetic aura:

> The fact that the words of the jargon sound as if they said something higher than what they mean suggests the term 'aura.' It is hardly an accident that [Walter] Benjamin introduced the term at the same moment when, according to his own theory, what he understood by 'aura' became impossible to experience. As words that are sacred without sacred content, as frozen emanations, the terms of the jargon of authenticity are products of the disintegration of the aura.[24]

Tosaka's critique of Watsuji's writings similarly concluded that the fetishization of native *kotoba* allowed that which is impossible to experience in reality to become fathomable in the form of "words that are sacred without sacred content." For Adorno, as for Tosaka, words that seem to say "something higher than what they mean" provided the semiotic codes by which fascist fantasies circulated as appealing ideals in the 1930s. In this regard, Tosaka would have agreed with Adorno that the jargon of authenticity is not merely a philosophical or philological problem, but also a cultural political crisis because it provides the signs that give form to consciousness. As Adorno put it: "Prior to any consideration of particular content, this language molds thought. [...] Fascism was not simply a conspiracy—although it was that—but it was something that came to life in the course of a powerful social development. Language provides it with a refuge. Within this refuge, a smoldering evil expresses itself as though it were salvation."[25]

Tosaka noted much the same tendency in the writings of philosophers like Watsuji, which broke off bits and pieces of language from a larger lexicon, and ascribed to these privileged *kotoba* the auratic values of "spirit," "being" and "community," whose imagined referents were never really possible to experience except as rhetorical constructs. Tosaka's reading of Watsuji, then, might be said to have arrived at much the same conclusion as did Adorno's critique of Martin Heidegger, in which Adorno argued:

> When [the jargon] dresses empirical words with aura, it exaggerates general concepts and ideas of philosophy—as for instance the concept of being—so grossly that their conceptual essence, the mediation through the thinking subject, disappears completely under the varnish. Then these terms lure us on as if they were the most concrete terms. Transcendence and concretion scintillate.

[23] Tosaka Jun. *Tosaka Jun zenshū* (Tokyo: Keisō Shobō, 1966-79), vol. 2, p. 304.
[24] Adorno, Theodor. *The Jargon of Authenticity*, Knut Tarnowski and Frederic Will, trans. (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973), pp. 9-10.
[25] Adorno, Theodor. *The Jargon of Authenticity*, Knut Tarnowski and Frederic Will, trans. (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973), p. 5.

> Ambiguity is the medium of an attitude toward language which is damned by its favorite philosophy.[26]

In 1930s Japan, Tosaka worried that a fascistic jargon that "dresses empirical words with aura" saturated not only the philosophical writings of thinkers like Watsuji, but also the more mundane realm of government slogans. In *Sekai no ikkan toshite no Nihon* (*Japan as a Link to the World*, 1937), for example, Tosaka argued that although the slogan "national unity" (*kyokoku ittchi*) purported to guarantee stability in the lives of the people (*kokumin*), it in fact offered only an ideological alibi for a state and military whose actions destabilized daily life. War, famine, excessive taxation and a secretive military-state alliance all, according to Tosaka, volatilized daily life, but the slogan "national unity" effaced the real suffering of the masses with an idealistic palliative:

> In sum, it is a fact that the so-called 'national unity' of today in no way provides for any actual stability in the lives of the people, nor is it conceivable that it ever will do so in the future. The actual 'national unity' regime of today provides no more than the ideal of stability in the lives of the people.[27]

For Tosaka, then, state-issued slogans of the 1930s resembled the merely literary reality conjured by literaturism, as well as the pseudo-philosophy that Watsuji's philological methods for analyzing native words. Like these other counterfeits, the statist slogan "national unity" suggested to Tosaka how language "escaped from reality" and structured an idealized world that came to life when infused with popular belief:

> To convert reality into a concept in this way indicates the existence of a massive store of faith (*shin'yō*). It requires the sort of faith that one places in a gold reserve. What, then, is in the basement room of the bank that honors our faith in national unity? It is the great store of gold held by an authoritarian regime.[28]

Tosaka's metaphor is complex and revealing. It suggests that in the language of fascism, as in an economy on the gold standard, meaning originates in the belief (*shin'yō*) that symbolic objects represent an incontrovertible value held in reserve—either the objective quality symbolized by the slogan "national unity" or a gold reserve equal to the value of bank notes. In both cases, a dialogue between material symbols—slogans and bank notes—and concrete reality—spiritual unity and gold—is presumed.

Yet, Tosaka pointed out that meaning is tied in these symbolic economies to an issuing institution (either the state that produces slogans or the bank that circulates notes). Value—be it the meaning of slogans or the value of bank notes—can therefore only exist in such an economy through circular exchange: the state produces slogans touting "national unity" that are "proven" by the very same statist authority said to embody that unity, just as banks issue notes whose

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[26] Adorno, Theodor. *The Jargon of Authenticity*, Knut Tarnowski and Frederic Will, trans. (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973), pp. 12-13. In a footnote to the last sentence of this citation, Adorno suggests Heidegger's *Being and Time* as an example.
[27] Tosaka Jun. *Tosaka Jun zenshū* (Tokyo: Keisō Shobō, 1966-79), vol. 5, p. 202.
[28] Tosaka Jun. *Tosaka Jun zenshū* (Tokyo: Keisō Shobō, 1966-79), vol. 5, p. 202.

value is guaranteed by a reserve held by the very bank that originally circulated the notes. Tosaka's point was that in this sort of circular symbolic economy, the value of material signs (be they slogans or bank notes) is always tied to the institution that produced the signs in the first place, and not to a material reality existing exterior to representational form. Fascist slogans conjured the image of stability and progress through a circular symbology that covered for the state's own destabilization of everyday life. In the same way that the liberal myths of free will and universal equality explained away the real exploitation and stratification endemic to modern society, fascism covered for its own horrific reality with an auratic literary jargon promising the ideals of unity, stability and, above all, progress.

Nakano Shigeharu and the Cultural History of Everyday Life

Tosaka's writings primarily focused on diagnosing the political crises of his own present, for the present was for him the very temporality most severely threatened with erasure by the telos and jargon of the fascist imagination. At the same time, though, his essays also carried latent prescriptions for a materialist language that would be, to borrow Mikhail Bakhtin's words, "born in a zone of contact with unresolved contemporaneity."[29] But what would such a language look like, and to what degree would it be legible as such? With these questions in mind, I now consider how Nakano's essays and poetry imply a pragmatic rejoinder to Tosaka's theoretical reflections.

Unlike Tosaka, Nakano understood himself as a poet and activist, not an intellectual, and his essays more often addressed the formation of a countercultural movement, rather than philosophically theorizing the problems of the present. These aspects of Nakano's identity come through in his writings on proletarian culture that focus on the pragmatics of overcoming bourgeois cultural forms through a new language whose value originates in the social interactions of everyday life. Nakano's essays expand the conceptual range delineated by Tosaka's critique of contemporary literature and language by suggesting that the Romantic origins of bourgeois culture in the 19th century were what had led to the alienation of the modern aesthetic imagination in the early 20th century. Read alongside Tosaka's critique of state-issued slogans and philological philosophy, then, Nakano's essays contribute to a larger reflection on how fascist politics and bourgeois culture co-operate through a shared idealism.

In the essay *Geijutsu ni tsuite* (*On Art*, 1928), Nakano argued that, historically, the meaning of an aesthetic expression derived from the social conditions of its generation, which often related to labor practices requisite to satisfy basic human needs. In one example, Nakano observed that Ainu performers at "Bear Festivals" (*kuma matsuri*) formed meaningful aesthetic expressions by combining songs and dances related to hunting.[30] In another example, Nakano cites a passage from *Kojiki* (*A Record of Ancient Matters*, ca. 712) about sake brewing that

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[29] Bakhtin, Mikhail. "Discourse in the Novel," in *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, Michael Holquist, ed., Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist, trans. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), p. 346. Bakhtin made this statement in the context of a broader critique of what he called "authoritative discourse," a signifying regime that coerces allegiance by eliminating all but a single, authorized register; the alternative to "authoritative discourse" is a heteroglossic language of everyday life, whose utterances are "born in a zone of contact with unresolved contemporaneity."

[30] Nakano Shigeharu. *Nakano Shigeharu zenshū* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1996-1998), vol. 9, p. 198.

featured song and dance as a part of the production process.[31] Nakano argued that these examples typified how the aesthetic imagination developed from within the experience of daily life: for him, the meaning of the song and dance of the Ainu and ancient sake brewers originated in the shared social reality of the group that produced them. In this way, Nakano concluded that social intercourse achieved exchangeable material expression through aesthetic form, and that aesthetic expression derived its meaning interactionally from the real world conditions governing its appearance.

Nakano further claimed that as production technology advanced during the industrial revolution, new aesthetic expressions accompanied the emergence of modern labor practices. In one example, he claimed that textile factory spinners' songs articulated daily experiences peculiar to industrial modernity: he pointed out that their lyrics concerned the movements of the equipment of the textile factory ("round and round, the spinning wheel goes"), and that the circular motion of the spinning wheel paced their rhythm.[32] Nakano concluded that in this way, the material conditions of the modern factory syncopated spinners' songs, producing aesthetic representations that organically coincided with the actuality of workers' daily lives. He believed that even at the dawn of industrial modernity, the crux of aesthetic expression was the reciprocal relationship between reproducible forms (such as the lyrics and syncopation of song) and the unique socio-historical circumstances of its generative moment (such as the experience of working in a textile factory).

Yet, Nakano feared that by the 1920s, the dialogue between aesthetic expression and the experience of everyday life had been disrupted by a homogenizing bourgeois culture that had sprouted from the soils of 19th century Romanticism. This aspect of Nakano's thought is complicated by a central paradox: on the one hand, he objected to the class-based ideological *content* of Romantic writing, but on the other, he also admired how 19th century Romantics had reanimated poetic *form* with revolutionary agency. These tensions come to the fore most clearly in his reading of Walt Whitman's verse. In the essay *Kako no shi no kenkyū* (*Studies of Poems of the Past*, 1931), Nakano called Whitman the "representative" poet of capitalism's robust "young adulthood" (*seinenki*) because his poetry represented the "class psychology" (*dankyū shinri*) of the bourgeoisie at their "moment of emergence" (*bokkōki*) after the American Civil War. Nakano praised the revolutionary spirit and unapologetic articulation of class values in Whitman's poetry—even though those class values were bourgeois: "As an apostle of capital—which destroys the old system (*furui mono*) and makes itself the foundation of the world it unites—Whitman wrote poems that had a psychology firmly oriented in the direction of capitalistic development, and that were, in this regard, combative (*tōsōteki*) and aggressive (*sekkyokuteki*)."[33] For Nakano, Whitman's poetry exemplified how a "combative" and "aggressive" verbal ideology could endow poetic form with transformative social and historical relevance. In this limited sense, Whitman was a kind of poet-hero.

However much Nakano admired Whitman's poetry as a form of revolutionary cultural activism, though, he nevertheless objected to its content. In his reading of Whitman's poem "To

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[31] Nakano Shigeharu. *Nakano Shigeharu zenshū* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1996-1998), vol. 9, p. 201.
[32] Nakano Shigeharu. *Nakano Shigeharu zenshū* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1996-1998), vol. 9, p. 199.
[33] Nakano Shigeharu. *Nakano Shigeharu zenshū* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1996-1998), vol. 9, pp. 449-450.

A Common Prostitute," for example, Nakano argued that although Whitman appeared to pity the "common prostitute" and to treat her as an equal, Whitman's humanistic posturing was undermined by the fact that his words "promised no salvation for the prostitute."[34] For Nakano, "To A Common Prostitute" ironically disclosed the hypocrisy of bourgeois idealism by showing the prostitute—purportedly the poet's equal in the fellowship of humanity—to have been destroyed by the very agent pretending to comfort her. Whatever the revolutionary aspects of its form, Nakano criticized the content of Whitman's poetry for inculcating a spiritualized, bourgeois vision of "humanity":

> When capitalist society insists on human equality (*ningen no byōdō*), it provides to the bourgeoisie the freedom to exploit, and to the proletariat the freedom to be exploited and starve to death. Removing class considerations from the understanding of "human", and instead providing equality in word only—such is the essence of bourgeois democracy. Whitman embodied this fundamental sprit, articulating the first, and most precise, expressions of the psychology of the revolutionary bourgeoisie.[35]

For Nakano, then, Whitman's poetry revealed how bourgeois culture perpetuated a delusional, undifferentiated vision of "humanity" by disengaging the aesthetic imagination from a stratified social ground, and connecting it, instead, to fantasy visions of a utopian humanism. In this sense, his critique resonated with Tosaka's writing against Watsuji's philological philosophy, which also located the fantasies of liberal humanism at the center of the most dangerous cultural politics of modern Japan.

Nakano's critique of the romantic roots of bourgeois culture led him to conclude that by the early 20th century, bourgeois culture had replaced the earlier symbiosis between aesthetic expression and lived experience with placid abstractions that "infected" the popular imagination with a liberal "psychic state." In *Geijutsu ni tsuite*, he suggested that modern cultural forms

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[34] Nakano Shigeharu. *Nakano Shigeharu zenshū* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1996-1998), vol. 9, p. 451.

To a Common Prostitute

Be Composed—be at ease with me—I am Walt Whitman, liberal and lusty as Nature;
Not till the sun excludes you, do I exclude you;
Not till the waters refuse to glisten for you, and the leaves to rustle for you, do my words refuse to glisten and rustle for you.

My girl, I appoint with you an appointment—and I charge you that you make preparation to be worthy to meet me,
And I charge you that you be patient and perfect till I come.

Til then, I salute you with a significant look, that you do not forget me.

[35] Nakano Shigeharu. *Nakano Shigeharu zenshū* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1996-1998), vol. 9, p. 452.

coerce docile feelings of acceptance and passivity while suppressing disruptive impulses and revolutionary intentions. In making this claim, Nakano drew heavily from (and often cited) Nikolai Bukharin's *Historical Materialism: A System of Sociology* (1925). Echoing Bukharin, for example, Nakano argued in *Geijutsu* that "aesthetic expression in general […]—be it music, literature, fine art (*bijutsu*), etcetera—is a single social mechanism (*shakai shudan*) for organizing human feelings (*ningen no kanjō o sōshiki suru*)."[1] In *Historical Materialism*, Bukharin similarly observed that artistic expressions distribute sensibility so effectively that painting, literature and other cultural expressions can be said to "infect" modern man with certain kinds of feelings. Nakano made the same point by citing the following passage from *Historical Materialism* in *Geijutsu*:

> Science classifies, arranges, clarifies, eliminates the contradictions in the thoughts of men; it constructs a complete raiment of scientific ideas and theories out of fragmentary knowledge. But social man not only thinks, he also feels; he suffers, enjoys, regrets, rejoices, mourns, despairs, etc.; his thoughts may be of infinite complexity and delicacy; his psychic experiences may be tuned according to this note or that. Art systematizes these feelings and expresses them in artistic form, in words, or in tones, in gestures (for example, the dance), or by other means, which sometimes are quite material, as in architecture. We may say that art is a means of 'socializing the feelings'; or, as Leo Tolstoi correctly says in his book, art is a means of emotionally 'infecting' men. The hearers of a musical work expressive of a certain mood will be 'infected', permeated, with this mood; the feeling of the individual composer becomes the feeling of many persons, has been transferred to them, has 'influenced them; a psychic state has been 'socialized'. The same holds good in any other art; painting, architecture, poetry, sculpture, etc.[36]

As Nakano's critique of Whitman's poetry suggested, however, the feelings with which art "infects" modern man always carry an ideological dimension. According to Nakano, what mainstream culture distributes are not neutral feelings, nor apolitical pleasures, but rather moods and emotions, sensibilities and sensations that function as the sugarcoating for didactic messages rooted in the liberal creed that explains away the vagaries of free market competition with poetic appeals to human freedom. For Nakano, Whitman's plea to the "common prostitute" exemplified how modern culture infected the populace with romantic ideals promising collective progress and human freedom in an imaginary realm unburdened by history, politics and the capitalist competition of the market. By locating the early gatherings of bourgeois politics in Romantic poetry and the "socialized feelings" conveyed by mainstream culture, Nakano's critique corroborated Volosinov's/Bakhtin's claim that "it is here, in the inner workings of this verbally materialized social psychology, that the barely noticeable shifts and changes that will later find expression in fully fledged ideological products accumulate."[37]

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[36] Bukharin, Nikolai. *Historical Materialism: A System of Sociology* (New York: Russell & Russell Inc., 1965), p. 189.
[37] Volosinov, V.N. *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, trans., Ladislav Matejka and I.R. Titunik (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973), p. 20.

However powerful, though, Nakano thought of bourgeois culture as but one transient cultural epoch within the flow of historical time.[38] It was not incontrovertible, but rather a seemingly natural condition that was, in fact, of relatively recent vintage. For Nakano, proletarian art represented the wave of the future, as he argued in an essay called *Puroretaria geijutsu to wa nani ka* (*What is Proletarian Art?* 1931):

> Proletarian art cannot be thought of as an equal in line with bourgeois or other art.[...]. Proletarian art is not merely one among the many art forms that have appeared throughout history; rather, proletarian art is the art that will create the history of art, an art that marks the evolution of the entire history of art. In this regard, proletarian art has an historical superiority over all other art of the past.[39]

Nakano hoped that proletarian culture would reanimate poetic form with the revolutionary potential that he found in Whitman's verse, while at the same time replacing Whitman's bourgeois fantasies with materialist sensibilities. The proletarian culture of the future, Nakano thought, would return aesthetic expression to dialogue with the material realities of everyday life, and thereby structure an alternative cultural imagination autonomous from the alienated (and alienating) bourgeois symbology.

Nakano thought that constructing such a materialist cultural episteme would require more than the aestheticization of Marxist theory for popular consumption, and something more convincing than a utopian socialist realism depicting the wonderful lives of workers after the revolution.[40] Rather, Nakano thought that the immediate task of proletarian culture was to break the bonds that imprisoned cultural representation (and especially language) within the stultifying confines of received forms. In a disjointed essay called "Danpenteki yōsō" (Fragmentary Thoughts, 1928), Nakano made this point by arguing that literary culture, be it of the aesthetes'

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[38] For Nakano, the historical transition from capitalism to socialism would not take the form of a linear progression, but would rather constitute a regeneration from within:

> […] We must not think that capitalist society exists on one riverbank and that socialist society exists on the other, and that the class of laborers will cross a bridge from one bank to the other. Socialist society does not exist on an opposite bank, nor is there any bridge extending toward it. Capitalist society was born as an evolution in the history of class society, and from within that capitalist society was born the class of laborers. It must be understood that this class of laborers must fight against capitalism, must overthrow it, and establish in its place a dictatorship of the proletariat that will mark the movement of the human race from capitalist society to socialist society. Therefore, while we may speak of "evolution" and "transition," the truth of the matter is confrontation (*tatakai*). (Nakano Shigeharu. *Nakano Shigeharu zenshū* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1996-1998), vol. 9, p. 340)

[39] Nakano Shigeharu. *Nakano Shigeharu zenshū* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1996-1998), vol. 9, p. 341.

[40] By to rejecting more straightforward approaches to proletarian culture, Nakano shared with Tosaka an abhorrence of crassly "ideologized literature" (*shisōka sareta bungaku*).

art for art's sake tradition or of the politically committed socialist vein, had become trapped in the forms of existing language:

> In the perspectives that have appeared in the many reviews (*hyōron*) that have been written, our differences have taken on exceedingly distinctive form.
>
> The perspectives that distinguish us take two forms.
>
> The first is a group that might be called the "status quo group." (*kisei*). The other is called the "proletarian group."
>
> The first group, in their dim-witted stupidity and laziness, does not see the movements of things, nor do they try to.
>
> The second group tries to see the movements of things, but does not know any method for seeing. And their perspective is mistaken. Whenever they are asked to revise their views, they defect to the first group.
>
> Tanizaki Jun'ichirō represents the first group. This writer lost his head long ago, but now he has now also lost his heart.
>
> Official socialists represent the second group. They are disobedient like children, and on reading *The Biography of Lenin* (*Rēnin den*), which was written by a foreigner, they get excited, set the book down on the table and drink sake. From time to time, ideas like "Does socialism have any relation to me?" flit through their minds like the breeze.
>
> The first and the second group are basically the same.
>
> They always have words first of all.[41]

The two groups rhetorically establish a metaphorical continuum of contemporary literary motivations, ranging from hermetic aestheticism to ideological commitment; yet, by attacking the extreme perspectives at both ends, Nakano implicitly rejected the entirety of extant writing practices. Claiming that too many writers "always [had] words first of all," Nakano critiqued contemporary writers for using language as a seemingly transparent, "natural" tool whose value existed prior to daily life. Whether bourgeois connoisseurs (such as Tanizaki and the "status quo group") or single-minded socialist ideologues (the "proletarian group"), Nakano claimed that too many of his contemporaries wrongly assumed that words carried a fixed, intrinsic value—as if meaning existed "out there" in the form of words—and thereby ignored the socio-historically determined aspects of semiotic meaning. The alternative culture that Nakano envisioned would remake aesthetic expression by setting aside the conventional associations of preexisting language, and constructing a referential mode whose meaning issued forth anew from the material realities of daily life: instead of an already fully formed language giving a post hoc organization to the plurality of experience, Nakano envisioned aesthetic expression in an ad hoc language coeval with daily life.

In a later essay, "Nechi nechi shita susumikata no hitsuyō" (The Necessity of Proceeding in a Sticky Way, 1939), Nakano described this sort of a language rooted in the cacophony of daily life as "sticky," by which he distinguished it from the clean, "ready-made language" (*dekiai*

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[41] Nakano Shigeharu. *Nakano Shigeharu zenshū* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1996-1998), vol. 9, pp. 113-114.

no kotoba) of prepackaged slogans.[42] Nakano argued, for example, that to classify literary writings as specifically "Japanese" (*Nihonteki*), "might enable a temporary escape from the noisiness (*urusasa*) of daily life, but one must be resigned to the fact that it will by no means offer an escape from the problems of art and learning."[43] For Nakano, then, the ready-made language of cultural nationalism silenced the cacophony of social life with prepackaged slogans. In response, his task as a poet became the destruction of "ready-made language" and the cultural imagination that "always [had] words first of all": as a producer of poetic language himself, he pursued the possibility that a "sticky" language indexing the stratification and historicity of contemporary everyday life would undermine bourgeois univocality, moving contemporary language closer to the social ground of the everyday and arresting fascist fantasies.

Indexing Everyday Life: Nakano's Poetry as the Anti-Journalistic "Machinery of Rejoinder"

In addition to forming a significant critique in their own right, Tosaka's and Nakano's expository writings also suggest a reading of Nakano's poetry as encoding a verbal ideology in competition with fascist jargon. This becomes clearer if Nakano's poetry is read as a literary praxis that ruptured the kinds of language that Bakhtin referred to as "authoritative discourse." In Bakhtin's writings, "authoritative discourse" refers to language that does not operate by any dialogic form of referentiality, nor within the interactional context of everyday life. It identifies language that is, rather, "located in a distanced zone, organically connected with a past that is felt to be hierarchically higher. […]. It is given (it sounds) in lofty spheres, not those of familiar contact."[44] In the same way that Tosaka described the jargon of fascist ideation as a group of inert utterances, Bakhtin similarly observed that the "semantic structure" of authoritative discourse "is static and dead, for it is fully complete, it has but a single meaning, the letter is fully sufficient to the sense and calcifies it."[45] Against the clichés of authoritative discourse, I read Nakano's poetry as a literary practice that moved language closer to what Bakhtin called

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[42] Yukiko Shigeto has also analyzed "Nechi nechi shita susumikata no hitsuyō," arguing that the essay revealed how Nakano "press[ed] for a defamiliarization of language, so that literary people would begin to *think* rather than *be thought by* ready-made words." (Shigeto Yukiko. "The Politics of Writing: *Tenkō* and the Crisis of Representation," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Washington (2009), p. 82).

Although the "stickiness" of language that Nakano lauded might appear to contradict the methodical, "scientific" language that Tosaka favored, these were in fact different ways of critiquing the same thing: for both writers, the calcification of language under the influence of the bourgeois-fascist imagination had eliminated any meaningful indexical capacity of language, prompting both to advocate for a stratified (or "sticky") alternative rooted in materialist sensibilities.

[43] Nakano Shigeharu. *Nakano Shigeharu zenshū* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1959-63), vol. 8, p. 298.

[44] Bakhtin, Mikhail. "Discourse in the Novel," in *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, Michael Holquist, ed., Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist, trans. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), p. 342.

[45] Bakhtin, Mikhail. "Discourse in the Novel," in *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, Michael Holquist, ed., Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist, trans. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), p. 343.

"internally persuasive discourse," whose polysemous structure "is *not finite*, it is *open*; in each of the new contexts that dialogize it, this discourse is able to reveal ever newer *ways to mean*."[46]

To show how these abstract concepts figure in Nakano's poetry, I focus on several of his poems that address speech, language and reading in relation to journalism. I read these poems through the prism of Tosaka's observation that newspapers were supposed to concretize the language and thought of the everyday (*jour*nalism): as he pointed out in *Nihon*, "journalism, as the very word itself implies (*kotoba dōri*), is an 'ism' (*shugi*) founded on the actuality of daily life, and it is therefore based on the principles of everydayness (*nichijōsei*)."[47] My reading of Nakano's verse focuses on how it transposes Tosaka's theoretical understanding of *jour*nal*ism* to an aesthetic register, treating the jargon of newspaper language as a metonym for the estrangement of contemporary language from everyday life. Read this way, Nakano's poetry not only critiques journalism itself, but also uses "journalism" as a poetic trope to express how orthodox language in Japan's long 1930s had betrayed its obligation to represent "the actuality of daily life." Taken together, my readings show how Nakano's poetry commuted the imperatives of "everydayness" (*nichijōsei*) in modern language from the authoritative discourse of journalism to the open-ended language of poetry.

Nakano's early poem "Shinnin taishi chakukyō no zu" (The Picture of the Newly Appointed Ambassador Arriving in Tokyo, 1926) exemplified how his verse challenged what he and Tosaka considered to have been the verbal orthodoxy of their contemporary moment:

The Picture of the Newly Appointed Ambassador Arriving in Tokyo

That man's photo was featured in a hundred newspapers this
morning
In the company of his wife and daughter
Surrounded by police and no-rank bureaucrats

I wonder what he's got it in mind to do
I bet he's got it in mind to tell some lies
I bet he's here again to tell some more lies
I wonder who'll benefit from his lying
I wonder how those lies will get through
I wonder how those lies will strike us when we hear them

The photo of that man
Surrounded by his wife, daughter, police and no-rank-
bureaucrats
Was featured by one hundred papers in unison this morning [48]

[46] Bakhtin, Mikhail. "Discourse in the Novel," in *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, Michael Holquist, ed., Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist, trans. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), p. 346. Emphasis in original.
[47] Tosaka Jun. *Tosaka Jun zenshū* (Tokyo: Keisō Shobō, 1966-79), vol. 2, p. 264.
[48] Nakano Shigeharu. *Nakano Shigeharu zenshū* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1996-1998), vol. 1, pp. 51.

In her careful reading of Nakano's poetry, Miriam Silverberg pointed out that the dense, Sinified title "Shinnin taishi chakukyō no zu" (新任大使着京の図) mimics the terse style of newspaper captions.[49] In addition, it is worth noting that the poem itself contrasts with this journalistic style, assuming the form of an interior monologue. The repetition of the speculative copula *darō* (translated above as "I wonder" and "I bet") six times in the middle stanza signals a cynical imagination inassimilable to unitary journalistic language—an imagination, that is, that filters the seemingly transparent declaratives of the newspaper through the speculative tense, mitigating against easy classifications and linear signification. Whereas journalism purports to transparently report the reality of everyday life, Nakano's reader-subject disrupts its monologic, unidirectional flow of utterances by subjectivizing (*darō*) its declaratives. In this way, "Shinnin" suggests how Nakano's poetry becomes a dynamo producing language that was, to borrow Bakhtin's phrase, "born in a zone of contact with unresolved contemporaneity."

The contradictions between the stability of journalistic language and the fluidity of lived experience are further developed in Nakano's "Shinbun o tsukuru hitobito e" (To Those Who Make the Newspapers, 1927):

To You Who Make The Newspapers

All of you, journalists
All of you, who make the newspapers
All of you, who write articles with your own hands
Who assemble them
Who print them
Who deliver them
All of you
Who stuff people's eyes with spectacular incidents and bloody ones
too
Who sear and scorch people's hearts
With shame and anger and all things insufferable
All of you who make the newspapers
We are waiting[50]

The opening stanza of "Shinbun" explains how journalistic jargon results from a semiotic process that transmutes the contingency of experience to the fixity of neatly packaged language: journalists first abstract an event into an article "with [their] own hands," after which several articles are "assembled" on the page, printed and delivered as a commodity (in this case, the newspaper, a literal example of neatly packaged language). At every stage, lived experience is abstracted into a less specific, more centralized category through a process of centripetal consolidation. In this way, "journalism" and the newspaper function as metonyms for the closed circuits of calcified language which, more generally, levels out the socio-historical dynamics of everyday life into a tightly troped jargon incapable of meaningful indexicality.

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[49] Silverberg, Miriam. *Changing Song: The Marxist Manifestos of Nakano Shigeharu* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), p. 133.
[50] Nakano Shigeharu. *Nakano Shigeharu zenshū* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1996-1998), vol. 1, pp. 89.

Yet, “Shinbun,” like “Shinnin,” does more than merely describe the problems of calcified language; it also actively intervenes against the very ossification of language that it critiques. In this regard, Max Horkheimer’s and Theodor Adorno’s commentary on the homogenizing effects of modern mass culture shines light on how “Shinbun” both recognizes and responds to unidirectional media. In their essay “The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception” (1944), Horkheimer and Adorno argued that modern media (including radio broadcasts, pop music and film) coerce consent through unidirectional communication: in one example, they argued that the radio “turns all participants into listeners and authoritatively subjects them to broadcast programs which are all exactly the same. No machinery of rejoinder has been devised, and private broadcasters are denied any freedom.”[51] For Horkheimer and Adorno, the homogenous forms of modern mass culture produce a set of self-identical communicative forms (or “jargon”) that instruct its receivers how to feel; for this reason, Horkheimer and Adorno conclude that “[i]ts [modern mass culture’s] prime service to the customer is to do his schematizing for him.”[52]

While “Shinnin” and “Shinbun” similarly imply that modern media coerce consent through unidirectional communication that “schematiz[es]” meaning, Nakano’s poems also suggest that poetry might constitute the “machinery of rejoinder.” The speaker of “Shinnin,” for example, resists the abstraction of language by transforming newspaper declaratives into subjective speculative forms, and the speaker of “Shinbun,” moreover, stands beyond the assault of journalistic language, away from its line of fire. The first several lines of “Shinbun” unmask how journalism extracts novelty and spectacle from daily life, packaging and delivering them to a docile receiver (reader), but Nakano’s speaker then confronts the anonymous producers of newspapers in rapid-fire, staccato statements that expose the artifice of journalistic language. Nakano’s subject speaks in a militant, confrontational voice that responds to what is conventionally a unidirectional flow of communication, interrupting the packaging of daily life into journalistic abstractions and exposing the vacancy of newsprint with a simple statement: “We are waiting.”

The next stanza of “Shinbun” makes clear that the language Nakano’s subject is “waiting” for is a materialist language organic to daily life—or, as Tosaka’s writings might suggest, a language in dialogue with everyday life:

> We are waiting
> For accurate reports and for reports without fabrications
> For reports of reality just as it is
> Without deference to anyone
> Without fear of anything

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[51] Horkheimer, Max and Theodor Adorno. *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (New York: Continuum, 1999), p. 122.

[52] Horkheimer, Max and Theodor Adorno. *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (New York: Continuum, 1999), p. 124. This quotation comes from the following context:

> The man with leisure has to accept what the culture manufactures offer him. Kant’s formalism still expected a contribution from the individual, who was thought to relate the varied experiences of the senses to fundamental concepts; but industry robs the individual of this function. Its prime service to the customer is to do his schematizing for him.

For the first such report
For a direct report whose warmth we will feel in the palms of
our hands
We will be the first to recognize it
For a report that spurs us into action first of all
It will be you who hand it to us
For a report that will give our gratitude to you
O, people who make the newspapers
All of you.[53]

Whereas the first stanza of "Shinbun" describes the abstraction of journalistic language from the experience of daily life, the second stanza calls for a new language in the form of "reports of reality just as it is" (*jijitsu sono mama no hōdō*). The notion of a "report of reality just as it is" seems to present a contradiction in terms insofar as representing an event in language would, by definition, appear to reconfigure the actuality of the event into the secondary form of verbal signs. The contradiction is partly resolved, however, in considering Nakano's and Tosaka's expository writings on language that figured linguistic meaning as something coproduced by the dialogue between the recycled forms of language and the unique socio-historical circumstances of the communicative event. From this perspective, a report of reality "just as it is" indicates a report written in a language whose meaning originates with the event itself, a language coeval with life instead of a monologic jargon whose preexisting forms overwrite the contingencies of experience with inert clichés.

In contrast to the alienating abstraction of daily life that frustrated Nakano's newspaper-reading subject in "Shinnin," moreover, the new language described in "Shinbun" would form a "direct report," or *nama no hōdō*. The modifier *nama* denotes something unvarnished, unmediated—even raw—and implies that the language of everyday life would produce an intuitive bond between reader and text—a "warmth we will feel in the palms of our hands." A more concrete vision of the first *nama no hōdō*, or "direct report," to which "Shinbun" alludes is embedded in Nakano's 1927 poem "Kisha: san" ("Train: Part Three"). Although "Kisha: san" was originally published as part of a trilogy, part three stands on its own as the prototype of a new language rooted in the actual social intercourse of daily life. In the first stanza, factory girls return home from the city to rural Toyama for the New Year's holiday:

Sayonara sayonara sayonara sayonara
Sayōnara sayōnara sayōnara sayōnara
We witnessed it
A hundred factory girls off boarding
And a thousand more continuing on

The repetition of *sayonara* and *sayōnara* in the first stanza suggests how the poem establishes a communicative frame rooted in the social transactions of daily life.[54] *Sayonara* and *sayōnara*

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[53] Nakano Shigeharu. *Nakano Shigeharu zenshū* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1996-1998), vol. 1, p. 90.

[54] Silverberg has read the repetition of *sayonara* and *sayōnara* as indicative of a Marxist understanding of "the production and reproduction of the working class." Silverberg argued that

both literally mean "if so it must be …" (*sore nara ba*), and since "so" (which corresponds to the Japanese *sayo, sayō* and *sore*) can only refer to a shared social circumstance (such as parting on the train at the New Year's holiday) existing prior to the communicative event, the meaning of *sayonara* and *sayōnara* is necessarily deictic, or produced within the concrete social reality held in common by a speaker and receiver. Unlike the "ready-made" language of journalistic abstractions, then, *sayonara* and *sayōnara* are direct, or *nama*, statements that derive their meaning from the actuality of social engagement. The elongated vowel that distinguishes *sayōnara* from *sayonara*, moreover, denotes a difference in intonation that indexes direct discourse in a living language. Volosinov/Bakhtin has observed that different intonations suggest how the same verbal form (in this case, the word) "may, of course, be pronounced in an enormous variety of intonations in keeping with the wide diversity of situations and moods that occur in life."[55] Similarly, varying intonations of the same lexical sign in Nakano's poem evoke the plurality of subjective emotional experiences that are pressed into the recycled forms of language. The distinction between *sayonara* and *sayōnara* therefore evinces a sensitivity to how meaning in language derives from the confluence of what Volosinov/Bakhtin called the reproducible, denotational forms of linguistic "meaning" and the irreproducible, socio-historical contexts, or "theme," of an utterance.[56]

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the repetition of "Bye" (*sayonara*) and "Good-bye" (*sayōnara*) "introduce[s] the idea of the repetitive nature of capitalist reproduction through the dulling rhythm of the words of the factory girls arriving home form their labors in the textile mills, on New Year's break," and that the poem makes clear how "capitalist society is in constant, repetitive movement, just like the train that stops only to start again along the northern coast of Japan." (Silverberg, Miriam. *Changing Song: The Marxist Manifestos of Nakano Shigeharu* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), p. 102).

[55] Volosinov, V.N. *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, trans., Ladislav Matejka and I.R. Titunik (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973), p. 104. Volosinov made this point in the following context: "There are certain expressions like "so-so," "yes-yes, "now-now," "well-well" and so on that commonly serve as "safety valves" of that sort. The doubling usual in such expressions is symptomatic; i.e., it represents an artificial prolongation of the sound image for the purpose of allowing the pent up intonation to fully expire. Any one such favorite little expression may, of course, be pronounced in an enormous variety of intonations in keeping with the wide diversity of situations and moods that occur in life."

[56] As an alternative to Ferdinand de Saussure's notion of "sign" and "signified," Volosinov/Bakhtin argued that the value of an utterance should be considered in terms of its "theme" and "meaning." In this context, "theme" indicated the "thematic unity" of an entire utterance, particularly as regarded the dialogue between the socio-historical frame of an utterance and its generic structural elements (words, syntax, intonation, etc.). The "meaning" of an utterance referred to formal structures, such as the dictionary definitions of words, the regular patterns of grammar and the orthodox morphological features of the utterance. For Volosinov, the theme of an utterance was irreproducible and indivisible because it was the product of a unique confluence of social, historical and linguistic factors; meaning, on the other hand, was entirely reproducible, unitary and divisible because it was composed of the generic linguistic structures (words, grammar and syntax, for example) that speakers recycled in wide-ranging circumstances.

The dynamic perspective of the first stanza further underwrites the dialogic value of *sayonara* and *sayōnara*. Shifting from directly quoted speech (*sayonara* and *sayōnara*) in the first two lines to the perspective of the first-person plural (*oretachi*, "we all") in the third line establishes a polyvocal frame in which the speakers saying "*sayonara*" and "*sayōnara*" are set against an anonymous group of observers ("we all saw that") who also speak to the reader. By anchoring quoted speech in an observed, communal experience, the first stanza of "Kisha: san" circumscribes verbal value within a specific social transaction. In these ways, the first stanza, as a verbal event, performs the alternative to "ready-made language" that remains alienated from what Nakano called the "nosiness" and "stickiness" of daily life.

The structure of the second stanza of "Kisha: san" forms a question and answer: in the first part, the speaker interrogates the words that categorize labor and everyday life, and in the second part, observation of actual experience replaces conventional language altogether. In combination, the questions and answers of the second stanza reveal an imagination outside of representational orthodoxy:

> Factory girl: what's that?
> Textile factory girl: what's that?
> A company a factory a smokestack a dormitory: what're they?
> The girls being wrung out like a wet towel: what's that?
> New Year's: what's that?
> The New Year's Holiday: what's that?

This stanza suggests that labels like "factory girl" and "New Year's holiday" schematize the "nosiness" of daily life, recalling Nakano's critique of writers who "always have words first of all" and Tosaka's critique of merely literary symbols that reify, instead of represent, everyday life. Like the speaker of "Shinnin," who questions the clean framing of photojournalism, and like the speaker of "Shinbun," who exposes the abstraction of daily life into generically packaged journalistic prose, the questions of the second stanza of "Kisha: san" imply a speaker who imagines a world outside of what Volosinov/Bakhtin called the mere "meaning" of words—that is, outside of conventional associations and dictionary definitions. These questions suggest a speaker who yearns instead for language with what Volosinov/Bakhtin called "thematic unity,"

Like Tosaka, then, Volosinov/Bakhtin argued that words in isolation were meaningless, and that linguistic forms (including words) signified only within the concrete socio-historical context of "verbal intercourse"—that is, through theme:

> [T]here is no reason for saying that meaning belongs to a word as such. In essence, meaning belongs to a word in its position between speakers […]. [Verbal signification] is like an electric spark that occurs only when two different terminals are hooked together. Those who ignore theme […] and who, in attempting to define the meaning of a word, approach its lower, stable, self-identical limit [its "meaning"], want, in effect, to turn on a light bulb after having switched off the current. Only the current of verbal intercourse endows a word with the light of meaning. (Volosinov, V.S. *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, trans., Ladislav Matejka and I.R. Titunik (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973), pp. 102-103).

or a language whose value is the interactional product of the dialogue between concrete socio-historical contexts and the recyclable structures of language.

The latter half of the stanza moves closer to such a language:

> My, the girls have been completely wrung out
> And thrown out, too In the name of New Year's
> We witnessed it
> A hundred factory girls off boarding A thousand more continuing on
> We witnessed it
> Fathers, mothers, brothers and sisters emerging from the snow
> On their oil paper coats
> On their Inverness capes
> The piling white snow
> And their wet straw shoes
> We witnessed it
> Their embrace with the girls
> The way they caressed each other's heads, faces and shoulders
> The snow falling down on them

This portion of the poem illustrates how real-world observation empties the "name of New Year's" of its conventional associations with domestic felicity and repose. Repetition of the phrase "We witnessed it" (*oretachi wa mita*) three times in the second stanza replaces "the name of New Year's" with a first person collective's (*oretachi*) account of what actually happened, thereby shifting the locus of meaning away from conventional language and closer to the actuality of real-world experience. The anonymous first-person plural pronoun *oretachi* refers here, as in the first stanza, to a group of observers that anchor the poetic utterance in a concrete, shared social experience, one that, crucially, conflicts with the traditional connotations of the "name of New Year's." The observations of the first-person collective therefore reverse the journalistic abstraction of language into monologic units, returning verbal expression to the social plane. Within the scope of their collective observation, the "name of New Year's" fades away as a relevant epistemological frame—as do the other "ready-made" categories, like "factory girl"—and the reality of parting and cyclical alienation from family issues forth in a "direct report" (*nama no hōdō*).

Although the girls embrace their parents and siblings, renewing the organic bonds of family, the third stanza reveals a cruel irony masked by the benign appellation "New Year's holiday":

> Sayonara sayonara sayonara sayonara
> The girls knew it
> That they would only briefly be able to embrace
> That they would only briefly be able to caress
> Yes, the girls knew it
> Who it was that they themselves were
> Where it was that the village was
> What it was that waited for them in the village

> The girls were thrown out   In the name of New Year's
> They have been completely wrung out
> In every village, new people buyers make their rounds
> Emerging from those small stations
> In the snow
> The girls returned home to an ambush of new people buyers
> The girls knew that

That the brutality of cyclical exploitation lays in wait beneath the seemingly benevolent "name of New Year's" reveals how conventional language conceals (and accelerates) the mechanisms of modern alienation. The above stanzas, however, also reveal that the poem figures the girls not as atomized individuals, but as part of a class whose labor will be recycled through a machine larger than themselves. For this reason, the sadness of parting is not only a private, subjective experience, but is, rather, a shared condition produced by material realities that masquerade under even the most sympathetic appellations—such as "the name of New Year's." In this "direct report" of daily life under the conditions of robust capitalism, the girls remain powerless to resist the coercive mechanisms of the labor market; yet, Nakano's poem succeeds in emptying out orthodox language of traditional associations, revealing the emergence of a counter-consciousness yearning for a representational idiom cleansed of the liberal conceits of imaginary freedom.

The final stanza makes clear that unlike the unitary, monologic accounts of daily life in newspapers, "Kisha: san" structures a "direct report" in a dialogic language whose meaning emanates from actual social intercourse:

> Sayonara sayonara sayonara sayonara
> Sayōnara sayōnara sayōnara sayōnara
> That was Etchū
> Atop the windswept dirt platform of that tiny train station
> The girls, their parents and siblings comforted each other
> The parting words uttered between those getting off and those riding
> on
> The chorus of the thousand voices
> Of the textile factory girls who would likely never meet again
> Of the girls who would be bought next time by different factories
> Danced upward in the sky of ever falling snow

The "chorus of [the factory girls'] thousand voices" produces in the poem only the words *sayonara* and *sayōnara*. But the final stanza of "Kisha: san" suggests that *sayonara* and *sayōnara* are more than words; they are also metonyms for an "internally persuasive," deictic language saturated with everydayness (*nichijōsei*). "Kisha: san" dilates on the material and social circumstances of the factory girls' utterances, indicating that the value of *sayonara* and *sayōnara* circulates within the unique confluence of socio-historical forces out of which these words appear. In this regard, *sayonara* and *sayōnara* heuristically evoke the possibility of a new logic of language, one that figures meaning as the product of the dialogical intercourse between recyclable verbal structures and the shared, material circumstances of the communicative event. This idea is given poetic expression in the last lines of "Kisha:san": as the words of "the chorus

of the thousand voices" "dance upward in the sky of ever falling snow," the poem closes with the image of the utterance literally emanating from the social ground.

Like his nativist contemporary Tanizaki —who concluded in *In'ei raisan* that writers could manipulate the politics of language in a way that they could not the politics of the commodity form—Nakano, as a poet, responded to the politics of modern culture by taking up the agency afforded him by aesthetic language. This is not to say that Nakano shared Tanizaki's politics, of course, nor that they were of a kind culturally. Rather, it is to point out that writers of vastly different ideological identities circulated their cultural political investments in aesthetic writing that competed for relevance in the shared sphere of communication in Japan's long 1930s. With each of Nakano's poetic utterances came a redistribution of political and cultural sensibility, and with every redistribution, a ripple effect reverberated through the ideological field of Japan's long 1930s. By developing a language whose meaning emanated from actual social intercourse, and by speaking back to (or dialogizing) the monologic communicative flow of modern mass culture, Nakano's verse ruptured the received field of representational possibilities, bringing forth a "sticky" materialist language that opposed the bourgeois-fascist imagination—its telos, jargon and mythology. As such, Nakano's poetry offers a valuable frame by which to consider the intellectual and literary life of the period in its moment of becoming.[57] In the next chapter, another frame emerges from the writings of Miki Kiyoshi and Yokomitsu Riichi.

[57] Nakano continued to write literature and essays that challenged what he viewed as the bourgeois-fascist cultural orthodoxy of the 1930s, but these writings appeared less frequently after he was imprisoned from 1932-34 under suspicion of belonging to the outlawed Communist party. He remained an important writer during the occupation years (1945-52), and was elected to the National Diet as a member of the Japanese Communist Party in 1947. Tosaka, on the other hand, was never even to glimpse the postwar world. He published almost nothing after the end of 1937, a time when he found himself harried by the police and forbidden to write. He died in a Nagano prison on August 9th, 1945.

Chapter Three:

Toward a New Cultural Logos: Miki Kiyoshi, Yokomitsu Riichi and the Cosmopolitan Imagination in Japan's Long 1930s

At around the same time that Tanizaki and Yamada were advocating for a language aligned with an imagined canon of national taste, and that Tosaka and Nakano were envisioning a language rooted in the temporality of everyday life, public intellectual Miki Kiyoshi (1897-1945) and novelist Yokomitsu Riichi (1898-1947)—the subjects of this chapter—were conceptualizing a language less tightly constrained by the parameters of national identity and contemporary history. By the mid-1930s, Miki and Yokomitsu sensed that Japanese cultural criticism and literary practice had reached an impasse that nationalists' and Marxists' partisan polemics would never overcome. In search of a way forward, they articulated a concept of modern culture transcendent of hermetic national identities and explicit ideological loyalties. The glue holding this new culture together was to be an amorphous pathos carried by the logos of aesthetic expression. In different ways, Miki's and Yokimitsu's essays suggested that an avowedly non-national, purportedly apolitical aesthetic energy would soothe the contradictions between the ancient and the modern, the European and the Asian, the religious and the secular, yielding a cosmopolitan cultural sensation more deeply affecting than parochial nationalist identities and ideological dogma.

The bond that Miki and Yokomitsu forged as kindred critics of modern culture and contemporary language is in evidence in their mutual citations of one anther's texts, their personal correspondence, the conceptual similarities in their thinking and even photographs of them together. These concrete connections between the two figures all suggest that each was a cultural and intellectual ally to the other, prompting Harry Harootunian to observe that "[i]n many ways, Miki was the consummate modernist thinker and resembled in philosophy and thought the writer Yokomitsu Riichi[.]"[1] But with that said, I break my analysis of their writings into two separate chapters as a way of indicating that their dialogue was in some respects looser than those examined earlier in this study. Unlike Tanizaki and Yamada, who worked together on the 1939 *Genji* translation, Miki and Yokomitsu never collaborated on any literary project; and unlike Tosaka and Nakano, whose writings developed from a Marxian social scientific perspective, Miki and Yokomitsu did not share an easily identifiable method for interpreting modern culture and language. In light of these differences, I understand Miki and Yokomitsu as writers and thinkers who were drawn together by a sensibility rather than an ideology, and I read their writings as a flowing dialogue that moved through a matrix of common concepts, rather than as a tight conversation with clearly defined boundaries and conclusions. Breaking my analysis into two separate but related chapters allows me to draw connections among their writings that were composed in different interpretive registers—from essays on ancient Greek poetry to theories of the literary avant-garde, and from a long newspaper novel to imperial propaganda—without homogenizing their distinctive voices into a straightforward, univocal utterance.

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[1] Harootunian, Harry. *Overcome By Modernity: History, Culture, and Community in Interwar Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), p. 358.

This chapter focuses on Miki's and Yokomitsu's writings on literary form and feeling, or what they called "logos" and "pathos," and frames their expository criticisms of literature as expressions of a cosmopolitan sensibility that would reach its fullest realization in their narratives of colonial modernity, examined in the next chapter. At first glance, the link between the philosopher and the novelist might be less than obvious, for although it is well known that Miki was a prominent public intellectual who collaborated with the imperial regime, it is less well known that he wrote extensively on literary matters, too. This chapter recuperates the literary criticism of Miki's vast corpus of writing, and puts his rarely discussed essays on poetic language into conversation with Yokomitsu's better known conceptualization of literary modernism. Thinking of Miki and Yokomitsu as literary theorists in dialogue with one another, this chapter examines how they understood literary language as an aesthetic structure, or logos, that brings forth a cosmopolitan form of feeling, or pathos, more powerful than nationality, ideology and scientific rationality. In the next chapter, I examine how the concepts developed in their essays guided two vastly different, though conceptually entwined narratives of colonial culture in greater East Asia: Yokomitsu's last novel, *Ryoshū* (The Melancholy of Travel, 1937-1946), and *Shin Nihon no shisō genri* (Principles of Thought for a New Japan, 1939), a state-sanctioned manifesto of imperial culture whose composition Miki directed and co-authored under the auspices of the Shōwa Kenkyūkai (Shōwa Research Association). Taken together, these chapters build toward the argument that the sensibilities of cosmopolitan openness and humanistic universalism that motivated Miki's and Yokomitsu's writings on the logos and pathos of aesthetic language fueled a literary triumph and a political tragedy in Japan's long 1930s with equal vigor.

Miki Kiyoshi's Lost Chapter on Language

When Miki died in prison on September 26, 1945, having been incarcerated earlier that year for aiding a suspected communist, he left unfinished his *magnum opus*, *Kōsōryoku no ronri* (A Theory of Imagination, 1939-1946). Given his declining fortunes late in life, it is easy to see why the sprawling text could not be completed. Earlier, in the 1920s, Miki had been a prominent Marxist thinker trained by the luminaries of the Kyoto School Nishida Kitarō (1870-1945) and Tanabe Hajime (1889-1962), and by European philosophers (including Martin Heidegger) during his three-year sojourn to France and Germany from 1922-1925. His intellectual range only bourgeoned through the 1930s, as he made a living as a journalist and public intellectual writing prolifically about the culture and politics of a global modernity. In 1938, Miki realized the intellectual leadership role that he had long desired, becoming a member of Prime Minister Konoe Fumimaro's brain trust, the Shōwa Kenkyūkai. As leader of its Culture Division, he directed a committee that theorized the formation of a new modern culture in East Asia that was to be founded on the principle of cosmopolitan collectivism, or *kyōdōshugi*. The cultural collective that Miki conceptualized in the Shōwa Kenkyūkai would later be rebranded the "Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere" (*dai tōa kyōeiken*).

Kōsōryoku could be understood as an extensive exposition on some of the philosophical foundations of collectivist culture that Miki and others would develop under the banner of *kyōdōtai* in their writings for the Culture Division of the Shōwa Kenkyūkai.[2] But the kind of

[2] In the preface to *Kōsōryoku*, Miki mentioned that his theory of imagination, or *kōsōryoku no ronri*, could form the philosophical basis of a new Gemeinschaft culture (*atarashii gemeinshafutto no bunka*). This suggests that although the notion of *kyōdōshugi* was developed

colonial collective that Miki envisioned in these writings would gradually become an impossibility over the course of his years-long description of it. By the time publication of *Kōsōryoku* ended in 1946, just after Miki's death, his influence had already been on the decline for years: the Shōwa kenkyūkai disbanded in 1940, and he was drafted to report from the war front in the Philippines in 1942, later forced into rural evacuation as bombing raids escalated, and finally imprisoned, left to die equally by the expansive provisions of the 1925 Peace Preservation Law and the neglect of the American occupation.[3] In this light, the lengthy publication of *Kōsōryoku* from 1939-1946 spans a period of personal and professional boom and bust for Miki that began with his collaboration with the state and ended with his death at its hands. Looking back on the paradoxes of Miki's career, Harootunian has observed: "[T]here was simply no way of bridging Miki's two sides: the philosopher analyzing the 'current situation' (Marxism) and the thinker promoting the space of Asia (fascism). […] [For Miki, p]hilosophy was a vocation for understanding contemporary reality and envisaging the proper course of action. In this sense, he remained true to the Marxian analytic, even though his theory of action promising a solution bordered on fascism."[4]

At the time of his death, Miki had completed four parts of *Kōsōryoku*: "myth" (*shinwa*), "system" (*seido*), "techné" (*gijutsu*) and "experience" (*keiken*). Its fifth part was to be on language (*gengo*), but his difficulties late in life and death in prison prevented this last portion from ever materializing.[5] The unwritten section of *Kōsōryoku* lets linger a question that guides this chapter: namely, how might we understand the place of language in the broader context of Miki's writings of the long 1930s, and particularly in relation to his theorization of a collectivist colonial culture? Needless to say, my analysis can only offer a dim shadow of what his own writing in the last part of *Kōsōryoku* might have illuminated; with that said, what follows is an attempt to place some of Miki's writings on language and literature in relation to the big ideas of his oeuvre—ideas whose lofty rhetoric of humanistic universalism did not keep them from becoming implicated in the concrete political crises of their moment.

In the early 1930s, rehabilitating aesthetic culture became an urgent matter for Miki because he feared that it was in danger of being overcome by a scientific imagination. Although

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in Shōwa Kenkyūkai writings that were compiled by committee, the idea of cultural collectivism that the Shōwa Kenkyūkai advanced was largely compatible with the basic orientation of Miki's sole-authored philosophical texts of the late 1930s and early 1940s.

[3] Miki was imprisoned under the authority of the Peace Preservation Law, but he died from malnutrition and illness after the Japanese surrender, at a time when the American Occupation could have liberated political prisoners of the wartime regime, but had not. Susan Townsend has described Miki's needless death as an indirect impetus for the American Occupation's subsequent release of political prisoners incarcerated under the authority of the wartime regime. As Townsend has noted, "Miki died not under the repressive regime of an authoritarian government in the throes of defeat, but under the Allied Occupation which had begun six weeks earlier with a pledge to instill in the Japanese people 'a desire for individual liberties and respect for fundamental human rights'." (Susan Townsend. "Notes on a Death," in *Miki Kiyoshi 1897-1945: Japan's Itinerant Philosopher* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), p. 250).

[4] Harootunian, Harry. *Overcome by Modernity*. Ibid., p. 359-360.

[5] Kuno Osamu mentions that the unwritten fifth section of *Kōsōryoku no ronri* was to be called "*gengo*" (language). See Kuno Osamu. "Kōki," in *Miki Kiyoshi zenshū* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1966-68) vol. 8, p. 518.

he was never an anti-scientific reactionary, Miki sensed that a turn in the literary realm toward mimetic realism in the early 20th century had forced literary practice to serve the methods and way of knowing of science, and foreclosed the possibility that literature might have an autonomous function in the broader cultural field.[6] The consequences, he claimed, were dire. In one of his best-known essays, "Fuan no shisō to sono chōkoku" (Angst and Its Overcoming, 1933), Miki argued that a cultural "angst" (*fuan*) increasingly overcame modern Japan as the language and narratives of the literati failed to render the contemporary idiom in meaningful literary aesthetic terms. He argued that in earlier times, literature had always produced "human types" (*ningen taipu*, of which he counted Hamlet, Don Quixote, and Faust as exemplars) that provided the models by which an age understood itself. But Miki felt that as the fascination with science-inspired literary realisms developed at the turn of the 20th century, the literary imagination had become incapable of producing a meaningful *ningen taipu*: "Since the end of the 20th century, humanity has searched in vain for a fitting self-definition. Despite all manner of efforts, a single orthodox definition of humanity has not been discovered, and no notion of humanity has garnered universal acceptance."[7] Miki feared that as literary culture came under the sway of a scientific imagination in the early 19th century, an existential vacuum emerged in which no representational schema existed by which humanity might represent and recognize its own image.

In response, Miki sought to distinguish the logic of aesthetic culture from that of scientific reasoning by claiming that culture was a form of techné (*gijutsu*). In Miki's writing, "techné" is a marked term that refers broadly to the act of making, of bringing forth. He argued that unlike the scientific impulse to document and explain the phenomena of a natural world already in existence, culture expressed itself most clearly in an inclination to make, and he used the term "techné" to refer to the processes of the human imagination that were involved in acts of

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[6] Literary Naturalism and Proletarian writing are two forms of literary realism in early 20th century Japan that were greatly informed by scientific knowledge. Naturalism (*shizenshugi*) in Japan developed in relation to its European (and especially French) counterparts in the late 19th and early 20th century. In Japan, as in Europe, literary Naturalists aimed to adopt and adapt an emerging corpus of scientific knowledge related to biological drives, psychological interiority, heredity and neurosis, among other things. Their goal was to eliminate the moralizing and romantic aspects of earlier literary traditions in order to transform the novel into an objective method of sociological and psychological inquiry.

Proletarian writers of the 1920s rebelled against the Naturalist tradition, arguing that it evinced a narrow literary theory tethered to a solipsistic notion of individualism. As an alternative, Proletarian writers drew inspiration from a Marxian canon of social scientific thinking as they described society as a system of social relations governed by the political economy.

In their own minds, Proletarian and Naturalist writers understood themselves in vastly different terms; For Miki and Yokomitsu, though, Naturalist and Proletarian writing were two sides of the same coin because each was a form of literary realism that channeled a corpus of scientific knowledge, and because each approached the literary craft with a scientific inclination toward transparent explication and documentary transcription.

[7] Miki Kiyoshi, *Miki Kiyoshi zenshū* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1966-68), vol. 10, p. 302.

cultural production.[8] In *Kōsōryoku*, he defined techné more specifically as a mode of production that synthesizes (*sōgō*) the subjective intent of the artisan and the objective laws of the environment, bringing forth a material expression that holds the oppositional forces of logos and pathos in balance.[9] His understanding channeled the writings of the ancient Greeks, whom Miki often observed had used the word "techné" to identify an inclination to make that expressed itself equally in the fabrication of utilitarian objects (e.g. toolmaking) and the composition of finely wrought aesthetic expressions (e.g. poetry).[10] Seeing the connections among these vastly different articulations of the human imagination, the logic of techné became for Miki the

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[8] Miki compared the distinction between the logic of techné and the logic of science to the difference between invention (*hatsumei*) and discovery (*hakken*). He claimed that scientific knowledge organized information about an objective world existing exterior and prior to human cognition. This objective world could be "discovered" through scientific observation, he claimed, but it could not be produced, brought forth or created by man. Techné, by contrast, indicated a more complex creative process that required the synthesis of subjective will, rational consciousness and material transformation. As Miki pointed out in *Kōsōryoku no ronri*, "Both discovery and invention have to do with newness (*atarashisa*), but invention inaugurates the existence of something whereas discovery inaugurates the consciousness of something. In this way, invention indicates creation; discovery indicates revelation." (Miki Kiyoshi, *Miki Kiyoshi zenshū* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1966-68), vol. 8, p. 238).[8]

[9] As Miki explained in *Kōsōryoku*:

> In the strict sense, techné (including mechanized techné) can be divided into three elements. First, consciousness of the laws of nature is presumed. No form of techné is possible that controverts the laws of nature. Next, there must be a fixed purpose established by a human being (*ningen*). However much nature may move in accordance with its own laws, that alone will never produce anything like tools, and one can distinguish at a glance that which exists naturally and that which has been produced through techné. Techné is the synthesis (*sōgō*) of objective laws and subjective purpose. Yet, this synthesis must be realized in the form of actual material change (*mono no jissai no henka).* Techné produces a specific technical form through real material changes. Since among these three elements, the first is objective, or logos, and the second subjective, or pathos, then techné aims for the synthesis of the objective and the subjective, logos and pathos. The third point to be made, then, is that this synthesis is actualized in the fixed technical form. (Miki Kiyoshi, *Miki Kiyoshi zenshū* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1966-68), vol 8, p. 241-42).

[10] As he pointed out in "Bungeiteki ningengaku" (Literary Studies of Humanity, 1942), for example, "artistic expression (*geijutsu*) can be seen as a kind of techné (*gijutsu*). It was no coincidence that the Greeks used a single word, 'techné' (*tekune*), to express *gijutsu* and *geijutsu* (art)." (Miki Kiyoshi, *Miki Kiyoshi zenshū* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1966-68), vol. 11, p. 469). He made a similar observation in "Bungaku to gijutsu" (Literature and Techné, 1938): "Greek philosophers thought of artistic expression (*geijutsu*) and techné (*gijutsu*) in the same way and included them both in the single category of poesies (*poieshisu*)." (Miki Kiyoshi, *Miki Kiyoshi zenshū* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1966-68), vol. 12, p. 251).

mastercode for understanding how disparate expressions of culture in fact operated by a universal logic that was both ancient and modern, Eastern and Western, technological and aesthetic. For in Miki's mind, techné was the poetry of production (or poesies) that dissolved these sorts of oppositional categories into a larger creative power that he called *kōsōryoku* (imagination).[11]

At the center of Miki's writings on culture as form of techné was a fascination with the *work of art* in a two senses: the concrete art object itself (i.e., the artwork, *sakuhin*, oeuvre) and the productive functions that it performs in a broader cultural field (i.e., the *work* that art *does*).[12] Understanding artworks as both objects and actions prevented Miki from viewing them as merely representational, and led him to see the concrete forms of painting and poetry, for example, as expressions endowed with a transformative force in the broader social sphere. In the essay "Bungeiteki ningengaku" (Literary Studies of Humanity, 1942), he indicated how the *work of art* conditions actual thoughts and feelings:

> The artistic oeuvre (*sakuhin*) created by humans acts upon humans, and by a reversal, makes humans. The created image of humanity becomes a model for humanity. Every human is to some extent a novelist. He acts in accord with the image he himself drew. Creative behavior does not arise from general laws, but is, rather, directed by the concrete images of humanity. In opposition to ethics based on maxims (*kakuritsuteki rinri*), that which might be called a humanistic ethics (*ningenteki rinri*) is an ethics that appeals to us not through general laws, but through the images of humanity that become our models. In this regard, the artist exerts a deeper influence on the morals and customs (*fūzoku*) of an age than the moralist (*dōgakusha*). The images of humanity portrayed in works of art (*sakuhin*) have a stronger effect on human behavior than laws (*hōritsu*).[13]

This suggests why for Miki, the *work of art* held the most potently transformative potential of any force in the cultural field: whereas rules and laws could define ethical behavior in

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[11] Also in the 1930s, Martin Heidegger (one of Miki's mentors during his sojourn to Europe) theorized *techné* in terms that resonate with Miki's formulations. In "The Origin of the Work of Art" (1935), for example, Heidegger described artworks as a kind of creation that brings forth that which would otherwise remain invisible, or "concealed." Heidegger refered to this notion of art as creation-that-brings-forth as "*techne*": "The word *techne* denotes rather a mode of knowing. To know means to have seen, in the widest sense of seeing, which means to apprehend what is present, as such. For Greek thought the nature of knowing consists of *aletheia*, that is, in the uncovering of beings. *Techne*, as knowledge experienced in the Greek manner, is a bringing forth of beings *out of* concealedness and specifically *into* the unconcealedness of their appearance; *techne* never signifies the action of making." (Martin Heidegger. *Poetry, Language, Thought*, Albert Hofstadter, trans. (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1971), p. 59. Emphasis in original).

[12] In this analysis, the italicized expression "*work of art*" signifies the confluence of art as object and art as action in Miki's thinking, and disambiguates this facet of his thought from a more commonplace usage of "work of art" to indicate an art piece.

[13] Miki Kiyoshi, *Miki Kiyoshi zenshū* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1966-68), vol. 11, p. 476-77.

explanatory rhetoric, only the *work of art* could bring forth the imagining of proper conduct, and give shape to actual human thought, feeling and action after its own image.

Miki's description of *the work of art* above also suggests that his understanding of aesthetic culture did not observe any solid boundary between the artisan-subject who makes art objects and the materiality of man-made artworks themselves. Rather, it indicates that he viewed the relationship between human imagination and materialized aesthetic expression through a loop whereby each gives form to the other in a symbiotic cycle of mutual relation. In this way, too, Miki distinguished his understanding of aesthetic culture from the episteme of mimetic realism: rather than viewing the art object as a transcription of "reality," Miki's understanding of culture as techné—as production—accommodated the possibility that "reality" in the human imagination might in fact be a transcription of art objects. Working from this premise, Miki concluded that aesthetic culture provides a kind of grammar by which the human imagination understands its world:

> The nature of humanity itself changes by imitating the fabricated humanity produced by the artist. In the ways we read facial expressions and judge body language, the painter is our teacher. The poets are our organs (*kikan*) for understanding humanity, and they influence how we behave in our social relationships and amorous liasons (*ren'ai ya shakō*). The human type (*ningen taipu*) created by the artist is more clearly before our eyes than someone we happen upon on the street. Without our even knowing it, the smallest aspects of our lives are imitations of it [the human type created by artist].[14]

If Japan had plunged into a malaise in the 1930s, as Miki claimed it had in "Fuan no shisō," then it was up to the poets and painters to offer a remedy, for by his reckoning, only the producers of culture held the power to reformulate the cultural syntax of the contemporary idiom. The urgent matter of culture and its producers, then, was to teach the human imagination an aesthetic grammar that that would legibly render the dynamics of thought and feeling anew.

Under the umbrella problematic of culture-as-techné, Miki's writings further implied that of all aesthetic forms, literary writing might well be the superlative techné medium because the written word is endowed with a "double existence" (*nijū sonzai*) that parallels the logos-pathos synthesis that defines the logic of techné itself. In "Kyō no rinri no mondai to bungaku" (Literature and the Ethical Problems of Today, 1933), Miki explained how the objective meaning of language (logos) related to the amorphous force of subjective experience (pathos):

> At a fundamental level, language (*kotoba*) is logos. Yet, at the risk of sounding paradoxical, there would be no such thing as literature if language were only logos. Within language that is logos (*rogosutaru kotoba no uchi ni*), pathos must also express itself. In other words, language does not merely copy the form of something that is outwardly visible; rather, language must be something that can express the form of that which moves on the inside and is formless (*uchi ni ugoku katachi naki mono*).[15]

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[14]Miki Kiyoshi, *Miki Kiyoshi zenshū* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1966-68), vol. 11, p. 227.
[15] Miki Kiyoshi, *Miki Kiyoshi zenshū* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1966-68), vol. 11, pp. 186-187.

Miki suggests that a formless kind of feeling, or pathos, always saturates the concrete forms of literary language, or logos. In a complementary observation, he also argued that even the most poetic (or pathos-laden) language carried logical intellectual content. In "Shiika no kōsatsu" (Thoughts on poetry, 1934), he pointed out that however strong the pathos expressed by literary language, the word itself (*kotoba*) remained an indissolubly concrete form of logos:

> The heart being moved does not as such constitute poetry; in addition, expression in the form of words must follow. Words are logos, and as stated already, they are endowed with an intellectual nature (*idēteki seishitsu*). On this basis, word and thought can never be separated. Since poetry is an art comprised of words, it would be useless to try to entirely remove all elements related to thought from poetry. Even words related to emotions (*kanjō no kotoba*) carry essential elements related to thought.[16]

Miki concluded, then, that literary language necessarily contained concrete intellectual content related to ideas (logos) even as it emerged from and represented the amorphous rhythms of the heart (pathos). These observations suggest that for Miki, the logos-pathos complementarity of poetic language coincided with the logos-pathos syntheses of techné production.

Miki intended his understanding of the word as a combination of thought and feeling, logos and pathos, to revise contemporaneous approaches that figured language through the metaphor of vision (*miru*). He argued that if literary language operated like vision, it could only describe and disclose an objective world already in existence—that is, it could only be mimetic. For Miki, though, the poetry of literary writing hinged on bringing forth something anew rather than documenting something as such. In order to reconceive of literary language as a productive cultural force rather that as a merely representational medium, Miki argued that poetic language is not so much a form of description or reference, but rather of "confession" (*kokuhaku*), as he pointed out in "Shiika no kōsatsu":

> Philosophy has heretofore normativized the association between the intuitive effect of logos and vision (*miru*), but this view has a basic limitation. If the effect of logos were like seeing, poetry would not be possible. Rather, logos indicates speech (*kataru*), and in turn has the effect of hearing (*kiku*). On the most basic level, that which logos hears is the voice of pathos. Pathos is not itself a voice—rather, that which gives voice to pathos is logos. The logos of man does not speak forth on its own; rather, it speaks after hearing the voice of pathos. This is the birth of poetry.
>
> In this way, we can define the essence of poetry in the deepest sense as "confession."[17]

In the literary history of early 20th century Japan, "confession" calls to mind the Naturalist literati known for solipsistic disclosures of their own sordid personal lives, which they narrated in great detail under the pretense of "scientific" transcription of the biological and environmental determinants of modern man's psyche. Against the claims of scientific certitude championed by

[16] Miki Kiyoshi, *Miki Kiyoshi zenshū* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1966-68), vol. 12, p. 162.
[17] Miki Kiyoshi, *Miki Kiyoshi zenshū* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1966-68), vol. 12, p. 163.

Naturalist confessors, though, Miki suggests that the essence of poetry is "confession" in a different sense. For Miki, the forms of language bring forth (or "unconceal," to borrow Heidegger's expression) a formless flow of pathos of their own accord, unbidden.[18] From this perspective, it is words, not authors, that confess feeling, and language, not literati, that makes meaning. In making these claims, Miki's larger point was that poetry becomes praxis when the artwork as object (the poem) gives way to the work of art as action (*poesies*).

By Miki's reckoning, moreover, not only did logos and pathos cohere in literary language as in no other modern aesthetic medium, but the "dual existence" of the written word also proved impervious to the abstractions and distortions of meaning that devalued other modern arts in the course of technological mediation and reproduction. Echoing the problematic (if not the conclusions) of Walter Benjamin's roughly contemporaneous essay "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" (1936), Miki's "Bungaku to gijutsu" (Literature and Techné, 1938) described how modern mechanical mediation affected the meaning of aesthetic culture. In the essay, Miki compared two categories of art: "original art" (*genkei geijutsu*), referring to artworks unmediated by modern technology that retained the imprint of an individual artisan (including original paintings and live theater performance), and "reproduction art" (*fukusei geijutsu*), referring to mechanically reproduced and technologically mediated artworks that lacked authorial presence (including poster prints of original paintings and recorded music). According to Miki, the dual function of the word allowed literary language to transcend this binary, retaining the characteristics of "original art" even in modern mass reproduction:

> In the case of literature, the invention of print technology has made reproduction possible. When an author composes a single work, it can be run through the printer and innumerable reproductions made. Yet, this does not mean that literature is a 'reproduction art.' [The mechanical reproduction of literature] has a different meaning than the actor's performance becoming a movie or the musician's performance becoming a record. The reproduction of a painting has a value completely different from the original, but the value of a literary work remains unchanged no matter how many times the work is reproduced. The appearance of film must have made the theater feel threatened, but for literature, by contrast, the invention of print technology was something to be embraced. In this is seen a simple distinction between literature and the other arts, but it carries important implications. In this regard, we must examine the mysteries (*himitsu*) of the word (*kotoba*), literature's medium (*shudan*), for there is nothing so wondrous (*fushigi*) as the word.[19]

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[18] In "The Origin of the Work of Art," Heidegger described the beauty of art as a kind of truth that issues forth from (or that is "unconcealed" by) the work of art. In his interpretation of Vincent van Gogh's iconic paintings of peasant boots, for example, Hiedegger wrote: "Truth happens in Van Gogh's painting. This does not mean that something is correctly portrayed, but rather that in the revelation of the equipmental being of shoes, that which is as a whole—world and earth in ther counterpaly—attains to unconcealedness." (Martin Heidegger. *Poetry, Language, Thought*, Albert Hofstadter, trans. (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1971), p.56). Heidegger later notes that "*[b]eauty is one way in which truth occurs as unconcealedness.*" (Heidegger, *Poetry*, ibid., p. 56. Emphasis in original).

[19] Miki Kiyoshi, *Miki Kiyoshi zenshū* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1966-68), vol. 12, pp. 254-55.

Miki concluded that the unique "double existence" (*nijū sonzai*) of the written word allowed "each of the innumerable printed texts to remain 'original art.'"[20] This suggests that for him, language might well have been the ideal medium through which to formalize a new cultural logic of techné because the word not only conveyed equal parts logos and pathos, but also retained the aura of originality even in modern mass reproduction.

Miki's writings on poetic language addressed a form of writing that he himself, as a public intellectual, did not practice. Largely for this reason, they remain at some remove from the actuality of literary form, and necessarily retain a measure of abstraction insofar as they are expository descriptions of aesthetic praxis. That said, Miki did have an interlocutor in the literary sphere whose own writings suggest how some of his conceptual reflections on language might have guided actual literary practices: Yokomitsu Riichi. At around the same time that Miki was thinking of poetic language as a form of techné synthesis that exceeded the rubrics of mimetic realism, Yokomitsu was describing the experiences of reading and writing in modern times as a series of "sensations" (*kankaku*) that were irreducible to documentary transcription and transparent explication. Like Miki, Yokomitsu hoped to break the bonds of rational explanation so that the forms of language and literary narrative might confess a formless pathos on their own. Writing in the register of the literary avant-garde, Yokomitsu composed essays that show how Miki's work with the ancient Greek concepts of logos and pathos might guide contemporary literary praxis.

Yokomitsu Riichi and the Aesthetics of Inexplicability

In addition to his novels and short stories, Yokomitsu's position at the center of Japanese literary modernism owes to his theoretical writings on what aesthetic language is and does. Many of his essays on language emerged while he was leading the New Sensationist literary coterie (*Shinkankaku-ha*) in the 1920s, a group that also included the novelist Kawabata Yasunari (1899-1972). Drawing on the models of European (and especially French) literary modernisms, the New Sensationists opposed the science-inspired realism of literary Naturalism, which they believed tended excessively toward self-psychoanalysis and a naïve obsession with narrative transparency.[21] Whereas the literary Naturalists looked inward, toward the psychological interiority of the modern self, the New Sensationists looked outward, taking inspiration from the undulating crowds of the city, the speed and shock of modern life, and the emerging technologies that powered mass media, advertising and cinema.

As the leader of an avant-garde literary movement, Yokomitsu frequently theorized the form and function of aesthetic language. Among his expository texts on literature and language, however, the best known—*Shinkankakuron* (On New Sensationist Literature, 1925) and *Junsui shōsetsu ron* (Theory of the Pure Novel, 1935)—are sometimes so opaque as to become almost

[20] Miki Kiyoshi, *Miki Kiyoshi zenshū* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1966-68), vol. 12, p. 257.

[21] For a detailed discussion of New Sensationist writings, with comparison to their French counterparts, see Dennis Keene, "Shinkankakuha—Background and Theory," and "Shinkankakuha—Practice," in *Yokomitsu Riichi: Modernist* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), pp. 58-85, pp. 86-130.

incomprehensible.[22] For this reason, my own examination of his expository corpus focuses on lesser-known writings that discuss literary language and the phenomenology of reading in more lucid terms. In these texts, Yokomitsu describes an amorphous "energy" (*enerugi*) that is confessed, as Miki would have it, by the concrete form of the printed character (*moji*). Yokomitsu's larger ambition in these essays is to conceptualize the relationship between the external forms of language (what Miki called logos) and the formless feelings that they bring forth (pathos) as a kind of synthesis that takes place in the act of reading.

Yokomitsu's expository writings on literature and language in the 1920s limed the position of New Sensationist aesthetics in complicated relation to the proletarian literary arts movement that was then gaining steam. Proletarian writers understood Marxism as both a social science that explained the structure of capitalist society and as an activist ideology promising a revolution that would reorganize that structure. The proletarian literati were always divided by internal dissent and splintering opinions about the relationship between their art and their politics, but in general, Yokomitsu shared with them an interest in Marxist social critique, and he advocated alongside them for the formation of a new literary practice rooted in a materialist (*yuibutsuron*) sensibility.[23] For like his proletarian contemporaries, Yokomitsu understood the emergence of global capitalism to be the fundamental condition that bounded the local concerns of his own idiom to a modernist moment worldwide.

When it came to literary concerns, though, Yokomitsu found little to praise in the works of the proletarian literati. In particular, he castigated doctrinaire proletarian writers for being more concerned with turning literature into propaganda than with crafting something aesthetically meaningful out of language. In the essay *Shinkankakuha to konminizumu bungaku* (The New Sensationists and Communist Literature, 1928), he suggested that the New Sensationists might succeed where their proletarian counterparts had failed. He claimed that whereas proletarian writing too often devolved into a socialist instrument for building class consciousness and fomenting revolution, New Sensationist literature would blend bourgeois literary convictions with a materialist sensibility in order to develop a more aesthetically complex, less politically dogmatic kind of "capitalist literature" (*shihonshugi bungaku*).

By "capitalist literature," Yokomitsu did not mean a literature in the service of the bourgeoisie, nor did he mean a literature that would romanticize or justify capitalism as a social and economic condition. Rather, he meant that capitalism itself was a "new sensation," so to speak, and that the New Sensationists were its literary interpreters. As capitalism perpetuated exploitative social relations and class tension, and as it repackaged culture as a commodity, Yokomitsu sensed that it also generated a new economy of feeling that might provide a source of literary inspiration. In his mind, the capitalist literature of the New Sensationists would take the pulse of cosmopolitan cities, in whose veins coursed the global flow of people, money and politics. It would syncopate its aesthetic rhythms in relation to the heartbeat of daily life in urban spheres as distant as Paris and Tokyo, and show that everyday life in these cities was, in fact, a

[22] For a lucid analysis of these difficult writings, see Dennis Washburn, "Translator's Postscript," in *Shanghai: A Novel by Yokomitsu Riichi*, Dennis Washburn, trans. (Ann Arbor MI: Center for Japanese Studies, The University of Michigan, 2001).

[23] As Yokomitsu put it: "Even if a capitalist literature is birthed anew, it will be impotent (*muryoku*) if it is not a New Sensationist literature fortified with the spirit of materialist observation." (Yokomitsu Riichi, *Teihon Yokomitsu Riichi zenshū* (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 1981-87), vol. 13, p. 97).

coeval, simultaneous experience. The New Sensationist imagination would take shape in relation to global imperialisms and local labor tensions, to the spectacle of consumer culture in the urban streetscape and the cliché language of advertising, to the worldwide circulation of cinematic images and the ceaseless appeals of mass culture. The literature of the New Sensationists would be a "capitalist literature" not because it would make an argument about the political economy in explicitly moral, political or social scientific terms, but because its language and aesthetics would evoke the feeling of life within the unprecedented flows of global capital itself.

Yokomitsu's overarching interest in constructing a materialist-inspired literary aesthetic trickled down to his reckonings with the nuts and bolts of aesthetic language on the smallest scale. In the essay "Moji ni tsuite" (On Written Characters, 1929), for example, he argued that the most basic unit of literature, the written character (*moji*), is a material object (*buttai*) that has an existence independent of any authorial intent or readerly expectation. Working from this premise, he claimed that in one sense, the literary text is a group of verbal objects that exist autonomously as mere structure:

> As the author chooses the structure [of his literary text], he goes about choosing written characters in accord with this vision (*gensō*), but does this mean that he can choose written characters that precisely equate with that vision? No, for that would be absolutely impossible since the material object of the written character and the material object of real thing that the written character refers to can never be precisely the same material object (*buttai*). For this reason, the literary works that we produce by stringing together a series of written characters are completely independent of we authors, and at the same time are material objects comprised of mere forms that are completely independent of the reader."[24]

In this view, literary language does not accord with the author's vision, the reader's imagination, nor even with a real and objective world signified through verbal signs. Rather, through a radical objectification of language, Yokomitsu understood the literary text in its most basic aspect as a group of what he called "external forms" (*gaimen keishiki*) that correspond only to the "material object" of language itself.

In a complementary observation, he also described the "internal form" (*naimen keishiki*) of literature as a kind of "content" (*naiyō*) that comes to life in the act of reading. Yokomitsu explained that "content" does not refer to the semantics of a word, but rather to a more amorphous, unaccountable "energy" produced by the intercourse between textual object and reading subject. He described the internal structure of literary language abstractly as "the bones that holds together the structure of the work. It is basic form (*genkei*). It is ideas. It is the life that exists within the work."[25] The internal structure of the text, then, is not really a concrete structure at all, but rather a force that issues forth when the imagination of a reader-subject encounters the external forms of the language-object. This perspective led Yokomitsu to understand reading as a kind of phenomenological experience: "The content of written characters

[24] Yokomitsu Riichi, *Teihon Yokomitsu Riichi zenshū* (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 1981-87), vol. 13, p. 115.
[25] Yokomitsu Riichi, *Teihon Yokomitsu Riichi zenshū* (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 1981-87), vol. 13, p. 117.

(*moji*) comes to us through our senses (*kankaku*) and our cognition (*chikaku*), as we feel the energy (*enerugi*) of language in its form as a material object (*moji de aru buttai no keishiki*), and a "mountain" becomes a mountain, an "ocean" becomes an ocean."[26] "Moji ni tsuite" suggests that Yokomitsu was conceptualizing literary language in the late 1920s through the paradigm of form and feeling that also guided Miki's slightly later essays on the logos and pathos of poetry: for both writers, the "meaning" of language was not the philological or semantic content that it conveyed, but rather the energy that its forms produced, or, as Miki would have it, the pathos that its logos confessed.

"Moji ni tsuite" also suggests that if the *enerugi* of language and the feelings of reading issue forth on their own accord, without the direction of authorial intent or readerly control, then their movements and effects are largely inexplicable. Yokomitsu developed this point in the essay "Shinkankaku-ha bungaku no kenkyū," in which he described the aesthetics of inexplicability in more concrete terms. In the essay, Yokomitsu cited a passage from one of his own works, "Hyōgenha no yakusha" ("The Expressionist Actor," 1925), in which the protagonist looks down from a bridge at a small boat in the water below, remarking: "The boat wanted water." (*ano fune wa mizu ga hoshii no da*). Yokomitsu explained that this seemingly nonsensical observation exemplified a kind of aesthetics of inexplicability:

> At the instant that the protagonist saw the small boat, he felt 'the boat wanted water.' Why did he feel this way? It cannot be explained. To force an explanation would be to lie. All that can be said is that he felt it because he felt it. I expressed it this way because I believed that I could best express the protagonist's feelings at this instant only by having him say the line 'the boat wanted water.' That is, I expressed it this way because I believed in the inevitable sensation that this line would arouse inside the reader. This has nothing to do with logic (*rikutsu*). Rather, it has to do with expression. The peculiar function of literature is particularly well suited to making these sorts of expressions.[27]

Yokomitsu explains that in the *enerugi* of reading, the seemingly illogical expression "the boat wanted water" brings forth an "inevitable sensation" in the reader as the forms of literary narrative give way to a readerly sensation. From this perspective, the task of the novelist is not to "make sense," but to manipulate the *enerugi* of *moji*: "The author needs only to place the structure. Within that structure, it will suffice if the reader falls in line with the author's intent, and if sensory activity is automatically (*hitsuzen ni*) stimulated within the reader."[28]

As the foregoing suggests, Yokomitsu's writings on form and feeling, structure and sensation, articulated ideas compatible with Miki's writings on logos and pathos, and at times, Yokomitsu even used those very terms. In "Bungaku no rinri" (The Ethics of Literature, 1934), for example, he described how merging feeling (*kansei*) and thinking (*chisei*) would produce a more complex literary representation of humanity: "The problem of literature is always a

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[26] Yokomitsu Riichi, *Teihon Yokomitsu Riichi zenshū* (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 1981-87), vol. 13, p. 114.
[27] Yokomitsu Riichi, *Teihon Yokomitsu Riichi zenshū* (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 1981-87), vol. 14, p. 356.
[28] Yokomitsu Riichi, *Teihon Yokomitsu Riichi zenshū* (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 1981-87), vol. 14, p. 355.

problem of humanity (*ningen*) in the broad sense. In the end, even fiction and drama about society return to the units that make up society—namely, humans. For this reason, the domain of literature rests on the fact that it must take as its object the feeling (*kansei*) and thinking (*chisei*) of we human beings."[29] Later in "Bungaku no rinri," Yokomitsu recoded "thinking" and "feeling" as, respectively, "logos" and "pathos," claiming that form and feeling formed a syncretic complementarity instead of an oppositional binary:

> Humanity contains the intellectual realm and at the same time pathos—the realm of feeling. Logos and pathos take the form of fundamental opposites, but in actuality, logos would be unthinkable separate from pathos, and vice versa. Our intellectual activity is stimulated by our emotional activity, just as our emotional activity is stimulated by our intellectual activity. What we feel can contribute to what we know, and what we know can contribute to what we feel.[30]

By embracing the dialgoic relationship between logos and pathos, Yokomitsu thought that literary writing would move closer to the truth of humanity, and of beauty: "When the beautiful harmony of humankind's thinking and feeling is completely controlled by the supreme spirit of the author, we will know for the first time the birth of our idealized, highest form of art."[31]

Yokomitsu's fascination with form and feeling in language brought his critiques of literature into dialogue with Miki's writings about the logos and pathos of poetry. Taken in isolation, their essays might appear to be relics of the intellectual history of the moment, or as self-contained arguments about *merely* literary matters. But the sorts of appeals to perfect beauty and the shared cultural accomplishments of "humankind" that issue forth from Yokomitsu's statements above cannot be taken at face value. Tosaka's and Adorno's critiques described in the previous chapter alert us to how words like "humankind," "art" and "beauty" could easily slip into an auratic jargon of fascist fantasy, allowing the seemingly high-minded ideals of humanism and culture to become the handmaidens of less noble intentions. Yokomitsu's last novel, *Ryoshū* (The Melancholy of Travel, 1937-1946), to which my analysis next turns, makes clear that the literary logos and cultural pathos that he and Miki conceptualized in their essays swirled within the same currents as did some of the more explicitly political and violent rhetoric and action of the period. To better understand how, the next chapter examines Yokomitsu's last novel and Miki's career with the Shōwa Kenkyūkai in relation to the concepts worked out in their writings on aesthetic language. In their ambitious narratives of culture and colonialism in greater East Asia, I find the traces of a literary imagination steeped in the logos and pathos of ancient Greek poetry and New Sensationist prose.

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[29] Yokomitsu Riichi, *Teihon Yokomitsu Riichi zenshū* (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 1981-87), vol. 14, p. 427.
[30] Yokomitsu Riichi, *Teihon Yokomitsu Riichi zenshū* (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 1981-87), vol. 14, pp. 430-31.
[31] Yokomitsu Riichi, *Teihon Yokomitsu Riichi zenshū* (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 1981-87), vol. 14, p. 432.

Chapter Four:

Toward A New Cultural Pathos: Yokomitsu Riichi's *Ryoshū*

Yokomitsu once described his career as moving from "a period of insubordination and absolutely desperate battle with the Japanese language (*kokugo*), through a period of combat with Marxism, arriving at a period of submission and obedience to the national language (*kokugo*)."[1] He made this statement in 1931 at the age of 33, in the same year that serialization of his best-known work, *Shanghai* (1928-1931), ended. He would continue to write until his death sixteen years later in 1947, and most of this latter half of his career was occupied with the composition of his sprawling *magnum opus*, *Ryoshū* (The Melancholy of Travel), which appeared in serial installments form 1937-1946. In this chapter, I read the novel as a non-teleological account of the culture and politics of the global 1930s, and examine how it gave literary expression to several of the concepts of language and culture that Yokomitsu and Miki theorized in their essays, examined in chapter three. My reading of *Ryoshū* concludes by noting that without setting out to do so, the novel implicitly gave aesthetic form to several of Miki's theses on imperial culture that he articulated in the employ of the Shōwa Kenkyūkai, the state-sponsored policy bureau that developed the blueprint for a culturally cohesive East Asian empire. I argue that what the abstractions and clichés of Miki's co-authored government propaganda could only sketch in declarative prose was more fully articulated by the literary language of Yokomitsu's last novel.

But I should preface my analysis of *Ryoshū* by noting that not all critics have taken Yokomitsu's late career as seriously as I do. To the contrary, several scholars seem to have accepted Yokomitsu's description of his own career as a failed effort to overcome the strictures of national culture and ideological allegiance that ironically ended in "submission" to the ideology of national culture itself—nationalism. From their perspective, Yokomitsu was an ambitious and idiosyncratic young writer in his 1920s New Sensationist phase that culminated in *Shanghai*—a time when he engaged in "absolutely desperate battle with the Japanese language" and conflicted "combat with Marxism"—but also one who tried and failed to "overcome the West" in the 1930s-1940s, becoming yet another "submissive and obedient" modernist to sing the hermetic gospel of Japanese nationalism.

For example, Dennis Keene's book-length study of the novelist, *Yokomitsu Riichi: Modernist* (1980), hardly discusses *Ryoshū* at all. In his brief comments on the novel, Keene calls it a failed work that "represents an open conflict between Oriental and Western ideas," and he notes in a chapter called "Defeat" that in the broader context of Yokomitsu's career, "dealing with [*Ryoshū*] would entail only a repetition of what has already been said."[2] Keene's comments are part of a larger tendency among scholars to read Yokomitsu's late career as a failure that was

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[1] This quotation is the English translation that appears in Dennis Washburn, "Translator's Postscript," in *Shanghai: A Novel by Yokomitsu Riichi*, Dennis Washburn, trans. (Ann Arbor MI: Center for Japanese Studies, The University of Michigan, 2001), p. 222. The Japanese original appears in Yokommitsu Riichi, "Kakikata sōshi," *TYRZ*, ibid., vol. 16, p. 369.

[2] Keene, Dennis. *Yokomitsu Riichi: Modernist* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), p. 187.

coterminous with Japan's military defeat in 1945.[3] In this vein, Seiji Lippit has noted that Yokomitsu's career after *Shanghai* was dominated and ultimately doomed by the insidious infiltrations of "the West," the only refuge from which available to Japanese modernists was the "phantasmagorical home" of an illusory native essence. He has argued that the "journey" indicated in the title of *Ryoshū* (which Lippit translates as "Melancholy Journey") refers "to an ideological passage, one that involves a rejection of the West and the rediscovery of a native cultural tradition. The journey to Europe and return to Japan that takes place in the novel is the physical embodiment of a specific psychological and ideological experience of early-twentieth-century intellectuals."[4] Lippit has claimed that this "psychological and ideological" transition implied a unidirectional movement across several oppositional binaries: from "European 'reason'" to "Asian affect or sentiment," from "intellect" to feeling, and from "matter" to "spirit."[5] In Lippit's reading, Yokomitsu's career exemplifies the familiar image of the cosmopolitan Japanese modernist who is ultimately overcome by Anglo-European cultural influence and who seeks to escape from it through a cathartic return to native culture. Within this trajectory, Yokomitsu trades his earlier ambition and promising dialogue with European contemporaries for the cultural hermeticism and ideological failures of Japanese nationalism.

Aspects of Yokomitsu's reception in Japan follow much the same pattern. Most infamously, Yokomitsu was counted among those with "war responsibility" (*sensō sekininsha*) soon after the surrender in 1945, presumably on account of the seemingly nationalistic implications of *Ryoshū* and a handful statements he made about the Japanese spirit (*Nihon seishin*). Regarding the latter, Yamamoto Ryōsuke has marshaled several citations in support of his claim that Yokomitsu sympathized with Japanist spiritualism, and that the novelist blamed the onslaughts of European thought for corrupting an intuitive, native sensibility. This has led Yamamoto to conclude that Yokomitsu "pushed forward as an ideologue promulgating [the ideology of] 'Japanese spirit' (*Nihon seishin*)," an assessment confirmed by Yamamoto's reading of *Ryoshū*.[6] He understands the narrative through the confrontation between Japanese feeling and European thinking, and concludes, like Lippit, that the novel portrays the Japanese man of culture as a floating figure crippled by his pathological drive to escape the standards of European

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[3] As Keene put it: "It is true that Yokomitsu supported the war effort, as almost all Japanese writers and intellectuals did, but since there seems nothing to be surprised at in that it requires little comment." (Keene, ibid., 187).

[4] Lippit, Seiji. *Topographies of Japanese Modernism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002) p. 200.

[5] Lippit has argued, for example, that "In his 'Theory of the Pure Novel' Yokomitsu had already contrasted European 'reason' with an Asian affect or sentiment. In other writings of the 1930s, the related concept of 'intellect' (*chisei*) came to be a general signifier for modernization, and its rejection framed the attempt to 'overcome modernity.'" (Lippit, *Topographies*. Ibid., pp. 210-11.). Comparing Yokomitsu's *Shanghai* (1928-31) and *Ryoshū*, furthermore, Lippit has argued that "[w]ith the change in emphasis from 'matter' (*busshitsu*) to 'spirit' (*seishin*), however, there is also an attendant shift from the representation of corporeal sensations to sentiment in Yokomitsu's writings." (Lippit, *Topographies*. Ibid., p. 215.).

[6] Yamamoto Ryōsuke, *Yokomitsu Riichi to shōsetsu no ronri: Yokomitsu Riichi, logics of novel* [*sic*]. (Tokyo: Kasama Shoin, 2008), p. 364. Yamamoto describes Yokomitsu's war responsibility on p. 437.

modernity, on the one hand, while simultaneously recognizing the impossibility of ever doing so, on the other.

These analyses all locate the writings and politics of Yokomitsu's late career within the contextual coordinates of the familiar "return to Japan" (*Nihon e no kaiki*) narrative of 1930s Japanese cultural history. Working within this interpretive rubric, scholars have read *Ryoshū* as a literary rendering of how Japanese modernists alienated by the onslaughts of Anglo-European influence and cultural hybridity attempted to return to native origins in search of a cathartic communion with an indigenous cultural essence. From this perspective, Yokomitsu's late career in general, and *Ryoshū* in particular, have been deemed less worthy of scholarly attention because they seem to merely replicate the familiar failures of Japanese nationalism itself, sharing its cultural parochialism and destiny for defeat.

My own analysis moves in a different direction. Without denying the important dialogue between nationalism and modernism in 1930s Japan, one of the main arguments of this dissertation as a whole is that Japanese literary life in the 1920s-1940s need not be understood exclusively within a linear schema that ends with war and defeat. As an alternative, I have focused on the coeval rather than the coterminous, and on tensions rather than transitions, as a way of elucidating how a range of co-present possibilities and perils fueled the literary imagination of the time in ways that exceed any diachronic narrative moving from beginnings to endings. Within this larger argumentative framework, Yokomitsu's late career provides a case in point of how reading from modernist beginnings to nationalist endings sometimes threatens to overwrite the deeper textures of literary life in a moment of cataclysm with a smooth narrative logic. My own analysis aims to show that his career did not develop through discrete stages, finally settling into a period of "obedience and submission" to the categories of national culture; rather, my reading of his last novel proceeds from the premise that his battle against the strictures of literary language and "combat" against doctrinaire ideologues continued until his death in 1947.

From this perspective, the literary aesthetic ambitions that Yokomitsu first articulated in his writings on New Sensationist aesthetics in the 1920s (examined in chapter three) were not absorbed into the failures of Japanese nationalism in the 1930s-1940s, but rather formed the foundation of a cosmopolitan success, *Ryoshū*. In making this claim, my reading of *Ryoshū* is consonant with those of literary scholars Hamakawa Katsuhiko and Mogi Masao, who have read it as a cosmopolitan novel that avoids the Japanist provincialism often associated with its age, and that thinks of Europe and Japan in the 1930s as parts of a common cultural field bounded by the temporality of contemporaneity.[7] In dialogue with their analyses, my own approach builds

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[7] Hamakawa Hatsuhiko, for example, has argued that despite Yokomitsu's reputation as a litterateur with "war responsibility," the fact that Yokomitsu continued to write *Ryoshū* even after the war "proves that *Ryoshū* was not written in the name of cooperation with the war effort, but was rather a novel of ideas (*shisō shōsetsu*) that tried to illustrate the problems Japanese people must confront (*Nihonjin no sakete tōrenu mondai*)." (Hamakawa Katsuhiko, *Ronkō Yokomitsu Riichi*. Osaka-shi: Izumi Shoin, 2001, p. 19). Hamakawa has emphasized that aspects of *Ryoshū* reveal Yokomitsu's interest in a deeper form of understanding (*rikai*) and consciousness (*ninshiki*) that transcended differences in race (*jinrui*), culture and politics. These universalist elements of the novel have led Hamakawa to conclude that "as even a cursory glance makes adequately clear, [*Ryoshū*] was not implicated in something as shortsighted as cooperating

toward the claim that *Ryoshū* provides a narrative structure for thinking and feeling the dynamics of the period without relying on the stability of beginnings and endings, nor the linearity of teleologies and transitions. I then bring this chapter to a close by reckoning with the politics of *Ryoshū*, noting that its literary subtleties carried cultural sensibilities that motivated Miki's more explicitly political writings for the Shōwa Kenkyūkai. As a cosmopolitan success, *Ryoshū* gave palatable poetic expression to ideas and feelings that in other contexts were articulated in more boldly sinister prose.

Reading *Ryoshū*

The first installment of *Ryoshū* appeared soon after Yokomitsu returned from a trip to Europe in 1936, during which he visited Paris and the Berlin Olympics while writing dispatches for the *Tokyo nichinichi shinbun* and the *Osaka mainichi shinbun*. The avant-garde painter Okamaoto Tarō, who spent part of the 1930s in Paris and visited with Yokomitsu there, remembered the novelist's response to Europe fondly, noting that Yokomitsu seemed more fascinated and inspired by his time abroad than overcome or paralyzed by it. In 1948, Okamoto countered those who claimed that Yokomitsu's trip to Europe was an alienating experience that catalyzed a turn to nationalism late in the novelist's career: "Yokomitsu certainly was not any sort of simple Japanist, nor was he a worshipper—or hater—of all things European. I cannot believe other than that in his heart, Yokomitsu understood that the problems of East and West were not the result of any severe contradiction between the two, but were rather the result of both East and West being bound by the same sensibility (*kansei*)."[8] Okamoto's observation introduces my own interpretation of *Ryoshū*. Rather than reading the novel as an argument against Anglo-European influence, or as a nationalist homage to Japanese roots, I approach the novel as an aesthetic evocation of the subtle undulations of a feeling, a sensibility. In its most lucid articulations, the sensibility conveyed by the novel holds in balance the spheres of Europe and Asia, the modern and the ancient, the secular and the religious, bringing seemingly oppositional structures of feeling into equilibrium.

The first half of *Ryoshū* is set in Europe and centers on the relationship between two Japanese expatriates: Yashiro, a young man of nativist-nationalist inclination, and Kuji, a

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with the war effort, but rather grappled with the larger problems of civilization." (Hamakawa, *Ronkō*. Ibid., p. 20).

Mogi Masao has also rejected the interpretation of *Ryoshū* as a nationalist statement. According to Mogi's reading, *Ryoshū* represents Yokomitsu's desire to synthesize seeming opposites, such as rationality and irrationality, thought and feeling, the new and the old.
Mogi's provocative reading attempts to show how *Ryoshū*, as a pluralistic, syncretic text that brings apparent opposites into harmony, functions like a mandala, which Mogi claims "is the superior image of unity" (*tōichisei no sugureta sō*). Mogi claims that as a mandala born from a universalistic worldview, *Ryoshū* subtly but consistently conveys anti-militarist—and even a pacifist—undertones. Mogi has claimed that rather than affirming the superiority of Japanese culture, *Ryoshū* is preoccupied with humanistic affection (*aijō*), cultural pluralism and universal—not nationalistic—concerns: "This is pacifism (*heiwashugi*) rooted in mutual respect among nations." (Mogi, *Yokomitsu Riichi no hyōgen sekai: Nihon no shōsetsu*. (Tokyo: Benseisha, 1995) ., p. 80). Mogi has therefore concluded that Yokomitsu's resistance of the war (*sensō e no teikō*) is encoded in the mandala of modernity, *Ryoshū*.

[8] Okamoto Tarō, "Pari jidai no Yokomitsu shi," in *TYRZ*, ibid., supplementary volume, p. 56.

cosmopolitan and pedantic Europhile. Yashiro is forever alienated from his surroundings in Paris and yearns to return home to Japan; Kuji, by contrast, adores nearly everything that catches his eye in Europe. In the second half of the narrative, Yashiro returns to Japan where he searches for a native spiritual and cultural home. Kuji is absent from the second half of the story, save for a brief appearance in the last installments. The narrative ends with a nationalist rally in Hibiya Park in which Tōno—a pensive haiku poet—touts the glorious prospects for a Japan-led "New Order" in East Asia. Taken in broad strokes, then, the masternarrative of Yokomitsu's last novel would seem to move through a confrontation with the alien Other in Europe toward a conflicted attempt to "return to Japan" and commune with the familiarity of native culture. From this perspective, the narrative arc of *Ryoshū* would seem to evoke a broader transition in the cultural history of 1930s Japan toward a hermetic cultural nationalism.

But it is my contention that reading the novel as a coherent "return to Japan" narrative may not allow for a full consideration of the unstable relationship that the text has with its own contemporary history. In this regard, it must not be forgotten that *Ryoshū* was a retrospective on the mid-1930s that appeared sporadically in serial form across a nine-year swath (1937-46) that witnessed the rise and fall of the Japanese empire. The first installment of the novel appeared in April 1937, the last in April 1946, and in between, there were gaps in serialization that sometimes stretched as long as two years.[9] In addition, Yokomitsu discussed abandoning the novel on several occasions over the lengthy course of its serialization, and he also seems to have had plans to continue *Ryoshū* at the time of his death; it remains an unfinished novel whose ending is—rather arbitrarily—simply the last installment that he happened to have written before he died.[10] The narrative chronology of the story itself, however, occupies a much shorter

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[9] Part of my consideration of *Ryoshū* as a retrospective account stems from my observation that it does not appear that Yokomitsu composed the entire text and then published individual installments sporadically; rather, evidence suggests that new installments were composed and subsequently serialized over the course of nearly a decade. Kuritsubo Yoshiki, co-editor of Yokomitsu's collected works (*Teihon Yokomitsu Riichi zenshū* (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 1981-87) points out that "the time of writing [*Ryoshū*]" (*kono sakuhin no jippitsu kikan*) spanned nearly ten years, suggesting that Yokomitsu wrote the installments over a chronology roughly concurrent with the nearly decade-long serialization schedule of *Ryoshū*. (Kuritsubo Yoshiki, *Henshū nōto. Teihon Yokomitsu Riichi zenshū* (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 1981-87), vol. 9, p. 304.) Yokomitsu's editor at *Bungei shunjū*, furthermore, has recounted that when the initial serialization of the novel was suspended in 1937, the editors desperately hoped that Yokomitsu would offer a continuation (*zokuhen*), indicating that the entire text was not yet complete at that time (Supplement to vol. 9 of *Teihon Yokomitsu Riichi zenshū* (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 1981-87), p. 4-5). Furthermore, *Ryoshū* is assumed to have been left incomplete at the time of Yokomitsu's death in 1947, which suggests that he did not first complete the novel and then serialize it, but rather added to the narrative incrementally over the course of nearly a decade. The assumption that *Ryoshū* is an incomplete novel is corroborated by Mogi Masao's observation that Yokomitsu apparently left behind plans for how he hoped to continue the narrative (Mogi Masao. *Yokomitsu Riichi no hyôgen sekai: Nihon no shôsetsu*. Tokyo: Banseisha, 1995), p. 70). Lippit has also pointed out that Yokomitsu "worked on [*Ryoshū*] for roughly a decade […]." (Lippit, *Topographies*. Ibid., p. 214).

[10] Mogi Masao has pointed out that Yokomitsu's son recalled his father once describing *Ryoshū* as "a novel that could just as well end at any point" (*ano sakuhin wa itsu owattemo, mō iinda*).

timeline than does the novel's lengthy serialization: current events described in the narrative reveal that the plot of *Ryoshū* begins in 1935 and ends in 1937.[11] Although the novel was serialized over the course of nine tumultuous years, then, it narrates only the two years prior to the outbreak of open hostilities between Japan and China ("The China Incident," or *shina jihen*), and the whole of the story plays out years before the bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941 initiated the catastrophic violence of the Pacific War.

All of which is to say that the novel narrates only a small sliver of a cataclysmic age, and from a greater and greater chronological remove. This creates discontinuities between the world of the storyteller and the world of the storydwellers: when serialization ended in April 1946, for example, readers were separated from the heady nationalism described in the last installment by nine years, disastrous defeat and the dawn of the Cold War. If recognized as a postwar retrospective on the imperialist fervor that had so recently ended in nuclear disaster, the last installment describing the promise of Japanese imperialism drips with a grim irony running counter to the nationalist appeals of its dramatis personae. In this light, it is harder to read *Ryoshū* as a straightforward tome of its times, or as a linear narrative that evokes a generation's failed attempt to "return to Japan." For even though Yokomitsu continued to serialize the novel through the historical cataclysms and political sea-change of 1940s Japan, the narrative itself largely avoids the appearance of retrospection and instead represents an open-ended world that is seemingly contemporaneous with the act of narration. In *Ryoshū*, characters reveal no foreknowledge of what is to come, and although current events appear frequently in the text—including the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, the 2/26 incident, the 1936 Munich Olympics, and the 1937 kidnapping of Chiang Kai Shek—the narrative does not align them in a way that implies a telos of historical progress. In this way, *Ryoshū* represents the mid-1930s as a contingent social and historical milieu: the world of *Ryoshū* is a world of possibility and perception, not one of foregone conclusions; a world in which characters weigh the competing appeals of various ambitions and impulses, not one in which they are doomed by fate.

Even at moments of seeming world-historical implication, characters' interpretations of events sometimes conflict in ways that lend an indeterminacy to the narrative trajectory of *Ryoshū*. Early in the story, for example, Kuji and Tōno mull the significance of the recent 2/26 Incident. Although the failed coup d'état on February 26, 1936 and subsequent government crackdown on political extremism would appear in retrospect to have been a watershed moment signaling the rapid consolidation of Japan's wartime totalitarian state, Kuji's and Tōno's conversation reveals a more ambivalent attitude about the implications of the Incident.

(Mogi Masao. *Yokomitsu Riichi no hyôgen sekai: Nihon no shôsetsu*. (Tokyo: Banseisha, 1995), p. 10). Mogi has also noted that Yokomitsu apparently planned to continue the narrative after the Japanese surrender in 1945, with Kuji becoming the protagonist instead of Yashiro. See Mogi Masao. *Yokomitsu Riichi no hyôgen sekai: Nihon no shôsetsu*. Tokyo: Banseisha, 1995), pp. 69-70.

[11] *Ryoshū* begins with the three main characters, Yashiro, Kuji and Chizuko, arriving in Marseilles. The year must be 1935, for a fellow Japanese mentions to Yashiro that the Yugoslavian Emperor was assassinated just "last year." This is a clear allusion to the October 9, 1934 killing of Yugoslavia's Alexander I. Near the end of the story, Yashiro reads in the newspaper that tensions have escalated between Japan and China. He remembers that a year earlier, Chiang Kai Shek was kidnapped in Xian. That incident took place in December 1936, so the reader knows that the narrative present at the end of the novel must be 1937.

Contrasting the labor strife in Paris with the 2/26 Incident in Tokyo, Kuji senses that France is becoming more leftist while Japan is becoming more rightist. He wonders aloud if there is any neutral territory—or "middle ground" (*chūkan*)—for knowledge (*chishiki*) left in the world, or if all knowledge has been politicized. Tōno responds that the binary between leftist and rightist knowledge is itself artificial and misleading, and that he therefore does not identify with either ideological position. Kuji then asks Tōno if resisting the political left *and* right makes him a liberal (*jiyūshugisha*), to which Tōno responds:

> I sometimes use abstract nouns from abroad for analysis, but I go to great lengths to avoid using them to describe matters related to human life and psychology. They seem more often than not to just confuse the matter. You seem to think that the concept of knowledge cannot exist except through abstract foreign-produced nouns, but as I think I once told you, I think of that as a simplistic notion of knowledge. […]. Left, right—those really aren't what's at issue.[12]

Kuji's attempt to identify individuals within stable political categories strikes Tōno as a superficial schematization. A poet at heart, Tōno distrusts the "abstract," "foreign-made" jargon that Kuji's pretentiously overuses because such language threatens to homogenize the plurality of "human life and psychology." A similar problem arose in the writings of Tanizaki and Yamada, who sought to revive classical language in order to combat a modern language that they, too, thought was full of "abstract jargon." The difference is that in Yokomitsu's novel, the cure for abstract jargon is not the restoration of ancient language, but rather the production of a poetry of the present. In this light, the broader implication of Tōno's comment is that he yearns to produce his own mode of identification outside of national history and ideological affiliation, in a language of his own contemporary idiom.

The conversation between Kuji and Tōno also points to how *Ryoshū* constructs a sense of narrative indeterminacy in its account of what Mary Favret would call "war at a distance." Both characters have lived their whole lives with war at a distance, for the Japanese empire is older than they are, and the outburst of military violence in Tokyo during the 2/26 incident that they discuss in Paris is only the most recent flicker of distant conflict to appear in the background of their daily lives. Favret has argued that when the experience of war violence flits through imaginations and conversations, newspapers and broadcasts far removed from the live action of the battlefield, even the prosaic details of otherwise uninterrupted daily lives become embedded in a peculiar sort of "war*time*." Favret has noted that the feeling of knowing some details about war but not all, of wondering when the warfare will end and how, generates a feeling of "war*time*" as a kind of temporal indeterminacy, or as Favret puts it, "a *sense* of time that, caught in the most unsettled sort of present, without knowledge of its outcome, cannot know its own borders. It indicates a dislocation of the bounded terrain usually associated with war, and the extension of war into a realm without clear limits."[13] Favret has claimed that in literary narratives of war at a distance, historical time takes shape in the feelings of indeterminate possibility and peril—such as angst, desire, anticipation and fear—rather than within a regular chronological

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[12] Yokomitsu Riichi, *Teihon Yokomitsu Riichi zenshū* (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 1981-87), vol. 8, pp. 157-58.

[13] Favret, Mary A. *War at a Distance: Romanticism and the Making of Modern Wartime* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), p. 18.

progression toward a stable endpoint. Her larger claim is that narrating war at a distance in literary terms provides a structure for feeling the contingencies of past presents that might otherwise appear to be bounded by the foregone conclusions of history: "If we take wartime less as an object of cognition bounded by dates—a period—and more as an affecting experience which resonates beyond the here and now, then wartime literature becomes an attempt to trace and give shape to such affect, to register its wayward power."[14]

Although the masternarrative of *Ryoshū* seems to trace a straight line from Europe to Japan, and although its main characters, Yashiro and Kuji, seem to symbolize a straightforward confrontation between Japanese feeling and European reasoning, Favret's insights suggest that its deeper narrative structures might relate the novel to the tensions of the long 1930s in subtler terms. Several scenes in *Ryoshū* suggest that one of the ways that it traces the "wayward power" of wartime's "affecting experience" is by describing characters' encounters with cultural objects in a time of world historical cataclysm. In these moments of aesthetic engagement, the tensions of global politics collide with the seemingly apolitical appeals of painting, architecture and sculpture, and the subject positions of leftist and rightist, Asian and European, melt into a kind of catharsis that exceeds nominal identifications. As characters living through the political conflicts of the mid-1930s encounter artworks that seem to have no apparent stake in those conflicts, *Ryoshū* traces the undulations of a cosmopolitan sensibility within the contingent temporality of war*time*. This cosmopolitan sensibility provides a structure through which to think and feel the indeterminacy of the long 1930s "as an affecting experience" that extends beyond the linearity of chronological time—and which therefore cannot be understood in relation to "an object of cognition bounded by dates---a period [.]"

One prominent example of this unfolds in the course of a narrative sequence that moves from Yashiro's arrival in France at the beginning of the novel to his visit to the Tyrol mountains partway through his sojourn abroad. His first encounter with European art upon arriving in Marseilles is one of the most jarring scenes in the novel. Glimpsing a sculpture of Christ's corpse, Yashiro is shocked by the verisimilitude of the gruesome image, and specifically with the "real sensation" of a dead body (*jitsubutsu sono mama no kankaku*) that it produces. His shock, though, leads him to a strange realization:

> Even in the culture of this country [France], there was once such a barbarous age, Yashiro thought. This barbarism, moreover, came from people's sense that unless things were portrayed with minute detail and absolute clarity, the senses (*kankaku*) would remain unstimulated. Such was the psychology of realism from which this civilization was no doubt born and raised. What has been hidden is right here. Such were Yashiro's thoughts as he walked around the bloody sculpture of Christ. As he did so, he began to feel a vague understanding about why Christ—with his emaciated body, his closed eyes—had to be killed.
>
> 'Realism killed Christ,' Yashiro thought as he left the building, sensing that he had just glimpsed one of the secrets of Europe. Chizuko and Kuji were just outside, gazing at a peninsula in the distance bathed in bright sunlight, swept by the wind. It was the actual scene that he had seen so many times in the paintings of Cézanne while he was in Japan. The actual peninsula that had been

[14] Favret, Mary A. *War at a Distance: Romanticism and the Making of Modern Wartime* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), p. 11.

> pursued relentlessly in colored paints—the actual thing that had thereafter established the conceptualization of painting—was right there.[15]

This scene is organized as an amalgamation of seemingly unrelated images (Christ's gruesome corpse, the placid French landscape) and inexplicable epiphanies ("Realism killed Christ," "glimpsing one of the secrets of Europe"). The disjointed style of the passage evokes (without explaining) the cognitive tension that results from Yashiro's confrontation with an alienating representational scheme. For Yashiro, that is, the "psychology of realism" amounts to an almost pathological drive for clarity and need for transparent explication. His horrified response to the "realistic" sculpture of Christ's corpse, then, reveals that he views the transfiguring of reality into artistic "realism" to be the sanction of grotesque secularizations that denature emotional experience. Miki argued that logos should confess pathos; for Yashiro, however, the sculpture of Christ's corpse does not "confess" pathos, but rather suffocates it: realism "killed Christ" by reducing the sensation of divine transcendence to an explicit, abject image.

Leaving the sculpture of Christ's corpse for a glimpse of the French landscape, Yashiro would seem to move from disillusionment with "realism" to a direct engagement with "reality itself"; yet, even as he gazes out, he cannot dissociate the actual scenery before his eyes (*jitsubutsu*) from is its representational conceptualization (*kannenka*) in Cézanne's painting. In other words, Yashiro recognizes that Cézanne's paintings provide the only visual grammar by which he can access the scene before him. From one perspective, this would seem to evoke aspects of Miki's understanding of how aesthetic culture provides the visual and verbal grammar by which the human imagination renders its environment legible. In this sense, Yashiro's encounter with the French landscape becomes an aesthetic experience as he envisions the environment as if it were a Cézanne painting. The other side of this coin, though, is that the French landscape has been packaged for Yashiro's visual consumption in advance, which reduces his subjective experience with its actuality to a mere confirmation of an already familiar way of seeing. In the same way that Yashiro believed that realism had denatured Christ's transcendence, he also notices that Cézanne's paintings saturate his visual imagination, providing a ready-made lens through which he filters his first experience with the French countryside. In this sense, Yashiro's experience in Marseilles moves closer to a kind of aesthetic alienation that results from his awareness that his consciousness and vision are saturated by a logos that does not confess pathos, but which, rather, alienates him from it.

Read in isolation, this scene might suggest that Yashiro had been corrupted by a specifically European aesthetic culture. Yet, his later trip to Tyrol provides a companion scene suggesting that the root of Yashiro's aesthetic alienation lies less in his purported estrangement from Japanese "cultural authenticity," and more in his self-awareness that the drive for clarity and explication obstructs human feeling. Far from longing for a native ethnic collective or cultural familiarity, Yashiro first becomes excited about his trip to Tyrol by the prospect of abandoning his fellow Japanese and his native language:

> This trip was the first time that Yashiro had completely left the company of his fellow Japanese and been alone since he departed Tokyo. In this region [Tyrol], the language Yashiro knew would be practically useless. Yashiro fully imbibed

[15] Yokomitsu Riichi, *Teihon Yokomitsu Riichi zenshū* (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 1981-87), vol. 8, pp. 25-26.

> the pleasure of true solitude, never having realized what a breathless joy it could be to glimpse not a single Japanese face nor be able to use language at all. Could there really be such pleasures in the world? Every time he looked out of the train window, he felt his heart brighten as if it were playing a flute. It was as if his body were continually being washed by pure water.[16]

Leaving behind language and the society of those who use it becomes a symbolic ablution for Yashiro in this scene. In his solitude, the abstraction of reality into "realism" or into Cézanne's conceptualized visual grammar no longer restricts his subjective experience to the categories of a preformed, explanatory logos. Rather, he rejoices at the prospect of accessing a feeling for which he knows no interpretive grammar.

Unlike Yashiro's life in Paris—which is punctuated by monotonous disputes with Kuji and a pervasive sense of self-estrangement—his trip to Tyrol unfolds within an enchanted land of immediate sensory experience. After Chizuko joins him there, they travel together into the mountains and prepare to spend the night in a small chalet. As the sun goes down, they glimpse a herder and his flock of sheep pass through a meadow below:

> Yashiro felt his chest turn cold and empty. The glimmer of sunset glistened off the mountain peaks. Below, the sound of the ringing bells of the sheep mixed together, echoing off the valley walls, doubling in force, rising up like a swarm of mosquitoes swirling through the air. […].
>
> "ruku ruku ruku ruku, ru ru ru ru ru ru—ruku ruku ruku ruku, ru ru ru ru ru ru—"
>
> "It's like I'm seeing God," Chizuko said quietly and looked down below absent-mindedly.[17]

Sensory experience becomes religious transcendence for Chizuko in this scene in a way that sharply contrasts with Yashiro's aesthetic alienation in Marseilles. Unlike the explanatory realism that Yashiro thought "killed Christ," the literary logic of this passage emphasizes the inexplicability of Chizuko's religious ecstasy. Recalling Yokomitsu's expository writing in praise of narrative illogicality ("the boat wanted water"), this passage leaves unstated the calculus by which the sound of the sheep's bells becomes Chizuko's vision of God. What the passage emphasizes instead is the amplification of sounds without semantic content ("ruku," "ruru"), sensory satisfaction and a corresponding intellectual void of "absent-mindedness" (*bon'yari hōshin*). By subordinating rational clarity to the immediacy of the senses, the literary logic of Yokomitsu's writing becomes the antidote to the logical transparency sanctioned by the "psychology of realism."

After Chizuko and Yashiro watch the sheep pass through the meadow below, finally vanishing from sight, "[t]hey then looked at each other for the first time, but neither said

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[16] Yokomitsu Riichi, *Teihon Yokomitsu Riichi zenshū* (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 1981-87), vol. 8, p. 123.

[17] Yokomitsu Riichi, *Teihon Yokomitsu Riichi zenshū* (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 1981-87), vol. 8, p. 147.

anything. In the vacant pasture below, darkness flowed in place of the sheep."[18] Unlike Chizuko's subjective transformation of the enveloping sound of the sheep's bells into a vision of God, the image of darkness flowing where the sheep once roamed is not filtered through any subjective perspective; rather, it is declared by the narrator as objective truth. Whether or not Yashiro or Chizuko sees it, the narrative emphasizes how an inexplicable flowing darkness becomes a sensory inversion of the now-absent white stream of sheep. By abandoning any impulse to explain through cause-and-effect logic, the image of an uncommented upon "flowing darkness" betrays a narrative preoccupation with sensory experience as an alternative to rational intellect. Unlike the monologic concepts of Cézanne's paintings that preformed Yashiro's vision in Marseilles, the senses become in Tyrol a middle ground wherein subjective experience and objective reality relate to one another dialogically.

Comparing Yashiro's aesthetic alienation in Marseilles with his and Chizuko's transcendent sensory experience in Tyrol further suggests that a nationalistic notion of "cultural authenticity" is not the highest aesthetic virtue in *Ryoshū*. Although "return to Japan" historiography often links a yearning for unmediated affective experience through communion with native aesthetic culture to a nationalistic cultural politics, Yashiro's and Chizuko's trip to Tyrol reveals the possibility of catharsis unrelated to the categories of national culture. Chizuko's inexplicable epiphany and Yashiro's relief after abandoning his native language suggest a desire to set aside nationality and ideology as units of identification. In their place, the Tyrol scene gives literary form to the cosmopolitan sensibility that guides Yokomitsu's and Miki's expository writings on language, which aimed to transcend the particularities of national cultural forms in order to access the inexplicable and distinctly non-national pathos of sensory experience (*kankaku*).

Yet, although the Tyrol scene exceeds the interpretive rubrics of cultural nationalism, this is not to say that is politically innocent. To the contrary, it could be counted among the many "fascist moments" that Alan Tansman has identified in the literary record of 1930s Japan.[19] Tansman has claimed that the most dangerous politics of interwar Japan often articulated themselves in the most rarified literary writing of the time, including in particular texts that lack any overtly political orientation or argument. For Tansman, in fact, it is precisely the seemingly apolitical aspect of finely wrought literary texts that allows them to be felt as merely aesthetic, and therefore to make their insidious appeals with the alibi of artistic innocence. In this light, the Tyrol scene may not be nationalistic, but its depiction of religious transcendence in the form of aesthetic epiphany, and its merging of an individual subjectivity with an expansive feeling of sublime beauty, all recall with the appeals of the fascist aesthetic that Tansman has argued overflowed from the literary prose of this period. As discussed below, later scenes in the novel further suggest that a fascistic cultural politics lurks in the cosmopolitanism of *Ryoshū*.

Within the broader narrative of *Ryoshū*, Yashiro's transcendent experience in Tyrol concludes a plotline moving from aesthetic alienation to catharsis that began with his repudiation of Cézanne's landscapes in Marseilles. This narrative sequence is balanced by another sequence that features Kuji's fixation on the recuperative powers of aesthetic representation and experience: whereas Yashiro is blinded by Cézanne's "conceptualization" of vision, Kuji is

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[18] Yokomitsu Riichi, *Teihon Yokomitsu Riichi zenshū* (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 1981-87), vol. 8, p. 148.

[19] See Alan Tansman. *The Aesthetics of Japanese Fascism*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009).

drawn to the style and substance of Cézanne's landscapes. In fact, the scene in which Kuji visits an exhibit of Cézanne's paintings with Makiko, another Japanese expatriate visiting Paris, is structured around his complex assimilation of Cézanne's vision. At the exhibit, Kuji first stands in the middle of the gallery and scans the pictures on the wall in one circular motion before circulating around the gallery himself to view them one by one. Through his circular viewing, the framed paintings become like the still frames of a film reel run through a projector: instead of remaining isolated images unrelated to one another, Yashiro's circular scanning motion blends them into a seamless composite of Cézanne's painterly vision:

> Not one of the paintings interrupted the development of the precise power of the brush in Cezanne's early works. The lushly growing leaves and branches of Cezanne's deepening realism (*shajitsu*) appeared one after the other on the walls, appearing as a sharply defined, wasteless beauty that extended as far as Makiko's figure clad in black standing before the paintings.[20]

Kuji's filmic blending of Cézanne's paintings into a single "sharply defined, wasteless beauty" produces a totalized form of vision that overcomes him, as if he were being engulfed by "lushly growing leaves and branches." As this suggests, Kuji does not passively appreciate the form of vision that is represented in Cézanne's painting; rather, he assimilates it and reproduces it as his own vision of reality.

Yashiro despaired in Marseilles that he could not view the French landscape for himself because his imagination had become saturated with the visual grammar of Cézanne's paintings, but Kuji, by contrast, feels reformed after assimilating a way of seeing from the Cézanne exhibit. In fact, Kuji reveals that viewing Cézanne's paintings marks a sort of ablution for him:

> Kuji whispered to Chizuko as they viewed the paintings: "The most mundane things—that's what Cézanne did. No one else could do it, so it was novel (*okashi na mono*)." As he spoke, Kuji realized that his own strange mind had become incapable of taking the absolutely mundane, common aspects of daily life and thinking them through just as they were (*sono mama*) in an uncomplicated way. He realized that from time to time, he needed to correct his mind by looking at these sorts of paintings—they allowed him to straighten out his thinking when his mind in one way or another distorted reality (*jujitsu no tadashisa*).
>
> "I like these paintings because they don't cause confusion. If it's fruit, it's just painted in a way that makes you want to grab it and eat it. Or in that painting of the old man—it's strange because you almost want to tell a joke and get a laugh out of him. All the paintings are straightforward," [Kuji said.][21]

Kuji's viewing of the paintings recalls Miki's notion of artistic expression as a form of techné that produces actual human cognition, vision and imagination. The paintings dramatize the work that art does by transcribing a kind of vision in Kuji's imagination, giving form to the visual

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[20] Yokomitsu Riichi, *Teihon Yokomitsu Riichi zenshū* (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 1981-87), vol. 8, pp. 378-79.
[21] Yokomitsu Riichi, *Teihon Yokomitsu Riichi zenshū* (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 1981-87), vol. 8, p. 379.

grammar by which Kuji's world becomes legible. As Kuji sees the "absolutely mundane, common aspects of daily life" in an "uncomplicated" (*futsū*) way, Cézanne's paintings provide a meaningful logos that replaces the pretentious, schematic jargon that Kuji used in his discussion of the 2/26 Incident with Tōno.

As Yashiro's and Kuji's experiences alternately condemn and confirm Cézanne's aesthetic vision, they disrupt any linear narrative momentum and suggest instead a preoccupation with coeval experiences and co-present sensibilities. This planar (as opposed to linear) dynamic of the narrative has prompted Mogi Masao to read the entire novel as a "mandala of modernity" (*kindaiteki na mandara*) that maps the oppositional forces of East and West, religion and science, rationality and irrationality within a contemporaneous cultural field of coeval (rather than coterminous) phenomena. For Mogi, the crux of the novel is a "mysterious harmony" (*reimyō na chōwa*) that owes to the shared condition of Europe and Japan in the 1930s: he argues that Yokomitsu's mandala of modernity transcends the strictures of national culture and the parochialism of nationalist politics by continuously merging the native and the universal, secular aesthetics and religious faith, and Anglo-European and Asian cultural canons.[22]

Mogi's reading of the novel as a series of "mysterious" (*reimyō*) syntheses by which otherwise oppositional forms of thinking and feeling melt into one another suggests a way of interpreting some of the more confusing convergences that appear in the novel. When Tōno, Kuji and others visit the Notre Dame Cathedral, for example, Tōno points out how its architecture shares a representational logic with haiku. Approaching the grand structure, Tōno says to Kuji, "The more I look at this building, the more it comes to resemble haiku. What a strange sight." Kuji responds flippantly, "Could this be the sound of water from a fog jumping in?" Tōno plays on Kuji's allusion to Matsuo Bashō's (1644-1694) famous haiku, responding "It's the sound of air (*sora no oto*)."[23] Paradoxically, Tōno's comments suggest that the most striking feature of the imposing edifice of the Notre Dame Cathedral is its empty space, and the "sound of air" that resonates within it. For him, the material edifice of the cathedral produces an ethereal sensation—"the sound of air"—reminiscent of the delicate effects of formulaic language in haiku.

When Kuji asks Tōno to explain the relationship between haiku and the architecture of the Notre Dame Cathedral, his response emphasizes the power of both architecture and poetry to mediate between subjective experience (*kokoro*; pathos) and the objective world (*mono*; logos):

> "I already told you about the spirit of Notre Dame. The sprit of haiku is similar. That is, the object of this architecture is air while the object of haiku is the seasons. By 'the seasons,' though, I don't mean spring, summer, fall and winter. I mean the force of nature (*shizen no setsuri*) that puts them in motion. I'm talking about a principle for unifying the thing and the heart (*mono to kokoro*). I suppose you could call it the system of the spirit searching for the Gods. In this, there is no reason for knowledge to be anything but abstract. Since it represents a

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[22] Mogi Masao, *Yokomitsu Riichi no hyōgen sekai: Nihon no shōsetsu*. (Tokyo: Benseisha, 1995). The main points of Mogi's argument appear several times, such as on pages 13-14, for example.

[23] Yokomitsu Riichi, *Teihon Yokomitsu Riichi zenshū* (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 1981-87), vol. 8, p. 309. The Bashō poem alluded to is "Ancient pond/frog jumps in/sound of water." (furuike ya/kawazu tobikomu/mizu no oto).

tradition, haiku may direct the heart toward concrete objects in nature such as flowers, birds, the wind or the moon. Yet, separate from its close examination of these concrete objects, the spirit of haiku also has an objective analytic power (*bunsekiryoku*) and power to synthesize (*sōgōryoku*). In this way, the lyric (*jojō*)—the beauty of delighted expression that transcends science—is for the first time born."[24]

When Bashō's haiku provides the grammar to read the *enerugi* of Cathedral architecture, *Ryoshū* alludes to the shared sentiment (*kansei*) binding Europe and Japan that Okamoto remembered Yokomitsu finding during his sojourn to France. In the same spirit, Mogi's reading of the novel as a mandala of modernity would suggest that Tōno's disquisition identifies one node within a matrix of cosmopolitan confluences. In this light, expositions like Tōno's at the Cathedral of Notre Dame can be read as parts of a larger project that develops over the lengthy course of the novel to understand Europe and Japan within the contemporaneous cultural substrate of the long 1930s. By thinking and feeling beyond the canons of national culture, Tōno communes with a flowing pathos that is confessed by the equally affecting logos of Bashō's haiku and Cathedral architecture.

Yashiro returns to Japan in the latter half of the novel, at the beginning of Part III. It is late summer 1936: his train from Berlin has traversed Siberia and finally approaches the Manchurian border, which he recognizes as the frontier gateway to his homeland.[25] Serialization of Part III began in 1942; parts IV and V subsequently appeared by 1945, and what would be the last installment of *Ryoshū* appeared as a stand-alone short story titled "Meibin" ("Plum Vase") in 1946. The publishing schedule of the latter half of *Ryoshū*, then, ranges from a moment when Japanese imperial influence was at its apex around 1942, to a moment when the tables of imperial domination had been turned and Japan found itself under American occupation at the dawn of the Cold War in 1946. With that said, it must not be forgotten that the narrative that emerges in Parts III, IV, V and "Meibin" deals only with events set in 1936 and 1937.

As the narrative of *Ryoshū* unfolds, then, it treats the mid-1930s from an ever greater historical remove: installments in the latter half of the novel that ponder the possibility of conflict between China and Japan from the safety of Yashiro's largely uninterrupted daily life, for example, were in fact serialized as Yokomitsu lived through the cataclysmic reality of the Pacific War and the collapse of the Japanese empire. In this light, part of the narrative work that the latter half of *Ryoshū* performs is keeping the lived experience of the storyteller from intruding into the imaginations of the storydwellers. Michael André Bernstein has pointed out that novelist Robert Musil faced much the same narrative conundrum in his novel *The Man Without Qualities* (1930-1943), a narrative set in the moments just before the outbreak of World War I. Bernstein lauds Musil's novel as a model of multidirectional narrative because it holds in

[24] Yokomitsu Riichi, *Teihon Yokomitsu Riichi zenshū* (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 1981-87), vol. 8, pp. 312-13.

[25] Although Yokomitsu was dispatched to Europe in 1936 to cover the Berlin Olympics, the games are only obliquely referenced in the novel. Yashiro visits Berlin, but his experience there is not described in any detail. This is one reason to consider the author's own sojourn abroad to have been only a minor inspiration for his writing the novel: the centerpiece of Yokomitsu's own travels in Europe—the Nazi Olympics—hardly figures at all in *Ryoshū*.

balance a range of perceived possibilities within a historical temporality moving ever closer to cataclysm: *The Man Without Qualities* looks back on a moment seemingly destined for a sense-making endpoint (the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand and the subsequent chain of events that led to World War) and supplies it with a narrative structure that allows readers to feel a sense of historical contingency in a moment that more often appears to memory to be destined for the foregone conclusion of cataclysmic warfare.

The scene on Yashiro's railcar traveling through Siberia toward the Manchurian border at the beginning of Part III suggests that *Ryoshū* maintains a similar sense of historical indeterminacy as it describes a moment that Yokomitsu would have known, looking back, was on the cusp of catastrophic conflict. Alongside Yashiro in the railcar are a French antiques dealer traveling from Paris to Beijing, two Nazi officials going form Berlin to Tokyo, a Chinese young adult of around twenty years of age and a French woman—all of whom gather to banter amicably in the hallway outside Yashiro's room. An American newlywed couple is also aboard, but they keep to themselves.[26] The geopolitics of the mid-1930s figure in this scene, to be sure, but they are laminated by the prosaics of everyday life: the strengthening alliance between Germany and Japan explains why Nazi officials would be traveling to Tokyo in 1936, but global politics do not foreclose the possibility of friendly dialogue among Nazi Germans and a bourgeois Frenchman, just as the political tensions of East Asia do not intrude upon the American honeymooners locked in amorous seclusion. In this moment, on this railcar, *Ryoshū* does not deny history, but it does deny teleology by declining to assign characters static subject positions within an stable historical narrative, and by instead rendering the small details of everyday life in subtle strokes. In these sorts of moments, to borrow Bernstein's words, "we see enacted a drama in which history unfolds without an author or a script."[27]

After Yashiro returns to Tokyo, the rest of the narrative dwells primarily on his conflicted attempts to achieve some measure of emotional and spiritual well-being. This proves to be no simple task. Without any direction in life or articulated ambition, he spends much of his time idle, submerged in extended periods of pensive isolation. His mind is at times nurtured by the familiarity of home, but brief moments of catharsis appear only intermittently between much longer spells of formless desolation. War and world history flit through his mind, but they are not Yashiro's most pressing worries; he is more concerned with being condemned by the spirits of his long-dead ancestors, who were overcome centuries ago by a daimyo in Kyushu who had converted to Christianity and routed Yashiro's paternal relatives with guns obtained from European imperialists trading in the area. He fears that his ancestors will curse him for falling in love with Chizuko, a practicing Catholic whose faith in a foreign god aligns her in Yashiro's mind with the Europeans responsible for his own family's demise centuries ago. The existential crisis that ensues might well be regarded as the mainline narrative of the novel from at least the beginning of Part III onward.

Yashiro's self-consuming spiritual confusion spares the later half of the novel from seeming to teeter on the brink of world historical cataclysm by rooting the emotional economy of the narrative in an open-ended, borderless kind of angst. With only slight modifications, Bernstein's description of Musil's *The Man Without Qualities*, a novel that is set in the moments before World War I, might equally apply to the latter half of *Ryoshū*, which narrates the moment before the conflicts of the Pacific War: "The war is indisputably a pivotal turning point in world

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[26] Yokomitsu Riichi. *TYRZ*, ibid., vol. 8, p. 454.
[27] Bernstein, Michael André. *Foregone Conclusions*, ibid., p. 100.

history, but its historical magnitude gives it no retrospective authority in [the novel]. Indeed, [the] novel describe[s] a world in stasis or in a self-perpetuating muddle, rather than on the verge of disintegration."[28] The latter portion of *Ryoshū* might similarly be described as a mire of "self-perpetuating muddle": in it, the European and the Japanese, the scientific and the religious, and the ancient past and the modern present all collide in Yashrio's mind in ways that structure a narrative of muddle rather than of movement. Narrative momentum in this portion of *Ryoshū* more closely resembles a diffuse energy extending in several different directions at once than a linear force accelerating toward a sense-making endpoint.

The muddled narrative atmosphere in the latter half of the novel is largely the result of Yashiro's pensive ruminations on unexpected convergences between scientific knowledge and aesthetic experience, and between religious ritual and modern rationality. As a matrix of cultural phenomena coalesces in his mind, the novel evokes the fascination with synthesizing form and feeling, logos and pathos, that Miki's and Yokomitsu's essays described. In a conversation with Chizuko soon after they return to Japan, for example, Yashiro describes how even ancient Shinto rituals evinced a complex understanding of geometry:

> In the past, there were many Shinto shrines in Japan, what people today call *inshi*. The object of worship at these *inshi* strongly resembled geometry. It resembled the non-Euclidean geometry of spheres, not the Euclidian plane geometry of Greece—the object of worship was something more exalted than that. In fact, it was similar to what is at the core Einstein's theory of relativity.[29]

Although this passage does not account for the similarities between ancient Japanese religious rituals and geometry with any specificity, it does make clear that even Yoshiro rejects the binary of "European thinking" and "Asian feeling." For him, ancient Shinto rituals implied a scientificity that was not inassimilable to Einstein's famous formulation.

In later discussions, Yashiro elaborates on the intellectual implications of ancient Shinto rituals in greater detail. In a conversation with Chiuzko and her brother, for example, Yashiro is asked if geometry existed in ancient Japan, to which he responds:

> It did, since the object of worship at small shrines in the past was paper offerings (*heihaku*). These white paper offerings represented geometry insofar as they could be cut and cut again without limit, always falling, falling down. At the same time, this ritual was prayer for Japanese people. And so we see that the core thought of our nation is a belief in the beauty of the cosmos (*uchū*). Today we go on and on mindlessly about "The state! The state!" (*kokka, kokka*), but this is strange because it indicates that the cosmos that our ancestors thought of is now discussed in translation (*hon'yakugo de*) as the state. Take a look at *Kojiki* and you'll understand.[30]

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[28] Bernstein, Michael André. *Foregone Conclusions*, ibid. p. 104.
[29] Yokomitsu Riichi, *Teihon Yokomitsu Riichi zenshū* (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 1981-87), vol. 8, p. 553.
[30] Yokomitsu Riichi, *Teihon Yokomitsu Riichi zenshū* (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 1981-87), vol. 8, p. 605.

Yashiro's comments do little to explain how paper offerings at Shinto shrines resemble something "at the core of Einstein's theory of relativity." Yet, the above does reveal that he recognized that geometry played a central role in ancient religious practices, and that those practices engaged a "beauty of the cosmos" that exceeds the preeminent category of modern culture—the nation. Yashiro's comments register his skepticism about the state (*kokka*) becoming the hegemonic unit of cultural identity in modern times, suggesting his sense that the imagination of the ancients had been distorted by nationalist rhetoric of more recent times. By examining the geometric logic of ancient Shinto ritual, Yashiro recovers something of an ancient intelligence that merged religious ritual and rational thought, aesthetics and mathematics. In this way, Yashiro's understanding of premodern religious ritual undermines the supposed tension between the collective cultural imagination of the ancients and the scientific skepticism of modern man, and recalls instead Miki's writings on the culture of techné synthesis, a culture that is both ancient and modern, aesthetic and technological.

Other discussions late in *Ryoshū* also emphasize the mathematical genius of ancient Japanese. One of Yashiro's interlocutors late in the narrative is intrigued by the prospect of a mathematical examination of Japanese religious rituals, arguing that the Mobius strip with which mathematicians model the universe resembles the paper prayer strips offered at Shinto shrines (*heihaku*). He concludes: "I'll be sure to research the matter thoroughly, and yet—what a strange country this is, Japan!"[31] Contrary to what the "return to Japan" narrative would suggest, elation results in this scene from recognizing the hidden mathematical imagination of indigenous religious rituals, rather than finding in ancient culture a prelapsarian imagination untouched by reason. Other investigations of ancient Japanese aesthetic culture also lead to discoveries of a shrouded mathematical impulse. A trip to the famous Zen rock garden at Ryōanji in Kyoto near the end of the narrative, for example, centers less on the aesthetics of the garden than on how the calculations implicit in the arrangement of its rocks perfectly align with the geometry of modern garden design. This, in turn, prompts an intricate disquisition on how the medieval rock garden implies an awareness of the theoretical "law of excluded zero" avant la lettre.[32] These sorts of confluences suggest that to read the novel as narrating a stable transition from one sensibility to another would be to miss the point that its most important meditations on and evocations of aesthetic life revolve around convergences and syntheses, rather than binary oppositions.

But if *Ryoshū* is a narrative of the aesthetic energy that appealed to the cosmopolitan cultural imagination of the long 1930s, the novel also suggests that that energy carried the seeds of a dangerous, even fascistic politics to which the cosmopolitan imagination of the time was equally receptive. This becomes clear in one of the most troubling confluences of East and West, ancient and modern, that appears in the latter half of *Ryoshū*. In a conversation with Chizuko, Yashiro compares the shape of the Nazi swastika to the sound of *kotodama*, the magical words believed to be imbued with ritualistic efficacy that are often associated with the poetry of *Kojiki* (Record of Ancient Matters, 712) and *Man'yōshū* (The Collection of Ten Thousand Leaves, ca.

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[31] Yokomitsu Riichi, *Teihon Yokomitsu Riichi zenshū* (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 1981-87), vol. 9, p. 108.
[32] Yokomitsu Riichi, *Teihon Yokomitsu Riichi zenshū* (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 1981-87), vol. 9, pp. 247-256.

759).[33] Their conversation begins when Chizuko asks Yashiro if modern man will ever feel satisfaction (*kindaijin ga manzoku dekiru mono desuka ne*), to which Yashrio responds "No, there is no happiness (*kofuku*) worthy of the name 'satisfaction' for modern man." The problem, Yashiro explains, is that modern man lives in a moment of world history that that is riven by a profound schism. He says that in ancient times, Greek and Japanese civilizations developed as parallel cultural universes: Greek civilization was founded on the geometric form of the three pointed triangle, whereas Japanese civilization was founded on the three vowel sounds *i*, *u*, and *e*. If the forms of Greek geometry and the sounds of Japanese language could be merged, perhaps then, Yashiro wonders aloud, modern man would know satisfaction. He then concludes cryptically: "The form of the swastika (*gyaku manji*) on the Nazi flag resembles the basic form of Japanese *kotodama*. Whether or not the Germans realize that their flag is the geometric rendering of what is understood in Japan as an ebullient life force (*seimeiryoku to iu mono no hirogari*) I cannot say, and I suppose that the Nazis have their own reasons for using the symbol."[34]

Yashiro's brief comments on sound and symbol in the civilization histories of Europe and Japan render in more explicit terms the politics that lurk in the cosmopolitan confluences that appear throughout the novel. Some of these convergences appear to be innocent enough evocations of a modernist inclination to see connections among vastly disparate cultural phenomena; but in Yashiro's discussion of the Nazi swastika and *kotodama*, something more sinister comes to the fore. He suggests that an alliance of fascist regimes East and West will lead modern man (*kindaijin*) to a kind of otherwise inaccessible feeling of "satisfaction" by overcoming the binary oppositions that separate Europe and Japan, symbol and sound, image and word. He prophesies the blending of these and other categories of expression into a cathartic cultural whole, whose form and feeling he codes as part Swastika logos, part *kotodama* pathos. To be sure, this startling vision appears in a minor scene: it flits through a conversation and then recedes from view, overwritten by the prosaic concerns of daily life. But even if only faintly, Yashrio's cryptic comments suggest the possibility of a cultural community of the future in which modern man will learn the satisfaction that he and Chizuko experienced in the mountains of Tyrol by setting aside the particularities of national history and national language in order to commune with a formless pathos confessed by a universal logos. This was precisely what Miki

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[33] Gary Ebersole has noted that "[t]here were a variety of rituals in early Japan in which poetry played an important part, but all these rituals were based upon the more general blief in the magico-religious efficacy of special words. This belief is generally referred to in the Japanese scholarly literature as *kotodama shinkō*, the belief in the spirit power (*tama*) of words (*koto*)[.]. (Gary Ebersole. *Ritual Poetry and the Politics of Death in Early Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), p. 19; See also Ebersole, *Ritual*, ibid., pp. 19-23.).

More recently, Alan Tansman has read the writings of Nihon Roman-ha (Japan Romantic School) leader Yasuda Yojūrō (1910-1981) through the lens of *kotodama*: "*Kotodama* refers to the power language once possessed to transform the world; and of all Yasuda's works, 'Japanese Bridges' [*Nihon no hashi*, 1936] resonated most powerfully with his readers as an act of *kotodama*, hovering at the border between art and life, rhetorically linking self-immolation and spiritual transformation." (Alan Tansman. *The Aesthetics of Japanese Fascism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), p. 61).

[34] Yokomitsu Riichi. *TYRZ*, ibid., vol. 8., p. 623.

and his Shōwa Kenkyūkai colleagues had in mind when they called for the establishment of a colonial culture grounded in a principle called "*kyōdōshugi*" (collectivism).

Miki's Writings for the Shōwa Kenkyūkai: A Companion to *Ryoshū*

At a Hibiya Park rally in the last installment of *Ryoshū*, the haiku poet Tōno gives a radio-broadcast speech called "The New Order" (*shin chitsujo*). The crux of his message is that the world is in tumult and that everyone lives with fear and anxiety (*urei*); the solution, he avers, is the creation of a "New Order" that will bring calm: "Literature, philosophy, religion, even a new kind of affection (*aijō*), should all move toward this goal."[35] Yokomitsu apparently had plans to continue the novel from here, with Yashiro dying in the war for empire and Kuji falling in love with and marrying Chizuko.[36] Aspects of the existing narrative would seem to confirm this trajectory: for example, Kuji's bizarre resurfacing in the final installments after having long been absent from the story hints that perhaps Yokomitsu had intended for him to become a central figure in a continuation of *Ryoshū* that was ultimately never written. Whatever the case, no further installments appeared before Yokomitsu died on December 30, 1947.[37]

The most distinctive aspect of the last installment is the title of Tōno's speech. The "New Order" that he discusses was in fact most notably theorized by Miki himself during his work with the Shōwa Kenkyūkai, a policy group in the service of Prime Minister Konoe Fumimaro.[38] One of the most important tasks of the Shōwa Kenkyūkai was to formulate an official policy for seizing the war with China (the "China Incident," or *shina jihen*, as it was known) as an opportunity to begin establishing an economically robust, culturally cohesive regional bloc in East Asia. Lewis Harrington has pointed out that the Shōwa Kenkyūkai described its *raison d'être* in 1936 as the development of a comprehensive plan for "mobilization of the experience and intelligence of the entire nation" in support of a transformation of East Asia from a group of atomized, nationalist units into a unified cultural collective: "[S]ince the cornerstone of this mobilization requires complete agreement on national intentions among all sections of Japan's society—among the bureaucrats, military, businessmen, scholars, and social critics, etc.—there is a pressing need for the formation of a research organization which will undertake the task of formulating a proper national policy. For this reason, we have organized the Shōwa Kenkyūkai."[39]

Harrington has interpreted the formation of the Shōwa Kenkyūkai as an opportunity for Miki to formulate explicit answers to the urgent philosophical questions articulated by his earlier essays about culture and politics in Japan, East Asia and the world at large. In this sense, the organization presented a golden opportunity: Miki had long believed that intellectuals (such as

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[35] Yokomitsu Riichi. *TYRZ*, ibid., vol. 9, p. 294.

[36] See Mogi Masao. *Yokomitsu Riichi no hyôgen sekai: Nihon no shôsetsu*. Tokyo: Banseisha, 1995), pp. 69-70.

[37] A revised (or perhaps censored) version of the novel was released soon after Yokomitsu's death. In it, several of the imperialist exhortations of the author's original were replaced with pacifist clichés.

[38] For an overview of Miki's writings for the Shōwa Kenkyūkai, and the historical background of its formation, see Lewis E. Harrington, "Miki Kiyoshi and the Shōwa Kenkyūkai: The Failure of World History," in *positions: east asia cultures critique*, 17:1 (Spring 2009), pp. 43-72.

[39] Translated and cited in Lewis E. Harrington, "Miki Kiyoshi and the Shōwa Kenkyūkai: The Failure of World History," in *positions: east asia cultures critique*, 17:1 (Spring 2009), p. 54.

himself) should guide the policy of the state, and he got his wish in 1938, when he joined the Shōwa Kenkyūkai as leader of its Culture Division.[40] Drawing on the narrative of a new colonial modernity that Miki and his colleagues soon developed, Konoe declared the beginning of "The New Order in Greater East Asia" (*dai tōa shin chitsujo*) on November 3, 1938. It would later be rebranded "The Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere" (*dai tōa kyōeiken*).

In this context, Tōno's speech, "The New Order," links the ending of a literary narrative about the culture and politics of the global 1930s to the beginning of a policy narrative of a cosmopolitan colonial future in East Asia. *Shin Nihon* appeared seven years earlier (in 1939) than did the last installment of Yokomitsu's novel (published in 1946), but in narrative time, the world historical moment that Miki and his colleagues described in *Shin Nihon* (composed in 1938) is roughly simultaneous with the temporality that Tōno engaged in his speech at the end of *Ryoshū* (set in 1937). Tōno and the Shōwa Kenkyūkai both responded to the China Incident, and both envisaged a "New Order" to be birthed from the conflict. The spaces of Asia implied by each, then, are coeval, and the temporalities of world history that they assume are simultaneous. For these reasons, *Shin Nihon* can be read as a kind of companion to *Ryoshū* that articulates in a non-literary register how the cosmopolitan cultural sensibilities that are given subtle poetic expression throughout the novel also moved in a more sinister direction in the prosaic policy narratives that Miki and others composed with official state sanction.

Miki guided the development of what would become the most important idea—as well as the intellectual legacy—of the Shōwa Kenkyūkai: *kyōdōtai*, or "the collective body," and its authorizing ideology, "*kyōdōshugi*" or "collectivism." In the Shōwa Kenkyūkai's manifestoes of imperial culture, *kyōdōtai* refers to a new kind of community in East Asia that would be bound not by nationality, language, or ethnicity, but rather by a shared sense of cooperation. The *kyōdōtai* collective would be an East Asian "bloc" of nations that cooperated with one another for economic development and regional security. Miki and his Shōwa Kenkyūkai colleagues argued that the prosperity of the collective would overcome the persistent class conflicts wrought

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[40] Although Miki collaborated with others in the Shōwa Kenkyūkai, and although the manifestoes on imperial culture that it produced were the work of many hands, it seems clear that Miki was the intellectual dynamo responsible for some of its most important ideas. Harrington has pointed out that Miki's sole-authored writings between 1935-1938 articulated many of the same ideas that also appear in the writings of the Culture Division, and the preface to Miki's sole-authored *magnum opus*, *Kōsōryoku no ronri*, composed at around the same time he was working with the Shōwa Kenkyūkai, introduces the work as a philosophy of a new Gemeinschaft cultural collectivism, a notion clearly compatible with the ideology of *kyōdōtai* made famous by the Shōwa Kenkyūkai. Although the Shōwa Kenkyūkai manifestoes of imperial culture were compiled by committee, then, they remain true to Miki's own philosophical project of the late 1930s, suggesting that his imagination was the guiding force behind them.

Lewis Harrington has pointed out that *Shin Nihon* was "translated within days into Chinese and appeared in various newspapers throughout East Asia, including the Shanghai *Da gong bao*." (Lewis Harrington. "Miki Kiyoshi and the Shōwa Kenkyūkai: The Failure of World History," *positions: east asia cultures critique* (Spring 2009, 17:1), p. 71 n. 35). Two other manifestoes soon followed: *Shin Nihon no shisō genri zokuhen: kyōdōshugi no tetsugakuteki kiso* (Principles of Thought for a New Japan Continued: The Philosophical Foundations of Collectivism) in September 1939, and by *Kyōdōshugi no keizai rinri* (The Economic Ethic of Collectivism) in 1940.

by capitalist modernity, and that its consensual social life would soothe the otherwise intractable antagonisms of nationalist rivalries. Most importantly, they believed that the cosmopolitan culture of the *kyōdōtai* collective would function as a radical form of synthesis that would eliminate the contradictions between traditional morality and modern progress, religious faith and secular rationality. In their minds, the appeals of culture would widen a consensual circle of colonial belonging across national boundaries, allowing for the emergence of a multiethnic community to coalesce around a cultural common sense that was both ancient and modern, scientific and aesthetic.

As this suggests, *Shin Nihon*, like *Ryoshū*, is a narrative of culture and politics in the long 1930s that clearly bears the imprint of the very cosmopolitan sensibilities that had earlier guided Miki's and Yokomitsu's dialogue on literary form and feeling, logos and pathos. It may be no coincidence, then, that both narratives also register the possibility that warfare could bring forth a new culture. Miki and his Shōwa Kenkyūkai colleagues, like Tōno at the end of *Ryoshū*, believed that war with China provided the perfect opportunity to orchestrate a movement toward the formation of a new East Asian collectivism. *Shin Nihon* states that "the mission (*shimei*) of Japan today is to work through the opportunity provided by the China Incident to construct a New Order in East Asia (*tōa no shinchitsujō*)," and at the end of *Ryoshū*, Tōno similarly seizes upon the China Incident as an open-ended opportunity for regional renovation, calling for "literature, philosophy and religion" to come together and catalyze the emergence of a "New Order."[41] In the manifestoes of the Shōwa Kenkyūkai, as in Yokomitsu's last novel, war is generative: *Shin Nihon* describes the China Incident as an event that was "in the process of giving birth" (*shōji tsutsuaru*) to great transformation in "politics, economics and culture," and a character in *Ryoshū* describes the crises of war more broadly as an opportunity to create beauty:

> "I believe that the purpose of war is not destruction, but rather the creation of beauty (*bi*). This does not mean just the beauty of fine art (*geijutsu no bi*), but also the beauty of politics, of economics, of religion, and also of the city, the countryside, of science and scholastics, law and publishing (*henshū*). In other words, war is for civilization (*bunmei*)."[42]

In this light, it would seem that the cosmopolitan confluences that figure prominently throughout *Ryoshū* emerged from the same seed that also produced the colonial fantasy that is expressed in *Shin Nihon*. If that is true, then the beauty of *Ryoshū* carries the unsavory politics of colonial aspirations such as *kyōdōtai*—a politics that several scholars have argued mixed aspects of cosmopolitan openness with the terror of fascism.

John Namjun Kim has observed that Miki's writings for the Shōwa Kenkyūkai attest to the fact that Japanese imperialism was fueled not only by jingoistic nationalists yearning to "return to Japan," but also gained traction in cosmopolitan fantasies of a new Asian culture, or what Kim calls "imperial cosmopolitanism."[43] Naoki Sakai has noted a similar tendency in the

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[41] Miki Kiyoshi, et al. "Shin Nihon no shisō genri," in *Miki Kiyoshi zenshū* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1966-1968), vol. 17, pp. 528-529.
[42] Yokomitsu Riichi. *TYRZ*, ibid., vol 8, p. 571.
[43] Kim, John Namjun. "The temporality of empire: The imperial cosmopolitanism of Miki Kiyoshi and Tanabe Hajime." In *Pan-Asianism in Modern Japanese History: Colonialism, regionalism and borders*, eds. Sven Saaler and J. Victor Koschmann, New York (Routledge, 2007), pp. 151-167.

writings of Tanabe Hajime—who was one of Miki's Kyoto School mentors—to conceive of imperial culture as a cosmopolitan form of consensual praxis rather than as a rigidly nationalistic form of dominance.[44] In Miki's thought and writing, the cosmopolitan openness that these scholars describe was always complicated by a paradoxical tendency toward fascistic closure, for although Miki often advocated for a humanistic and universalistic alternative to the rising tide of global fascisms in the 1930s, his own vision of a New Order based on *kyōdōtai* collectivism has also been called a fascistic response to the conundrums of capitalism and the fractures of East Asia. Writing at a time (1982) when few scholars were comfortable using the term "fascism" to describe the culture and politics of Japan in the 1930s, William Miles Fletcher provided a sustained analysis of the ways in which Miki and the Shōwa Kenkyūkai resembled their fascist counterparts in Europe.[45] More recently, Harootunian has described Miki's philosophical project as fascistic, concluding that Miki "often sought to distance himself from historic fascisms even as his analysis of Japan's modernity and his defense of imperialism led him to imagine an order that was just as fascistic, inasmuch as it sought to salvage capitalism and the folk which had been estranged from it in its original form as an organic community. A 'modern gemeinschaft' propelled by technological rationality and an an organicist folk cooperativeness was simply another name for fascist political totalism."[46]

These scholarly assessments suggest that a politics merging aspects of fascism and cosmopolitanism emerged in Miki's writings of the late 1930s as his cultural theory built on the universalistic rhetoric of "logos" and "pathos" collided with the more concrete reality of imperial praxis. The specter of what might be called "fascist cosmopolitanism" in the intellectual world of Japan's long 1930s comes to the fore most explicitly in Miki's writings for the Shōwa Kenkyūkai, but it also courses through Yokomitsu's *Ryoshū*, perhaps even more powerfully so. After all, the feeling of colonial belonging based on a cosmopolitan cultural common sense never materialized in the historical experience of East Asia in the terms set forth by the Shōwa Kenkyūkai—but it did in *Ryoshū*. Yokomitsu's narrative gave aesthetic form to the blending of thinking and feeling, and the yearning for catharsis that is both religious and secular, ancient and modern, that figured prominently in Miki's Shōwa Kenkyūkai expository writings. In this light, the novel might be read as supplying a moving literary logos to the form of colonial pathos that the declarative prose of *Shin Nihon* describes, but does not evoke. Read alongside Miki's writings on imperial culture, then, *Ryoshū* might be called a novel that conjures aspects of the fascist-cosmopolitan mind.

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[44] See Naoki Sakai. "Subject and Substratum: On Japanese Imperial Nationalism," in *Cultural Studies* (2000), vol. 8, 3-4, pp. 462-530.

[45] For example, in regards to Miki and some of his Shōwa Kenkyūkai colleagues, Fletcher has observed: "Fascism appealed to Rōyama, Ryū, and Miki because it presented solutions to serious economic and political problems of industrial society, addressing such concerns as Japan's national role in Asia, social peace, and economic justice. Moreover, fascism promised to break the deadlock of parliamentary democracy, raise productivity, and end economic strife. Rōyama, Ryū, and Miki believed that even the emotional aspect of fascism, the ethic of national service, could facilitate rational reforms of society." (William Miles Fletcher III. *The Search for a New Order: Intellectuals and Fascism in Prewar Japan* (Chapel Hill NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1982), pp. 156-157).

[46] Harootunian, Harry. *Overcome by Modernity*, ibid., pp. 398-399.

At the same time, though, it is also true that Yokomitsu's literary narrative relates to the culture and politics of the long 1930s differently than do the Shōwa Kenkyūkai's manifestoes of imperial culture, which are always regarded as failures. Harrington has pointed out that although "interpretations of the intentions of the Shōwa Kenkyūkai vary from reactionary to communist, and while evaluations of its ultimate goals vary from control of the military to creation of a fascistic mass party organization fully in support of totalitarian military rule, nearly all accounts agree that the group failed to accomplish its goals, whatever the particular interpreter feels those goals to have been."[47] The Shōwa Kenkyūkai posed questions about world history and East Asian modernity, and framed answers to those questions in explanatory rhetoric. It defined itself in utilitarian terms, with goals to achieve and policies to pursue. But the moment of perceived possibility in which the group might have realized its vision soon passed: the Japanese empire collapsed only six years after the Showa Kenkyūkai published its first manifesto of imperial culture, and the East Asian collectivist culture that the Showa Kenkyūkai described never materialized. In retrospect, then, the Japanese surrender in 1945 marks a meaningful endpiont to the condition of possibility that gave rise to the Showa Kenkyukai writings on imperial culture in the first place. Defeat absorbed their narratives of East Asian collectivism, rendering them failures.

The same cannot be said for *Ryoshū*, a novel that narrates the culture and politics of the long 1930s without ever encountering a totalized endpoint. The defeat did not signal the failure of Yokomtisu's literary aesthetic ambitions, for he continued writing the novel even after 1945, and released what turned out to be the last installment in 1946. The structure of the novel itself, furthermore, lacks a meaningful endpoint because its composition was truncated by the death of its author, which abruptly conferred an arbitrary narrative conclusion. These aspects of the publishing history of the novel suggest that *Ryoshu* might be understood as a kind of "endless" narrative of the long 1930s: they reveal that the novel did not fail or become impossible in 1945, but rather remained a viable and meaningful meditation on contemporary history even thereafter, and they make clear that its ending wields no explanatory power over the whole of the preceding narrative because it was conditioned only by the death of the author, and not by any teleological drive or ideological obsolescence that developed within the novel itself.

Perhaps this is why the ambiguities that develop over the course of hundreds of pages in *Ryoshū* can linger into what turned out to be the last lines of the narrative. The grand rhetorical gestures of Tōno's speech recall the stable declarative prose of the Showa Kenkyūkai's writings, but the last installment of *Ryoshū* also shows how even the seemingly inarguable utterances of imperialist rhetoricans diffused into vastly different sorts of imaginations. Some are moved by Tōno's words, for example, but Kuji finds his pretentious tone to be almost unbearable. More puzzling still, the last lines of the last installment bring the long novel to a close by noting that Tōno's wife had recently died, and that his speech about a "New Order" appealed to Makiko, apparently Tōno's new love interest, as a kind of love letter. In this light, the last installment dramatizes the unpredictable reception of even seemingly straightforward rhetoric in wartime Japan: although Tōno's message is clear enough as an argument, its meaning is mediated by imaginations that are colored by different sorts of moods. The self-perpetuating muddle that plays out over the course of the long novel therefore continues into its last lines, precluding the possibility that the narrative might arrive at any stable moment of closure or climax.

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[47] Harringon, Lewis. "Miki Kiyoshi and the Shōwa Kenkyūkai: The Failure of World History," *positions: east asia cultures critique* (Spring 2009, 17:1), p. 53.

As a literary text, then, *Ryoshū* bears the imprint of a cosmopolitan cultural imagination that also left its mark on *Shin Nihon*, but unlike Miki's policy writings, Yokomitsu's novel does not set out to answer questions in declarative prose, and neither does it articulate a plan of action that can succeed or fail. It makes no argument that can be proven true or false, and stakes no wager on the colonial future of East Asia. Rather, *Ryoshū* allows the events of world history and the feelings of aesthetic experience to form and flow together without ever arriving at any concrete moment of closure. In this sense, Yokomitsu's novel suggests an understanding of what I have been calling the long 1930s as a moment in which there was no hegemonic zeitgeist, no master narrative, and no telos of history destined for anything. The triumph of Yokomitsu's novel is that it gives literary form to a feeling of contingency in the midst of cataclysm, and that it evokes the pathos of cultural objects that overflowed the boundaries of national culture in a moment of nationalist rivalry. Many narratives died with the defeat in 1945, but *Ryoshū* was not one of them: it still provides a structure for thinking and feeling a range of possibilities and perils that mingled in the undulating indeterminacy of the long 1930s.

Epilogue:

A Literary Afterlife in Politics and Poetics

> The voices that sing the praises of Sōseki are all, in fact, no more than voices that push him deeper into the past.
>
> –Etō Jun, 1973[1]

In the Introduction, I framed this study in relation to Sōseki's frustrations about using language to talk about language, which he compared to "washing blood with blood." But I also noted that Sōseki overcame these frustrations, completing one of the most important literary theoretical works of modern Japan, *Bungakuron* (A Theory of Literature), in 1907. As I bring this study to a close, I would add that Sōseki apparently expressed the desire to compose a different sort of *bungakuron* near the end of his life. At a November 1916 meeting of his Mokuyōkai salon, so the story goes, he coined the aphorism *sokuten kyoshi* ("leave the self, follow the heavens"). In this context, he is believed to have mentioned that his last novel, *Meian* (Light and Dark, 1916), was conceived in the spirit of this cryptic exhortation, and that he wanted to lecture on a "new and true theory of literature" (*atarashii hontō no bungakuron*) that would follow from the *sokuten kyoshi* ethos:

> I have recently entered a kind of mental state that I would refer to as *sokuten kyoshi*, although there may well be others who would describe it with different words. At any rate, it means abandoning what I would ordinarily understand to be my self (*jibun*), the small self of the ego (*shōga no watakushi*), and surrendering myself to the commands of a larger, universal grand self (*daiga*). To say it this way does not fully do justice to it. In this state, the assertions, ideals and ideologies that would ordinarily seem sophisticated come to seem inconsequential, and things that would ordinarily seem to lack significance are endowed with an existence in their own being. From this perspective, all is one and can be viewed impartially, without prejudice or bias. My recent novel *Meian* [Light and Dark] was composed with this attitude, and in the near future, I would like to deliver a university lecture in this spirit on a new and true theory of literature. [2]

Sōseki is said to have uttered these words mere weeks before he died on December 9, 1916. Whether or not he really did is unknowable; after all, what we have in this citation are not the words of Sōseki himself—who never explained *sokuten kyoshi* in any expository detail—but of his disciple (*deshi*), Matsuoka Yuzuru, who transcribed what he remembered Sōseki having said that evening only after eighteen years had passed, in 1934. In this light, Matsuoka's narrative

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I would like to thank the estates of F.A. Hayek, Henry Regnery and Edwin McClellan for granting permission to quote from correspondence held in the Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University.

[1] Eto Jun. "Sōseki shinwa to 'sokuten kyoshi,'" in *Natsume Sōseki* (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1974), p. 10.

[2] Matsuoka Yuzuru. *Sōseki sensei* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1934), pp. 214-215.

might be regarded as a kind of modern analect: it conveys a statement believed to have been uttered by the moral master, but that survives only in the later record of a fervent follower who claims to have heard it first-hand.

Matsuoka's analect inflects a broader stream of Sōseki's reception that mixes the poetics of literary writing with the politics of cultural ideology, presenting in microcosm some of the central problems of this dissertation as a whole. My concern here is no so much with critiquing Sōseki's writings *per se*, and more with examining how a group of seemingly unrelated readers of his novels—ranging from his most faithful *deshi* to one of his most skeptical critics, and finally to a non-Japanese readership that encountered his writing in translation—variously sensed a politics in Sōseki's literary language. This analysis points to how some of the dialogues between the literary and intellectual realms that were examined in the four preceding chapters continued even after the Japanese military defeat in 1945. The latter part of the Epilogue extends the scope of this study into the 1950s, and examines how a group of intellectuals in America—men of roughly the same generation as the six figures examined in the three chapters of this study, but who had little knowledge of Japan—seem to have found in Sōseki's writing an evocation of the "conservative mind" that they were then conceptualizing in expository terms.

I begin with Sōseki's *deshi*, who wrote in the late 1910s-1930s that their Sensei's newspaper novels coded the teachings of a modern moral exemplar. To be sure, the writings of Sōseki's *deshi* represent only a minuscule portion of the novelist's mass readership, and few others have shared their single-minded insistence that Sōseki was a priestly paragon whose last action as a sentient being was to abandon the ego and achieve the ideal of *sokuten kyoshi*. But in 1936, Tosaka Jun suggested that the fervor of these moralizing *deshi* was only an extreme expression of a wider-spread tendency among more moderate readers to find a subtle confirmation of their own conservative morals in Sōseki's literary writings. According to Tosaka, a broader "Sōsekian culture" (*Sōseki bunka*) had made the conservative politics of classic liberalism palatable to a mainstream audience who never would have identified with Sōseki's fanatical disciples, but who nevertheless found in Sōseki's novels an affirmation of their own conservative sensibilities.

The dialogue between Tosaka and Sōseki's *deshi* provides an interpretive vocabulary for examining the reception of Edwin McClellan's 1957 translation of Sōseki's masterpiece *Kokoro* among a circle of conservatives in 1950s America. Read through the lens of Tosaka's critique of Sōsekian culture and the disciples' moralistic fervor, the reception of McClellan's translation can be understood as a kind of afterlife of the literary and intellectual culture of Japan's long 1930s. Like the six Japanese figures examined in the four preceding chapters, the intellectuals in McClellan's circle wrote extensively about how to heal the spirit of a modern world that they believed to be sick with a cultural disease. And as in the case of their Japanese counterparts, the men in McClellan's circle found in a literary text the aesthetic evocation of the political sensibilities articulated by their essays, for they seem to have read McClellan's literary translation of *Kokoro* as an artistic rendering of the "conservative mind" that they were then describing in expository terms. Bringing these strands together, this Epilogue examines how aspects of the literary and intellectual culture of Japan's long 1930s lingered into the 1950s, and beyond, assuming the form of a spectral afterlife carried forth in acts of reading and writing that are always contemporary, and that never end.

The Analects of Natsume Sōseki:

Broadly construed, analects are selected and collected fragments of narrative—often transcribed sayings and recorded anecdotes—that distill the insights of a cultural paragon or philosophical luminary. Analectic writing presumes a faith in the recorded words of the moral master rather than the cool detachment of scholarly skepticism, and it gives cover to the artifice of narrative transcription with appeals to the auratic authenticity of the exemplar's own speech. Analectic formulae often convey aphorisms that evoke rather than explain, avoiding lengthy narrative exposition and explicit argumentation in favor of cathartic moments of insight and epiphanic inspiration. In short, then, the realm of analectic writing is the inherently conservative realm of faith in a received narrative: analectic words are not recorded to be proven or falsified, but to be believed, and taken to heart.

Between the time of Sōseki's death in 1916 and roughly 1936, when Tosaka's critique appeared, Sōseki's *deshi* produced an analectic discourse that transformed their Sensei into the prophet of the moral precept *sokuten kyoshi*. Their fascination with the aphorism probably had little to do with any inarguable meaning that might be coaxed form the four-character compound. Rather, the mythology surrounding Sōseki and *sokuten kyoshi* more likely owed to its appearance as the sense-making endpoint that concluded the life narrative of the Sensei, and the unstated assumption that all of Sōseki's earlier writings had somehow led to this final utterance. In this sense, the attention paid to the *sokuten kyoshi* aphorism may well be disproportionate to its actual explanatory power, but this has to do not only with the predilections of the curiously fervent *deshi* that surrounded Sōseki, but also with the formal nature of narrative endpoints themselves, which as discussed in the Introduction to this study, can assume mythological proportions in other historical and biographical narratives, too, if they are understood to absorb a vast collection of antecedents.

Matsuoka's 1934 analect cited above may be one of the most familiar accounts of Sōseki's discussion of *sokuten kyoshi*, but in fact, it appeared much later than several others. Aihara Kazukuni has observed that records of the *sokuten kyoshi* tale go back as far as Kume Masao's diary excerpt dated November 2 1916, which appears in Kume's collected works (*zenshū*) under the title *Seikatsu to getijutsu to*.[3] Kume records that Akutagawa Ryūnosuke, Matsuoka, Akagi Kōhei, and an unnamed college student were with him the night that Sōseki held forth about *sokuten kyoshi*. He then describes the evening as follows:

> As usual, Sensei spoke of all sorts of matters, but lastly, he discussed with great sincerity an outlook on life (*jinseikan*) wrapped in religious connotations through which he had recently entered a state of enlightenment—a strange way to put it, I know. It is a view of life that encounters the totality of all things (*zen ni tassuru*) through an egoless art (*watakushi no nai geijutsu*) [.] In Zen it is called *zenjō*, the state of *sanmai*. Sensei's words were fragmentary, but it was clear enough what he was trying to say, even if it was somewhat hazy. […]. It was only very recently that Sensei had achieved this enlightenment, and for that reason, he had not had the chance to explain to anyone. At any rate, it was surprising to see Sensei tending toward religion. What was even more surprising was that he

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[3] Aihara Kazukuni. *Sōseki bungaku: Sono hyōgen to shisō* (Tokyo: Hanawa Shobō, 1980), p. 263.

mentioned his desire to lecture on a general theory of literature to be based on this worldview in the next year or two.[4]

Soon after Sōseki's death, several other analects emerged, many of which related to *Meian* since Sōseki apparently conveyed to his *deshi* that the novel was conceived in the spirit of *sokuten kyoshi*. Aihara has pointed out that in the first months of 1917, Akagi Kōhei discussed *sokuten kyoshi* in his book *Natsume Sōseki*, that Kume returned to the aphorism in his *Rinjūki*, and that Sōma Gyofū discussed *sokuten kyoshi* in his *Meian o yomu* (Reading *Light and Dark*). Aihara has observed that these analyses all suggest that the *sokuten kyoshi* analect had circulated widely by early 1917, mere months after Sōseki's death, and that by the time that Komiya Toyotaka's moralistic reading of *Meian* through the lens of *sokuten kyoshi* appeared in 1938, several versions of the analect had been in circulation for more than two decades.[5]

Probably the most famous writer to contribute to the *sokuten kyoshi* analects was Watsuji Tetsurō, a philosopher of culture who was part of Sōseki's circle, and who is rumored to have been the real-life model for Watakushi in *Kokoro*.[6] Watsuji composed an elegiac essay titled *Natsume Sōseki no tsuioku* (Remembering Natsume Sōseki) mere days after the novelist's death. In passages such as the following, he channels the *sokuten kyoshi* mythos surrounding Sōseki: "This is where the ascending way traveled by Sensei's character is to be found. His just and righteous convictions led him to abandon the ego, and his quest for transcendence led to his desire to follow the heavens."[7] Watsuji's description also portrays Sōseki as a *sokuten kyoshi* paragon who transcends human emotion (*kandō o chōetsu*), and who can intuitively judge the purity of others' intentions. These aspects of Watsuji's reminiscence recall Kume's diary entry that described Sōseki as having attained a kind of enlightenment (*gonyū shieta*) at the end of his life, and therefore orient his reminiscence on Sōseki squarely within a group of writings that aggrandized the novelist a priestly paragon of moral virtue.

As narrative, moreover, Watsuji's reminiscence merges with the analectic passages from the early portion of *Kokoro* ("Sensei to Watakushi"), in which Watakushi describes Sensei as a *hininjō* ("asympathetic," "unmoved") exemplar. The passage below, for example, portrays Sensei in terms that recall Watsuji's description of Sōseki himself as "a man who suffers because he feels too deeply the movements of others' hearts"[8]:

> [Sensei says to Watakushi:]: "You are like a man in a fever. When that fever passes, your enthusiasm will turn to disgust. Your present opinion of me makes me unhappy

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[4] Kume Masao, "Seikatsu to Geijutsu to: nikkishō," *Kume Masao zenshū* (Tokyo: Hon no Tomosha, 1993), vol. 13, p. 437.

[5] Aihara Kazukuni. *Sōseki bungaku: Sono hyōgen to shisō* (Tokyo: Hanawa Shobō, 1980), pp. 264-266.

[6] In correspondence with Robert E. Carter dated February 16, 1995, Watsuji's student Yuasa Yasuo mentions that anecdotes circulate suggesting that Watsuji was the model for Watakushi. See "Appendix: Correspondence with Yuasa Yasuo," in *Watsuji Tetsurō's* Rinrigaku, Yamamoto Seisaku and Robert E. Carter, trans. (Albany NY: State University of New York Press, 1996), pp. 315-316.

[7] Watsuji Tetsurō. *Watsuji Tetsurō zenshū* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1963), vol. 17, p. 92.

[8] Watsuji Tetsurō. *Watsuji Tetsurō zenshū* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1963), vol. 17, p. 89.

> enough. But when I think of the disillusionment that is to come, I feel even greater sorrow."
> [Watakushi responds]: "Do you think me so fickle? Do you find me so untrustworthy?"
> "I am simply sorry for you."
> "I deserve your sympathy but not your trust. Is that what you mean, Sensei?"
> He seemed vexed as he turned his face towards the garden. […]
> "It is not your in particular that I distrust, but the whole of humanity."
> […]
> "Then you have no trust in your wife either?"
> Sensei looked a little uneasy. He avoided giving a direct answer to my question.
> "I don't even trust myself. And not trusting myself, I can hardly trust others. There is nothing that I can do, except curse my own soul."
> "Surely, Sensei, you think too seriously about these things."
> "It is not a matter of what I think. It is what I have done that has led me to feel the way I do. At first, my own act shocked me. Then, I was terribly afraid."
> […]
> [Sensei:] "I bear with my loneliness now, in order to avoid greater loneliness I the years ahead. You see, loneliness is the price we have to pay for being born in this modern age, so full of freedom, independence, and our own egotistical selves."
>
> In response to Sensei, a man who had attained this sort of enlightened resignation, I did not know what to say.[9]

This passage is structured by the familiar formulae of analectic writing. Most prominently, it is a Sensei-*deshi* dialogue that deals with morality writ large, and leads to an aphorism ("You see, loneliness is the price we have to pay for being born in this modern age, so full of freedom, independence, and our own egotistical selves.") that distills an essential teaching of the moral master. Like other analects, too, this passage presents the words of the Sensei in direct quotations, even though they must have been transcribed by a *deshi* (Watakushi) from memory only after Sensei's death, and therefore reach the reader with all the distortions of reminiscence, bias and nostalgia. The end of Watakushi's analect, finally, reveals that he has recorded this dialogue as evidence of Sensei's enlightenment—"*kakugo o motteiru Sensei*"—which recalls Sōseki's own *deshi* describing their Sensei as having attained the spiritual state of *sokuten kyoshi* just before death: as Kume wrote just weeks before Sōseki's passed away, for example, "It was very recently that Sensei achieved this 'enlightenment' (*satori*)." All of this suggests that in the echo chamber of analectic writing, history easily becomes hagiography, and the ethos of a man can merge with the mythos of modernity. These were precisely the sorts of abstractions that Tosaka feared.

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[9] This citation is a slightly modified version of McClellan's translation of *Kokoro* (Natsume Sōseki. *Kokoro*, Edwin McClellan, trans. Washington D.C.: Regnery Publishing, Inc., 2000), pp. 29-30). The Japanese original appears in Natsume Sōseki. *Kokoro*, in *Sōseki zenshū* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1966), vol. 6, pp. 39-41. The only modification I have made to McClellan's translation is to rework the last sentence of the citation: 私はこういう覚悟を有っている先生に対して、云うべき言葉を知らなかった. In McClellan's translation, this line reads: "I could not think of anything to say."

Tosaka Jun: Enough Culture, Enough Sōseki

In 1974, Etō Jun argued that the *deshi*'s hagiographical discourse had had the corrosive effect of cheapening, if not obscuring altogether, the literary value of Sōseki's writing: "Reverence for a dead author breeds moderate feelings that corrupt the very feelings that his works communicate to us. In this regard, we must recall the idea that the past is not complete, and that the past has value precisely because it is not complete.[10] Etō went on to castigate the *deshi* for blindly worshipping Sōseki, and argued that the author should be understood first and foremost as a writer of literature, not as an ethical exemplar: "If there is greatness in Sōseki, it is not because he achieved enlightenment through *sokuten kyoshi*, even if it might have been because he was a particularly remarkable intellectual. Rather, it was because what Sōseki wrote was *literature*, and in that *literature*, the actuality of Japan (*Nihon no genjitsu*) was grasped with rarely seen acuity."[11] Nearly forty years before Etō's writing on the "myth of Sōseki" (*Sōseki shinwa*) appeared in 1974, Tosaka had advanced a similar sort of critique in "Gendai ni okeru Sōseki bunka," a short 1936 essay that is included in his larger work *Sekai no ikkan toshite no Nihon*. Etō's essay focused on what I have been calling the *deshi*'s analectic hagiography of Sōseki, and Tosaka's critique suggested that even a more moderate, mainstream audience found in Sōseki's novels an affirmation of their own conservative sensibilities.

In "Gendai ni okeru Sōseki bunka," Tosaka's begins by identifying Sōseki as one of the only true combinations of novelist, journalist, academic and critic in modern Japan. For Tosaka, Sōseki was both creative author (*sakka*) and evaluative critic (*hyōronka*), a man of art and scholar of society—and this was a laudable combination. But Tosaka also explains that his object of criticism is not really Sōseki himself, nor even Sōseki's writings: "My aim here is not to compose a study of Sōseki (*Sōsekiron*). Rather, I'd like to point to how we might be able to identify the inheritance and the development of something that might be called 'Sosekian Culture' (*Sōseki bunka*) within the cultural complexion of contemporary Japan."[12]

For Tosaka, "Sōseki bunka" is both an "inheritance" (*isan*) and a "development" (*hattatsu*), a cause and an effect, something that begets and something that is begotten. This is worth pausing over because it suggests that Tosaka viewed modern culture not so much through a linear narrative of evolution or progress toward ever-greater sophistication, but rather as a mechanism that conserves and reproduces the same sensibilities in different forms over the *longue durée*. In this sense, Tosaka's true object of analysis is the production and circulation of cultural capital: his critique focuses on the ways in which the agents of a cultural field—including primarily publishers and academics, in collusion with readers—had produced, sustained and ultimately naturalized the symbolic value of the sign of "Sōseki."

Tosaka's critique proceeds toward the larger claim that the sign of "Sōseki" carries currency in the conservative realm of culture (*bunka*), where it functions as the antidote to ideas (*shisō*). For Tosaka's purposes, "culture" refers to a set of received morals that define propriety and "good politics": it is a set of dictates that enforce sensibility, policing the boundaries of orthodox pleasure and authorized taste. In this context, it might be said that the man of culture

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[10] Etō Jun. "Sōseki shinwa to 'sokuten kyoshi,'" in *Natsume Sōseki* (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1974), pp. 10-11.

[11] Etō Jun. "Sōseki shinwa to 'sokuten kyoshi,'" in *Natsume Sōseki* (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1974), p. 16. Emphasis on *bungaku* (literature) in original.

[12] Tosaka Jun, "Gendai ni okeru 'Sōseki bunka,'" in *Tosaka Jun zenshū* (Tokyo: Keisō shobō, 1967), Vol 5, p. 112.

(*bunkajin*) plays a role roughly analogous to the priest described in Max Weber's *The Sociology of Religion*: he is as a credentialed speaker whose authority does not derive from anything inherent to his message or being, but is, rather, borrowed from the immense mass of symbolic capital accumulated by his authorizing institution. Priestly men of culture honor traditions and view society as part of a natural moral order. They trade in a circular economy of faith where symbols refer only to other symbols.

In contrast, ideas rupture the field delineated by culture. Tosaka argued that ideas "establish a new culture" (*atarashii bunka o sosetsu suru*), and for the purpose, they do not abide by the criteria (*shakudo*) and standards (*hyōjun*) of the existing culture (*kisei no bunka*), but rather initiate a new episteme that interrupts received wisdom and the existing regime of taste. Ideas are transformative and revolutionary; their bursting forth is not orderly but rather anarhcic: as Tosaka put it, "ideas can even have the quality of negating culture (*bunka no hitei*)."[13] To return to Weber's taxonomy, the man of ideas plays a role roughly analogous to that of the prophet: he is defined by an irresistible "charisma," and the power of his message owes not to any borrowed symbolic capital but to its autonomous and unprecedented insight. In a prosaic field full of priestly men of culture, the prophets of ideas are the authors of a poetry all their own.

Within this analytical framework, Tosaka argued that the sign of "Sōseki" appealed to priestly cultural tastes. As he put it:

> The gravity of Sōseki's reputation does not owe to the writer having birthed any new ideas, nor to his having initiated a new culture that vandalizes the old culture (*kyūbunka ni taisuru vandarizumu bunka*). Rather, the case of Sōseki has always represented the high-water mark of "culture" within the common sensical, permitted range of what "culture" can mean. For this reason, Sōseki is not so much an intellectual (*shisōka*) as a man of culture (*bunkajin*). He is not a critic of culture, but rather the King (*ōza*) of culture, or perhaps the very category of culture itself. Herein lies the greatness of Sōseki: the Sōseki that people of all sorts—from the learned to the ignorant—feel moved by and yearn to bask in the imminence of is not a critic of the content of culture, but rather the embodiment of the formal apex of culture itself.[14]

Chapter two pointed out that in Tosaka's thought, cultural "common sense" is a marked expression that often refers broadly to the unacknowledged values of cultural liberalism. In his most important work, *The Japanese Ideology* (1935), Tosaka claimed that liberalism formed the ideological bedrock of capitalist modernity worldwide: it was the ethos that sanctioned free market competition and private property accumulation, and which inevitably led to social inequality and class tension. He argued that liberalism saturated the social unconscious, functioning less like an overtly political ideology and more like an apolitical common sense, or even a kind of secular religion. For Tosaka, moreover, the truly nefarious aspect of liberalism was that it articulated an alibi for the capitalist excesses that it authorized. As discussed in the Introduction, Harry Harootunian has pointed out that one of Tosaka's most important insights

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[13] Tosaka Jun, "Gendai ni okeru 'Sōseki bunka,'" in *Tosaka Jun zenshū* (Tokyo: Keisō shobō, 1966-79), Vol 5, p. 113. *shisō* and *bunka* are emphasized in original.
[14] Tosaka Jun, "Gendai ni okeru 'Sōseki bunka,'" in *Tosaka Jun zenshū* (Tokyo: Keisō shobō, 1966-79), Vol 5, p. 113.

was that liberalism explained away the baleful effects of capitalism by trafficking in the illusory notion that society and culture are natural entities, idealized realms autonomous from the intrusions of scientific investigation and rational explication.[15] Harootunian has further observed that for Tosaka, the naturalization of the social and the historical led to the delusional belief that the auraticizied realm of culture would provide a surrogate for the freedoms that liberalism had foreclosed. In a world of inevitable conflict and strife, liberalism promised cultural progress and human freedom, even as it distributed the fruits of modernity unevenly, and therefore intensified the very social conflicts that it promised to resolve.

In this context, the catharsis of Sōseki's *deshi* seems less than innocent. Their fervent faith in a popular cultural icon reveals that as the reality of history and society are transformed into the mythology of culture, a mere man can be elevated to an ethical exemplar, novels can be read as scripture, and anecdotes can be believed as analects. In Tosaka's mind, furthermore, the industrial concomitant to the secular faith in Sōseki bunka pointed to how the bad politics of a liberal disposition reproduced itself: as Iwanami Shoten got rich of off endless reprints of Sōseki's novels, and as academics made careers out of pious commentary on Sōseki's texts, Tosaka sensed that a veritable Sōseki Industrial Complex emerged to quite lucrative effect. Its stock in trade was the commoditized cultural capital of the sign of "Sōseki," whose naturalized form articulated a seemingly apolitical credo of liberal taste and sensibility, and whose holy name promised a feeling of communion with other believers—that is, with other like-minded consumers. Tosaka's critique of Sōseki bunka, then, suggests that secular agents acting out of self-interest pimped the sign of "Sōseki," cashing in on a liberal endowment whose own morality had long since been cached out. As the priests of publishing and academe circulated the sacred symbol of a false prophet, the ever new forms of Sōseki bunka effectively inculcated the ever same politics of liberal conservatism.

At this juncture, the distinction between Sōseki the man and "Sōseki" the myth is worth recalling since Sōseki himself quit the priesthood, as it were, leaving the professoriate to become a humble newspaper novelist. In that capacity, he refused to accept Monbushō's attempt to confer a doctorate (*hakushi*) upon him, becoming, apparently, one of the first to ever decline the "honor." This suggests that Sōseki himself wished to avoid trading in the superficial currency of the scholastic bureaucracy, and to avoid lending credence to its spiritually vacant symbolic capital. Perhaps Tosaka would have counted this sort of sensibility among Sōseki's virtues: given the protections of scholarly safety and the privileges of professorial authority, Sōseki chose instead to be a *sakka* and a *hyōronka*—neither a priest nor a prophet, but a willfully uncredentialed man of art and scholar of society. But what Tosaka would have found no virtue in, had he lived to see it, would be Sōseki bunka gaining a foothold among conservatives in 1950s America—a group whose most deeply held convictions originated in the very canon of classic liberalism that he had tirelessly critiqued. In a context Tosaka never could have anticipated, his critique of Sōseki bunka as a function of publishers and academics found its clearest referent.

The Conservative *Kokoro* of 1950s America

Edwin McClellan translated *Kokoro* into English in the mid-1950s while he was a graduate student on the Committee on Social Thought at the University of Chicago. The

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[15] Harootunian, Harry. "The Postwar Critique of Fascism, and Tosaka Jun's Prewar Critique of Liberalism," in *The Journal of Pacific Asia* (1995), pp. 104-105.

translation was a companion to his 1957 dissertation, *An Introduction to Soseki, A Japanese Novelist*, the Preface to which contains the following:

> I have deliberately omitted to mention in the text the much quoted phrase, sokuten kyoshi ("the following of heaven and the denial of self"), which Soseki coined to express what may be called his philosophy of life. It is so personal a statement that nothing worthwhile can be said about it, except that it is perhaps an expression of his desire to view the vicissitudes of life with calm detachment. Such a statement, so nearly banal in itself, is meaningless unless we know the private experience that lies behind it.[16]

Although McClellan declined to discuss *sokuten kyoshi* as such, his intellectual circle in the 1950s was philosophically committed to some of the ideals that are coded by the aphorism—in particular, the ideal of living in accord with a moral and social order understood to be a natural entity (*sokuten*), and of abandoning the decadence of egotism (*kyoshi*). For after all, McClellan's graduate work—including his much-loved translation of *Kokoro*—was directed, funded, published and appreciated by some of the architects of postwar American conservatism, including historian Russell Kirk, economist Friedrich Hayek and publisher Henry Regnery.[17]

The politics of this circle were rooted in the classic liberal creed of free market economics, government non-intervention, and the belief that the social inequalities and class distinctions caused by capitalist competition were inevitable, just and natural. Their perspectives on the economy followed from a moral code rooted in respect for precedent and abhorrence of rapid change. In his 1953 classic, *The Conservative Mind*, Kirk defined conservatism as the "preservation of the ancient moral traditions of humanity. Conservatives respect the wisdom of their ancestors (…); they are dubious of wholesale alteration. They think society is a spiritual reality, possessing an eternal life but a delicate constitution: it cannot be scrapped and recast as if it were a machine."[18] As a novel in English translation, then, *Kokoro* emerged from a ground prepared by precisely the conservative politics and morality that Tosaka claimed had always animated Sōseki bunka.

In 1957, McClellan published his translation of *Kokoro* with Henry Regnery Company. It might have been possible to introduce Sōseki through a more mainstream outlet—such as New York publishing giant Alfred Knopf, which released Edward Seidensticker's translations of Tanizaki Jun'ichirō and Kawabata Yasunari at around the same time—but it seems that

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[16] McClellan, Edwin. "An Introduction to Natsume Soseki, a Japanese Novelist" (University of Chicago Dissertation, 1957), p. ii.

[17] It should be noted that the labels "conservative" and "conservatism" refer to the shared politics of McClellan's circle only in a broad sense, and that there are also important differences among these thinkers that these terms sometimes elide. For example, the Postscript to Hayek's *The Constitution of Liberty* (1960) is titled "Why I Am Not A Conservative," and draws a more nuanced distinction between "conservatism" and "liberalism."

Aida Hirotsugu has also written about McClellan, F.A. Hayek and Sōseki. See Aida Hirotsugu. "Sōseki, Haieku, Etō Jun: Kokoro no kizuna," in *Bungei Shunjū* (October 2008, 86:11), pp. 334-341.

[18] Kirk, Russell. *The Conservative Mind: From Burke to Santayana* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1953), p. 7.

McClellan's politics drew him to Regnery, a recently founded publishing house that had fast become one of the brightest beacons of American conservatism. In 1951, Regnery had published William F. Buckley Jr.'s *God and Man at Yale: The Superstitions of 'Academic Freedom*,*'* a classic of American conservatism in which Buckley argued that university professors forced their politics on students, crushing free market economic thought and the spirituality of students' religious lives. Two years later, in 1953, Regnery published another conservative classic, Kirk's *The Conservative Mind*, which gave shape to a nascent conservative movement by tracing its philosophical genealogy through the tradition of classic liberalism to Edmund Burke and others—the very liberal tradition, that is, which Tosaka argued was at the core of the Meiji ideology of the modern and 1930s fascism. By the time McClellan came calling with a translated novel that treats, among other things, the spiritual vacancy of university life and the philosophical possibility of living morally in a moment of social upheaval, Regnery would have easily recognized the political salience of these themes—for it was Regnery himself who was then publishing the conservative critique of American academe on a press dedicated to preserving a traditional morality thought to have been under siege.

Regnery would also have recognized McClellan to have been part of a circle that included some of the godfathers of postwar American conservatism. McCellan had met Kirk at the University of St. Andrews, in Scotland, where Kirk was completing research for *The Conservative Mind*. In 1952, McClellan began work as a graduate student at Michigan State under Kirk, who had just joined the faculty there. As Kirk's disillusionment with academe deepened—soon to precipitate his retirement to rural Mecosta, Michigan in protest of what he viewed as the moral decay and intellectual deterioration of university life—he suggested that McClellan transfer to the University of Chicago. McClellan did so, joining the Committee on Social Thought and working under the supervision of the economist Friedrich A. Hayek—a free marketer who would win the Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences in 1974—and the classicist David Grene. The last year of McClellan's graduate work—academic year 1956-1957—was supported by a fellowship from Earhart Foundation, a conservative funding agency that has also supported the work of several Nobel Prize winning economists, including Hayek.[19]

Although McClellan was neither an activist nor an ideologue, in the company of these colleagues, he did become a minor, behind-the-scenes agent in the conservative movement. His brilliant translation of *Kokoro* demonstrated his mastery of English prose style to Hayek, who once remarked that McClellan "writes the kind of English I would like to write[.]"[20] Born in Austria, Hayek's native language was German, and since he feared that his own writing in English was clumsy and awkward, he offered to hire McClellan to edit his manuscripts for readability and style; McClellan accepted. At Hayek's request, Relm Foundation—a subsidiary of Earhart Foundation—paid McClellan $2,700 for his assistance with Hayek's manuscript of *The Constitution of Liberty* (1960).[21] Roughly a decade later, Relm Foundation would pay

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[19] Information about McClellan's funding from Earhart Foundation in explained a February 14, 1956 letter from Hayek to James A. Kennedy, President of Earhart Foundation, and another letter from Kennedy to McClellan, dated February 28th, 1956. Correspondence, Friedrich A. von Hayek papers, Box 17, Folder 37, Hoover Institution Archives.

[20] Correspondence dated October 23rd, 1966, Friedrich A. von Hayek papers, Box 17, Folder 37, Hoover Institution Archives.

[21] These financial matters are discussed in letters between Hayek and Richard Ware of Earhart and Relm Foundations. On October 7th 1958, Hayek requested $2,700 for McClellan's

McClellan $1,500 for his work on Hayek's *Law, Legalization and Liberty* (1973) after Hayek had petitioned the agency as follows: "I believe that it is important that when the book comes out it should be fairly polished in exposition. If The Constitution of Liberty has been fairly successful, this is in a large measure due to what Edwin MacClellan [sic] did to my original draft."[22] In addition, McClellan had earlier helped with the preparation of Kirk's *The Conservative Mind* and compiled its Index.

Given that McClellan's graduate work was directed and funded by some of the key figures in American conservatism, it makes sense that he offered his translation of *Kokoro* to Regnery, a staunch ally in the publishing world to conservative writers and thinkers. In a letter to Regnery dated February 9th 1955, McClellan made oblique reference to his translation of *Kokoro* then in progress: "Right now, I am working on a rather important Japanese writer who died in 1916 [Sōseki], and reading [Lafcadio] Hearn will certainly help me in my work." Earlier in the letter, McClellan encourages Regnery to consider publishing a volume of Hearn's "conservative" writing: "He is not only a good stylist, but a very sound and, I think, conservative observer of things Japanese also."[23] The conservative sensibility behind the translation is further suggested by McClellan's enclosure to Regnery: a copy of his 1954 article "The Educational Ideas of Henry Philip Tappan," which he introduces to Regnery as something he wrote "while still at Michigan State, an oblique attack on what the place stood for [.]"[24] In the fashion of 1950s conservatives like Kirk and Buckley, who castigated the politics and morality of American academe, McClellan had earlier published a satirical piece in *The New Yorker* that mocked Michigan State as an intellectually vacant "Midwestern state university" that boasts "a football team that wins every time, come rain or shine. The campus is huge and pretty, and would be prettier still if so many new buildings weren't going up all the time. The professors get their pieces in the learned journals, and co-eds win beauty contests[.]"[25]

The English translation of *Kokoro* seems to have struck some as an aesthetic evocation of the conservative mind that McClellan's circle was then conceptualizing in expository terms. Anecdotes to this effect circulate among McClellan's students, and McClellan himself has remarked on the emotional responses of Hayek and Grene to his translation of *Kokoro*: "I have never forgotten and shall never forget the generosity of feeling of those two men, the Irish classicist and the Austrian economist, when without any reserve they told me how moved they had been by the novel."[26] McClellan's February 9th, 1955 letter to Regnery also makes clear that

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assistance, and on October 22, 1958, Ware informed Hayek that the trustees of Relm Foundation had approved the expenditure. Correspondence, Friedrich A. von Hayek papers, Box 17, Folder 37, Hoover Institution Archives.

[22] Hayek writes this in a letter to Richard Ware of Relm Foundation dated March 2nd 1966. Ware wrote to McClellan on February 27, 1967 to inform him that the trustees of Relm Foundation had resolved to offer him a grant in the amount of $1,500 for his help with the manuscript of *Law, Legislation and Liberty*. Correspondence, Friedrich A. von Hayek papers, Box 17, Folder 37, Hoover Institution Archives.

[23] Correspondence, Henry Regnery papers, Box 47, Folder 11, Hoover Institution Archives.

[24] Correspondence, Henry Regnery papers, Box 47, Folder 11, Hoover Institution Archives.

[25] McClellan, Edwin. "St. Andrews," in *The New Yorker*, January 22, 1955, p. 26.

[26] McClellan, Edwin. "'The Photographer': An Essay by Soseki; Prefatory Remarks by the Translator," in *Literary Imagination, Ancient and Modern: Essays in Honor of David Grene*, Todd Breyfogle, ed. (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1999), p. 204.

Hearn's "conservative" understanding of Japan in some sense informed his reading of the novel, and in another letter, to Hayek, McClellan mentions his intent to translate something by Sōseki for Hayek to read, and that he "find[s] [himself] yearning for Burke, Acton, de Tocqueville, etc.," the very stalwarts of classical liberalism that guided Kirk's *The Conservative Mind*.[27] As late as 1978, moreover, Regnery suggested in a letter to McClellan that Sōseki and the architects of American conservatism shared a readership distrustful of the university: in the letter, Regnery mentions that McClellan's translation of *Kokoro* is still in print after more than twenty years, and that "[o]ur fall list will include a new book by Russell Kirk, DECADENCE AND RENEWAL IN THE HIGHER LEARNING—who but Russel [sic] could have come up with such a title?"[28]

Clearly, then, the conservative politics that Tosaka identified at the core of Sōseki bunka in 1936 guided the reception of *Kokoro* in postwar America, too. What is harder to document is the reading experience that conservatives in McClellan's circle had with Sōseki's novel. What did they think when they read the translation? How did *Kokoro* make them feel? I have yet to find any writing by Hayek, Regnery or others about these more private aspects of reading, but in a speculative vein, I might wonder if the novel conveyed to them the kind of conservative energy that Kirk found in Nathaniel Hawthorne's writing. Kirk thought of Hawthorne as the conservative literary writer par excellence because he took most seriously the matters of morality and conscience, and their decay. Kirk called Hawthorne "a melancholy man obsessed with the problems of conscience" whose "chief accomplishment" was "impressing the idea of sin upon a nation which would like to forget it."[29] Needless to say, Kirk's reading of Hawthorne is no stand-in for conservatives' reading of Sōseki, not least of all because Kirk praises Hawthorne for his love of old things and staunch resistance to change, whereas Sōseki's critique of modernity maintains an ambivalence that prevents it from being described as either reactionary or progressive in any uncomplicated sense. That said, it does seem that Kirk's description of Hawthorne's "conservative energy" recalls some aspects of *Kokoro*.

In particular, Kirk praised Hawthorne's writing for conveying a sense of grief that was a necessary concomitant to moral living, "at once chastening and salutary."[30] In a quoted passage originally written by John Adams, Kirk suggests that the conservative mind was predicated on a sensitivity to grief. Adams wrote: "The desolated lover, and disappointed connections, are compelled by their grief to reflect on the vanity of human wishes and expectations; to learn the essential lesson of resignation, to review their own conduct toward the deceased[.]" This leads Adams to conclude that "grief drives men into habits of serious reflection, sharpens the understanding, and softens the heart."[31] These words seem as if they might also describe Watakushi's experience with Sensei's letter at the end of *Kokoro*, wherein the act of reading brings a sensing subject into communion with the conflicts of grief and conscience, prompting

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[27] Correspondence, Friedrich A. von Hayek papers, Box 37, Folder 26, Hoover Institution Archives. The letter is dated January 20th, but no year is given.

[28] Correspondence dated May 16, 1978, Henry Regnery papers, Box 47, Folder 11, Hoover Institution Archives.

[29] Kirk, Russell. *The Conservative Mind: From Burke to Santayana* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1953), p. 218 and p. 221.

[30] Kirk, Russell. *The Conservative Mind: From Burke to Santayana* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1953), p. 81.

[31] Kirk, Russell. *The Conservative Mind: From Burke to Santayana* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1953), p. 81.

Watakushi to "review [his] own conduct toward the deceased" just as Sensei reviews his toward K. Kirk's reading of Hawhtorne also recalls the analectic aspects of *Kokoro*, which allows all readers to become faithful *deshi* if the novel drives them "into habits of serious reflection," and if they feel Watakushi's and Sensei's grief as somehow salutary. If Watakushi has learned something from his relationship with Sensei, and if the novel is an analectic record from which others can learn, too, then it conserves and conveys the kind of restorative grief that Kirk found in Hawthorne. To borrow Kirk's description of Hawthorne, it might be said of Sōseki that his "novels are not tracts. He dissects the anatomy of sin with a curiosity insatiable and even cruel. […] [H]e suggest that sin, for all its consequences, nevertheless may be an enlightening influence upon certain natures—indeed, ennobling: although it burns, it wakens."[32]

I must be careful, however, not to give the impression of marshaling these excerpts as conclusive evidence of the only possible response that conservatives in 1950s America could have had to *Kokoro*. To do so would be to undersell the cultural imagination of the conservatives in McClellan's circle, many of whom were brilliant prose stylists themselves, and deeply read men of subtle sensitivity to the movements of language and politics. It would also be to sell out the complexity of the novel. *Kokoro* has a politics, of course, but it also speaks to readers in its most moving moments in ways that may not clearly align with any stable political position: by turns, the novel is a poetic evocation of melancholic desolation, of fading familiarity between father and son, of communion between the living and the dead, and of a deeply felt (if rarely articulated) yearning for authentic feeling in social contexts that seems always to foreclose that possibility. In short, it is an open-ended novel that affords any number of feelings, and there is no reason that 1950s conservatives of sensitive cultural imagination could not have felt its aesthetic appeals beyond the range of their own political arguments. Kirk's reading of Hawthorne suggests one possibility for considering how *Kokoro* might have affected the conservative mind in 1950s America, but it is only one possibility among many. Perhaps the most I can say, then, is that at least one of Kirk's descriptions of Hawthorne's writing seems to fit with my own feeling for what we find in *Kokoro*, even if only by coincidence:
"Much to fear here, something to hate, a great deal to hold in awe."[33]

Reading Without Ending

Although I cannot say for certain what it was that McClellan's circle found in *Kokoro*, I can say, in closing, that I find in the novel something of a literary aesthetic evocation of some of the concepts that have guided my own expository arguments in this dissertation. Most important is that although *Kokoro* has a narrative chronology with beginnings and endings, and although it indexes its relation to the end of an historical era through reference to the death of the Meiji Emperor in 1912, it might yet be read as a kind of endless novel unbounded by any stable moment of climax or closure. The first half of the novel is Watakushi's retrospective account of his relationship with Sensei, which he tells sometime after Sensei has died. The latter half of *Kokoro* shifts to Sensei's first-person perspective, and is told in the form of a letter that Sensei writes to Watakushi just before his death. The letter describes a chain of events in Sensei's past that begins with his childhood and ends with his suicide just after the Meiji Emperor's death, and

[32] Kirk, Russell. *The Conservative Mind: From Burke to Santayana* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1953), pp. 221-222.
[33] Kirk, Russell. *The Conservative Mind: From Burke to Santayana* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1953), p. 220.

its contents are already known to Watakushi before he begins his own narrative in the first lines of the novel. In chronological terms, then, Watakushi's story about his relationship with Sensei in the first half of *Kokoro* and Sensei's letter that tells the story of his life in the latter half of the novel are narratives that describe how earlier moments of initiation or beginning led to later moments of closure and completion.

But from another perspective, *Kokoro* is a novel structured by feelings and sensibilities that collide and collude without ever ending. Most notably, Sensei remains a spectral presence in Watakushi's imagination even after he takes his own life, indicating that the emotional economy evoked by the novel exceeds the supposed finality of death in particular, and overflows any rigidly linear logic tied to an indisputable endpoint in general. On a smaller scale, moreover, the endlessness of *Kokoro* emerges in part as a grammatical function of the ways in which the end of the novel addresses its reader. In his testament, Sensei speaks to a nameless second-person subject (*anata*, "you") that stands opposite his testimony. For instance, Sensei writes: "I was born a moral man. And I was raised a moral man. My thoughts on morality may differ from those of young people today, but be that as it may, my morals are true to me (*watakushi jishin no mono desu*). They are not as cheap and changeable as a rented suit. For that reason, they might serve as some sort of a guide to you (*anata*) as you move forward in life."[34] This is followed by the famous passage: "I shall now tear apart my own heart, and allow its blood to drench your (*anata no*) face. When my heartbeat has stopped, I shall be satisfied if a new life should emerge within you (*anata*)."[35]

The most straightforward reading of Sensei's letter would hold that *anata* can only refer to Watakushi. Read this way, the end of Sensei's letter loops the reader back to the first lines of the novel, in which Watakushi describes the beginning of his relationship with Sensei after having already read Sensei's letter, and after Sensei has already died by his own hand.[36] In addition, the letter could also be thought of as opening up to a range of readers who are separated in chronological time, but who nevertheless share the same grammatical subject position in relation to Sensei. That is, the second-person pronoun *anata* might be taken more literally to address any reader of Sensei's letter—including Watakushi, to be sure, but also Sōseki's *deshi* like Matasuoka and Watsuji, a Marxist philosopher like Tosaka, a graduate student like McClellan, a conservative economist like Hayek, and even the mass readerships of Iwanami Shoten and Henry Regnery Company. In this light, the second-person form of address *anata* might be understood as a directional pronoun that literally references *whoever* is opposite Sensei's *language*, which would allow all readers to become coeval subjects occupying the same grammatical position in relation to Sensei's words, whether Tosaka or Hayek, Watakushi or Watsuji.

With that said, the readerly experiences of these figures may be coeval within the grammatical plane of address, but they are not coterminous, for each of these readers

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[34] Natsume Sōseki. *Kokoro*, in *Sōseki zenshū* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1966), vol. 6, pp. 153-154.

[35] Natsume Sōseki. *Kokoro*, in *Sōseki zenshū* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1966), vol. 6, p. 154.

[36] The opening lines of *Kokoro* make clear that Watakushi has already read Sensei's letter. When Watakushi states in the first paragraph of the first installment that he can only call "that person" "Sensei," and could never use a "cold and impersonal initial" (*yosoyososhii kashira moji*), he clearly has in mind Sensei's reference to his college friend by just such an initial, "K," in the letter that concludes the novel.

encountered a different sort of message in the same text, and filtered that message through the matrix of his own sensibilities. This was possible because *Kokoro* does not lead readers to an explanatory endpoint that resolves earlier tensions in the narrative, and nether does it unfold through a tight logic of cause and effect that funnels readerly sentiment in only one direction. Instead, its ending is its beginning, and the interceding narrative channels currents of feeling—of *kokoro*—that swirl within its narrators (and readers) concurrently. Even as *Kokoro* describes the end of an era—the Meiji era—and several deaths—the Meiji Emperor's and General Nogi's, as well as K's and Sensei's—it locates the meaning of these events not within a teleological narrative schema, but rather within an indeterminate space of feeling that knows no ending. In these respects, *Kokoro* offers something of a literary aesthetic model for the non-teleological imperatives that have guided this dissertation insofar as the novel's structure allows readers to feel a sense of open-endedness even in the midst of otherwise indisputable endpoints in history and the seemingly conclusive closure of death.

Perhaps these narrative complexities are part of what allowed *Kokoro*, as a novel received in translation in 1950 America, to carry forth aspects of the dialogues about literary aesthetics and cultural ideology that played out in Japan's long 1930s. The foregoing has suggested that McClellan's circle of conservatives had the very sensibilities which Tosaka claimed had always conditioned Sōseki's reception, indicating that the politics of Sōsekian culture stretched farther and wider after Tosaka's death than he ever could have anticipated when he critiqued it in 1936. Other continuities also connect the six figures examined earlier in this study to the 1950s readers of Sōseki that have featured in this Epilogue. Like their counterparts in the Shōwa Kenkyūkai, for example, the conservatives in McClellan's circle sought cultural and ethical solutions to the pressing political and economic crises of their day. For even after the conclusion of the Pacific War in 1945, men like Hayek and Regnery believed their world was on the brink of collapse, and that only a combination of moral, cultural and economic reform could soothe the soul of modern man. Without knowing it, their reading of *Kokoro* may well have been conditioned by feelings and convictions that also fueled some of the cultural criticism and literary writing examined in the four preceding chapters.

All of which is to suggest that the Japanese surrender in 1945 did not mark the end of literary and intellectual life in Japan's long 1930s any more than Tosaka's death marked the end of his critique of Sōsekian culture, or Sensei's death marked the end of *Kokoro*. The implications of Tosaka's critique lived on beyond his own lifetime, just as Sensei's words and presence exceeded his own suicide at the end of the Meiji era, giving rise to Watakushi's narrative and addressing all readers who allow themselves to become *anata*. In this light, the reception of McClellan's translation of *Kokoro* in 1950s America suggests that in the ever new forms of cultural and intellectual life, the ever same imbrications of literary aesthetics and cultural ideology endured, carried forth in acts of reading and writing that never climax or culminate, but rather undulate in the currents of their own contemporary present.