

Connecting Events and Fiction: Reflections on Historical Fiction

by

Akio KANEKO

Using the definition of “a novel dealing with historical subjects” makes it easy to determine whether a particular novel belongs to the historical fiction genre. However, when attempting to evaluate novels based on how they handle historical subjects, it is difficult to establish clear evaluation criteria.

Early modern novels overcame the distinction between fact and fiction—subjects divided between history and fiction—justifying and valuing novels that dealt with historical facts. The prevailing view came to be those novels, exemplified by those of Shoyo Tsubouchi, which fill in the details of historical facts and compensate for their gaps, should be valued. This gave rise to a tendency to evaluate historical novels based on the degree to which they represent historical facts.

On the other hand, there were those who questioned the objectivity of the historical facts being represented. Ōoka Shōhei, incorporating phenomenological historical consciousness into his perspective, engaged in trial and error aimed at achieving a historically recreated narrative that maintained a certain degree of objectivity within a context where the existence of unambiguous historical facts was called into question.

A Tentative Study of IZUMI Kyoka’s “GEKASHITSU”: From the Perspective of the Reader’s Desire

by

Tomofumi YOSHIMI

This article discusses IZUMI Kyoka’s “GEKASHITSU” (*Bungei Kurabu*, June 1895 issue) from the perspective of the reader’s desire in an attempt to reconsider its aspects as a novel of ideas.

The critical assessment of “GEKASHITSU” as a novel of ideas, which was first advanced by SHIMAMURA Hogetsu and other contemporary writers, remains largely unchanged to this day. This article examines these critiques in detail, presenting a revised perspective on the work in the context of the development of the novel of ideas genre. It is shown that today, where the concept has already gained broad acceptance in both literary history studies and textbooks, the classification of “GEKASHITSU” as a novel of ideas is based on the reader’s desire to read it in a specific way. Expanding on this perspective of the reader’s desire, this article also conducts a comparative analysis of the novel “GEKASHITSU” and its film adaptation (in which the reader assumes the role of creator) to present a new, modern interpretation of “GEKASHITSU.”

Ishikawa Takuboku's Representations of "Nostalgia" and "City"
— Focusing on His Tankas and "*Romanji Nikki*"

by

Hiroyuki MATSUSHITA

Generally, upon hearing the name Ishikawa Takuboku, the image that first springs to mind is that of a poet who depicts of nostalgia. This paper first examines the historical factors behind Takuboku's creation of tankas (short poems) recalling his homeland, then considers the characteristics of his representation of 'hometown' in these tankas.

Furthermore, within Ishikawa Takuboku's 26-year life, one senses both the spiritual 'strength' and 'weakness' inherent in youth. Therefore, this paper focuses particularly on his "*Romanji Nikki*" (Romanised Diary), analysing the evolution of Takuboku's worldview – specifically, the process by which he acquired the perspective of the "underdog".

Furthermore, it examines the characteristics of his tanka, born as an extension of this worldview. During his lifetime, Ishikawa Takuboku was neither highly regarded nor blessed with a fortunate life. However, having left his hometown for the city, he harboured a profound nostalgia. Consequently, he reacted sensitively to both the allure and the darker aspects of the city of Tokyo, painting a new landscape of urban lyricism through the tankas he composed.

This paper examines the significance of the landscapes of "nostalgia" and scenes of Tokyo in the early 1900s depicted in Ishikawa Takuboku's tankas.

Portrait of a Modern Intellectual
— A Critical Study of Kojin by Natsume Soseki —

by
Chiaki ISHIHARA

In the literature of Natsume Soseki, Nagano Jiro appears as the “narrative protagonist” who moves from one realm to another, while Nagano Ichiro appears as the “novelistic protagonist” who continuously observes other characters and remains deep in thought. However, by writing these memoirs, Jiro also functions as a novelistic protagonist himself. As the second son of the Nagano family, Jiro was led by Ichiro into a close involvement with Ichiro’s wife, O-nao, thereby disrupting their relationship. When this tension reached its peak, Jiro left the Nagano household. This constitutes Jiro’s actions as a narrative protagonist.

Nagano Ichiro deliberately behaved in an eccentric manner, leading his family to view him as a quintessential, albeit difficult, scholar. The price of this persona, however, was isolation; he remained misunderstood by his family and suffered profoundly from that solitude. Even Jiro could not comprehend the root cause of this agony.

What, then, did Jiro contemplate in his role as a novelistic protagonist? Naturally, his reflections centered on his brother, Ichiro. He even enlisted Mr. H as a collaborator in these contemplations. According to reports from Mr. H, who traveled with Ichiro, Ichiro felt a sense of dread regarding the terrifying speed of scientific progress. Looking at contemporary theories of war, this was a defining characteristic of Victorian England. Furthermore, solitude was another hallmark of the British era. Ichiro’s loneliness stemmed from his position as the eldest son at the apex of the family hierarchy, as well as his tendency to adopt a meta-level perspective as a scholar. Such isolation was inevitable for Ichiro, who studied Western disciplines and flaunted his Westernized tastes.

Ultimately, however, it was Jiro who orchestrated the clarity of this situation for the reader. By composing these memoirs, Jiro framed Ichiro as the “scholar among scholars,” making his brother’s predicament visible to all.

Narratives Cover the World:
The “Plot of a Novel” Debate and Nakazato Kaizan’s “*Daibosatsu Tōge*”

by

Kensuke KONO

This paper reconsidered the literary and intellectual significance of Nakazato Kaizan’s *Daibosatsu Tōge* through the lens of the 1927 debate over “the plot of the novel” between Akutagawa Ryūnosuke and Tanizaki Jun’ichirō. It first highlighted Tanizaki’s evaluation of the work, not as a mere sequence of events, but as a sophisticated literary achievement grounded in stylistic elegance, narrative dignity, and techniques of omission that stimulate the reader’s imagination. For Tanizaki, “plot” meant an architecturally constructed narrative structure, and in this sense *Daibosatsu Tōge* exemplified a high level of literary artistry.

More centrally, however, the paper emphasized the novel’s deep engagement with the social and religious conditions of its time. By examining its connections to contemporary new religious movements such as Tanaka Chigaku’s Kokuchūkai, Ōmoto, and Hito no Michi, it argued that the novel reflected a zeitgeist characterized by a powerful desire for “narrative.” The suppression of these movements through their conflict with state-sanctioned mythology is mirrored in the narrative through the rise and fall of imagined communities such as the “Ibuki Kingdom,” producing a structure in which reality and fiction increasingly blur and narratives proliferate.

The paper further framed the opposition between official national mythology and popular religious narratives as a form of hegemonic struggle over storytelling. By incorporating this struggle into its narrative while maintaining a critical distance, *Daibosatsu Tōge* depicts how the desire for narrative mobilizes people, leads to disillusionment, and yet continually regenerates itself. Through this doubled structure, the novel acquires a perspective that relativizes political and religious movements themselves.

In conclusion, the paper argued that understanding the “plot” debate not merely as a technical literary dispute, but as a response to contemporary collective unconscious and narrative desire, most clearly illuminates the literary-historical and intellectual significance of *Daibosatsu Tōge*.

Lies and Madness: The Fictionality of Tanizaki Jun'ichirō's *Hakuchukigo*

by

Yoshiki HIDAHA

Tanizaki Jun'ichirō's *Hakuchukigo* (1918) is a work that narrates the process by which the narrator, "I," comes to believe a false murder to be true on two separate occasions. This paper aims to clarify the characteristics of fictionality in this novel. To conduct a representational analysis grounded in the awareness of the detective fiction genre evident in this novel, I examined specific narrative techniques. The problem lies in the fact that "I" perceive his friend Sonomura as a madman. This renders the facts within the story unstable. Based on this premise, I analyzed three ways of narrating the scene of the first murder. From there, I examined the functions of the detective fiction genre and the process of recognizing the truth behind the case. Furthermore, by considering the narrative characteristics of the second murder scene where Sonomura is killed and deciphering Sonomura's intent to deceive the narrator with lies, I grasped the nature of fiction within this work. This work employs an unstable narrative oscillating between madness and sanity, creating a story whose very nature dissolves the boundaries between lies and truth, fiction and reality.

Religion and Logic in Mori Ōgai's *Hánshān* and *Shídé* (寒山拾得)

by

Chisato SUDA

This paper examines the true identity of *Hánshān* (寒山) and *Shídé* (拾得) in Mori Ōgai's "*Hánshān and Shídé* (寒山拾得)" and the meaning of the concluding paragraphs of "The origin of *Hánshān* and *Shídé*". First, I argue that "The origin of *Hánshān* and *Shídé*" is a caricature of religion's transcendence of logic. Since religious perception is based on personal subjectivity, judgments about whether *Hánshān* and *Shídé* are Manjusri (文殊) and Samantabhadra (普賢), whether Miyazaki Toranosuke is the Messiah, and whether Mori Ōgai is Manjusri vary from person to person and cannot be explained logically. This discrepancy between religion and logic, subjectivity and objectivity, is repeated three times throughout the work: the existence or nonexistence of Lú qiū Yǔn (閻丘胤), his headaches, and whether *Hánshān* and *Shídé* are Manjusri and Samantabhadra. Both "*Hánshān and Shídé*" and "The origin of *Hánshān* and *Shídé*" share the same personal belief that they exist, even though it cannot be objectively confirmed. Although "*Hánshān and Shídé*" begins with a historical and geographical explanation, it was conceived as a historical novel, eliminating the supernatural elements from its source, the "*Hánshān Poetry chǎn dī jì wén* (寒山詩闡提記聞)." As a result, this realistic novel is designed so that it remains unclear until the very end whether *Hánshān* and *Shídé* is Manjushri and Samantabhadra, or simply a poor man. The difference in perception between Feng-gān (豐干) and Dào-qiáo (道翹) is due to the fact that gods and Buddhas exist only in the hearts of individuals.

Nevertheless, readers who readily agree with Feng-gān's words without even knowing the true nature of *Hánshān* and *Shídé*'s duties will likely find it hard to laugh at Lú qiū Yǔn's "blind respect."

Yoshiya Nobuko's "Burning Flowers" and "Roses in the Rainstorm" with Yanagihara Byakuren and Muraoka Hanako

by

Yoriko KUME

"Burning Flowers," a story in Yoshiya Nobuko's "Flower Stories," was long thought to be based on the so-called "Byakuren Incident" of 1921. However, recent research has revealed that it was published in 1919, before the incident. However, Yanagihara Byakuren should not be dismissed as a possible model; rather, the story is thought to have been constructed based on Byakuren's circumstances prior to the incident. Furthermore, it is believed that information from Byakuren's close friend, Muraoka Hanako, was a key factor in the creation of this work. Furthermore, information from Muraoka was likely also used in Yoshiya's 1930 novel, "Roses in the Storm." At the end of "Burning Flowers," two of the protagonist's roommates die, and death is seen as a protest against the tainted world. In contrast, the protagonist of "Roses in the Storm" leaves in the blizzard after receiving help from his best friend. The transformation of the protagonist into a strong-willed character likely reflects the influence of the real-life Byakuren and Muraoka, who faced adversity head-on. Yoshiya's works, which depict the hardships and hopes of such women, gained widespread popularity among female readers, making Yoshiya a popular author.

The American Life of Sokei-an's Wife, Tome Sasaki : A Study of Her Writings in the Magazine *Fujinkai* in 1918

by

Madoka HORI

This article examines Tome Sasaki, the Japanese wife of Zen pioneer Shigetsu Sasaki (Sokei-an), through her 1918 serial essay "My Life Working with My Husband in America," published in the women's magazine *Fujinkai*. Drawing on this first-hand narrative, the study reconstructs the Sasaki couple's immigrant experiences on the U.S. West Coast from 1906 to 1916. Tome's chronological writing reveals several dimensions of their lives that are largely absent from Sokei-an's own writings, including their interactions with wealthy patrons, his study under the painter Richard Partington, and patterns of jealousy, exclusion, and sexual harassment within the Japanese immigrant community. Attending to the intersections of gender and class, the article also uncovers Tome's conflicted attitudes toward childbearing in the context of early twentieth-century American birth control discourse and feminist debates, as well as tensions with her husband over the possibility of returning to Japan. By foregrounding her perspective, the study offers a critical wife's view of cultural negotiation, power relations, and the everyday struggles of immigrant survival in prewar United States.

Long-ago Records and Blue Beads: A Study of Chūjō [Miyamoto] Yuriko's "The Insect Nest of Tsugaru"

by

Keigo IKEDA

The short story "Tsugaru no Mushi no Su [The Insect Nest of Tsugaru]," published on June 21 and 28, 1919, in the *Nichibei Jiho* [The Japanese American], was first drafted on July 31, 1918. The author, Miyamoto Yuriko (then Chūjō Yuriko), conducted research on the Ainu in Hokkaido from May to August 1918. However, since no Ainu characters appear directly in this story, the research and the story were never discussed in relation to each other. Yet, the story is closely related to the Ainu in its content as well as the period of its composition. Specifically, the "insect nest" or "blue beads" it addresses are Ainu trading pieces, which, as this paper points out, were used to symbolize the Ainu in the early modern period. In addition, while previous studies have discussed the references to classical literature in the story, this paper notes that there are other works which approach it more closely. Furthermore, reference to the draft version donated to the Museum of Modern Japanese Literature has made it possible to confirm sections added to the existing version. Through this process, this paper clarifies how Yuriko experimented with finding her own style in the closely adjacent sequence of "Kaze ni notte kuru Koropokkuru [Koropokkur Riding the Wind]," "The Insect Nest of Tsugaru," and "Haruka naru kanata [The Distant Horizon]."

The Formation of the *Hōchi Shinbun* Literary and Arts Section

by

Hajime SEKI

The movement to establish cultural and arts sections in newspapers spread from the mid-Taishō period onward. This paper examines the *Hōchi Shinbun*, one of Tokyo's major newspapers at the time, and analyzes changes in the state of journalism, the process through which its cultural and arts section came into being, and the distinctive features of that section. The roots of the *Hōchi Shinbun*'s cultural and arts section lie in the column "Sunday Literature" (*Nichiyō Bungei*), which began publication on January 1920. Nomura Kodō, who would later become a popular writer, played an important role in its creation. Although the "Sunday Literature" column was discontinued after roughly six months, it was revived in January 1922 as a literary column and was renamed the cultural and arts section in December of the same year. This section appeared within the newspaper's economics pages, and the journalist Sakon Masue was responsible for its actual editing. Articles in the cultural and arts section also addressed topics such as philosophy, religion, social issues, and science. These features reflect the intellectual interests and cultural perspectives of the newspaper's general readership—distinct from the cultivation-oriented ideology that prevailed in the prewar higher school system.

The Radiance and Shadow of the Clarté Movement: Nationalism and Literary Theory in the Magazine ‘Tanemakuhito’

by

Yoshitada NAITOU

This paper reexamines the Nationalism and Literary theories of the magazine ‘Tanemakuhito’ (*Le semeur*), first published in Akita in 1921, to extract the fundamental pitfalls inherent within Japan’s proletarian literature movement. ‘Tanemakuhito’ is known for transplanting the Clarté movement, practiced in France, to Japan. The magazine also adopted internationalism as its guiding principle for thought and action, engaging in activities to show solidarity with workers worldwide. These activities were groundbreaking and left significant footprints in the history of modern Japanese literature. However, the movement theory of ‘Tanemakuhito’ contained an inherent, unavoidable limitation. This paper demonstrates that ‘Tanemakuhito’ lacked the perspective to critique the state itself and failed to theorize the consciousness reform necessary to transform literature itself, thereby clarifying the inherent constraints within its movement theory. Furthermore, it reveals that what ‘Tanemakuhito’ left behind was not only inherited by Japan’s proletarian cultural movement but also carried forward into wartime debates on boosting morale.

What Shapes Takeo Kato’s *Kuon-no-zo* (*Image of Eternity*)

— Dante, Chopin and Koji Fukiya —

by

Nami KITO

Takeo Kato, used to be known as popular novelist in Taisho period is forgotten now. This paper intend to analyze his serialized novel *Kuon-no-zo* (*Image of Eternity*) which published in the women’s magazine *Fujin no Tomo* from January 1922 to June 1923. Dante and Chopin are repeatedly mentioned in the characterization of the heroine Reiko and her love interest Katsuragi, demonstrating their appeal to female readers. Furthermore, it was revealed that the illustrations by Fukiya Koji, which were published during the serialization, also contributed to the creation of the image of the characters. Both Dante and Chopin were accepted with lyrical and romantic images then. Fukiya was also realized as a lyrical painter by his artworks. These three elements functioned to enrich Reiko and Katsuragi’s love story and its setbacks with “lyricism”, giving it the emotional appeal to female readers.

A Study of Hideo Kobayashi's Novel 'Ami'
—The Disjunction with the 'Other' Brought into Presence—

by

Azusa SASAKI

Hideo Kobayashi's 'Candy' (published in *Bronze Age*, September 1924) has been positioned in previous scholarship primarily as a work expressing the defeat or transformation of the narrator's self-consciousness. This paper re-examines this interpretation, focusing instead on the presence and estrangement of the other mediated through the candy. First, an analysis of the work's expression was conducted. It then pointed out the possibility that the personification within the text, the Shin-Kankaku-ha style, and keywords such as the "nose" and "candy" bear influences from the works of Gogol and Shiga Naoya. It further noted that these expressive features, organically intertwined, symbolise the protagonist's immaturity and comicality. Simultaneously, shifts in landscape depiction transition from projecting the narrator's emotions to separating from consciousness, signifying estrangement from others. Furthermore, the <candy> functions as a device mechanically initiating conversation, eventually exposing a disconnect in consciousness between the narrator and the <man>. For the man, the <candy> is merely a sweet, making the disconnect with the 'I' obsessed by it starkly clear. The depiction at the conclusion of both walking in diametrically opposite directions symbolises a definitive estrangement from the other, positioning the novel as one that depicts the <other> made present through the 'candy'.

What the Letters from Kusano Shinpei and Genri Michio to Sakamoto Ryo Reveal
— The Publication of the Poetry Collection Tanpopo and Its Surroundings —

by

Takehiko OHASHI

Sakamoto Ryo's poetry collection "Tanpopo (たんぽぽ)" (1927) was published with the strong backing of Kusano Shinpei and Genri Michio, fellow contributors to the poetry journal "Dora (銅鑼)". The collection of letters they addressed to Sakamoto Ryo vividly recounts the circumstances surrounding this publication. In evaluating Sakamoto's individual works, they offered unique proposals for the collection's title and design based on their respective sensibilities, highlighting both commonalities and differences. They volunteered to write the preface and afterword, reported on progress repeatedly, and even requested revisions after the manuscript had been sent to the printers, demonstrating extraordinary enthusiasm. In essence, Tanpopo—imbued with a rustic simplicity redolent of country soil—was, in a sense, a collaborative effort by all three.

Moreover, these letters offer insights into their stance towards contemporary poetic movements and the dynamics of their tripartite relationship. On the one hand, there was Kusano, who threw himself into other arenas beyond Dora, such as "Barricade (バリケード)" and "Taiheiyosijin (太平洋詩人)", seeking to draw Sakamoto and Genri into them. On the other, there was Genri, who, upon learning of Kusano's proposed retitling of Dora through a letter, took up that title and plotted to publish a two-person magazine with Sakamoto.

Romance in Yumeno Kyūsaku “Shigon-no-koi”—On the Existence of “I”

by

Atsuko NISHIKAWA

Yumeno Kyūsaku “Shigon-no-koi” is set in Vladivostok (Urazio) during the Siberian Intervention. It is a first-person monologue novel in which “I,” known in town as a “notorious lunatic,” recounts my experience of “shigo-no-koi” to “you,” a “noble Japanese soldier,” in order to have you acknowledge its authenticity. This paper analyzes the significance of evoking narratives of the Russian Revolution and memories of the Siberian Expedition during this period, and presenting them as a love romance. It focuses on the relationship between readers’ contemporary imagery and the events within the work, as well as the temporal gap between the work’s setting and its publication. Specifically, it elucidates how the “I” in this work overlaps with the contemporary representation of the “wandering Russian.” It also interprets the nature of this ‘I’—seeking validation for its experiences both as a historical narrative about the fall of the Romanov dynasty and as a love story with Ryadnikov, described as “the supreme mystery of the cosmos”—by examining its connection to contemporary discourse surrounding the Anastasia legend and notions of romance. Furthermore, by examining the discourse surrounding post-revolutionary Russia at the time of the work’s publication and noting how the Siberian Expedition was recalled in a manner overlapping with the Shandong Expedition, it was revealed that this work is a narrative that questions the very substance of things like lineage, nation, and love that signify self-existence.

A Study of Uchida Hyakken's "Kage":
Deviations from the "Cutting Edge" of *Bungaku Jidai*

by

Daisuke MATSUBARA

This paper examines Uchida Hyakken's (1889–1971) short story "Kage" ("Shadow") in the context of its original venue, the magazine *Bungaku Jidai*, which promoted the "New Era" as reflected in the excitement of the modern city and an objective rationality grounded in modern science. Accordingly, *Bungaku Jidai* devoted a special issue within this framework to detective fiction. "Kage" thus appeared in volume 1, issue 3, July 1929, alongside four other works classified as "detective fiction," all of which described the logical pursuit and clear solutions of criminal cases.

However, "Kage" describes several irrational events against the backdrop of an economic downturn in which the narrator's resentment over financial matters brings calamity for his acquaintances. Although the narrator denies any causal relation between his emotions and their misfortunes, he is forced to confront suspicions—both others' and his own—that he constitutes a horrifying being. The narrator's perception of his "eerie-shaped" shadow at Cafe L suggests the presence within his inner self of an indeterminate entity. "Kage" thus diverges from *Bungaku Jidai*'s dominant tendencies through its emphasis on irrationality and description of an indefinable presence haunting the narrator's interiority.

In this way, Kage diverges from the magazine's dominant tendencies, distinguishing itself through its emphasis on irrationality and its description of an indefinable presence haunting the narrator's interiority.

Gender of Realism: On “*Nyonin aishi*” Starring Yamamoto Yasue of the Shintsukiji Theater Company

by

Maiko ODAIRA

This paper analyzes the representation of women in the 1936 Shintsukiji Theatre Company production of Yamamoto Yūzō’s play, “*Nyonin Aishi*” (1930).

The discussion first details the content of the controversy surrounding “Socialist Realism” within proletarian literature around 1935. In the theatre world, efforts to overcome the crisis resulting from the suppression of leftist activities led to proposals for a grand alliance of multiple troupes, spearheaded by Murayama Tomoyoshi. The term “realism” was utilized within this context and is analyzed as having possessed an ambiguous meaning.

The Shintsukiji Theatre Company maintained a distance from this alliance, consequently facing economic and ideological difficulties. However, the troupe recovered its standing through the successful staging of *Nyonin Aishi* with Yamamoto Yasue in the leading role. Yamamoto Yasue’s emphasis on “reality” in her performance can be situated within the historical context of “realism” already discussed.

The combined image of the play’s female protagonist and the media coverage of Yasue’s private life served to dissociate the troupe’s public image from its leftist tendencies, contributing to the production’s commercial success. Despite this, the significance of this work is scarcely discussed in later histories of *Shingeki*. The paper argues that this omission is underpinned by a historical disdain for entertainment value and commercialism when associated with femininity.

A Study of Yokomitsu Riichi's "Muchi (Whip)": Psychology Shaped by "Custom"

by

Ruri YAHARA

"Muchi (Whip)" (*Chuōkōron*, 1930) is a narrative in which the ship's purser—the first-person narrator ("I")—recounts the circumstances under which *Junkichi Ootake*, a first-class passenger, died by poisoning aboard the vessel. The novel features a purser as its protagonist and takes as its setting the exceptional case of a death occurring on an international passenger liner. However, previous scholarship has not analyzed the work with attention to the maritime "customs" that structure life aboard ship.

Accordingly, this paper investigates the professional positions and institutional systems specific to the shipboard environment, thereby sharpening the resolution of the "customs" that surround the narrator. Through this approach, I identify previously unnoticed psychological dimensions embedded within the narrator's discourse. Further, by examining the narrator's storytelling and bringing to light the "gaps" within the text, I argue that the narrator comes to function as an "unreliable narrator."

In this way, the present study re-evaluates a work long overshadowed by "Kikai (Machine)" (*Kaizō*, 1930) by demonstrating that in *Whip*, the reader's degree of background knowledge significantly alters the perceived character of the narrator's discourse and the psychology inherent therein.

Tatsuo Hori and Shusaku Endo's Library Collections, and François Mauriac's *The Knot of Vipers*:
Text in the "Place of Reading"

by

Mami WATANABE

Literary texts generate meaning through the act of being read; in other words, one may say that a text is born in the "place of reading". From this perspective, the present paper attempts to approach texts that exist together with markings, underlines or marginal notes.

Specifically, it examines *The Knot of Vipers* by François Mauriac—text found in the library collections of Tatsuo Hori and Shusaku Endo, both of which contain extensive writings. The study analyzes the writings themselves as well as the totality of the text marked by these annotations. As preparation for this analysis, all passages containing some writings, along with all Japanese and French marginal notes, were extracted from each of these texts of *The Knot of Vipers*, and textual data for two library collection was constructed.

What are these reconstructed texts—Hori's *The Knot of Vipers* and Endo's *The Knot of Vipers*? In what ways do they differ from one another, and how do they differ from Mauriac's original *The Knot of Vipers*? Using the constructed data, the study employs word clouds to capture objectively and visually the overall characteristics of each version, before returning to a closer reading of the texts. While keeping in mind the authorial images that arise through the act of reading, the paper seeks to interpret each of these versions of *The Knot of Vipers*.

A Study on Savings: Regarding the Novels of Sakunosuke Oda

by

Hideaki SATO

While this essay serves as a literary critique discussing the novels of Sakunosuke Oda, its primary thesis is "savings."

Why make savings the issue? The concept of savings has long been shrouded in the *doxa* that "one ought to save," and has rarely been considered in depth. It can be argued that savings deprived people of the carefree nature of "never keeping money overnight"—the spirit of living day-to-day. Savings is a locus where the motives of depositors, the expectations of family and acquaintances, economic conditions, industrial trends, and national goals all intertwine. By unraveling the reality of savings, this essay seeks to clarify several fundamental meanings.

Using the descriptions of savings and money in Oda's novels as clues, I will examine stereotypes regarding savings and explore a transvaluation of values. In doing so, I aim to approach the very core of Oda's entire body of work.

Oda Sakunosuke's Drafts for *Dobutsu-shu* (Animal Collection)

by

Masao SAITO

Oda Sakunosuke was a writer known for his meticulous revisions, even in his shortest works. In this paper, I focus on Oda Sakunosuke's short-short story collection *Dobutsu-shu* (published in *Osaka Bungaku* in December 1941). Specifically, I conduct a comparative examination of the multiple drafts of this collection preserved in the Oda Library. By examining and organizing these manuscripts, the study aims to clarify how the published version of *Dobutsu-shu* took shape and, at the same time, to offer new perspectives on interpreting the work.

The paper first reviews the current state of scholarship on Oda's drafts. It then provides an overview of the seven extant drafts of *Dobutsu-shu*, focusing on the types of manuscript paper used and the characteristics of their content. Building on this foundation, the study reconstructs the draft history of the stories "Jushimatu (society finch)," "Tosa-ken (Tosa Dog)," "Karasugane (Crow Usurer)," "Uma-jigoku (Horse Hell)," "Fukurou (Owl)," "Tanuki (Raccoon Dog)," and "Neko no nomi (Cat Flea)," with particular emphasis on "society finch," and identifies key features that illuminate the formative process leading to the published texts.

Through this analysis, the paper demonstrates how the work seeks to objectify aspects of the human condition while drawing on the diverse and often striking ideas surrounding people's ways of making a living.

Jun Ishikawa's *Otosibanashi* and Kibyōshi

by

Junko MIYAUCHI

Between 1949 and 1951, Ishikawa Jun published six short stories entitled “Otosibanashi.” This series of stories, depicting legendary figures and historical figures such as Gyou, Shun, LiHaku, and Kiyomori acting in contemporary ways, creates laughter. They employ the “yatsushi” method of subverting the elegant into the mundane. During the war, Ishikawa was drawn to the kyōka and Gesaku of the Tenmei period, particularly those by Ota Nanpo, but this did not end as a wartime obscurity.

Around 1950, when this series was written, the occupation was still in full swing, and the “yatsushi” method naturally became a form of contemporary criticism. Following his postwar masterpiece, “Jesus in the Ruins,” this was a time when Ishikawa was turning to revolutionary novels. While the stories may seem to deviate from the main focus, the very nature of “yatsushi” serves as a form of contemporary criticism.

This article focuses on the relationship with Kibyōshi, and points out the elements that “Otosibanashi” adopted from them, such as comparison with the original sources, the illustrations, and the backstage punch line. In deliberately adopting this style, one can see a resistance to the mainstream of modern literature, which sought to realistically portray the inner lives of individuals using natural prose. On the other hand, some punch lines are extremely personal, reflecting Ishikawa’s literary views, and do not expect the reader to understand them. These punch lines allow one to explore the inner workings of a modern literary writer. In the “Otosibanashi” series, one can see a resistance to modern literature as well as a search for a new, personal form of literature.

The 1951 Matisse Exhibition and Literary Writers: From the Perspective of Newspapers

by

Miho SUZUKI

In the spring of 1951, the “Henri Matisse Exhibition” held at the National Museum was the first large-scale solo exhibition in postwar Japan by a living foreign artist, serving as a symbolic opportunity to alleviate the cultural hunger of the era. Through negotiations in France by Inosuke Hazama, about one hundred works—including pieces related to the Vence Chapel then under construction—were exhibited, with the display supervised directly by Matisse himself. The organizer, the Yomiuri Shimbun, utilized the immediacy and influence of the press, reporting daily in *The Yomiuri Shimbun* and *Yūkan Yomiuri* on the negotiation process and the enthusiastic responses of visitors, thereby shaping the exhibition into a major cultural event. Although not specialists in painting, literary figures also actively contributed commentary: Hideo Kobayashi and Junzaburō Nishiwaki focused on oil paintings, Shūzō Takiguchi and Shintarō Suzuki on cut-outs and illustrated books, and Tatsuzō Ishikawa on studies for the Vence Chapel, all praising Matisse’s sincere dedication to creation. Their writings reflected the significance of the shift from a culture of reproductions to direct encounters with originals. Overlapping with the Peace Treaty and Japan’s reentry into the international community, the exhibition became a social phenomenon heralding the dawn of postwar culture.

Ooka Shohei's *Jochu no ko*:
Analysis Focusing on "Irritation" that "I" Feels

by

Naomi TANIGAWA

Ooka Shohei's *Jochu no ko* is one of the novels written about his fallen comrades, but it is unique in the sense that condolences are not depicted. "I", who is the narrator, harshly criticizes Yasuda's nature of sycophant. In addition, "I" felt uncomfortable with the way Yasuda confessed about his upbringing as a maid's child. "I" thought that Yasuda's confession showed the attitude of justifying his inferiority by blaming his past situation. After that, "I" expresses an uncontrollable "irritation" towards Yasuda.

In *Nobi* (English title: *Fires on the Plain*), Ooka depicted Nagamatsu, a character modeled on the same "maid's child" as Yasuda's case. This fact shows that "maid's child" was a particularly important motif for Ooka. By comparing *Jochu no ko* with *Nobi*, we can confirm that *Jochu no ko* is a work that expresses "irritation" that "I" feels towards Yasuda in an extremely emotional way.

"Maid's child" was an important motif for Ooka, which was associated with not only interest in upbringing and parent-child relationships, but also with the desire to pursue very shocking experiences and the strong negative emotions. Ooka perceived war as an extension of daily life. He pursued the underlying perceptions and attitudes of individuals. *Jochu no ko* tells that "I" can't help but feel a special "irritation" about the attitude of talking about the past for self-justification, which is a matter of the basic way people are.

Why did Yoshie Hotta Write "The Sphinx"?: In Relation to the Afro-Asian Writers' Association

by

Emiko TAKEUCHI

"The Sphinx" (1965) written by Yoshie Hotta, is a unique novel that depicts the behind-the-scenes international politics surrounding Algerian independence movement. Drawing on his experiences at the 1962 Afro-Asian Writers' Congress in Cairo, the novel explores key themes such as continuing colonialism and the nuclear issue. Some characters in the novel were modeled on Mohamed Khemesti, whom Hotta met at the Cairo Congress. According to the journal of Japanese Liaison Committee of Afro-Asian Writers, "Afro-Asian Correspondence", a sentiment expressed at the 1961 The Emergency Meeting of the Permanent Bureau of Afro-Asian Writers in Tokyo, "The Sphinx" was written as a response to this sentiment. The Sphinx, which was built upon the sacrifices of many people and still stands today, is a metaphor for "history", and we also confirm the core tenet of Hotta's literary work, which seeks to overcome "death" and pursue "life".

A Brief Essay on Haruki Murakami's "Fireflies"
— The Lyrical Quality of the Fireflies' Faint Light —

by

Makiko YAMASAKI

This essay argues that Haruki Murakami's short story "Fireflies", published in *Chūō Kōron* in January 1983, appeared between his two major novels "A Wild Sheep Chase" (Kodansha, October 1982) and "The End of the World and Hard-Boiled Wonderland" (Shinchosha, June 1985). It is a crucial work that laid the groundwork for the globally bestselling novel *Norwegian Wood* (Kodansha, September 1987).

While inheriting the metaphor of fireflies depicted in classical Japanese literature, this work depicts light, wind, water, and darkness within the work, seeking a relationship where he and his friend "her", who shares the same grief, can bear the emotional wounds inflicted by his best friend's suicide and heal each other. Ultimately, however, this is not achieved, and she departs. This analysis explores how the sorrow of this loss is poetically conveyed through the fireflies.

Reading Natsume Sōseki's Long Novels through TEI Markup

by

Yoshitaka HIBI

This article analyzes Natsume Sōseki's long novels using the "Digital Sōseki: TEI-Tagged Full-Text Dataset of Complete Long Novels," developed jointly with Ikuko Yamagishi and InKyung Um. The dataset is characterized by carefully designed uses of TEI elements, including refinements of type attributes and ana attributes. The primary aim of the article is to survey the kinds of literary research that become possible through the use of this dataset.

In the first half, the article adopts a distant-reading approach, seeking to understand literary works through quantitative analysis and comparative examination across multiple novels. It demonstrates that distinctive analytical patterns emerge in works such as *I Am a Cat* and *The Miner*, and shows that diachronic changes across Sōseki's novels can also be observed through the <said> tag, which marks dialogue and utterances. The analysis further identifies *Sanshirō* as a particularly intriguing work positioned at the transitional boundary between Sōseki's early and later periods.

The second half of the article presents a close reading of *Kusamakura*, focusing on the behavior of travel-related tags, which reveal a notable point in the text. Using this observation as a starting point, the article reexamines the novel's narrative structure. It argues that in *Kusamakura*, the protagonist Yo's journey is not concluded, and that the journey depicted at the conclusion is not Yo's own. The article argues that Yo begins to form new causal threads with Nami and the people connected to her, whom he refers to collectively as "we."

Finally, the article notes that the dataset includes a wide range of additional tags, such as <quote>, <persName>, and <placeName>, and suggests that these can be flexibly employed depending on the analyst's research ideas, indicating broad prospects for future literary analysis.