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Drodzy Czytelnicy.

Niniejszy specjalny numer *Silva Iaponicarum* 日林 jest już drugim z serii tomów powarsztatowych i prezentuje dorobek Międzynarodowych Studenckich Warsztatów Japonistycznych, które odbyły się w Murzasichlu w dniach 4-7 maja 2010 roku. Organizacją tego wydarzenia zajęli się, z pomocą kadry naukowej, studenci z Koła Naukowego Kappa, działającego przy Zakładzie Japonistyki i Sinologii Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego.

Warsztaty z roku na rok (w momencie edycji niniejszego tomu odbyły się już czterokrotnie) zyskują coraz szersze poparcie zarówno władz uczestniczących Uniwersytetów, Rady Kół Naukowych, lecz przede wszystkim Fundacji Japońskiej oraz Sakura Network. W imieniu organizatorów redakcja specjalnego wydania *Silvy Iaponicarum* pragnie jeszcze raz podziękować wszystkim Sponsorom, bez których udziału organizacja wydarzenia tak ważnego w polskim kalendarzu japonistycznym nie miałaby szans powodzenia.

Tom niniejszy zawiera teksty z dziedziny językoznawstwa – artykuły Kathariny Schruuff, Bartosza Wojciechowskiego oraz Patrycji Duc; literaturoznawstwa – artykuły Diany Donath i Sabiny Imburskiej-Kuźniar; szeroko pojętych badań kulturowych – artykuły Krzysztofa Loski (film), Arkadiusza Jabłońskiego (komunikacja międzykulturowa), Marcina Rutkowskiego (prawodawstwo dotyczące pornografii w mediach) oraz Marty Newelskiej i Magdaleny Kańskiej (badania genderowe).

Mamy nadzieję, że prezentowany zbiór artykułów da czytelnikom wiele satysfakcji, a także zachęci do czynnego udziału w kolejnych Warsztatach.

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Dear Readers,

This is a special issue of *Silva Iaponicarum* 日林, already the second of the series of post-workshop volumes. It presents the output of the Students' International Japanese Studies Workshop, which was held in Murzasichle in May 4-7th 2010.

The workshop was organized by the students' circle "Kappa" with the assistance of the staff from the Japanology and Sinology Department of Jagiellonian University in Cracow. The annual workshops, which at the time of the publication of the present volume had already been organized four times, has been gaining more and more support from the university authorities, the Council of the Scientific Circles, as well as the generous support of Japan Foundation and the Sakura Network. On behalf of the organizers the Editorial Board of *Silva Iaponicarum* we would like to express deep gratitude to all Sponsors, without whose understanding and support the workshops and the publications would not be possible.

The present volume comprises of texts from various fields including linguistics – represented by articles by Katharina Schruff, Bartosz Wojciechowski and Patrycja Duc; literary studies with contributions from Diana Donath and Sabina Imburska-Kuźniar, cultural studies focusing on cinematography (Krzysztof Loska), cross-cultural communication (Arkadiusz Jabłoński), juridical status of pornography in anime (Marcin Rutkowski), and gender studies (Marta Newelska and Magdalena Kańska).

We hope that the present volume, the fruit of the second Workshop, will encourage all our Readers to take an active part in the future workshops.

The Editorial Board  
and the event participants

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読者のみなさまへ

季刊誌「*Silva Iaponicarum* 日林」の特別号をお届けします。本誌は、2010年5月5-7日にかけて実施した第二回目の国際日本学科合同合宿後の論文集で、合宿の特別シリーズの第2巻目となります。

2010年の合宿はクラクフの日本中国語学科の〔カップ〕科学サークルの学生と学科のスタッフの協力のもとで組織されました。合宿は本誌の出版の段階では4回まで開催されていて、毎年組織代表の大学や科学サークル委員会など、そして日本の国際交流基金とさくらネットワークの支援を得ています。実施委員会の代表としてこの機会にスポンサーの皆様には厚く御礼、感謝の言葉を申し上げます。皆様のご協力を得てポーランドの日本学界では有益なイベントが様々開催されています。

本誌は様々な研究分野の論文からなり、言語学はカタリナ・シュルツとバルトツシュ・ヴォイチェホフスキとパトリツィア・デウツツの論文、文学研究はディアナ・ドーナットとサビナ・イムブルスカ・クジュニャルの論文、尚、広義の文化研究ではクシシュトフ・ロスカの論文（映画研究）とアルカディウシュ・ヤブオニススキの論文（異文化コミュニケーション）とマルチン・ルトコフスキの論文（アニメの中のポルノグラフィーに関する法律）とマルタ・ネヴェルスカとマグダレナ・カニスカの論文（ジェンダー研究）を含めません。

国際日本学科合宿に関する特別シリーズの論文集が皆様のご好意を得られ、今後の合宿へご参加への激励となると期待しております。

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2012年9月 クラクフ・ポズナニ・トルン・プラハ・ブラティス  
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Diana Donath

## **Black Romanticism in Postmodern Japanese Literature – The Works of Ogawa Yōko**

### **Introduction**

In contrast to modern Japanese literature of the 1980s before and during the *bubble economy*, which at large expressed a positive, affirmative and active attitude towards life, the so-called postmodern literature, which in Japan developed together with the breakdown of the *bubble*, conveys a negative awareness of life, together with annoyance of political and topical issues, rejection of normal life and society, negation of obligations and disregard for traditional and bourgeois values.

An aspect of this literary trend is the so-called Black Romanticism, which perceives romantic scenes, pictures and moods from a sinister, gloomy point of view.

An outstanding representative of this literary current is Ogawa Yōko, whose focus is on decay and decadence, dilapidation and ruin of buildings as well as of the human being, both mentally and physically.

With her explorations of the dark side of the human soul, with a barely concealed maliciousness<sup>1</sup> underlying her cold, minimalist language, and with her mixture of simplicity and refinement, innocence and hard-boiledness, naiveté and cruelty, Ogawa Yōko has created her own special form of Black Romanticism.

### **Biographical Annotations**

Ogawa Yōko was born in Okayama prefecture on March 30, 1962, into a Shintoist family; her parents' home stood on the ground of the Shinto shrine led by her grandfather. Probably influenced by the special circumstances of her upbringing, certain motifs and characters recur in Ogawa's writing, such as persons who are members of a religious sect, or persons who keep praying loudly and thereby disturb others, or the motif of an orphanage run by a sect, and others.

Ogawa regards the years of her Middle and High School as her gloomy time, in which she put up a silent resistance.<sup>2</sup> Already in High School, she wrote fairy tales and had an interest in poetry, esp. in *Manyōshū*. Her favorite authors were Hagiwara Sakutarō, Ōka Makoto and Kanai Mieko. Ogawa's works show strong references to some of Murakami Haruki's

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<sup>1</sup> See Gnam 2004: "...a maliciousness, which is sometimes hard to bear".

<sup>2</sup> Cassing 1996: 7.

works, in particular to the novels *Hitsuji o meguru bōken* (1982, English translation by Alfred Birnbaum *A Wild Sheep Chase* 1989) and *Sekai no owari to hādo boirudo wandārando* (1985, English translation by Alfred Birnbaum *Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World* 1992).<sup>3</sup>

In the early 1980s, Ogawa studied literature at Waseda University in Tokyo and graduated in the subject of creative writing with a novella with the original title *Nasakenai shūmatsu (A Sad Weekend)*<sup>4</sup>, later titled *Agehachō ga kowareru toki (When the Butterfly Broke Apart)*, which was awarded with the Kaien New Writers' Prize in 1988.

After graduating in 1984, she returned to Okayama, where she worked as a secretary in the university hospital until 1986. The influence of the world of medicine and diseases, hospitals and laboratories is clearly reflected in her works.

She was nominated for the Akutagawa Prize three times in succession, with her novellas *Kanpeki na byōshitsu (The Perfect Sickroom)*, *Daibingu pūru (The Diving Pool)* and *Samenai kōcha (Black Tea that never Cools)*. Finally, she received the Akutagawa Prize in January 1991 for her story *Ninshin karendā (Pregnancy Diary)*, when she was 28 years old.

After marrying an engineer four years her senior, she devoted herself to writing fiction. In 1991, she gave birth to a son. She lived in Kurashiki for six years and is since living in Ashiya, Hyōgo-ken, together with her family. In 2003, she visited Germany, invited by the Japan Foundation, and I got acquainted with her in Cologne.

Ogawa Yōko received many literary awards. *Burafuman no maisō (Brahma's Funeral)* from 2004 was awarded the Izumi Kyōka Prize and *Miina no kōshin (Miina's March)* from 2006 received the Tanizaki Prize.

Her works have widely been translated into foreign languages. Since the 1990s, several of Ogawa's works were first published in France and then in Germany, but not before 2001 did translations of her works appear in English (see lists of translations at the end of this article).

### **Characterization of Ogawa's Writing**

First, I would like to give a compact characterization of Ogawa's writing. In the discussion of selected works, I will give proof of these features.

Ogawa's cold and minimalist narrative style with frugal sentences and the juxtaposition of elements of the plot without causal connection leaves<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> In the following referred to as *Wonderland* and *Wild Sheep Chase*.

<sup>4</sup> Details on all Japanese titles by Ogawa are given in the list of Ogawa's works at the end of this article.

<sup>5</sup> In *Yohaku no ai (Marginal Love)*, the I-narrator says: 'I ...didn't allow myself to get to the bottom of the matter or to make any connections.'

much room for imagination and associations, interpretations and conclusions, speculations and suspicions, which solidify into a strangely diffuse atmosphere of subtle apprehension. The reader tends to make up for Ogawa's occasional narrative inaccuracies and her leaps of time by imagining transitions and completions. (In my conclusion, I will give the author's own interpretation of this feature of her writing.)

On the one hand, Ogawa's texts are enriched with meticulous scientific descriptions, which convey a purist matter-of-factness, and on the other hand with lyrical accounts of scenery (particularly of winter scenery with snow and ice, similar to those in the novels of Murakami Haruki), with various descriptions of temperature and changes of light and of color, by which the author creates impressive poetic images. Some lyrical descriptions, however, end up on a kitschy note, like the boy playing the violin on the riverside at dusk in her novel *Yohaku no ai* (*Marginal Love*, see below).

Except for her earliest novellas, Ogawa's protagonists usually remain nameless<sup>6</sup> and are only referred to with their occupation or social position – 'the stenographer', 'the translator', 'the gardener', 'the girl' etc. This habit, too, is reminiscent of Murakami's *Wonderland* and *Wild Sheep Chase*, where the persons are not given names and are called 'the professor', 'the librarian', 'the administrator', 'the guardian', 'the reader of dreams' etc. In Ogawa's works, leaving the characters thus impersonal and vague is meant to create a distance and an alienation of the reader, but sometimes it ends up leaving the reader uncertain and unsatisfied.

Ogawa's characters are reduced to a few characteristic features, and regarding their behaviour, neither a motivation nor a psychological reasoning is given. For example, in several novels, a young woman's fascination with an old man even leading to dependency and voluntary submission is not made understandable to the reader. In the same way, no emotions are related of Ogawa's characters. Instead, occasionally the weather situation may be described, for example a person's oppressive feeling being transcribed by heavy autumn fog, which causes breathing trouble.

Generally, the author does not describe love and sensuality and should therefore avoid the word *love* in a title. For example, considering the important role of the hands in *Marginal Love*, the reader expects

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<sup>6</sup> Only side-characters sometimes are given names, e.g. in the novella *Ninjin karendā* (*Pregnancy Diary*, see below), the doctor of the protagonist's elder sister (Dr. Nikaidō), who does not take part in the plot, or in the novella *Yūgure no kyūshokushitsu to ame no pūru* (*A School Kitchen at Dusk and a Pool in the Rain*, see below), the protagonist's dog is called Juju.

suggestions of eroticism, which the author always steers clear off. Or in the novel *Kusuriyubi no hyōhon* (*The Specimen of a Ringfinger*, see below), the depiction of the couple clutching tightly onto each other on the floor of an empty pool is devoid of any kind of eroticism. Even the sex scene in her early novella *When the Butterfly Broke Apart* (see below) is described in a cool and unerotic way and does not convey any emotion of love or sensuality. Instead, Ogawa makes fetishism, obsession, and addictive sexual dependency the subject of her novels, like the detailed depiction of sadomasochism in her novel *Hoteru Airisu* (*Hotel Iris*, see below).

Ogawa's storylines usually begin with subtle irritations and small deviations from normality, with over-sensitive or disturbed perceptions; and such minimal divergences lead to disconcerting, enigmatic worlds or mysterious parallel worlds, where the border between life and death becomes blurred.

Most of Ogawa's novels profit from the depiction of things disgusting and revolting, mean and cruel, bizarre and absurd. Her focus is on decay and decadence, dilapidation and ruin. She repeatedly describes frailty, mutilation, and physical handicaps like stuttering and limping, the loss of legs, arms, fingers, eye or tongue, the loss of the ability to hear, to see and to speak, or the loss of memory or of reason.

One of Ogawa's main themes is the conservation of memory as a means to counteract the transitoriness of life. The conservation does not only serve the purpose of maintaining and preserving things, as in her novel *Chinmoku hakubutsukan* (*The Museum of Silence*, see below), but also of storing something away and freeing oneself of it, as in *Marginal Love* and *The Specimen of a Ringfinger*. Ogawa's emphasis lies hereby on the significance of simple, banal and trivial things of everyday life, of things personal and individual.

### **Analysis of Selected Novels**

Among her works that deal with the conservation of memory, the novel *Chinmoku hakubutsukan* (*The Museum of Silence*, 2000) is the most prominent one. The idea of such a kind of special museum, which recurs in Ogawa's writing, is probably related to Oba Minako's novel *Garakuta hakubutsukan* (*The Rubbish Museum*, 1975).

In Ogawa's novel, the first-person-narrator, a qualified expert on museums in his late twenties, comes to a secluded village. He is brought to a remote, time-honored manor which mirrors past splendor and decay, with numerous rooms, a spacious basement used as a depot, and a former horses' stable consisting of two wings. For the purpose of turning the stable

into a museum, he is employed by the owner, a small, skinny, frail old lady. Whereas most of Ogawa's novels are told from the point of view of a young woman who submits to the dominance of an old man, this is the reverse case of a young man surrendering to the willpower of an old woman, transcending her death.

Throughout her life, the old woman has stolen a keepsake from every deceased person in the village, an enumeration of oddities,<sup>7</sup> for example the hedge clippers of her former gardener, which had probably been used for a murder, a prostitute's diaphragm, the scalpel of an ear-surgeon, the glass eye of an organist or the color tubes of a female painter who licked them while dying of starvation.

The old lady wants to exhibit her collection, expertly documented, in her *Museum of Silence*, newly to be established by the young man. Incessantly abusing him, coughing and spitting, she tells him the story and origin of every single object, which he documents and has the old woman's twenty-year-old adoptive daughter, called *the girl*, write down neatly.

During the construction works, which slowly stretch on from early spring throughout summer until deep winter, the young man gets support from the girl, the gardener whose hobby is the forging of knives, and his wife who works as a housekeeper. Here again, there are some reminiscences of Murakami's novel *Wonderland*: The description of the art of knife-forging resembles a scene in Murakami's *Wonderland* (chap. 2); Ogawa's description of a flock of buffaloes with white fur reminds of the unicorns in Murakami's novel (chap. 2, 14, 20); and Ogawa's unnecessarily extensive depiction of a baseball match reminds of that in Murakami's *Wonderland* (chap. 7).

The protagonist of Ogawa's novel is now also in charge of the illegal acquisition of keepsakes of the newly deceased, as in the case of three young women from the village, who are murdered in succession, which makes the local police suspect him. His burgeoning affection to the girl (who has a scar on her cheek – one of Ogawa's recurrent motifs) remains unrequited, as she is more interested in a novice of the so-called *Monastery of Silence* in the nearby mountains, which is inhabited by barefooted monks clad in white buffalo furs.

During the long time in the manor, the I-narrator is gradually bereft of his hold on reality. His longed-for holiday is formally granted but then thwarted. The contact to his brother as his only link to the outside world is cut off. His attempt at escape fails - it drowns in masses of snow and ends

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<sup>7</sup> Such an enumeration (as in *The Specimen of a Ringfinger*) reminds of the strangely assembled chapter titles in Murakami's *Wonderland*.

in being encircled by dead buffaloes, and finally the girl leads him back to the manor.

When the old lady, after having documented her last exhibit, has breathed her last breath, the young man succumbs to his fate that the constantly expanding museum will never set him free.<sup>8</sup> As his own keepsakes, he provides his brother's microscope, which he has used for vivisectioning animals, and a book he has inherited from his mother: the *Diary of Anne Frank*. The fact that Ogawa is strongly influenced by this book, which has been published in over 60 countries, is reflected in her work *Anne Furanku no kioku (in Memory of Anne Frank, 1995)* and in many references in Ogawa's works.<sup>9</sup>

In the nostalgic setting of the once stately grand manor – a sad symbol of past beauty – and in the romantically snowy but also threatening winter forest, a setting which is enriched with motifs from the literary genre of Fantasy (for example muted monks, standing barefoot in the snow, and buffaloes with shining white fur, who surround the protagonist in a magic circle), human beings are deprived of their individuality, by being reduced to a bizarre attribute from their former life, which is selected by the malicious old woman, who thus allows them to leave behind merely an unpleasant, negative memory. It is a menacing, negative, “black” view that the protagonist gets into isolation through the loss of contacts to the outside world, that he loses his personal freedom, as he does not escape from the museum anymore, which is to be understood as a parallel world, and that he loses his own individuality by being reduced to his function for the museum. This is typical of Black Romanticism.

Ogawa's repeated depictions of forlornness, seclusion and silence are images of the isolation of the individual in society.

The conservation of objects or memories is also the basic topic of the novels *Marginal Love* and *The Specimen of a Ringfinger*, although here for the purpose of filing them away and leaving them behind.

The simply narrated novel *Yohaku no ai (Marginal Love, 1991)* derives its fascination from its floating and discomfiting atmosphere, which is based on imperceptible changes and smooth transitions of the realistic and the surrealist level of experience of the protagonist. Here, too, Ogawa follows Murakami who draws up an inner world of memories as a parallel

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<sup>8</sup> This ending with the protagonist giving up the prospect of returning home respectively to the real world also correlates to the ending of Murakami's *Wonderland*.

<sup>9</sup> Mentioned e.g. in *Daibingu pūru (The Diving Pool)*, in *Yōsei ga mai-oriru yoru (The Nights When the Fairy Dances Down, see below)* etc.

world in his novel *Wonderland*.<sup>10</sup> Because of her depiction of parallel worlds, Ogawa is also considered an author of Fantasy Fiction.

The first-person-narrator, a nameless young woman without a child, without qualifications, without aims or interests in life, suffers from a hearing defect since she has been left by her husband. The reason for their separation is his relationship to another woman. In order to contrast the two women, the author makes use of a device reminiscent of the confessional style of the traditional Japanese I-novel (*shishōsetsu*): the protagonist portrays herself as weak, incapable and negative-minded, and elevates her rival, a florist surrounded by a sea of flowers in a shop in the elegant embassy district, to a figure of light.

In a roundtable discussion with other patients of hearing diseases, she feels attracted to the stenographer called by his initial Y, who takes notes of the meeting. In a mysterious kind of magic, she feels particularly drawn to his graceful, slender fingers.

In the protagonist's life, the phase of upheaval, when her husband has paid her a farewell visit and handed her the divorce papers, is a time of emptiness in which she indulges herself in her memories, which are to be understood as her inner life, being another dimension or a parallel world. Her meetings with the stenographer, though described like real experiences, are later disclosed as part of this inner world.

A person of her memories (who corresponds to the real person of her 13-year old nephew Hiro) is a former schoolmate of the age of 13, who used to play the violin. At a meeting with the stenographer Y in a hotel, which formerly was a noble manor, she learns that the son of the former owner had fallen from the balcony at the age of 13 and had spent the next ten years until his death bedridden and ailing in this manor.

On a cold winter night, on a walk with Y in a dark park, she asks him to write down the beginnings of her ear defect. During their first dictation, with heavy snow outside, she realizes that the sound in her ear is the sound of a violin.

Y keeps coming for dictation, and when she falls ill with a flu, he comes to look after her and makes her drink exotic canned soups, and she enjoys the closeness of his fingers. It is not the man himself, but it is his fingers that are the object of her obsession, which is clearly not defined as love. The fetishism and constant personification of the fingers is an essential feature of the novel.

Despite her state of exhaustion, one day she sets out to have a look at the company, which Y gave as his working place. After a troublesome trip to a

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<sup>10</sup> See especially chap. 27 and 36.

remote harbor area, she reaches a brick-warehouse, which was formerly used for imported canned soups and is nowadays a storage for antique furniture. Stuffed with antique chairs and cupboards, it shows a Kafkaesque scenery. Upstairs she finds the violin, which is the cause for her ear sound, and discovers a photo, showing two brothers on the balcony of the manor, which reveals that her former schoolmate was the ailing son from the manor, and that Y is his older brother.

As during their last dictation Y has filled his last sheet of paper and has thus conserved her memories and stored them away in a drawer, she is freed of them and returns from the inner world of her memories to reality, and now she is cured of her hearing affliction.

Impaired hearing is commonly known as a poetic metaphor for social retreat and escapism and thus a stylistic means of postmodern literature.

Another work which deals with the conservation of memory is Ogawa's short novel *Kusuriyubi no hyōhon* (*The Specimen of a Ringfinger*, 1994). The I-narrator, a nameless and shapeless girl of 21, is one of Ogawa's unattached and isolated, obedient and unsuspecting female characters with no experience in love.

After the tip of her ringfinger has been crushed in an accident at work in a lemonade factory in the countryside, she finds a job in the city as a secretary and sole employee of a laboratory expert in an eerie, dilapidated building, a former girls' dormitory, which has been turned into a museum with display cases and shelves.

Her unmarried boss, Mr. Deshimaru, works in a laboratory in the bolted basement. He is specialized on the conservation of pieces of memory brought by persons who want to deposit their memories. The objects are a motley collection of peculiarities and oddities, like mushrooms grown on the ruins of a burned house, a glass of sperm, a bird's bone, a turtle shell, handcuffs, opera glasses and so on.

In some kind of surrealistic hypertrophy, Deshimaru can also conserve immaterial values. When a young woman wants to have the burn scar on her cheek preserved, she gains admission to the closed-off basement rooms, and never comes out again. In the same way, Deshimaru's former female assistants all vanished one after the other.

The I-narrator, too, gets more and more under the influence of her boss and feels an inexplicable fascination mingled with fear. Deshimaru takes her to the deserted indoor pool drained of water. The blue tiles of the pool have a butterfly pattern, which is an allusion to Thomas Harris' novel *The Silence of the Lambs* (1988, made into a film in 1991).

Deshimaru gives her precious black shoes, which he puts on her feet in a ritual and which she is not allowed to take off any more – symbols or magic instruments of his power over her.<sup>11</sup> Deshimaru and the young woman meet in the pool repeatedly, lying on the floor clutching onto each other, with him stripping her naked except for her shoes, but him keeping his clothes on.

In spite of the baneful atmosphere, she does not make use of any of the possible ways of escape, advised to her by several persons, in the same way that Abe Kōbō's protagonist in *Suna no onna* (*The Woman in the Dunes*, 1962) finally turns down the longed-for possibility of escape. Instead, when Deshimaru one day suggests she should have her injured ringfinger preserved as her object of memory, she consciously and of her own free will sets foot in the basement laboratory as a *place of no return*; an act of voluntary submission. This reminds of the voluntary act of self-mutilation of Tanizaki's protagonist in *Shunkin-shō* (*Portrait of Shunkin*, 1933).

Again in the romantic-nostalgic, but also creepy setting of the formerly impressive and lordly, but now run-down building, which has been converted for obscure purposes – once again a kind of parallel world -, the couple of the young, naïve girl and the older man, who impresses her, but exudes an eerie, abnormal and dangerous atmosphere, is used to illustrate with pleasurable presented malice, which is typical of Black Romanticism, the disfiguration of a relationship to a compulsive, emotionally cold obsession. Any insinuation of affection or love is strictly avoided. As it turns out, the man has in fact taken the lives of his former assistants and continues to murder in his parallel world, with the female protagonist as his next victim.

The unfathomable fascination an old man exudes on a young woman, which leads to sexual dependency, is also the topic of Ogawa's novel *Hoteru Airisu* (*Hotel Iris*, 1996). The protagonist, pretty 17-year-old Mari, works hard as a general assistant in her mother's run-down third-class hotel in a seaside resort. Her domineering mother has taken Mari out of school two years earlier, so that she has neither friends of her age nor a boyfriend – she is thus one of Ogawa's isolated female protagonists.

One night, overhearing an aged hotel guest being abused as 'a perverse swine' by a prostitute accompanying him, Mari is impressed by his deep

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<sup>11</sup> In the French film version of this novel with the title *L'annulaire*, made by Diane Bertrand in 2005, the shoes are red, in reference to the red sandals of the girl in *Chinmoku hakubutsukan*.

and imperious voice.

After meeting him in town, they continue to go out together to cafés and to a fairground. The shabby, unsightly old man of over sixty in a worn-out suit is a translator of Russian for package inserts and user's instructions and also translates a novel with a protagonist named Marie, intended by Ogawa as a literary parallel – a rather trivial stylistic device.

The man lives a secluded life on an island off the shore, where Mari goes with him willingly and becomes his mistress right away, although he has a bad reputation and is even said to have murdered his wife.

He turns out to be a tough sadist with perverse sexual inclinations. What shocks the reader most is that Mari, used to nothing else but serving and obeying, responds to him with pleasure. She lets him abuse her, spit at her, insult and humiliate her, moreover kick, punch and beat her, whip her, tie her up and strangle her, and on top of that take intimate photos of her.

One day, when Mari meets the old man's nephew, who cannot speak and eat normally since his tongue has been removed in a surgical treatment, she takes him to her mother's hotel and sleeps with him in one of the guestrooms before he leaves town.

For this reason, on her next night with the old man, his perversions increase to unpredictable dimensions. He punishes her by shaving her head, covering it with cuts, and then scalding her with boiling water, and he hangs her up on a hook at the ceiling of the pantry, tied in a metal chain, almost breaking her bones. Maltreated to total exhaustion, she imagines she sees his dead wife's head gored on a hook, the scarf she was strangled in wrapped around her neck. Mari is completely at his mercy due to a heavy thunderstorm with suspended ferry traffic.

When the old man finally takes Mari back to the mainland, a crowd of people awaits them on the shore, because Mari's mother had informed the police that Mari is missing. As two policemen storm on deck of the ferry to arrest him for abducting Mari, he jumps over the railing and drowns.

This novel, too, describes the relationship of a very young, naïve girl and a considerably older man, which in spite of the age difference might have dealt with romantic love, but in a “black” description is disfigured to a chilling obsession and is focused on sadistic torture scenes, pleasurably depicted in minute detail. Here, too, the man appears as a presumable ripper.

This novel is said to contain the most brutal descriptions in Ogawa's entire body of work.

### **Analysis of Selected Early Novellas**

In her early novellas, Ogawa also pursues her intention of exposing the evil and abnormal and the unplumbed depths of the human soul. She does so explicitly in her novella *Ninshin karendā* (*Pregnancy Diary*, 1990), which was awarded the Akutagawa Prize in 1991.

The female I-narrator, a nameless student who lives together with her older sister and her sister's husband in her parents' apartment after their death, keeps a diary on her sister's pregnancy, in particular on her attacks of nausea, which stretch on and increase for months, result in complete fasting, and change abruptly to a voracious appetite and gluttony. The I-narrator feels impeded by her sister's superior position, which the pregnancy gives her, her domineering behavior and her capriciousness, and rebels against it inwardly.

Working in a supermarket during the vacation, she receives a large bag of soiled, unsellable American grapefruits. She makes them into marmalade, a hot delicacy, which her sister gobbles up immediately. Remembering a brochure on the perils of these fruits, which are prepared with several toxins and a pesticide damaging to chromosomes, she deliberately cooks the fruits together with the skins. She cooks more and more marmalade, which her sister consumes insatiably in vast amounts over months, while she imagines what kind of ominous deformities the pesticide is likely to cause the unborn child. When it finally comes to the birth, she walks to the hospital, past an unrecognizable crying woman and following a tremulous screaming, convinced that because of her doing, the baby will be handicapped.

With her view at the "black" side of the human soul, the author reveals how negative emotions and low motives like malevolence, enviousness, hatred and revenge can lead to felonious actions.

The same idea, to poison a defenseless person with perished food, is also a basic element in Ogawa's novella *Daibingu pūru* (*The Diving Pool*, 1990). The I-narrator Aya, a 17-year-old high school girl, grows up in an orphanage of a sect run by her parents. The dilapidated building with a garden overgrown with weeds, for which she feels a deep loathing because of its suffocating narrowness, is described in detail, which is typical of Ogawa's Black Romanticism.

The noisy community in the orphanage, thrown together by children of alcoholic, mentally deficient, criminal or deceased parents, who are strangers to each other, exerts a de-individualizing group pressure. It represents a family composed by chance - a topic also addressed by other

women writers such as Tomioka Taeko and Yoshimoto Banana.

Although the orphanage is pathetically called *Garden of Light*, the only bright spot in Aya's sinister life is her infatuation with the orphan Jun of about her age, whom she likes to watch when he dives from the 10-meter diving board into the public swimming pool, taking delight in his sinewy body.

However, not knowing that he pays her attention, too, she loses her affection for him, because she continues to torture the 17-months-old orphan baby Rie with sadistic joy, which the author describes in graphic detail, without giving a reason for the evil instincts by which Aya is obsessed, e.g. when Aya lets Rie down into a large ceramic bowl and draws pleasure from the screams of fear the baby lets out, who is enclosed in darkness and musty coldness for hours. Aya even puts Rie's life at risk by poisoning her with a perished cream pastry, leaving her to her fate without any compassion or remorse.

In this novella, too, it is the author's literary intention to reveal the dark sides inherent in the human soul. Furthermore, the revulsion at poisoned or perished food as a symbol of decay is a recurrent motif in Ogawa's works, which is also typical of Black Romanticism.

A variation of Ogawa's descriptions of the disgust of food is exemplified in her novella *Yūgure no kyūshokushitsu to ame no pūru* (*A School Kitchen at Dusk and a Pool in the Rain*, 1991).

In a conversation of the female I-narrator and a stranger, probably a missionary of a sect, who tells her of his youth as a pupil, the former school kitchen - in contrast to a modern school kitchen with machines and assembly lines - is described as a dim and dirty, stable-like building, where unsavoury meals were prepared. The meat was stirred by fat women with rusty scoops, and the potatoes were crushed underfoot with black rubber boots, which repulsed him to the extent that he stopped eating altogether and even skipped school. He took shelter in the ruins of a former chocolate factory together with his alcohol-addicted grandfather, whom he gave the money for his school trip.

In the school swimming pool, he experienced all kinds of agony of adolescence: shame, because he could not swim and had to wear a red bathing cap branding him as a non-swimmer, and fear and despair, when the rain made the splashing water seem to be swarming with fish greedily nabbing at him. In the novella, the motif of the swimming pool, one of Ogawa's favourite motifs, is used to express criticism of the Japanese school system and its group pressure with harmful effects on individuals.

In this novella, Ogawa assimilates unpleasant experiences from her own high school time, which, as she said, are at the basis of the strikingly negative, “black” view, which is prevailing in her early novellas.

The novella contains some further elements typical of Ogawa’s writing, e.g. the commitment of a young woman to an unworthy man much older than her, as the female I-narrator is engaged to a divorced, ailing and penniless loser, for whom she has to renovate and to furnish an old house, which means she is in a situation of upheaval.

The novella *Kanpeki na byōshitsu* (*The Perfect Sickroom*, 1989) depicts the physical decay of the female I-narrator’s 21-year-old brother, her only relative after the early loss of both parents. Ailing from leukemia, he becomes weaker day by day and, merely capable of eating grapes, lives towards death for more than half a year in a hygienically clean hospital room, which embodies for the I-narrator a world detached from normal life, which excludes the dirt of the outside world.

In sharp contrast, the I-narrator describes the untidiness and the chaos in her own kitchen, where dirty dishes keep piling up. This is all the more disgusting for her, because their mother, who had been ailing from dementia, was incapable of leading the household, which led to constant chaos - she is characterized by a hectic, unstoppable flow of words, similar to the mother in *Daibingu pūru*, whose lips are also compared to maggots.

The I-narrator feels disgust at all perishable organic substances and at the act of eating, which symbolizes her basic revulsion against life. In order to comfort her brother, she tells him that marriage and sexual life, which he will never experience, are boring, dull and dirty. These views are basic features of postmodern Japanese literature.

Facing her brother’s gradual process of dying, she finds comfort in a relationship of human warmth with her brother’s stuttering doctor, who, like Aya in *The Diving Pool*, was brought up in an orphanage led by his parents,<sup>12</sup> and to whose muscular body she feels attracted. On a cold winter night, he takes her to a hospital room on the top floor, climbing the outside staircase covered with snow, and she finds shelter and solace in his rather unerotic embrace, while only she keeps her clothes on – a counterpart to the embrace of the girl and Mr. Deshimaru in *The Specimen of a Ringfinger*, where only he keeps his clothes on.

This novella also contains romantic elements like for example the snowy staircase, but it presents most of all Ogawa’s “black” view in the depiction of physical decay of persons in the female protagonist’s environment, for

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<sup>12</sup> And who takes over a position as director of an orphanage after her brother’s death in spring.

example her dying brother, her demented mother, and of the stuttering doctor, an abnormal lover lacking in passion, as well as in the dedicated description of revulsion at any kind of food as a life-abnegating element.

In the novella *Dōmitorii* (*The Dormitory*, 1991), the 28-year-old I-narrator is in an Ogawa-typical phase of upheaval, because she is urged by her husband to follow him to Sweden where he works on an oil pipeline, and to break up their household, which she is unable to do. She keeps hearing an indefinable ear sound, which is combined with the memory of the students' dormitory where she lived until six years ago. The combination of an ear sound and memory, like in *Marginal Love*, is one of Ogawa's recurrent motifs.

In order to find a cheap accommodation for her cousin, she takes him to this dormitory, which was formerly an impressive building, but is now dilapidated, strangely quiet and apparently uninhabited. The janitor, called *the Sensei*, an invalid of over fifty with no arms, just one leg and a deformation of his ribcage, attributes the lack of inhabitants to bad rumors, as a student, who lived there, has disappeared without a trace.

Her cousin moves in, but when she pays the dormitory several visits, she never meets him again. Instead, she gets more acquainted with the handicapped janitor and is impressed by his elegant movements, when he tucks objects between his chin and his collarbone or when he prepares food with the toes of his one leg, which he swings skillfully on the table. He enthuses about her cousin's and the missing student's bodies with a strange anatomic interest and deep affection. When he falls ill, she visits him every day and observes his progressing disease moving toward death, while his deformed ribs will gradually destroy his inner organs. This is an embodiment of human decay, described in a cruel way.

During her visits, a dark wet spot at the ceiling, constantly expanding and dripping a viscous liquid like blood, alarms her. She discovers a beehive in the ventilation shaft, which is probably the cause of her ear sound, but suspecting more behind it because of the ominous disappearance of the two young men, she is left in despair. The underlying suspicion that the janitor might be responsible for their disappearance or has murdered them, creates an eerie atmosphere typical for Ogawa's writing.

In this novella, romantic elements lie for example in Ogawa's familiar motif of the formerly impressive, but dilapidated large building, as well as in the depiction of flower beds with garishly colourful flowers and of buzzing bees, which both make the reader suspicious. "Black" is Ogawa's focus on depicting human imperfectness and decrepitness in the repellent

description of the physical handicaps of the janitor, and of his physical decay until his death.

The above-discussed important feature of Ogawa's writing, the description of physical deformations or transformations, in the case of dying (as in *The Dormitory*) and in the case of pregnancy (as in *Pregnancy Calendar*), which is perceived as a disconcerting, unpleasant physical process, is also the topic of Ogawa's early novella *Agehachō ga kowareru toki* (*When the Butterfly Broke Apart*, 1988): the process of wilting of a dying grandmother, set in contrast to the growing of a new life in the womb of the pregnant I-narrator Nanako.

Nanako's irritation about her unusual physical awareness, which makes her repeatedly doubt her sense of reality, is described in many facets, for example in her over-sensitive perception of the city as "noisy, glaring, evil-minded" and "oppressive".

Nanako's boyfriend Mikoto, a poet who rejects making decisions in life and sees his own self in a state of uncertainty, also speaks of a flowing border between reality and illusion, since he had an experience of near death. Whereas she feels estranged from him because of her pregnancy and is angry at him for not noticing her condition, he gets inspiration for a poem from a casual encounter with an unknown seductive young woman, who – as a photo portrays, which he leaves as a book-marker for Nanako – lets a butterfly out of her opened hands. Nanako, jealous and moreover afraid he might reject her baby, buys a preserved butterfly,<sup>13</sup> and in a fury crushes it in her clenched fist. The butterfly may be understood as a sign for the enticing call of the other woman and also as a symbol of the fetus.

Nanako brings her grandmother Sae, who is suffering from dementia in an advanced stage and can neither speak coherently nor eat by herself, to an elderly peoples' home called *New World*. Nanako describes how she tries to get used to the absence of her grandmother, who she grew up with and who she regarded as a witness to her everyday life, although Sae transferred her grudge against Nanako's unfaithful mother on her, who had abandoned the family because she got pregnant. In addition, Nanako felt rejected by Sae's frequent praying activities.<sup>14</sup> With the depiction of the grandmother's need of care, Ogawa addresses the problem of the aging society (*kōreika shakai*) at an early point of time.

Several novellas have the longing for consolation in common, here in the

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<sup>13</sup> Here, Ogawa mentions a specimen – a topic repeated in her later works.

<sup>14</sup> Like the father figure in *The Diving Pool*, who spends most of his time praying, this may be autobiographically influenced by Ogawa's own upbringing on the grounds of a Shinto shrine.

form of the pregnant woman who wishes to be taken care of in the same way as her dying grandmother.

All these novellas complement each other and contain a hidden depth, being psychographs on experiences of change and human decay.

### **Analysis of Representative Collection of Short Stories**

Less sinister and cruel, but eerie-mysterious, magic-poetic and thoughtful are the short stories comprised in Ogawa's collection *Anjeriina – Sano Motoharu to 10 no tanpen* (*Angelina – Ten Stories With References to Songs by Sano Motoharu*, 1993).<sup>15</sup>

The stories, which have in turn male (story 1, 3, 5, 7, 8) and female I-narrators (story 2, 4, 6, 9, 10), mostly belong to the genre of Fantasy Fiction (thus, in story 10, “through a crack in the air” the I-narrator is transferred to the parallel world).

Here, several of Ogawa's familiar motifs and characters recur, for example:

- Seemingly real persons, who disappear from reality and thus prove to be surreal, or persons, who are transferred from reality to the parallel world of their memory (like in *Marginal Love*) – here an alleged Spanish teacher (story 2) and a muscular man who works at the swimming pool (story 6);
- disabled, injured or suffering characters: here a ballerina who cannot dance anymore because of an injury of her knee (story 1); a woman who loses the feeling for her body parts one after another (a loss of physical awareness, story 4); a female librarian<sup>16</sup> with a speaking handicap (story 2), a man who willingly gives up his voice because of

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<sup>15</sup> The song titles, or excerpts of them, precede each story, followed by a subtitle:

1. ‘Anjeriina’ – *Kimi ga wasureta kutsu* (‘Angelina’ – *The Shoes You Forgot*),
2. ‘Baruserōna no yoru’ – *Hikari ga michibiku monogatari* (‘*The Night of Barcelona*’ -*Story of the Light That Led the Way*),
3. ‘Kanojo wa derikēto’ – *Bejitarian no kuchibeni* (‘*She is delicate*’ –*The Lipsticks of the Vegetarian*),
4. ‘Dareka ga kimi no doa o tataite iru’ – *Kubi ni kaketa yubiwa* (‘*Who is knocking on Your Door*’ – *A Ring Around the Neck*),
5. ‘Kimiyō na hibi’ – *Ichiban omoidashitai koto* (‘*Strange Days*’ – *What I Most Want to Remember*),
6. ‘Napoleon fisshu to oyogu hi’ – *Mizu no nai pūru* (‘*One Day I Will Swim With Napoleon Fishes*’ – *A Pool Without Water*),
7. ‘Mata ashita...’ – *Kin no piasu* (‘*See You Tomorrow*’ – *The Golden Earring*),
8. ‘Kurisumasu taimu in burū’ – *Seinaru yoru ni kuchibue fuite* (‘*Christmas-time in Blue*’ – *Whistling in the Holy Night*),
9. ‘Garasu no jenerēshon’ – *Puriti furamingo* (‘*Glass Generation*’ – *Pretty Flamingo*),
10. ‘Nasakenai shūmatsu’ – *Konsāto ga owatte* (‘*A Sad Weekend*’ – *When the Concert is Over*).

The narrative technique to combine the story with the mood conveyed by a popular song or music title is also frequently used in Murakami's novels.

<sup>16</sup> Another common ground with Murakami's *Wonderland*.

- his fascination with another person's voice (story 7), a woman who has to keep a permanent diet (story 9);
- physical decay in various aspects, like the daily loss of body elements such as hair or skin scales (story 5);
  - the motif of perished or poisoned food (in *Pregnancy Calendar, The Diving Pool, The Perfect Sickroom*) - here of crashed, destroyed food as a symbol for the sudden and irreversible destruction of something which hitherto seemed beautiful and perfect (story 10);
  - a variation of the ear sound (in *Marginal Love*) here in story 8;
  - the fascination with a voice (in *Hotel Iris*) here in story 7;
  - the loss or the renunciation of one's own identity (in *The Museum of Silence*) – here different identities a person assumes: a young woman has the strange job to act as a family member like sister or niece; the different lipsticks she uses in each new role are symbols for her various identities (story 3);
  - the loss of happiness or the life-long, futile waiting for happiness: a 30-year-old woman indulges in memories of her lost youth love (story 6);
  - commemorating the dead on Christmas Eve (story 8).
  - the nostalgic motif of a formerly impressive, but now dilapidated large building, here a dormitory with a malicious janitor (story 6) as a symbol for decay; or the motifs of libraries (story 4) or museums (in *The Museum of Silence, The Ringfinger*);
  - a conglomeration of bizarre, peculiar objects (in *The Museum of Silence, The Ringfinger*) here in story 7;
  - the motif of a pond (in *Marginal Love*) or a swimming-pool (in *The School-Kitchen at Dusk and a Pool in the Rain, The Diving Pool*);
  - the motif of an empty swimming pool drained of water (in *The Ringfinger*) as a symbol for the negation of the purpose of an otherwise usable facility (story 6);
  - romantic snow scenery (in the *Museum of Silence, Marginal Love, The Perfect Sickroom* and others).

### **A New Positive Attitude in Ogawa's Writing**

In contrast to the works discussed above, Ogawa's novel *Hakase no aishita sūshiki* (*The Professor's Beloved Formulas*, 2003, translated into English twice, as *The Housekeeper and the Professor* and as *The Gift of Numbers*,<sup>17</sup> awarded the Yomiuri Literature Prize and the newly established Booksellers' Prize in 2004) shows a kind of warm-heartedness. With its

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<sup>17</sup> See the list of translations at the end of this article.

positive attitude and a humorous note, the novel marks a turning point in Ogawa's writing.

The I-narrator, a young single mother, is dispatched by her agency to work as a housekeeper for the professor, a 64-year-old former university professor of mathematics. The literary model for this character is probably the Hungarian mathematician Paul Erdős (whose biography *The Man Who Loved Only Numbers* by the American author Paul Hoffmann was published in 1998).

As the professor is suffering from brain damage since he had an accident at the age of 47, he can only retain short-term memories for a bit more than one hour. He keeps important information on memo papers which he attaches everywhere, and he comprehends his whole environment through mathematical formulas.<sup>18</sup> In the beginning, the housekeeper is frustrated to find that the professor shows no interest in anything else than mathematics, but despite his difficult behavior, she comes to feel respect and affection for him.

When he hears that the date of her birthday corresponds to a number of significance for him, he opens up to her, and when he learns that her 10-year-old son is waiting for her every day until late at night, he invites the boy to come to his house right after school. He calls him by the name *Root* according to the mathematic symbol for root, in reference to the shape of his head. It turns out that both, the professor and the boy, are fans of the same baseball team 'Hanshin Tigers', and after the professor has repaired 'Root's' radio, the two of them listen to baseball broadcasts together, and the house fills with warmth.

The novel was made into a film in January 2006, directed by Koizumi Takashi, which, in contrast to the novel, is told from the perspective of 'Root' who, at age 29, has become a junior high school teacher of mathematics and recounts his memories of the professor to a group of pupils. The movie touches on the professor's relationship with his widowed sister-in-law, while the novel does not go into much detail and only describes that the widow has a walking handicap as the result of a traffic accident.

Both the film and the book, of which one million copies were sold in two months after its publication as paperback in December 2005, gained the author a wide popularity.

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<sup>18</sup> This idea is also reminiscent of Murakami's novel *Wonderland*, where the I-narrator says: 'My only link to reality are the numbers assigned to me'.

### **The Author on Her Own Writing**

A final look at Ogawa's collection of essays *Yōsei ga maioriru yoru* (*The Nights When the Fairy Dances Down*, 1993), which gives manifold comments of the author on her life, her likings (such as sports) and her work, reveals unknown aspects of her writing.

In the afterword to the paperback edition from 1997, she reports for example on her visit to the former concentration camp of Auschwitz in July 1994. When she stood there, where every word and every kind of liberty was denied and life was destroyed, she kept asking herself what it means to write fiction, and she has become more attentive to her inner voice.

She confesses that there are moments when she gets inspiration for her writing out of the blue, but that she writes extremely slowly and places each word like a brick. She compares her literature to lace, the beauty of which consists in its holes – in something that is not there. It is the same with her writing: when she selects words, many will remain behind, but the unsaid words are equally part of her writing. She wants to create a style where the words chosen include fascinating cavities between them.

She emphasizes repeatedly her wish that her voice may meet with much response in the world. Through the many translations of her works in various countries and languages (e.g. English, French, German, Polish, Italian, Spanish, Catalan, Greek, Chinese, Korean and others), this wish has been fulfilled.

### **Works by Ogawa Yōko**

*Agehachō ga kowareru toki*. 1989. Kaien shinjin Prize 1988, Fukutake shoten (「揚羽蝶が壊れる時」福武書店).

*Kanpeki na byōshitsu*. 1989. Akutagawa Prize Nomination, Fukutake shoten (「完璧な病室」福武書店).

*Samenai kōcha*. 1990. Akutagawa Prize Nomination, Fukutake shoten (「冷めない紅茶」福武書店).

*Daibingu pūru*. 1990. Akutagawa Prize Nomination, Shirley Jackson Award, Bungei shunjū (「ダイビング・プール」文藝春秋).

*Ninshin karendā*. 1990. Akutagawa Prize 1991, Bungei shunjū (「妊娠カレンダー」文藝春秋).

*Shugā taimu*. 1991. Chūō kōron shinsha (「シュガータイム」中央公論新社).

- Domitorii*. 1991. Bungei shunjū (「ドミトリー」文藝春秋).
- Yūgure no kyūshokushitsu to ame no pūru*. 1991. Bungei shunjū (「夕暮れの給食室と雨のプール」文藝春秋).
- Yohaku no ai*. 1991. Fukutake shoten (「余白の愛」福武書店).
- Anjeriina - Sano Motoharu to 10 no tanpen*. 1993. Kadokawa shoten (「アンジェリーナ・佐野元春と10の短編」角川書店).
- Yōsei ga maioriru yoru*. 1993. Kadokawa shoten (「妖精が舞い降りる夜」角川書店).
- Kusuriyubi no hyōhon*. 1994. Shinchōsha (「薬指の標本」新潮社).
- Rokkakukei no kobeya*. 1994. Shinchōsha (「六角形の小部屋」新潮社).
- Hisoyaka na kesshō*. 1994. Kōdansha (「密やかな結晶」講談社).
- Anne Furanku no kioku*. 1995. Kadokawa shoten (「アンネ・フランクの記憶」角川書店).
- Hoteru Airisu*. 1996. Gakushū kenkyūsha, Gentōsha (「ホテル・アイリス」学習研究社、幻冬舎).
- Shishū suru shōjo*. 1996. Kadokawa shoten (「刺繍する少女」角川書店).
- Yasashii uttae*. 1996. Bungei shunjū (「やさしい訴え」文藝春秋).
- Kōritsuita kaori*. 1998. Gentōsha (「凍りついた香り」幻冬舎).
- Kamoku na shigai, midara na tomurai*. 1998. Jitsugyō no Nihonsha (「寡黙な死骸、みだらな弔い」実業之日本社、中央公論社).
- Gibusu o uru hito*. 1998. Bungei shunjū (「ギブスを売る人」文藝春秋).
- Fukaki kokoro no soko yori*. 1999. Kairyūsha (「深き心の底より」海竜社).
- Gūzen no shukufuku*. 2000. Kadokawa shoten (「偶然の祝福」角川書店).
- Chinmoku hakubutsukan*. 2000. Chikuma shobō (「沈黙博物館」筑摩書房).
- Mabuta*. 2001. Shinchōsha (「まぶた」新潮社).

- Kifujin A no sosei*. 2002. Asahi shinbunsha (「貴婦人の蘇生」朝日新聞社).
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## The Meaning and Use of *Waseieigo* in Present-Day Japanese

While considering the subject of *waseieigo*, it is essential to mention two important aspects of its present-day usage in Japanese language. The first refers to the etymology of *waseieigo* and its phonetic and morphologic layer (linguistic aspect). The second might be regarded as an attempt to present the link between the popularity of words which belong to the *waseieigo* group and some kind of sociological diversity in Japan (sociological aspect). Although Japanese society is often depicted as homogenic and collective, its internal structure is varied. The aim of this short paper is to introduce and describe the above-mentioned aspects of *waseieigo* in order to emphasize the mutual dependence between the language and its users.

### ***Waseieigo* – Linguistic Aspects of the Phenomenon**

The term: *waseieigo* 和製英語 can be literally translated as ‘English words made (or produced) in Japan’. *Eigo* 英語 means ‘English’ or ‘English words’, *wasei* 和製 – ‘produced/made in Japan’. However, this way of translation is not completely correct – one cannot consider *waseieigo* expressions as *English words*, since it is obvious that only English native speakers are able to create new ones, whilst the Japanese definitely not. Nevertheless, the term *waseieigo* is with no doubt connected with the English language. It refers to all vocabulary containing Japanese expressions made from English words or morphemes. However, we have to take into consideration that the meaning of these words has been extended from the original one and thereupon the safest way is to translate this term as a group of Japanese words which were made from English words or morphemes and where *katakana* symbols are used for its transcription. The most proper Polish term for *waseieigo* is: *wyrazy anglojapońskie*.

It is difficult to identify precisely when the first *waseieigo* expression appeared in the Japanese Archipelago. However, this matter is strongly related to the large-scale arrival of loanwords from English, firstly after the Meiji Restoration (1868- ) and then after the Second World War (1946- ) when Japan was under American occupation.

The process of borrowing some words or morphemes from English and forming new Japanese words is not a modern phenomenon. It can be compared to the process of forming Japanese words from Chinese

morphemes in the 5th and 6th centuries when numerous Chinese words were absorbed by the Japanese and now are still in use as *kango* (e.g. words like: *benkyō* 勉強 ‘science’, *en* 円 ‘yen’, *isha* 医者 ‘doctor’, *tenki* 天気 ‘the weather’ etc., or prefixes such as: *zen* 全 ‘all’, *sai* 最 ‘the best/the most’). Furthermore, analogically to *waseieigo* nowadays we can find in Japanese a huge group of *waseikango* 和製漢語 (Japanese-made kanji words). This term refers to Japanese words, written by *kanji*, which were mostly formed after the Meiji Restoration to express new notions that had appeared in Japan (e.g. *jiyū* 自由 ‘freedom’, *kaisha* 会社 ‘company’, *bunka* 文化 ‘culture’, *kannen* 觀念 ‘idea, notion, conception’, *kakumei* 革命 ‘revolution’).

While each *waseieigo* expression consists of some English-like words, its pronunciation should resemble the English one. Therefore, the understanding of them may appear to be not difficult for English native-speakers. However, it is essential to know that while forming a new *gairaigo* or *waseieigo* its pronunciation must fit to diction rules which are obligatory in the Japanese language. Furthermore, the way of spelling *waseieigo* is based on how the Japanese hear and assimilate English language and, as a result its pronunciation differs from the original.

In comparison to loanwords (*gairaigo*), *waseieigo* equivalents do not exist in English at all. For example, the Japanese way of calling Los Angeles city (which belongs to *waseieigo*) sounds: *rosu* ロス and was formed as a loan of the first part of the geographical name: *Los Angeles*. The abbreviation: *Los* does not exist in English as a way of calling this American city, so it is rather impossible to guess what the real meaning of *rosu* is. While reading Japanese newspapers or watching Japanese TV, we might come across some Japanese people titled by the word: *desuku* and then we can ask ourselves: who might Tanaka-desuku be? As we can guess *desuku* デスク is not an example of the loanword (*gairaigo*) but it is a typical *waseieigo*, which was made from the English word: *desk*. The meaning of this word has been completely changed – desk is not regarded here as an object, but as a title for a person who works as a reporter or editor in charge of a department at a newspaper. We can notice that every language is subjective and always reflects the specific reality we live in. As a result, some things which exist in one language sometimes cannot be understood by people from a different society and different culture, and therefore searching for accurate equivalents for those words in other languages may appear as a difficult or almost impossible matter.

### On some Aspects of *Waseieigo* Phonetics

Japanese vocabulary can be classified into three categories: *wago* (native Japanese words), *kango* (words of Chinese origin) and *gairaigo* (words of foreign origin). *Waseieigo* belongs to the *gairaigo* category, where one can find some phonetic differences in comparison with *wago* and *kango*. Therefore, only in *gairaigo* and *waseieigo* it is possible to distinguish the following phonetic changes:

1. fricative consonant [ç] can be followed by the vowel [e]:

sheipu pantsu シェイプ・パンツ eng. *shape + pants* ‘tight shorts’

2. flap (tap) consonant [ɾ] can be substituted for [l]:

rō tiin ロー・ティーン eng. *low + teen* ‘kids between 10 and 15 years of age’

3. fricative bilabial consonant [ɸ] can be followed by all Japanese vowels, not only by [u]:

fittonesu wōkingu フィットネス・ウォーキング eng. *fitness + walking* ‘walking to keep fit’

4. stop consonant [g] is spelled only as a non-nasal consonant (as for *kango* and *wago* it can be spelled either as nasal [ŋ] or non-nasal [g]):

ragu matto ラグ・マット eng. *rug + mat* ‘rug’

5. voiced labialized velar approximant [w] may be followed by all vowels (in *wago* and *kango* only by [a]):

uīntamu ウィンタム eng. the contraction for *wint(er) + (aut)umn* ‘shirt on a slip’

6. stop consonants [tʰ], [dʰ], occur only in *gairaigo* and *waseieigo* units:

disukomyunikēshon ディスココミュニケーション eng. *discommunication* ‘inability to speak one’s mind’

7. combinations of labiodental consonant [v] and vowels exist:

Reonarudo Dayinchi レオナルド・ダヴィンチ it. *Leonardo da Vinci*

8. combination of affricate consonant [dʒ] and vowel [e]:

jetto kōsutā ジェット・コースター eng. *jet coaster* ‘rollercoaster’

9. gemination of voiced consonants (as for *wago* and *kango* only voiceless consonants can be geminated):

*Buraddo Pitto* ブラッド・ピット eng. *Brad Pitt*

### **Waseieigo Morphology**

The morphology of *waseieigo* should not be regarded as a problematic issue. Its morphological structure is mostly based on one fundamental rule which is: creating a new word by connecting some borrowed from English morphemes or words. The next step is to phonetically adjust them to the Japanese language.

Nevertheless, we should mention one matter which is worth considering – the tendency to make contractions of words (e.g. *Tōdai* 東大 contraction of *Tōkyō Daigaku* 東京大学 ‘Tokyo University’, *kōkō* 高校 contraction of *kōtōgakkō* 高等学校 ‘high school’, etc.)

In present-day Japanese we can find numerous *waseieigo* that were formed as a contraction of two loanwords from English. The most common pattern is to take the first two moras of each of the two words, and combine them to form a new, single one:

*deko tora* デコ・トラ contraction of *dekoratibu torakku* デコラティブ・トラック ‘decorative truck’

*seku hara* セク・ハラ *sekushuaru harasumento* セクシュアル・ハラスメノト ‘sexual harassment’

*rorikon* ロリコン *roriita konpurekkusu* ロリータ・コンプレックス ‘Lolita complex’

*pasokon* パソコン *pāsonaru konpyūta* パーソナル・コンピュータ ‘personal computer’

*famiresu* ファミレス *famirii resutoran* ファミリー・レストラン ‘family restaurant’

The same or similar pattern is used to make contractions of words for popular names, inventions, products or TV shows (not only of English origin):

*Burapi* ブラピ contraction of *Buraddo Pitto* ブラッド・ピット ‘Brad Pitt’

*Dikapuri* ディカプリ *Reonarudo Dikapurio* レオナルド・ディカプリオ ‘Leonardo DiCaprio’

*purikura* プリクラ *purinto kurabu* プリント・クラブ ‘print club’ ‘an automated photograph machine’

ポケモン *poketto monsutā* ポケット・モンスター ‘pocket monster’

### **Sociological Aspects**

The above-mentioned spheres (linguistic and sociological) undoubtedly influence each other and one cannot be detached from the other. This mutual dependence between some linguistic and sociological changes is not only based on individual, current needs of members of each society, but it also refers to some common phenomena, which exist around us. The word: *mutual* is the key-word here. The society we live in, and all changes and transformations which we meet in our every-day life have a great influence on the way we speak; on the other hand language can influence some aspects of each society as well (e.g. gaps between young and elderly people, or between people from different environments, determined by the usage of different vocabulary; the existence of femiolect, sociolect, etc.). *Sociolinguistics* is a science which analyses the connection between these two spheres. This term refers to the study of the effect of all aspects of society, including cultural, expectations, and context, on the way is used. These aspects determine the usage of *waseieigo* in present-day Japanese as well. Based on the results of a survey which was carried out by me amongst the Japanese to find out *what is their attitude toward waseieigo and who uses it mostly*, I would like to answer some basic questions about this matter.

### **Popularity**

The popularity of *waseieigo* obviously refers to the continuing increase in fascination with American culture. Once Japan was opened to Western influences, the possibility of learning English became a common thing and, therefore, nowadays the usage of some words which refer to English should bring no difficulties. What is more, we cannot disregard the importance of the Media, as we find them to be the most influential *carrier* of new vocabulary, especially foreign words, which are widely used by all TV and radio presenters.

However, it is essential to take into consideration that *waseieigo* is used especially when there is no possibility to call some things by using *wago* or *kango* expression. In Japanese vocabulary we can find plenty of examples of some *differences in nuance* between two words which, on the surface can mean the same, but in fact they refer to two different matters. One of

the most known examples is the *waseieigo* expression: *ofisuredii* オフィスレディー (consisting of two English units: *office* + *lady*). In comparison to: *joseijimuin* 女性事務員 (which is a *kango* term and means: ‘a female office worker’), *ofisuredii* describes a woman who is unmarried, still lives with her parents and usually works as a secretary. As we can see, the term: *joseijimuin* has a more general meaning, whilst *ofisuredii* has more particular connotations.

The common feature of every language is that their users always strive to make their language simpler. Some examples of *waseieigo* and *gairaigo* expressions are formed as a result of shortening loanwords [such as: *baito* バイト, shortened from *gairaigo*: *arubaito* アルバイト – a loanword from the German *Arbeit* (however, here *baito* refers to ‘a part-time job’, not to a regular job or a full-time job)]. Some of them are formed as a result of combining two loanwords together, which can be illustrated by the unit *basujakku* バスジャック ‘bus kidnapping’ (created from original English units: *bus* + [*hi*]jack)

There are plenty of reasons why people who responded to the survey find *waseieigo* useful and characteristic for present-day Japanese. They also claim that *waseieigo* is regarded as something *kakkoii* かつこいい ‘cool, trendy’, which makes their language more *up-to-date*.

### Users’ Identity

A characteristic feature of every culture and its language is the fact that the group of people considered to be most influenced by the latest modern things are teenagers. Japanese youngsters, who demonstrate a real admiration for Western culture and nowadays have an opportunity to study English, use *waseieigo* and *gairaigo* more often than elderly people, which is not surprising.

Those who are responsible for popularizing the usage of *waseieigo* are of course people connected with the Media industry (TV stars, singers, TV and radio presenters, also businessmen and people interested in mass culture). The Media touts, on a mass scale, all innovative things. *Waseieigo* is used mostly in areas such as: TV shows, commercials, pop culture, science and technology, newspapers and magazines, which is determined by the fact that in these areas we can observe the great impact of Westernization (fashion, music, movies etc.). We can also find many examples of *waseieigo* use in manga and anime (e.g. titles of popular manga and anime: *Sērā Mūn* セーラー・ムーン ‘Sailor Moon’ which is well-known by all Polish teenagers; some jargon terms, such as: *gāruzu*

*rabu* ガールズ・ラブ ‘girls love’ – Japanese jargon term for ‘a genre involving love between women in anime and manga’). We can also find many examples of *waseieigo* in modern literature, e.g. the name of a new genre of Japanese novel: *raito noberu* ライト・ノベル ‘light novel’, which refers to ‘small and portable illustrated books’.

Japanese slang is full of *waseieigo* constructions as well, and what we find more interesting – some of them are surprisingly difficult to interpret or even associate with English language. These colloquial expressions are often connected with the subject of sex, and belong to Japanese vulgarisms. We can introduce here some softer examples of these colloquialisms (however, we have to take into consideration that most of them were used until the 1980s and may now appear as quite out-of-date): *rēiji* レーイジ, shortened from the *gairaigo* unit *kurēiji* ‘crazy’, *apo* アポ<sup>o</sup> eng. *appointment* ‘a date’, *moderugan* モデルガン eng. *model* + *gun* ‘penis’, *hādo koa* ハード・コア eng. *hard core* ‘tough-looking homosexual’, *reinkōto* レインコート eng. *raincoat* ‘condom’, *maniakku* マニアック eng. *maniac* ‘someone who is a know-it-all about a subject’.

On the other hand, survey respondents suggested that the areas where the usage of *waseieigo* is not so common are: education, ceremonial speeches, and some cultural performances, as we can find there the impact of traditional culture. The group of people who uses *waseieigo* least is undoubtedly elderly Japanese people. According to the suggestions of the respondents of our survey – elderly people feel no need to use these unknown, English-like words and claim that they feel no bond with them. The survey also corresponds to the conviction that the older we are the more difficult it is for us to pronounce and remember new words, especially when they are loanwords.

### Difficulties

As mentioned earlier the pronunciation of *gairaigo* and *waseieigo* words must correspond with Japanese phonetic system, thus, theoretically the usage of them should not bring any difficulties. However, elderly people find it quite troublesome to pronounce some new sound combinations, such as: *wi* ウイ, *di* デイ, *vi* ヴイ, *je* ジェ, which often occur in *gairaigo* and *waseieigo* (Imamura 1996: 83).

One of the respondents of the survey claims that, in her opinion, all words written by katakana symbols can cause some difficulties for Japanese people. As they live in the world of kanji, it can be hard for them to

completely understand a word if they cannot imagine the sign of this word in their head.

What we find more troublesome is the fact that the term *waseieigo* usually refers to new words, new notions or names for things which did not exist before. We can find an expression, such as: ペーパー・ドライバー (*pēpā doraibā*) eng. *paper* + *driver* ‘the way of calling a person who has a driving license, but does not drive a car at all’, which is known by most Japanese people because it refers to something that is common in Japan. On the other hand, in some dictionaries we can find an expression, such as: デコ・トラ (*deko tora*) eng. *deco(rative)* + *tru(ck)* ‘the truck which was decorated on purpose’, which refers to something rare and unknown.

As we can see, the knowledge and usage of these kind of expressions depend on whether something is close to us, exists in our surroundings, or how often it is used by us in our everyday life.

### **The *Waseieigo* Consciousness**

People are able to speak and communicate using (easily and freely) their native languages, but they rarely consider why they use *that word* and not *the other*, or why they pronounce *these words* and not their synonyms. Being an ordinary person means that we do not have to be completely aware of our language, or possess more detailed knowledge of any linguistic matter. That is the reason why some respondents said that while answering our survey, for the first time, they were obliged to think about their language and consider things, which had seemed to them obvious before.

Do we know and completely understand the language we use, or is it rather a matter of context, which influences the way we understand an expression and use it, or just a matter of our speaking habits? In Japanese we can find some confusing pairs of words (the first one belongs to *kango* or *wago* and the second one belongs to *gairaigo*) which (on the surface) seems to be synonyms, but in fact, they are not. The difference between them depends on the context and prevalence [e.g. *chiketto* チケット and *kippu* 切符, both mean: ‘a ticket’; the latter unit usually refers to a bus or train ticket, while the former is rather used as general reference to tickets]. Analogically, there is a Japanese way of calling *wife* as *tsuma* 妻, or *waifu* ワイフ however, *waifu* is not so popular nowadays and is rather classified as *shigo* 死語 (dead language, which is sometimes used by elderly people). *Waifu* is also used by comics when they are joking about women from the West. On the other hand, the word *tsuma* has different connotations – it is a modest way of referring to one’s own wife in Japanese. In spite of the fact

that these words belong to the same semantic fields, differences between them are dictated by context.

As we can observe, context has a leading role in Japanese conversation, and sometimes it is even more significant than words. Here, I would like to mention the work of Edward Hall, entitled *Beyond culture*, where he presented his concept of dividing cultures into two particular types: high-context cultures and low-context cultures (Hall 1976). The first type refers to all groups and societies where people have close connections and interaction over a long time, which makes their communication more implicit and helps them to understand each other with fewer words. Edward Hall has claimed that Asian cultures (the Japanese and Korean) are more like that, when European cultures (especially from the North) should be classified as low-context cultures, as the communication between people living there is more explicit, requires more detailed information and words are more valuable than non-verbal communication. Consequently, we find it troublesome to understand some Japanese expressions, although we do our best to learn Japanese. According to Edward Hall's conception this inconvenience might be determined by the fact that, as living in central Europe, we belong to a low-context culture.

To conclude, no matter whether the attitude toward a still increasing number of loanwords and *waseieigo* in Japan is positive or rather negative, we can be sure that its growing use is unavoidable. The process of borrowing words from one language and incorporating them into another one is common and characteristic for all languages, not only for Japanese. However, the way the Japanese create their English-like words from some borrowed morphemes and use them in their everyday life on such a mass scale seems to be quite astonishing.

The use of *waseieigo* can be regarded as the most suitable way of calling something that is new, exotic, or has a peculiar connotation and it makes spoken language more up-to-date as well. Being aware of this fact can help us believe that this huge group of words is an irreplaceable part of the Japanese language.

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### **Western Suit Ill-Matched to a Japanese Body: The Problem of Christian and Japanese Identity in the Works of Endō Shūsaku**

*We, Western people, expect our Japanese acquaintances to be Buddhists just as some of us take for granted that all of them would gladly die from overwork. We might even feel somehow disappointed having learned that our oriental friend is a devout Christian, just as we can hardly imagine maiko wearing jeans. Not only because it wouldn't suit her. It would be a total negation of everything she represents. Is Japanese culture and identity so deeply enrooted in Shintō and Buddhism that "Western" Christianity would be such an ill-matched suit? (Netland 2009: 1)*

Firstly, let us look from the Christian theology point of view. Due to religious belief, being a Christian means being part of a family whose ultimate home is not of this world (Netland 2009: 9 & 11). One may say that Christianity genuinely is a multi-cultural faith. Sin and redemption by Christ are believed to transcend cultural boundaries. Having said that though, considering Christianity outside its Western stream is not without the greatest effort. After all, this is where it developed and flourished and helped to shape along with other prominent factors. But what if Christianity has influenced Western thought to such a profound extent that nowadays it is hardly possible to extract its values from those which we only mistake for them? Still, there must be some basis of the Christian faith that lie in its very heart and cannot be adjusted to one's likings or customs and therefore the believers' origin should be irrelevant. However, Endō in his works seems to indicate that it is not mere cultural differences that enable the Japanese to convert to the Westerners' faith, but the problem lies in its core itself. Could the Japanese ever adapt fundamental Christian values to their mentality. This question haunted Endō Shūsaku almost all his life and certainly constitutes one of the main themes of his novels.

Endō was baptised at the age of eleven and he knew the pains of the outsider all too well, although at the beginning he was not seriously interested in his new religion. It is very probable that, like most people, he simply followed the example of his closest relatives, without giving it a second thought. But eventually he let Christianity shape his life, as well as the very nature of his writings. Endō remained Japanese, but at the same time he was a Catholic – and believed that Christianity is from the

beginning associated with Western culture. In fact, the sense of oppression one of his characters – Mukaizaka from *Nanji mo mata* (*And you, too*, published only in Japan in 1965) – felt in European culture as a stranger in foreign country was Christianity. (Mathy 1967: 69) This towering tension due to the conflict of “the Japanese spirit” and Christian basic values echoes in almost every piece of his work.

*I wondered whether it was possible for me to reshape this Western dress that my mother gave me and make it fit my Japanese body; that is, whether it was possible to adapt Christianity to our mentality without distorting Christianity.* (Netland 2009: 1-2).

What is essential, both elements of his identity, that is being Christian and being Japanese at the same time, were equally precious to him. In his novels, Endo places emphasis on the fact that in Japan even during severe persecutions Christianity as a religion was not treated with hostility, but rather passive indifference. This indifference, which can be in fact more painful than open hatred, points out that Christianity might have been beneficial for Western countries and therefore is praiseworthy, but not imitable, least of all in Japan. Not an ugly suit – just an ill-matched one. As a convert Endō found himself in a rather uncomfortable position and this experience encouraged him to find his true identity and his true self – or at least to seek it throughout his life.

Painful, but perhaps the only authentic and fruitful way to develop one’s self-awareness, is a spiritual journey that often starts on the occasion of meeting another culture. Travelling to the end of the world and leaving behind everything that we have so long taken for granted can be a traumatic experience, but purifying as well. It is not without purpose that Endō so willingly forces his characters to set off on a journey. Only confrontation teaches us what is really essential and authentic about ourselves, and apparently Endō knew it all too well. He wrote in the preface to his novel *Foreign Studies* about his feelings and experience of being a stranger in France:

*Optimistically I began to believe that I had taken the first step towards acquiring an understanding of Europe. And yet, in about the middle of my second year, I learnt that towering beyond the hill I had scaled lay an enormous mountain. Further on lay an even more imposing mountain. I now found myself wondering*

*whether there was any way that a visitor from the Far East could ever comprehend France.* (Rimer 1967: 62)

The main character of *Nanji mo mata*, Mukaizaka, a Japanese student in France, at the beginning of his stay notices surprisingly many similarities between Western and Eastern cultures. Horyūji temple in Nara and the statues of Moissac in Chartres display a visible resemblance and the young Japanese is full of hope and enthusiasm for his attempts to tame “the European river”, as he calls it (Mathy 1967: 58). As time passes, he learns that the similarities are no more than skin-deep, and in the end he comes to the rather gloomy conclusion that *the blood that produced the two was of altogether different type... We are unable to receive a blood transfusion from a donor with a blood type different from our own* (Mathy 1967: 59).

It may seem rather pessimistic, but on the other hand Endō also stated that because of the experience of solitude he had become more aware of his Japanese identity.

Endō also spoke about the *unfathomable distance* as well as the *emotions and a sensibility that remained alien* to him (Mathy 1967: 59). And perhaps this painful discovery stimulated him to seek, with even deeper commitment, the link with all human beings. His message eventually is not very uplifting: evil and frailty are omnipresent. But on the other hand, Endō loves his weak characters, just as his Christ does (Gallagher 1993: 80). Thrown from society, betrayers and betrayed – all those pitiful individuals at the bottom of the heap are considered to play a significant role in other people's lives as a litmus test to their humanity.

In spite of his quoted bitter confession concluding his lack of profound understanding for Europe and its religion, Endō remains an influential novelist, not only in Japan, but as a true world-class writer. His works were widely translated into almost all European languages and were reviewed positively in the most respected publications and newspapers (Rimer 1993: 59).

What is more, Japanese writers rarely created as complex and convincing foreign characters as he managed to do. In other novelists' works, foreigners were usually just a walking parody, which was not necessarily intended. According to Rimer (1993: 60) even the greatest Japanese writers, such as Kawabata Yasunari or Mishima Yukio, failed to break free from stereotypes. Endō's vivid portrayals of foreigners and of the Japanese as well, are proof of his in-depth understanding of the human soul at the most profound level, extending beyond cultural boundaries.

Endō was well aware of hidden, but unbridgeable differences as well as tempting, but shallow parallels. His strong aspiration to express his inner conflict can be found not only in his numerous novels, but also as direct references in many of his essays.

First of all, he tends to point out that Western people's actions are often determined by a need for continuous confrontation (Mathy 1967: 60). We are used to binary ways of thinking and can instinctively indicate boundaries when asked to. But the Japanese have neither such consciousness nor need. Japanese sensibility praises the indefinite, the safe and friendly grey rather than the contrast of black and white that excludes anything else in between. In other words, the Japanese are said to be reluctant to the Western extreme way of thinking.

Endō calls Western culture a world of *deko* 凸 'convex', a world of oppositions and boundaries, and contrasts it with the Japanese world of *boko* 凹 'concave', insensitive to many Western concerns as well as lacking clear distinctions (Mathy 1967: 64). The opposition of Western rationality and Eastern intuition can be found in *Deep River*, when one of main characters – Endō's typical *obakasan* 'fool' type, Ōtsu – complains:

*(...) my Japanese sensibilities have made me feel out of harmony with European Christianity. In the final analysis, the faith of the Europeans is conscious and rational, and these people reject anything they cannot slice into categories with their rationality and their conscious minds. (...) But an Asian like me just can't make sharp distinctions and pass judgement on everything the way they do* (Netland 2009: 1).

In one of his undergraduate essays Endō also mentioned also three "insensitivities" typical for the Japanese. Indicated insensitivities were said to be responsible for the inability to transplant Christianity successfully (as expressed in *Silence*): insensitivity to God, to sin, and to death – all of them the negation of undoubtedly basic Christian ideas (Mathy 1967: 62). Yet in fact the most dangerous Japanese characteristic is not the fact of negation, but mere indifference.

When it comes to God, the Japanese are clearly reluctant to apprehend Him as an absolute being, especially one that is depicted as a severe judge, giving praise or punishment, dependent on peoples' deeds. The paternal vision of God is enrooted in Western minds so deeply that turning to God using the *she* form sounds almost like heresy. A maternal, compassionate God, resembling the merciful Buddhist Kannon or the divine Hindu mother

Chamunda presented in Endō Shūsaku's *Fukai Kawa* (Deep River, 1993) is more relevant to Japanese sensibility than an old, majestic man. Perhaps a Japanese father, or at least his image, was more strict than the European one, and definitely not like the father from the Parable of the Lost Son (Gallagher 1993: 83). Maybe we are excused to redefine some terms, as least to some extent, to introduce them successfully to another culture in a possibly smooth way. This is, after all, what constitutes good translation. And so *Samurai's* main character, Hasekura, is at first repulsed by images of crucified Jesus, but in the end realizes that they are much closer to him than the triumphant, lavishly embellished pictures. "That Man", the humiliated outsider whose face is covered with blood and spittle, is incomparably easier to befriend (Gallagher 1993: 79).

But the terror of a punishing father is not the only obstruction that, in Endō's opinion, prevents the Japanese from the correct apprehension of his faith. The Japanese, he says, cannot conceive of a transcendent God. Even if they have the true will to believe and accept Christian faith, they filter it through a pantheistic culture. This issue is raised in *Silence*, and reaches its peak in father Ferreira's statement:

*(...) the God that the Japanese prayed to in our churches was not the Christian God, but a god of their own making, such as we cannot understand... if you can even call him a god... No, that is not God, but something like a butterfly caught in a spider's web. At first the butterfly was certainly a butterfly. But by the following day, while it still had wings and trunk, it had become a lifeless corpse, had lost its true reality. Our God too, when he came to Japan, like a butterfly caught in a spider's web, retained the external form of God but lost his true reality, becoming a lifeless corpse (Mathy 1967: 71).*

That is why he compares Japan to a mud swamp – whatever is borrowed is filtered and eventually becomes something completely different from the original.

In another of Endō's novels, *Ōgon no kuni* (*The Golden Country*, 1966), which tells the story of Ferreira's apostasy, the man leading the persecution of Japanese Christians called Inoue also refers to the metaphor of a mud swamp saying:

*(...) but the mudswamp too has its good points. If you but give yourself to its comfortable warmth. The Christian teachings are*

*like a flame. Like a flame they set a man on fire. But the tepid warmth of Japan will eventually nurture sleep." (Mathy 1967: 72)*

The problem, according to Endō, is not only that the Japanese people reject the Christian transcended God, but that they do not even feel an urge to declare whether they believe in Him at all. In the West, on the other hand, even an atheist by denying this fundamental truth positions himself in relation to Him, or rather – in this case – to His non-existence. This matter, however, seems to be completely irrelevant to the Japanese.

*Hasn't this Christian tradition and sensibility permeated so deeply into the Westerner's hearts that it can never be obliterated?(...)*

*Even where there is no trace of anything Christian in what he writes, or even when he positively rejects Christianity, I can see that this religion remains in some form or other in the Westerner's heart (Mathy 1967: 61).*

The second insensitivity mentioned – insensitivity to sin, might be questionable. It was Ruth Benedict who for the first time presented to the West an idea of Japanese “shame culture” in contrast to Western “guilt culture”. Benedict tried to prove that the Japanese feel no guilt after committing a shameful deed as long as no one discovers what they have done. It is rather a risky theory, whose conclusion could be as dangerous as what follows: that Japanese have no conscience. This, of course is an absurd thesis with no reflection to reality. Individual consciousness of sin depends on one's background, religion and sensibility, and probably cultural factors as well, but such a claim would be an evident overstatement. Yet the reaction of the Japanese to sin is not as those of Western Christians – they do not conceive of the death of the soul, which is said to be the natural consequence of sin. Apparently, such comprehension is simply too extreme for the Japanese sensibility. That is why Endō's characters cannot – or are reluctant to – think about sin and guilt in a way that is usually associated with Christianity: sin is a harmful deed and a haunting sense of guilt is its well-deserved punishment. On the other hand, the God depicted in Endo's novels is hardly ever seen as a just, but destructive and punishing force. Can “That Man” on the Cross, known from *Samurai*, punish? Can Christ encouraging to step on *fumie* 踏み絵 in *Silence* punish? This God similar to *Deep River*'s Chamunda? Or rather,

like the River Ganges, He accepts everyone and everything, mercifully absorbing into the stream of His unconditional love? Yet again, perhaps it is not the core of the problem. Consciousness of sin healed with a boundless trust in God is not the same as an entire lack of consciousness. As Mathy (1967: 62) states, good and bad, right and wrong were not usually used by the Japanese in the past to classify other people's deeds. The Japanese, it seems, had a more aesthetic approach and talked about being clean or unclean rather than moral or immoral. Perhaps it is safe to say that this is just putting the emphasis on different aspects of the same phenomenon.

The third Japanese "insensitivity" – to death, is undoubtedly the hardest to track in Endō's works as it is not illustrated as lavishly as the two mentioned formerly. If there is anything in this world that equalizes people so objectively, it is certainly the inevitability of death. Endō, of course, did not venture to prove that the whole Japanese nation does not fear death, although the Japanese approach to death is certainly not the same as ours. Yet from the physical point of view, most people are simply afraid to die, whatever their culture or nationality may be. Putting aside primitive instincts, Christians, for instance, should consider death as a longed-for moment of passing to the Home of the Father. In most cases, however, this blessed passage is seen as a dreadful scene of ultimate judgment. The passive Japanese attitude and calm resignation so characteristic in Japanese philosophy perhaps lets them conceive of death as an eternal sleep (which is not just a mere poetic metaphor) and an end of all struggles and suffering (Mathy 1967: 62).

According to Mathy (1967: 63) Endō himself could not help feeling envious of his Japanese acquaintances, who apparently got along quite well without a sense of guilt or longing for the elusive God and His uncertain salvation. It is said that Christianity is in fact a very unbalanced religion and so tension and uneasiness is inevitable.

Endō did not trust fully in his newly acquired sensuality and often relied on feelings shaped by the Japanese spirit and open-mindedness rather than strict Christian convictions. Strange though it may seem, as an official and devoted member of the Catholic Church he rejected at the same time all human institutions, that he saw as an oppressive force that crushes the weak and destroys individual feelings (Van C.Gessel 1999: 39). It must have been another source of anxiety for a member of the Catholic Church, which can be conceived as a spiritual community, but at the same time as one of the most influential and powerful organizations in the world. Nevertheless, remaining true to his partly Japanese, partly Western world-

view Endō was very genuine in his struggle. And this is this struggle that restrained him from the luxury of passive resignation so praised in his country. Perhaps, out of his haunting feeling of being lost between two great cultures arose his interest and pity of the weakest that appears in almost all of his novels, rather than praising the un sinful – unrealistic, that means – heroes.

Due to Gallagher (1993: 83) Endō was a theologian ahead of his time. Long before the extensive spread of ecumenism or Divine Mercy he explored both these themes. But being a theologian and a devout Christian does not necessarily mean abandoning free art. As a writer, Endō followed the words of the English Catholic novelist – Graham Greene – who said that it was the writer’s “duty to be disloyal” (Gallagher 1993: 77). For Endō does not edify, does not give straight answers or uplifting morality (Gallagher 1993: 76). Instead, he poses disturbing questions which aim at provoking readers to rethink and redefine fundamental truths and ideas and therefore have much more of a significant impact than clear, but dull answers.

Endō made the main theme of his novels issues that have rarely appeared in Japanese writing before and therefore may be hard to fully comprehend. Yet, how could the novelist supposed to be writing outside his tradition be awarded the most prestigious prizes and be elected as president of Japan’s P.E.N. Club? How could he ever gain such immense popularity not only in Western countries, but also in Japan (Gessel 1993: 67-68) ? Either his works were, as he said himself, *lavishly praised and totally misinterpreted* (Gessel 1982: 444-445) or it is justified to state that he successfully depicted in his novels something that ties all humanity, whatever the cultural differences may be. Or maybe his success can be attributed to both of the above mentioned reasons combined at the same time. After all, misinterpreted or not, his works are simply entertaining even for a less demanding reader.

Supposing a universal element in his prose can really be found, we should look for this link in layers of the unconscious – something familiar rather to the Eastern tradition of writing than to Western thought (Rimer 1993: 63-64).

Unconsciousness was often regarded with suspicion by the Western tradition, whereas Buddhist wisdom says that it is *the* unconscious that *lies at the heart of man* (Rimer 1993: 64). Perhaps these two traditions use the same term for different layers of the self. In a negative sense, unconsciousness is its dangerous aspect, responsible for nameless, dark instincts, uncontrolled and unbalanced. In Buddhist understanding,

however, and Endō's as well, the "unconscious" refers to the deepest level of self, hard to define, but common for every human being – something we can call in the West, universal human nature that makes us all equal and therefore is positively valued.

This ambiguous attitude to the human self, different in both traditions and so precious to Endō, might have been problematic for him, but at the same time this conflict initialized the creative spiritual uneasiness and the power of posing important questions with doubled strength.

When it comes to Endō's diagnosis on Christianity, its universality and the uniqueness of the Japanese spirit is not obvious. Japan cannot absorb Christianity without some necessary alterations to its Western form, that at least seems to be quite certain. The question is: after this filtration would Christianity become simply a butterfly with differently coloured wings, equally beautiful, or would it turn into an empty corpse, mentioned by Ferreira? Despite the pessimistic claim of the old apostate, *Silence* gives us a shadow of hope. After all, how can Japan be a deadly mud swamp, if it eventually enabled father Rodrigues to find in Christ from *fumi-e* he had trampled his God? By this act he rejected his Church, failed his superiors and lost his already hurting pride. In other words, he lost everything that was ever precious to him and lost everything that he could stick to all his life. Only humiliated love remained. And maybe that is the only answer that Endō managed to find for himself through all the pages of his numerous works.

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## **Polish-Japanese Communication as a Challenge – in the Light of Interpretation Practice**

Interpretation problems are inherent elements of cross-cultural noise, which is inevitably present at any interpretation scene. Some data on actual interpretation issues that emerged during an actual interpretation project implemented in a Polish-Japanese environment are going to be presented in this paper.

### ***Ab Ovo***

As is commonly known, the notions of translation and interpretation tend to be defined as processes or process results. This is reflected in the following definitions:

#### *translation (interpretation)1*

„A linguistic procedure of substituting a text in source language with a text in target language, maintaining the relation of equivalence.” (Lukszyn 1993: 349-350)

#### *translation (interpretation)2*

„A text as a result of a translation/interpretation procedure.”  
(ibid.: 350)

Equivalence issues emerge, regardless of the actual definition, especially concerning the issue of interpretation and the position of an interpreter. First, it is often not possible to substitute the source competence of an original speaker with a competence of the final recipient of a text. Second, the interpreter functions on the stage of interpretation process not only on a theoretical basis, as a medium between the speaker and the hearer, but as one of situation participants, who may be required to take part in certain activities of the interaction parties.

### **From the Theory of Interpretation**

Contrary to translation, interpretation is often described in a rather superficial manner:

“Interpretation is a natural activity, its oral character enabling it to contain all elements of meaning, of which the written

translation is often deprived: interlocutors are present on the spot, no time distance divides the messages exchanged between them, and also the utterances are formulated in a contemporary language and the cultural differences do not constitute a major handicap for the interpreter's activity." (Pieńkos 2003: 146)

While interpretation is a natural activity in a sense that communication without it is impossible, it is a serious misunderstanding to imply that it occurs without problems. Significant issues that must be dealt with on the scene of translation process are related first of all to the distance between the source and target text. On one hand, it is possible to ask ironically:

“Are the Poles praying <<Pater Noster>> or <<Ave Maria>> in their native language aware that they actually deal with translations?” (Lipiński 2004: 31)

On the other hand, it is possible and necessary to ask, whether the participants of a cross-cultural exchange process that lays behind the process of interpretation, constituting its most vital axis, who experience the unknown and unpredictable aspects of the foreign culture are prepared to receive the target messages related to them?

### ***The Area of Increased Risk***

Duszak emphasises the notion of miscommunication and the issue of recognising cross-cultural and interlingual contacts as “the area of increased risk (Duszak 1998: 332).”

“(…) disturbances in communication processes may be of a critical character from the point of view of immediate communication effects as well as for future contacts of whole social and ethnic groups. At the moment we lack tools for analysis, which would make it possible for such intuitions to get more specific, to be reproduced within a model of communication, not to mention their transfer to the language of practical educational activities (ibid.).”

### **Actual Interpretation Project**

In this paper, issues related to the actual implementation of a translation project are going to be presented. The project was implemented in Poland and Japan in the years 2007 and 2008. The project's main objective was a construction of a Japanese company plant in Poland and its future employee (operator) training in two locations in Japan. Main phase of the

project lasted around 12 months, with 39 interpreters involved, of which up to 30 were simultaneously delegated to Japan at the project peak.

Interaction within the project took place among 4 partners (parties): PL customer, JP customer, interpreters (PL), interpreting office (PL). The following are the results of a survey conducted among the project participants (interpreters), with 37 respondents of all 39 (94,8%) interpreters involved in the project. Although it was probably not possible to prevent a certain bias related to such research methodology, the feedback from the interpreters may be considered an important source of information on how actual interpretation projects are carried out.

The following results for multiple choice answers are in percents. Percent values were not supplemented for responses to open questions of the survey questionnaire. The percent overall may be different from 100, in cases when responses to some questions were not received.

### Interpreters

It is obvious that interpreters are crucial participants of cross-cultural communication related projects. The data below contain basic parameters related to the interpreting staff involved in the project.

M. A. studies majoring in Japanese:				
in progress (54,05)		graduated 1-3 years ago (32,43)		graduated more than 3 years ago (13,51)
Previous experience in interpreting to and from Japanese:				
less than 1 year (62,16)		1-3 years (18,92)		more than 3 years (18,92)
Total period of stay in Japan before the project:				
less than 1 year (37,84)		1-3 years (59,46)		more than 3 years (2,70)
Experience as an interpreter:				
none (16,22)	occasional (43,24)	regular (8,11)	profesional (part-time) (18,92)	profesional (full time) (13,51)
Project difficulty estimation:				
low (0)		medium (89,19)		high (10,81)

### Survey: Project Evaluation (by Interpreters)

Interpreters do not only take part in the aspects of the project related to the actual communication and interpretation. They experience numerous technical details of the project that influence their professional activities and as such are also subject of evaluation.

<b>Project logistics:</b>			
insufficient (0,00)	for essential improvement (8,11)	acceptable (78,38)	perfect (13,51)
<b>Information flow:</b>			
insufficient (5,41)	for essential improvement (40,54)	acceptable, (48,65)	perfect (5,41)
<b>Vocabulary and technical information:</b>			
insufficient (5,41)	for essential improvement (51,35)	acceptable (40,54)	perfect (8,11)
<b>Fulfillment of individual expectations towards the project:</b>			
insufficient (0,00)	for essential improvement (5,41)	acceptable (62,16)	perfect (32,43)
<b>Solutions of problems within the project:</b>			
insufficient (2,70)	for serious improvement (21,62)	acceptable (51,35)	perfect (24,32)
<b>Other interpreters' abilities:</b>			
insufficient (2,70)	for serious improvement (32,43)	acceptable (43,24)	perfect (21,62)
<b>Financial satisfaction:</b>			
insufficient (0,00)	for serious improvement (2,70)	acceptable (56,76)	perfect (40,54)

### **Survey: Problems on the PL Side (Operators)**

While the operators involved in the project were recruited according to the quality of their professional skills, their cross-cultural competence was not examined. As a result, they were not sufficiently prepared to act in a cross-cultural environment, which also had substantial effect on interpreters' activities. The interpreters' efforts focused on solving problems related to operators, though not necessarily related to actual interpretation, constituted a significant part of their job. The data below were acquired in order to provide an overall impression on how the interpreters perceived the Polish operators involved in the project.

Symptoms of cultural problems on the PL operators side:	xenophobia (35,14)
	lack of discipline (75,68)
	lack of JP hierarchy recognition (40,54)
	neglecting rules (8,11)
	lack of understanding for different cultural attitudes (67,57)
	culinary problems (21,62)
	acclimatization problems (40,54)
	discrimination of women (51,35)
	punctuality (and its lack) (24,32)
	lack of order (32,43)
lack of personal hygiene (48,65)	
Other:	lack of patience, complaints, drunkenness, verbal aggression, taking too much for granted

Situations when problems emerged:

PL operators sleeping at the meetings, could not concentrate on what they were told, did not make notes, which made the impression of disregard for the JP side.

Discussion of Poles in the front of their apartment block around 10 PM triggers a police intervention.

PL operators often insisted on doing things the JP side could not accept (e.g. a grill party in front of their block). The Poles said that they were free men and could not be forbidden to do anything.

Lack of hierarchy and dependence awareness. Pretentious and usurper attitude. Planning revenge when back in Poland.

### **Survey: Problems on the JP Side (Customer)**

Problems emerging on the customer (Japanese production plant) were, quite unsurprisingly, not much different from those experienced by the operators. Quite apart from the lack of cross-cultural training, the customer employees were also not used to foreign operators who suddenly appeared in their plants. The data below are related to the interpreters' impressions on the behavior of Japanese employees involved in the project in the Japanese production plants.

Symptoms of cultural problems on the JP customer side:	xenophobia (10,81)
	lack of discipline (2,70)
	lack of PL hierarchy recognition (40,54)

	neglecting rules (18,92)
	lack of understanding for different cultural attitudes (70,27)
	culinary problems (2,70)
	fear of foreigners (16,22)
	discrimination of women (10,81)
	punctuality (and its lack) (2,70)
	lack of order (2,70)
	lack of personal hygiene (2,70)
Other:	indecisiveness, finishing works cursorily, in order to finish on schedule, ignoring problems, lack of consequence, improper attitude towards insubordinate operators, fear of PL operators

Situations when problem emerged:

Despite accurate comments, observations and propositions from the PL side, the JP side always performed their duties according to fixed procedures and habits.

Some JP customers interpreted the PL operators' frustrations (many of the latter have never worked or even been abroad before) as a rebellion.

The idea (of the JP side) or even the prejudice on the lack of competence, laziness and childish behavior of PL operators.

The obvious for a Japanese way of treating the newcomers as children led to the opposition of PL operators (which not necessarily had no previous work experience).

JP side was not able to answer many questions. Sometimes they were neglected as meaningless.

### Survey: Causes of Problems

Along with the list of communication problems on each side of intercultural exchange during the project implementation, the interpreters were also asked on possible causes of the problems. The data provided below refer to the PL side problems with JP side and the JP side problems with PL side, respectively.

Causes of PL side communication problems with JP side:	national character (40,54)
	problems were provoked by the other party (10,81)
	low level of intelligence (21,62)
	bad manners (67,57)

	low assertiveness (21,62)
	low emotional intelligence (43,24)
	provincialism (35,14)
	interpersonal friction (18,92)
	lack of cross-cultural training (67,57)
	low education level (5,41)
	nothing in particular (5,41)
Other:	lack of patience, lack of acceptance towards low assertiveness of JP side, conviction of impunity, lack of membership sense within the organizational structure of the company

Causes of JP side communication problems with PL side:	national character (48,65)
	problems were provoked by the other party (43,24)
	low level of intelligence (2,70)
	bad manners (10,81)
	low assertiveness (37,84)
	low emotional intelligence (13,51)
	provincialism (5,41)
	interpersonal friction (10,81)
	lack of cross-cultural training (45,95)
	low education level (2,70)
nothing in particular (8,11)	
Other:	making arrangements without co-ordination with PL side, inability to transfer knowledge, treating PL operators like children, empty promises of problem solutions and waiting until they come to their end, imprecise declaration of own expectations towards PL side

### Survey: Interpreter-Customer Problems

A separate area of technical problems related to interpreters' job covered the problems related to the mutual problems on the axis: interpreter-customer as well as their causes. The data below reveal the interpreters' attitude to the problems with PL and JP customer side, respectively.

PL side:	fear of interpreter (2,70)
	overuse of the customer role (21,62)

	occupying interpreter's free time (35,14)
	treating interpreters like objects (16,22)
	shifting responsibility for failures (32,43)
	discrimination of women (16,22)
	remarks on interpreter's work (37,84)
	disrespectful attitude (27,03)
	lack of objectivity (35,14)
	insufficient information flow (16,22)
	lack of order (5,41)
Other:	displaying one's superiority to the interpreter, triggered by envy on their qualifications and salary, wrong notion of the role of interpreters
Causes:	some interpreters fraternizing with JP or PL side, PL side's frustration emerging due to their long stay abroad, bad manners

JP side:	fear of interpreter (32,43)
	overuse of the customer role (2,70)
	occupying interpreter's free time (21,62)
	treating interpreters like objects (18,92)
	shifting responsibility for failures (2,70)
	discrimination of women (24,32)
	remarks on interpreter's work (5,41)
	disrespectful attitude (16,22)
	lack of objectivity (8,11)
	insufficient information flow (32,43)
	lack of order (8,11)
Other:	frequent usage of dialectal expressions, culturally biased training examples, often unintelligible even for other Japanese, shifting minor duties to the interpreters, expecting from them knowledge of internal company issues or that they take responsibility for PL operator activities
Causes:	not perceiving the need of communicating certain information, missing proper habits of cooperation with interpreters, who are not experts in a certain field

### Survey: Problems and Interpreters

In the end, it was considered important to investigate whether the interpreters were actively involved in the attempts at solving cultural problems and whether they were successful.

Did interpreters actively attempt to solve inter-cultural problems?	
Yes (78,38)	No (16,22)

What attempts were made, if any?

Attempts to quiet down the PL side in cases of overreaction, cultural mediation, explaining that there are certain behavior schemes in Japan and it is good to observe them, to the benefit of both sides.

Convincing the JP side to a bilateral meeting for a frank discussion and explanation of problems, attempts to arrive at a compromise, relaxing the tense atmosphere, explaining what can be expected, when certain steps are taken in Japan and in Poland, explaining that the intentions of the other party are not bad, but it is the attitude that is different.

Explaining to the JP side that the lack of understanding the content of the meetings of the PL side is mostly related to differences in explanation manner.

Were the attempts successful?	
Yes (75,68)	No (13,51)

### Problems – a Tentative Classification

While the presented results are related to the sole interpreter's view of the interpretation process, this may not necessarily be a flaw of the presented survey. Although a substantial number of interpretation projects is implemented year after year in Japan, Poland and other communication environments, few verifiable data is available for cross-cultural research. As such, this paper contributes to the study of interpretation and to better understanding of interpreter's job complexity, both among the readers with and without interpretation practice.

As a summary, the following tentative classifications of problems related to interpretation may be proposed:

- Formulation/Interpretation Problems – triggered by the target side's resistance to source realities.
- Logistic Problems – related to assuring proper conditions for project (interpretation) execution.

- Personal Problems – caused by personality conflicts between interaction parties (including interpreters).

### **Final Remarks**

Miscommunication issues may emerge in any case of communication. All the more they should be expected – and solved – in cross-cultural contexts. Formulation/Interpretation problems relate not only to the bare content of messages, but also to understanding actual interactions, which often conditions the very initialization of communication activity.

Logistic and Personal Problems, while being outside the scope of linguistic research, may at least temporarily significantly influence the interaction flow. While it is not possible to solve such problems in advance, the interpreter should be ready to cope with them.

In written translation, miscommunication issues relate to failures in target text composition or rejection of the text by final user. Such phenomena are much less spectacular than a necessity to solve a situation in progress, which evolves in an unpredictable and unexpected way by an interpreter.

As can be seen translation and interpretation, rather unsurprisingly, are not the activities related to sole exchanging the source text into the target text. The translation, and even more the interpretation activity, is dependent on numerous contextual factors, which, especially in case of the latter, may exactly arise due to the above mentioned presence of both interpreter and communication parties on the spot as well as almost no time distance between the source and the target text generation. Thus, even the factors that could have been regarded as facilitating the information exchange between the act participants in a normal, uni-cultural environment, may become serious obstacles on the scene of cross-cultural communication. In such a manner the cross-cultural noise may function as a rather unexpected and demanding challenge for the interpreters.

Unfortunately, the recognition of the above mentioned problem issues, also with regard to the translation science terminology, is still inadequate. The application of linguistics and translation science to understanding and solving actual communication problems requires reference to the actual context of cross-cultural communication. This author's hope is that live data presented in this paper may contribute to this objective.

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## **Masculinities in Modern Japan**

Studies dealing with gender issues in Japan have been present for more than 20 years. Whilst the position of women in society is the focus of most research and analyses, men and issues concerning masculinity are equally interesting and important, though they are often omitted. The modern world's debates about "the crisis of masculinity" and other issues related to men make the position of men in Japan all the more interesting. Japanese society is evolving and some customs, behaviors, social roles and relations change, and with them also gender roles and the perception of men and women. In this article I would like to take a look at some matters concerning masculinity in modern Japan and briefly describe the changes we can observe over the last couple of years.

The usage of plural for masculinity in the title may surprise some readers. The main reason behind this is the fact that masculinity is not a coherent, stable and clear category. We simply cannot use the same set of adjectives to describe all men on Earth. The definition of what it means to be a man, what you have to look like, how you have to act, and who you have to be, to be considered a "real" man differs quite a lot in many different groups and social environments. Social factors like race, sexual identity or age differentiate men (Badinter 1993: 25). For many researchers in the field of men's studies today, masculinity is not an essence, not a matter of fact, but an ideology. And this ideology quite often serves the purpose of justifying man's domination in society (Badinter 1993: 41). The proof of the fact that masculinity is not something that only comes from human nature, but is artificially created is, for example, the need to prove your masculinity. Saying "Be a man!" or "Act like a man" shows that it is not a state that you gain at birth once and for all, but it is something men have to achieve, prove and train throughout their lives (Badinter 1993: 24).

If this is true then it seems obvious that different societies and historical moments will construct masculinity in a completely different way (Connell 2000: 10). In addition to time and space, other factors like race, religion, age or sexual orientation also bring changes to the way masculinity is constructed. Therefore, as masculinity is something that is created, so it can also change. There are a few dimensions in which it changes. First of all, the concept of masculinity varies in different cultures. Second, masculinities differ inside a certain culture or society over time. Therefore, we may easily say that quite a different type of man dominated Japan in the

Heian period, than in the Muromachi or Meiji periods and today. Third, the way a man sees his masculinity may change during his life. Men can think differently of themselves when they are 20, another way when they are 40 and 60 years old. And finally there are different masculinities functioning in a certain society or culture at a certain time. And here factors like age, social standing and even profession play an important role, determining various definitions of masculinity (Kimmel 2004: 503-504).

### **Hegemonic Masculinity and the ‘Traditional’ and ‘new’ Masculinity Paradigms**

Another important matter that needs to be stated at the beginning is the fact that the set of masculinities is diverse, but it is not disordered. Particular masculinities are not equal. There is a hierarchy in which they are placed and at the top of this hierarchy resides a type called “hegemonic masculinity” (Connell 1995, in Roberson 2003: 3). In Japan this hegemonic type is represented by *salaryman* which is a category I will describe later.

The term “hegemonic masculinity” was constructed by R.W. Connell about 20 years ago. It is used to describe a type of masculinity that dominates ideologically, politically and socially in a certain society at a certain moment. Connell states that hegemonic masculinity is a set of practices legitimating and justifying men’s dominance over women as well as the accepted and “the currently most honored way of being a man” (Connell, Messerschmidt: 2005: 832). It is not normal in the statistical sense, so it does not mean that it is the most common pattern (2005: 832). Therefore, when we say that the *salaryman* is the hegemonic type for Japan it does not mean that most Japanese men belong to this category. In fact, only a minority of men can achieve it, but as it is considered the most honored and accepted, it also requires all other men to somehow position themselves in relation to it, whether they meet its requirement or not (Connell, Messerschmidt: 2005: 832). It is a standard, a norm in comparison with which things are judged (Donaldson 1993, in Roberson 2005: 370). Hegemonic masculinity is very often connected with financial or political power because those who have power are able to impose and force their way of living and judgment of things on others (Connell 2004: 508). In this way hegemony can reveal itself in advantages in religious or political doctrines, the educational system, media – commercials or TV shows, tax systems, family structures and so on.

What is also important is that the hegemony of a certain masculinity is not total and does not mean that other patterns are eliminated. They are

essential for the hegemonic type because it has to be defined in opposition to something and in relation to other subordinate types (Connell 1987: 183). The subordinated masculinities may of course turn into a strong alternative and even overthrow the current hegemonic type and take its place, so there is always room for change (Connell, Messerschmidt 2005: 847).

In order to organize the group of masculinities I will use a concept of two paradigms of masculinity. Although this distinction was created on the basis of Western thought I think it can also be used to discuss Japanese society, as the categories are rather broad and the representatives of both of them can be observed in Japan quite easily. The two paradigms I will use here are the so-called “traditional” and “new” masculinity. Hegemonic masculinity – in contemporary Japan represented by *salaryman* – is an example of “traditional” masculinity. There are a few characteristics on which the traditional paradigm is built. The first one is called domination and specialization. It means that men have the dominant role in society, and that both men and women must specialize in certain fields of life different from each other. The next feature, the so-called dualism of gender roles, expands this concept, stating that men are strictly bound within the social or public sphere – meaning work, and women within the domestic sphere – taking care of the house, husband and children. This is also justified by the asymmetry of features denoting that the roles are fixed the way they are because it is believed women and men are determined by their biological features for different kinds of life. Men create culture, women are more biological creatures – giving birth to children, therefore are bound to take care of their family and household. And the last characteristic of the traditional paradigm orders men to suppress their emotions and feelings because they are rather the domain of women (Arcimowicz 2003: 28).

The “new” paradigm on the other hand emphasizes equality and partnership. Men and women are equal, both can work, both can take care of the house or children. Moreover, they should help each other, because such a partnership leads to a stable relationship and an even society as a whole. Another component is androgyny meaning the blending of feminine and masculine characteristics. As I will try to show later, androgyny in the looks of some Japanese men is quite obvious, but the androgyny in the sense of the “new” paradigm means not only looks, but also attitudes, way of life and so on. So, while the traditional paradigm ordered men to suppress emotions and feelings, the new one considers crying and showing affection and emotions to be perfectly fine. Another very important factor pertaining to the new paradigm is self-fulfillment and freedom of choice,

which is somehow connected to the previous feature. In the traditional paradigm there was only one way of being a man. In the new one, men can freely construct their masculinity in any way they want, choosing characteristics of different types of masculinity and femininity in order to achieve self- fulfillment (Arcimowicz 2003: 28).

### **Salaryman – the Representative of Traditional Masculinity in Japan**

The Japanese term *sarariiman* (*salaryman*) is a combination of the English words “salary” and “man” and is used to describe employees of large companies or public services, representatives of the white-collar class. The term was introduced to Western readers in 1963 by Ezra Vogel as an agent of the new middle-class (Roberson 2003: 1). He portrayed them in terms of “economic security, social status and sex role division”. In the 1950s they were a symbol of a new, better life, new order, and prosperity. On their shoulders rested the responsibility of rebuilding the country destroyed after the Second World War. Therefore, for a long time they were highly respected by the whole of society (Roberson 2003: 7).

But in the 1990s, along with the economic crisis came a change in the associations with the term. In 1995, a typical *salaryman* was described by Japanese writers Fujimura-Fanselow-sarar-man and Kameda (1995: 229, in Roberson 2003: 1) as:

“a workaholic, who toils long hours for Mitsubishi or Sony or some other large corporation, goes out drinking with his fellow workers or clients after work, and plays golf with them on weekends, and rarely spends much time at home with his wife and children, much less does anything around the house, such as cleaning or changing diapers.”

As a consequence, *salaryman* is pictured almost only in the context of work. This is the main scene of his activities. Within the traditional paradigm, men are said to belong to the *shakai* (social) sphere, women to the *katei* (domestic) sphere. These are the remains of *ryōsai kenbo*<sup>1</sup> (good wife, wise mother) ideal which showed the essence of being a woman and *daikokubashira*<sup>2</sup> – the central pillar, supporting the family – a concept indicating the duty of the man. The support offered by a man as a

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<sup>1</sup> This Confucian concept assumed that the duty of a woman was to take care of the household and her husband, and raise children as good citizens

<sup>2</sup> “the financial and rational mainstay of the ideally nuclear family, on whom others depend” (Roberson 2005: 375)

*daikokubashira* was of course only financial as he did not need to take part in raising his own children, which was always his wife's duty. A man's responsibility was to work and earn money to provide for his family while fully committing himself to his company.

### **Examples of 'New' Masculinity**

Japan is usually considered a very homogenous country. But contemporary writers observe a growing diversity of masculinities and ways in which Japanese men construct their identity. Itō Kimio, one of the most important scholars in men's studies in Japan points out how many factors concerning masculinity are discussed by the Japanese media. Among the points he highlighted is the growing number of boys committing suicide because of bullying; the *femio-kun phenomenon* used to describe young men that dress and behave in an extremely androgynous way; shy men who avoid women; a problem extremely significant lately – men who delay their marriage and remain single for a long time, or those who marry older women; the number of divorced men, often at a young age; a problem known worldwide – men dying of *karōshi* (death from overwork); very high and still growing suicide rates among men; the so-called “going-home refusal syndrome” (*kitaku kyohi shōkōgun*) indicating fathers who do not want to go home after work; retirement-age divorces, between couples who cannot live together after the husband stops working and, as a consequence, divorce (Itō 1996). Looking at the variety and vast number of problems concerning Japanese men it is obvious that this category is not as cohesive and uniform as it is thought to be.

The obvious question that comes to mind is – what is the reason behind these changes? It seems that women's liberation is one of the main causes. Women, entering the labor market have undermined the traditional role of the man as the family's bread-winner. Now, that women can earn money by themselves, men have lost their advantage. As a consequence women more frequently demand help in house duties, which leads to slight changes in gender roles. Second, men are now open to criticism, which was impossible earlier. All their faults and weaknesses are reviled. This and many other features together create something called by many scholars “the crisis of masculinity” (Melosik 2006: 9). The crisis itself is an object of a never-ending debate between researchers. Some claim it never really existed, others claim that the current condition could as well be called the end of masculinity in general. Either way, the crisis is said to be connected with the growing difficulty in defining what it means exactly to be a man in the modern world. Previously, the traditional paradigm gave a clear

explanation and answer for this question, while nowadays there seems to be no obvious standards (Melosik 2006: 8).

As an important part of this crisis, many see the feminization of men. While this term is usually associated with looks and behavior, it is in fact a much more complicated process that we can observe on many levels, from appearance to attitudes. The first thing that reveals a man's feminization is consumerism. Consumerism is associated with shopping. Shopping means an activity related with the domestic sphere which is naturally the woman's domain. So the fact that men have become consumers has brought them closer to women. The fact that they also feel the pressure of following fashion trends or such is also clear evidence of that (Melosik 2006: 14-15).

As many sociologists and anthropologists claim, identity in today's world is no longer considered a factor connected only with personality, mind, intelligence and the emotional sphere of a person, but more and more with the body. It means that what we look like is more important than what we do. Previously, fashion was considered something that only women had to care about. Men were more associated with the mind than with the body. But it has changed quite a lot in recent years. Now, not only women but also men are tyrannized by the media which shows them how slim and handsome they should be and what hairstyle and clothes they have to wear in order to be considered stylish and fashionable (Melosik 2006: 24). So, the Japanese media market of course answers the needs of the clients, or maybe rather creates those needs by releasing a lot of commercials showing stylish young boys in trendy clothes with perfect hair as the ideal to be pursued. The actual number of magazines concerning only men's fashion in the Japanese market might surprise some westerners.

The other noticeable factor here is cosmetics. The men's cosmetics industry, or men's beauty work as it is sometimes called, is a rapidly developing business in Japan. Even in 1999 – more that 10 years ago, Shiseidō – one of the biggest cosmetics companies in Japan – annually sold more than one million dollars worth of products dedicated to men (Miller 2003: 46). Men's beauty parlors began to rise all over the country. They offer services that address skin problems, hairstyles, manicures, face massages or even make-up. They even provide special packages for certain occasions like weddings or New Year's parties (Miller 2003: 39). Men's bodies must be slim, sporty and smooth. Hairy bodies are considered uncivilized. They are also a relic of the past, a symbol of a salaryman body, of conservatism and as such rejected. There is an old saying *kebukai mono wa irobukai* which was translated by Laura Miller as “a hairy person is a sexy person” (Miller 2003: 44), but it doesn't seem to go with the trends anymore.

This brings us to another important factor, which is the appearance of the male naked body in public discourse and the fact that this body is being treated as a sexual object. The reason for this is again the change in the relations between men and women (Melosik 2006: 25). Liberated, emancipated women have started to look at men's body and judge it more boldly, what is more, it has become an object of clear fascination and desire (Melosik 2006: 26). Melosik writes about the Western World but also in Japan we can easily come across half naked or completely naked singers, actors or other celebrities in photo-shoots, videos and TV commercials.

### **Androgyny and Transgender Images**

The factor that cannot be omitted while talking about Japanese masculinities is androgyny. As it has already been said, there are many fields in which we can observe the feminization of men in Japan, starting from consumerism itself up to fashion and cosmetics. But those may easily be treated as the effect of the globalization of trends and as it is possible to observe it in other parts of the world, it is not only a characteristic of Japan. As for androgynous images of men it is certainly more common in Japan than in the West and might be considered as more specific to Japanese society.

But first, a brief introduction to what exactly androgyny is, is needed. Androgyny, as we understand it here, does not refer to a physiological condition (that is, an intersexed body) but to the "surface politics of the body" (Butler 1990, in Robertson 1992: 419). Following Jennifer Robertson I treat androgyny as a construct that involves the mixing of gender markers such as clothes, gestures, speech patterns, and so on – in a way that undermines the stability of a sex-gender system based on a male-female dichotomy by either exchanging or blending its elements (Robertson 1992: 419). It is the integration of both masculinity and femininity within a single person. In other words, an androgynous or transgendered – a broader meaning of the term – person looks, acts and behaves in a way that differs from what society expects of a certain gender (trans-fuzja 2007). It does not mean a need to live in a different gender, but just an attempt to cross gender norms.

Such androgynous images are not a completely new phenomenon and have been present in Japanese culture since the Muromachi period, the most obvious of the examples being Kabuki's *onnagata* – actors specializing in playing women's roles. It is said that *onnagata* actors kept their female identity behind the scenes, often engaging in homosexual relationships,

adopting women's gestures, ways of speaking, walking, behavior and looks. They used women's vocabulary, but also intonation and a tone of voice more typical for women than for men. They styled their hair in a woman's way, young *onnagata* were even said to wear *furisode*, a kimono typical for young women, decorated with colorful flower patterns (Shiveley 1979: 41). They were even allowed to use women's public bathhouses (Robertson 1992: 424) and treated as trendsetters in women's fashion. They were supposed to be the picture of an ideal woman, and were loved and respected by both men and women exactly because of their specific ambiguity and androgynous style.

However, at the beginning of the Meiji period all feminine aspects of men were restricted and men "were prevented from having any qualities in common with females" (Robertson 1992: 424). After that, Japanese masculinity started to follow the "traditional" paradigm. So, typical for the "new" paradigm tendency for androgyny in Japanese society might be considered new only in modern Japan.

But even contemporary Japan had a chance to observe such feminine images, starting with Akihiro Miwa – a singer, actor, director, writer, drag queen. He does not hide his homosexual identity, he is also known for his bold and critical opinions on war and politics (Ryall 2006). Even his early pictures show that his clothes, make-up and looks were extremely feminine. But he is not the only one. Japanese media are full of men who openly admit to their homosexuality, often transvestites, like Mikawa Ken'ichi (Ryall 2006). But even men usually not presenting transgender images often cross-dress for entertainment purposes in many TV shows or dramas, which proves how widespread is social acceptance for such practices in Japanese society.

But one of the most distinctive (and in a way unique for Japan) examples of modern male androgynous images that I would like to point out is *Visual kei*. *Visual kei* is considered a music genre, but – as the name denotes – the most important aspect bringing all the bands together in one category is the stress put on appearance. The band's visual image is mostly androgynous but there are also groups that have a slightly different concept around which they build their stage identity. What is typical for *Visual kei* images is the usage of extremely androgynous clothes, make-up, jewelry and other attributes usually ascribed to women. Colorful, lacy, sometimes even wedding dresses, corsets, high-heel shoes are common outfits. Hair is often dyed in flashy and vivid colors, nails are painted and faces are hidden under thick makeup.

The beginning of the genre dates back to the end of the 1980s with the appearance of one of the most important rock bands in Japan: X Japan. They are considered the pioneers of the genre, bringing shocking clothes, hairstyles and outrageous make-up to the Japanese audience. They were not the first group to do this but were definitely the most successful and wide-known. On the wave of their popularity other bands started following in their footsteps creating more and more diverse images affecting not only men's but also girls' culture.

Gothic Lolita subculture, or rather fashion style, is a good example of that, with musicians such as guitarist Mana being an icon of Gothic Lolita fashion, presenting this kind of image on and off stage and having his own fashion brand of clothes for girls. As for men's culture, some claim that the development of men's esthetics is a consequence of the boom for *Visual kei* bands and is the reason why piercing, hair dying or eyebrows plucking is common and does not surprise anymore (Inoue 2003: 35). Western culture has had its own share of androgynous images in rock music, but it never reached the same level of popularity as in Japan, where *Visual kei* has continued its existence since the 1990s and still attracts many fans, mostly female.

## **Conclusion**

The above examples deal mainly with appearance, but the changes in definitions of masculinity in Japan do not confine themselves to exterior factors only, even though those might be the easiest to notice.

Changing gender roles and family relations seem to be the most crucial factors. For about 20 years, Japan has struggled with a low birth rate which has forced the government to take on steps in order to help women in raising children by encouraging men to take part in it. But also NGOs and initiatives that are not connected with the government have started to emerge. One good example is a non-profit organization called "Fathering Japan" which decided to found a school for future fathers. A set of lectures and workshops was organized, and future dads could learn how to take care of their babies, prevent sicknesses, and what rights fathers had in their country (Shiroyama 2010). The first meeting saw not only soon-to-be fathers, but also single men, men that already had children and *salarymen* – representatives of hegemonic, traditional masculinity. This shows that even if the changes in gender roles in Japan might be considered slow by western observers they are undeniable.

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### **Traumatic Identity in the Films about the Atomic Bomb**

Perhaps one should begin by asking how to present something that is unimaginable, how to understand something that cannot be rationally comprehended or expressed by means of simple ideas. One should consider the nature of trauma caused by the threat of war, genocide or holocaust. Such an ordeal makes man confront a challenge that goes far beyond human understanding - a tragedy that cannot be explained or rationalized. It is the state of shock, both physical and psychological that forces a man to seek some defense mechanisms which might help him/her to survive. The word "trauma" comes from the Greek τραύμα and denotes a physical wound; however, in its broader sense, it refers to a violent shock an individual may experience when faced with an external situation he/she cannot overcome and cope with.

Trauma stems from the lack of security or terror caused by particular events from the past that one cannot describe or express in any way that might bring peace. To reconcile with the past a casualty must take efforts to re-work their terrifying experiences. War experiences, surviving an extermination camp or a holocaust are particularly traumatic. Mentally paralyzed or numb, a survivor lives in ruins, haunted by the memory of their dead beloved. Succumbed to this feeling, an individual understands what happened, and yet, at the same time, is "incapable of imagining that something like this could ever have happened" (Slade 2004:170).

A traumatic experience leaves an individual crippled, deprived of self-confidence, unable to express his identity. An existence becomes nothing but dwelling in a past that cannot be reconciled (Dąbrowski 2001:82). Unpleasant experiences return, sometimes taking the shape of phantasmal delusions that one cannot get rid of or control. As Jean-François Lyotard once said, the word „survivor” itself denotes a person who should have died, but didn't, and is still alive. Robert Jay Lifton defined a "survivor" as someone "who faced death in its physical form, but stayed alive" (Lyotard 1991:56 & Lifton 1976:113-114).

In our culture, survivors are usually associated with the prisoners of concentration camps, witnesses of the holocaust, the systematic extermination of the Jews. However, we might as well refer to an example from a more distant culture, namely, the victims of the atomic bombs dropped over Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945. *Hibakusha* – the

ones who escaped death – stayed alive, but were marked by radiation sickness, infertility or post-traumatic neuroses.<sup>1</sup>

For the Japanese, the dropping of the bombs has become a collective traumatic experience; as it was something inconceivable; something that strongly affected the way they perceived both the past and the future. The trauma concerned both individuals and the nation. In the former case, it meant the deaths of one's relatives, the deterioration of a family and one's inability to cope with the loss; whereas in the latter, it meant a turning point which twisted and transformed the identity of the whole nation.

I shall not concentrate on the psychological and social consequences of the atomic holocaust. However, I would like to focus on how these consequences were grasped and "tamed" by film images which may recreate this particular moment and thus, endlessly re-produce and disseminate the trauma. One may wonder if a historical event of this kind could become a text at all. Is it possible to represent something that might as well serve as crucial evidence of representative inability? It seems that painful experiences cannot be grasped and represented by images. There is nothing like a traumatic image as such; an image merely has the potential to make us realize the tension between an objective and subjective representation of reality, between a historical fact and a memory which distorts it (Hirsch 2004:98).

It was difficult to record the tragedy of Hiroshima and Nagasaki on tape, not only because of its inexpressibility, but also because of the political situation of the defeated country which remained under American occupation. For more than six years after the war had ended the Americans strictly supervised and controlled film production in Japan. Although no official ban on the subject of Hiroshima or Nagasaki was issued, if a film referred to the bombs, the dropping had to be shown in a broader context, with clear justification of the act as a necessary step that helped the Allies end the war. However, it was strictly forbidden to show the extent of destruction or the sufferings of civilian inhabitants (Hirano 1992:59-65).

Even before the unconditional surrender of Japan was announced by Emperor Hirohito, on August 10, 1945, a day after the bomb had exploded over Nagasaki, the management of the Nippon Eigasha Film Studio

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<sup>1</sup> Nearly everybody within 500m of the epicenter was instantly killed, with over 50% of the casualties within the range of 2km. According to rough estimates, by the end of 1945, about 140,000 inhabitants of Hiroshima died of the wounds or radiation, many were considered missing. In the following years a large number of deaths resulted from radiation diseases or neurological disorders. What is more, amongst the children whose mothers were pregnant at the time of the blast, the doctors noticed a high percentage of physical anomalies, deformations and mental disorders. See (Holdstock & Barnaby 1995:3-4).

considered sending a film crew to the place. The shooting started a month later in Hiroshima; however, in late October, the occupational authorities confiscated the tape. Soon, the consent was restored, yet, in January 1946 the studio management was asked to hand in the whole footage, which was treated as classified and taken to the USA. Fragments of the footage were hidden by a lab worker who kept them safe in an attic until the end of the occupation (Nornes 1996:120-155). This is how the first documentary on the subject was made and given the English title *The Effects of The Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki*. The remaining footage could not be shown to the public, and the negative copies were kept for years in American archives.<sup>2</sup>

The version, which is now available, begins with a short introduction specifying the setting with a vast bird's-eye panorama of the city and a close-up of the epicenter of explosion. One can see the crew unpacking equipment and the scientists who accompanied the cameramen. The film may be described as *kagaku eiga* – an educational film – which is aimed at a direct and objective representation of reality. The detached eye of the camera tries to show the destruction, this perspective somehow reminds the viewer of a medical report on the sufferings of the inhabitants. With clinical precision the voiceover enumerates the number of casualties, while showing distorted, burnt and mutilated bodies. The second part, which concerns Nagasaki, introduces some elements of dramatization – for example, the story of a man in a garden who has lost his wife and daughter; frames which show the ruins of the cathedral, or children wandering aimlessly in the ruins. This is no longer an objective “scientific” report, but an attempt at grasping tremendous human suffering. The memory of Hiroshima and Nagasaki was shaped by these images recorded at the time by the Nippon Eigasha crew, later frequently used in news reels, educational films and feature films, even though the original footage remained locked up for years.

In 1948 the Shōchiku Studio was planning to make a feature film based on a novel by Earnest Hoberecht, but the script – like many other projects – was rejected by the censors. The aim of the American authorities was not only to conceal the side-effects of the weapons of mass destruction while the trials of nuclear missiles were being made and the armaments race was getting more and more severe, but also because it might have compromised

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<sup>2</sup> The US government handed over a 16-millimetre copy of the film to the Japanese Ministry of Education. The money collected nation-wide in the early 1980s enabled the repurchasing of 300,000 metres of the film tape which was then edited by Susumu Hani and released in 1982, though the official premiere of *The Effects of Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki* was held much later in 1994.

the image of America as a humanitarian and civilized country which loves peace, democracy and despises the cruel and barbarian methods of waging wars. The situation changed with the end of occupation in spring 1952, so a young Nagasaki-born director and scriptwriter Kaneto Shindō began the shooting of his *Children of Hiroshima (Genbaku no ko)* which was based on a collection of stories told to the university professor Arata Osada by primary school pupils. The script was not flawless, basically due to its sentimental tone with melodramatic elements in some situations, and yet, the film turned out to be valuable and extremely moving.

The main character is a young teacher, Takako Ichikawa (Nobuko Otowa), who after a few years comes back to Hiroshima to find the children of the kindergarten where she used to work until the end of the war. A once destroyed city has been rebuilt, yet, the people still live with the past, as they cannot forget how they lost their loved ones. The flashback sequences revoke the painful events – the explosion, the giant mushroom cloud and the city in flames; charred corpses, deformed and disfigured bodies of the survivors. Takako visits her friend, who survived, but is infertile; then she meets an old servant, severely burnt and blinded; finally, she finds her old pupils and returns to the places of great emotional value for her. Everybody she meets is suffering in silence; they cautiously hide their emotions, like the girl whose parents were killed in the blast and she herself is dying of radiation sickness, and yet, she seems to be calm and reconciled with her fate. One may see that in one way or another, all the characters express the awareness of the transitory nature of life. The multilayered and, at times, incoherent film by Shindō brought some consolation to the audiences, together with a clear anti-war message and a warning against the effects of the atomic bomb.

Apart from Shindō's film, two other productions deserve more attention, even though they do not directly evoke the events which ended the war. Nevertheless, they significantly contributed to the collective concept of a nuclear disaster. These films were *Godzilla (Gojira, 1954)* by Ishirō Honda and *I Live in Fear (Ikimono no kiroku, 1955)* by Akira Kurosawa. The former is an allegoric representation of traumatic events as a method of dealing with the inexpressible – conveyed by a story about monsters (*kaijū eiga*) which helps to understand the inexplicable or even to overcome fear. According to Walter Benjamin, allegory is connected with ruins, the remnants of the past; it is a gaze which stems from the inability to cope with loss. An allegoric representation always refers to the transitory and suggests hope for delivery.

Since the end of the Second World War, Bikini Atoll<sup>3</sup> had been the site of many American nuclear tests. On March 1st, 1954 “an unfortunate accident” took place – as a result of a hydrogen bomb explosion accompanied by unfavorable weather conditions, two islands were contaminated by radioactive fallout and the inhabitants were hastily evacuated. A Japanese fishing vessel „Daigo fukuryū maru” with 23 men on board was infected by the cloud of radioactive ash. Shortly after being exposed to the fallout their skin began to itch and they experienced nausea and vomiting. Soon they were diagnosed with radioactive sickness and some of them died. This tragedy was thoroughly discussed in the media all over the world and brought about a serious crisis in Japanese-American relationships (although the US government paid huge compensation to the victims’ families). An international debate on nuclear tests and their consequences began and, of course, artists wanted to express their opinions, too – in 1959 Kaneto Shindō made a film entitled *The Fifth Lucky Dragon (Daigo fukuryū maru)* based on these tragic events.

The opening scenes of *Godzilla* by Ishirō seemed to be directly linked to these events, too. A Japanese fishing boat is attacked at sea by a mysterious monster which at the same time attacks the people living on a tiny island nearby. In their statements, the survivors describe the monster as a huge dinosaur, which is later confirmed by research carried out by Professor Yamane (Takashi Shimura) and Doctor Ogata (Akira Takarada), who discover that a giant beast was awakened by the H-bomb tests. The monster begins his destructive raid through Tokyo and its districts - Shinbashi, Ginza and Shitomachi. The Houses of Parliament and the Television Tower are demolished while the monster walks towards Tokyo Bay. People run away in panic, hysterically seeking refuge. Hospitals are overrun with victims, many exposed to heavy doses of radiation. One of the survivors cries: “I have survived Nagasaki. Why?”. Ogata compares *Godzilla* to a “walking H-bomb”, the symbol of a nuclear disaster, as he kills people with its atomic breath. Yamane points out that the monster is the product of human technology.

Honda’s film perfectly reflected the fear of possible nuclear war and the trauma of the first days of August 1945. Inuhiko Yomota remarked that *Godzilla* was so terrifying because it embodied the souls of the victims killed by the Atomic Bomb. It remained a mental image of the casualties

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<sup>3</sup> The first atomic weapons tests began in July 1946. The hydrogen bomb tested by the Americans in 1954 had the power of 15 megatonnes (which was a load several hundred times more powerful than the one dropped on Hiroshima). In 1958, the American government suspended the programme in the face of protests from the international community.

treasured by the survivors, even though it took an abject and appalling form. Both the atomic bomb and the giant monster seem to go beyond human understanding and imagination as destructive forces of unprecedented power in the history of mankind. Honda's film therefore served as a warning against the fatal effects of nuclear weapons. The moral dilemmas of the scientists working on nuclear bombs were shown in the character of Serizawa (Akihiko Hirata). He constructed a new weapon of mass destruction, which could both kill the monster and humanity. Serizawa sacrifices his own life to destroy Godzilla and ensures that the weapon will never be used again.

*I Live in Fear* was one of the most interesting films made in the 1950s and deals with the subject of nuclear threat. Akira Kurosawa showed the psychological consequences of the atomic bomb and its negative influences on the personality of its survivors. The main character, Kiichi Nakajima (Toshirō Mifune), the owner of a big company, suffers from fear of a nuclear war. He wants to take his whole family, including his wife, his sons and his lovers - to Brazil which seems far enough away to be a safe refuge. His adult children claim he is insane and take him to court to verify if he is still capable of running a company. An external danger is enhanced by an internal threat, namely, the decline of family ties, while both political and psychological aspects are cleverly intermingled by the director.

The hero's neurotic (erratic) behaviour seems to confirm the opinion expressed by his kins. However, some doubts are raised by Dr Harada (Takashi Shimura). During the interrogation Nakajima tries to present his views in a rational way, explaining that his attitude is not the expression of fear of death or the atomic bomb. He says: "Everyone must die. But I don't want to be killed". He knows how to avoid the danger and wants to save his nearest and dearest from peril. Although the judge shares his anxiety, he declares him legally incapacitated. For the last time Nakajima tries to change his family's opinion – though it is all in vain; finally, in an act of despair, he sets his factory on fire hoping that when deprived of financial means, his sons will agree to leave for Brazil. Arrested and locked up in a mental institution, he loses his last chance for salvation.

Even though Kurosawa directly does not refer to Hiroshima or Nagasaki, his aim is clear – he wants to show how contemporary culture and society have become more and more "nuclear". Despite the real threat, everybody seems to ignore it and deny the very possibility of a nuclear disaster. Paradoxically, a justified fear becomes the evidence of madness, and seeking refuge confirms one's neurotic behavior in the situation where a denial of fear stands for normality.

Kurosawa returned to the subject of the atomic bomb in his late films *Dreams* (*Yume*, 1990), perhaps his most personal statement as it was based upon his own dreams and nightmares, and in *Rhapsody in August* (*Hachigatsu no kyōshikyoku*, 1991) – a film about the significance of the past for the young generations. Two of the eight episodes in *Dreams* evoke the motif of a nuclear catastrophe – in “Mount Fuji in Red” a meltdown at a nuclear power station, built at the bottom of the mountain, threatens the whole area – the inhabitants run away in panic. Soon the people disappear, the ground is covered with red ash, and there are just two characters left on the scene – a mother with a baby and one of the directors who feels responsible for the disaster. “The Weeping Demon” presents a post-apocalyptic vision of the world in which survivors turn into mad beasts howling with pain, surrounded by mutations of animals and plants. On the other hand, the tone of *Rhapsody in August* seems to be completely different - the film becomes yet more proof that art cannot express trauma which goes beyond human understanding. Painful memories are not directly shown in flashback sequences, because, as Kurosawa claims, it is only silence that may communicate a tragic experience. In his conversation with Gabriel García Márquez, the director explains that „he tried to characterize the wounds the atomic bomb left in the hearts of the people and to show the process of their gradual healing” (Goodwin 1996:196). The main protagonist, Kane (Sachiko Murase), is an elderly woman whose husband was killed in Nagasaki. She takes care of her four grandchildren who come to visit her during the summer holiday. It is their perspective that the viewer assumes to learn about the past events. First we hear about them when children visit the school – a symbolic epicenter – which serves both as a warning against the fatal consequences of the weapons of mass destruction and as a place commemorating those killed by the atomic bomb. “Under this city hides another Nagasaki, the one that was destroyed by the explosion”, says the eldest child. The second time the bomb is referred to is on the day of the anniversary when the survivors (*hibakusha*) gather around the monument of the bomb’s victims. “Today, for many people the bomb is just an event from the past”. As the years pass, everybody forgets about even the most terrible things. “We heard about the bomb, but we thought it was just a horrible story”. The mood of elegy and mourning, typical of *genbaku eiga*, prevails in these scenes. However, American reviewers criticized Kurosawa saying that by avoiding the political context and twisting the historical truth, he presents the Japanese as victims of the war, thus erasing their responsibility for what happened.

Kurosawa is primarily concerned with the issue of memory, as Hiroshima and Nagasaki are not only associated with trauma, but with the birth of a new national identity and the source of collective bonds. Kane remains cold and critical of her own memories until the final scenes of the movie, when the return to the past turns out to be too painful and the emotions burst over her apparent detachment. Kurosawa emphasizes the spiritual bond between the survivors and the youngest generation by suggesting the existence of a secret agreement, absent in the relations between Kane and her own children who are mainly concerned with the present and who want to forget the past. The survivors must testify to the truth and pass it on to the next generations. In this way Kurosawa suggests that the survivors of the trauma have a knowledge which is unattainable for others.

At nearly the same time Shōhei Imamura made his film *Black Rain* (*Kuroi ame*, 1989), based upon the famous novel by Masuji Ibuse (1898-1993), which belonged to the genre of *chinkon bungaku* - “mourning literature” whose aim was to commemorate the dead and tell the stories of their lives. It is not a story about the tragedy of August 6, but the story about the influence of those events on the lives of the inhabitants of Hiroshima and the relations between the past and the present. Shizuma Shigematsu (Kazuo Kitamura), one of the survivors, wants to find a husband for his niece Yasuko (Yoshiko Tanaka). Therefore, he tries to convince potential suitors that the girl is healthy and shows no signs of radiation sickness. Imamura touches the issue of double suffering – first a survivor is exposed to the bomb and radiation, and later as a *hibakusha* he or she must cope with discrimination and aversion from the rest of Japanese society.

Unlike in Kurosawa’s film, here the past events are presented in flashback sequences, introduced through a diary read by the uncle. The moment of explosion is shown from two points of view – one belongs to a young girl living in a distant village, the other – to her uncle, waiting for the train at Hiroshima station. Unaware of what happened, Yasuko immediately heads for the city. She sees a building burning in the distance, on her way she is covered with oily black rain. Imamura returns to this memorable day many times – when he shows the terrified victims, the children sneaking amongst the ruins, or the burnt and charred bodies frozen like uncanny sculptures. Scenes from the past and the present overlap. Some people cannot shed the shock, and compulsively return to past events, like a young soldier who in the effect of a mental breakdown during the war, still suffers from post-traumatic neurosis.

Realism and authenticity of the images is not only a matter of aesthetic decisions on the part of the director, but, first of all, of moral choices, as it

poses the question whether the past may be preserved in technologically reproductive images. Besides, it is achieved thanks to the tension between the objective and the subjective mode of presenting reality. The authenticity of the story being told seems to be a crucial factor for the main character, too, because he wants to make a precise copy of his niece's diary, however, as Carole Cavanaugh points out, personal experiences are deprived of their context, taken out of the historical course of events, and, at the same time, released of responsibility (Cavanaugh 2001:257-259). Imamura successfully realizes the thesis of the equal sufferings of innocent men and women, soldiers and civilians, adults and children, and makes us remember the war entirely through the experience of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The slogan "we are all the victims of the bomb" conveys a particular ideological and political message, which was also clear in *Rhapsody in August*.

Like *The Children of Hiroshima*, and, to some extent, *Godzilla*, *Black Rain*, seems to be unique for yet another reason, namely, for the way it treats female characters. In *genbaku eiga* the image of women-survivors is not equivocal – on the one hand, they are victims who deserve compassion, and whose chastity and innocence have been preserved despite physical symptoms of disease. At the same time, their typical features, e.g. readiness for sacrifice, let them humbly bear an extremely harsh ordeal. A female protagonist of *Black Rain* is unique, not only because of her youth and beauty, but above all, because of moral and spiritual values thanks to which she accepts her fate with dignity. Yasuko does not fight, does not rebel, her suffering is idealized and anesthetized. The sickness does not change her soul, even though she becomes more mature, which is evident in her attitude towards a veteran of the war, with whom she seems to be bound by a special kind of affinity. The women in *The Children of Hiroshima*, *Rhapsody in August* and *Black Rain* seem to be the guardians of traditional values, the embodiment of the past and its memory; sometimes, they even become the symbol of reconciliation with the transience of all things in life. The influence of the past upon the present, one's inability to get over the loss and forget the traumatic events that shape an identity have been raised in the film regarded as the most important among those discussing the effects of the atomic bomb. This is, of course, *Hiroshima mon amour*, by Alain Resnais (1959). At first the French director planned to make a documentary about Hiroshima. Soon, however, he found out that the archival footage did not convey the whole truth about the events of August 1945. Nevertheless, he included it in the plot of the film, making use of the images of the destroyed city and the mutilated bodies.

The film tells the story of a young actress who comes to Hiroshima to shoot a film. Before leaving the city she meets a Japanese architect whose family was killed in the explosion. They spend a night together. However, it is not a romance that is the subject of the film, but the memories of the past, those traumatic experiences that cannot be shared with another person, as they are totally inexplicable and inexpressible. The opening sequence may serve as a superb example of filmic discourse on the limits of representation (Ropars-Wuillienier 1990:179-180). The horror of nuclear destruction is presented through the abstract close-ups of bodies that become unrecognizable. It is only through the voices – a female and a male one - that the images gain their referentiality. The images of naked bodies entwined in a loving embrace unexpectedly clash with the images of other bodies - deformed, mutilated, burnt or dead in the blast.

The epistemological aspects of the film are emphasized by the very first lines of the dialogue: “You saw nothing in Hiroshima, nothing”. “I saw everything, everything. I saw the hospital, for instance. That I know. The hospital is there in Hiroshima. How could I have avoided seeing it?” “You saw no hospital in Hiroshima. You saw nothing in Hiroshima.” It is not the matter of the empirical sensation, nor the truthfulness of one’s senses, but the ability of testifying to the truth of the past that becomes a crucial issue. The gaze erases the reality of an event. The man’s words undermine and question the woman’s statement, which suggests that such an inexpressible experience cannot be evoked in a straightforward manner. Seeing means forgetting a referential dimension of what has been seen – namely, the uniqueness of the tragedy. At the same time, seeing means delivery from what has been remembered, from the past and its madness.

The inexpressible tragedy of Hiroshima’s destruction is transferred and filtered through another story – the story of the forbidden love of a French girl for a German soldier – and such a story may be expressed with words. The process of transference of the plot’s events reminds the viewer of a psychoanalytical operation of working over a traumatic situation, so that a painful experience can gain shape enabling an individual to begin the work of mourning, by means of which one gradually lets his/her mind free of the past and gets over the loss. The woman tells the man that they are bound together by the fact that neither of them wants and can forget the past; they want to preserve it, but she gradually realizes that it will be impossible to save either the memory of her beloved, or the images she had seen in Hiroshima. Both protagonists may be characterized by the traumatic and dissociate kind of memory which is distinguished from normal memory by the lack of social or interpersonal aspects. The way the past is evoked no

longer follows the rules of a narrative logic, which guarantees the coherence of events, but becomes split and broken.<sup>4</sup>

Nevertheless, it was not Resnais' aim to compare those two traumatic events experienced by the characters. He was neither interested in drawing any analogy between them, nor in the ability to grasp one's experience by assuming the perspective of the other. It is rather a particular attitude towards the past that unites the characters – it is the embodiment of the strategy of a survivor, which is to survive at any cost: “Like you, I am also endowed with the memory. I know what forgetting is. Like you, I've desperately tried to fight against forgetting. Like you, I've forgotten. Like you, I wanted to preserve my inconsolable memory.”

The significance of both stories gradually becomes clear, as they both touch the issue of the limits of communication. The story of a tragic love for an enemy who is killed on the day before the liberation of Nevers, enables the woman to reinterpret these experiences, to find distance and reconciliation by the very act of telling and being listened to. However, a traumatic experience cannot be directly shown, it cannot be grasped by the logic of a language, as the only form of communication is either a scream or silence, both of which stem from a fear of death and from one's total isolation, alienation and the sense of otherness. Such were the experiences of the characters in *Hiroshima, mon amour*, but also of Kane in *Rhapsody in August* and of Yasuko in *Black Rain*.

Their trauma makes it impossible for them to function within society and gives rise to severe internal conflicts. Finally, it imprisons them in the nightmare of the past, forcing them to re-live the same events over and over again. Such a trauma poses a threat to the integrity of an individual, distorts one's sense of time and space, and at the same time, breaks the coherence of narration which is the source and basis of one's identity.

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<sup>4</sup> The distinction between normal and traumatic memory was introduced by Pierre Janet, a French psychologist.

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## Male Homosexuality in Pre-Modern Japan

### Introduction

The phenomenon of male homosexuality in Japan is worth attention mainly because it seems to be the only culture of the pre-modern (not ancient) world in which male-male sexual relations were widely accepted and tolerated, which is even more remarkable when compared to the European culture of the same period (i.e. until the 19th century). Of course, homosexual behaviours did exist in Europe at that time. For example in the cities of 14th and 15th century Italy, mainly Siena and Florence, male homosexual practices were so common that the German term for a 'homosexual' at that time was 'florener' (Duby & Aries 1993:296). Nevertheless, such practices, although common, were not accepted or welcome – they were criticized and condemned by priests in Christian sermons, or even by Dante in his *Divine Comedy*, where he designed a place for sodomites, which was the inner ring of the Seventh Circle of Hell. He even met his mentor, Brunetto Latini among them.

In Japan for hundreds of years, if male-male relations appeared in literature, the context was usually positive, often humorous, but very rarely critical. Moreover, even if it was critical, the target of negative opinions was sexual desire itself, regardless of the genders of the individuals involved.

Such acceptance of male homosexuality resulted in its visible presence in mainstream culture. The tradition of male-male love in Japanese Buddhist monasteries has produced a separate literary genre, the so-called *chigo-monogatari*, acolyte tales. An example of an ideal male-male relationship among samurai was given by the 16th century's greatest military personality, Oda Nobunaga, whose most loyal attendant, Mori Ranmaru, was his companion not only in the battlefield but also in the bedroom. Nobunaga was neither the first nor the last famous samurai to get involved in sex with boys; he was preceded by shoguns like Minamoto Yoritomo or Ashikaga Yoshimitsu and followed by Tokugawa Ieyasu, Iemitsu and many others.

When it comes to urban culture, scholars do not doubt that *kabuki* theatre arose and flourished in close relation to male prostitution in the Edo period (1600-1868). Shirakura argues that: "Prostitution among young male actors was an essential part of *kabuki* theatre, as was female prostitution at the beginning. The craze for young actors, supported by both men and women,

extended over all social classes. This was the basis for the emergence of *kabuki* theatre” (2005:4)

Pre-modern Japanese homosexuality is called *nanshoku*. The term consists of two kanji characters: *nan* (currently mostly read as *dan*) – *otoko* – “male”, and *shoku* – *iro* – “Eros” or “physical love”. *Iro* is the character for “colour” which is the most commonly used meaning nowadays. In the past the meaning of “Eros” was widely used, not only in the term *nanshoku*, but also in words like *kōshoku* or *irogonomi* which mean “pursuing the pleasures of love”, *baishoku* – “prostitution” or *joshoku* – “sex with women”. This meaning of *iro* has survived in the modern language in such expressions as *iropoi* – “sexually attractive, seductive, erotic”. I will use the term *nanshoku* conversely with the English vocabulary.

While *nanshoku*, the Eros of men, involves two men, the term *joshoku*, constructed in the same way as *nanshoku*, where *jo* – *onna* means a “woman”, does not express love between two women but between a man and a woman which can be translated as “heterosexuality” in this context. Moreover, it seems that there was no word for female homosexuals in old Japan.

The vocabulary alone suggests that sexuality in pre-modern Japan revolved around the male. An adult man was the active member in sexual intercourse with a woman or a boy, and only the man was to gain pleasure from such relations. The female or the passive male partner was there only to serve the male, their sexuality or their feelings were not the object of interest. Therefore, the least interesting sex was between women, where the male was totally excluded. For this reason, literary or historical sources concerning lesbians are very rare and require great effort to locate and classify, compared to sources dealing with the sexual life of men.

### **Monks: Situation, Aesthetics**

The first important centres of male homosexuality in Japan were Buddhist monastic institutions. According to a very popular anecdote, homosexual practices were introduced to Japan by the founder of the Shingon sect, Kōbō Daishi or Kūkai in the early 9th century. Although cited in the writings of Christian missionaries from the 16th century or in various works from the Edo period, Kūkai’s contribution is nothing but a myth which, by the way, indicates that male-male acts were closely identified with Buddhist monks and suggests that monks were looking for an eminent person as a symbol of *nanshoku*, to justify it as a somehow noble practice. The actual historical source which indicates the existence of homoerotic practices in the 9th century is the most popular Buddhist writing of the

time - *The Essentials of Rebirth* (*Ōjōyōshū*, 985 by monk Genshin) which describes the punishment for ‘men who love men’. However, even in this seemingly critical text, such relations are treated as a rather minor offence, of the same gravity as secretly diluting *sake* (Japanese liquor) with water (Leupp 1995:31). The next mention of male-male relations comes from sources about Emperor Shirakawa (ruling from 1072-86) who fell in love with an acolyte while visiting Tōdaiji temple (Shirakura 2005:17), which suggests that the tradition of keeping beautiful young boys in monasteries existed, at least in the 11th century.

Buddhist monasteries in old Japan were located in isolated places, usually deep in mountains, far from villages or towns. The main temple of the Shingon sect, for example, is located on Mt. Kōya, the Tendai sect temple is on Mt. Hiei. The majority of monastic communities were male only. Moreover, the first important Buddhist sects in Japan, Shingon and Tendai, excluded women not only from monastic service but also forbade them entering sacred places as pilgrims. It was only when Buddhism was later reformed that women were given more access to religious practices. Thus, even if women were finally allowed to form their own communities, monasteries were still constructed separately for men and women. Also, one of the main rules of a monastic order was sexual abstinence, in male communities called *nyobon* (女犯) which literally reads as ‘woman offence’ and means the ‘offence of having sex’ based on the assumption that if a man wants to have sex, he looks for a woman. Then, although the term *nyobon* was supposed to ban sexual desire in general, monks gave it their own interpretation, thinking that if they were not allowed to make love to women, they could use boys to indulge in their desires. Furthermore, the low position of women in Buddhism inspired some monks to think that boys are generally more refined and pure than women, which made them prefer boys over women.

Presently there is a tendency to perceive homosexuality as a kind of identity, an individual preference, and not as the result of certain situational factors. A male homosexual is usually understood as a man who, even given an opportunity to have sex with a woman, chooses a man. However, in places where women are absent, like prisons, the army or Catholic monasteries, homoerotic acts happen to men who do not think of themselves as gay. They treat other males as a substitute for women or they use such practices as a method of violence against other men, but when they are back to heterogenic society, they act as heterosexuals. This is what I mean by situational factors.

Thus, such behaviour can be generally divided into homosexuality resulting from identity and homosexuality resulting from a certain situation. It is said that the first group of so-called ‘declared’ or ‘inborn’ homosexuals makes around 8 to 10% of every population, including both lesbians and gays (Lew-Starowicz 1999:11). Although Japanese historical sources usually lack precise numeric data, it can be deduced from the available literature that the proportion of men involved in sex with boys in pre-modern Japan was higher than these figures, which clearly suggests that their homosexuality was not inborn but situational<sup>1</sup>. It is now clear how factors such as isolation, a homogenous gender environment, “the woman offence” and the Buddhist notion of women’s inferiority encouraged monks to involve themselves in homoerotic relations.

The object of homoerotic desire was not an adult man but a boy. Although monks usually shave their heads, boys of a certain age were not required to do that when being accepted to the monastic community. This regulation served as an excuse to give boys beautiful hairstyles, make them wear gorgeous clothes and makeup, usually making them look like girls (McLelland 2001).

Boys could enter a Buddhist order as young as the age of 5, but usually they became sexual objects at the age of 11 or 12 and were attractive to their masters until around 18, when they gained masculine features like body hair or a deeper voice. What is clear here is that it was not masculinity which attracted the monks, but rather a kind of gender ambiguity of the boys. They looked like girls, sometimes acted like girls and yet they were boys. This aesthetics of ambiguous gender was continued in *nanshoku* of *samurai* and prostitutes in later times.

The age of boys may sound shocking to the modern readers as it resembles child abuse. However, to the Europeans contemporary to the Japanese of the past centuries, a 12-year-old person was not considered a child. Childhood as a separate period of life was not invented until the 18th century in Europe and the 19th century in Japan. At that time the priority of a human being was to get married, have children and inherit wealth from parents. To do that, a person was supposed to be sexually mature. Puberty was the moment when a person started being socially significant. The time before being able to marry was not perceived as a happy period of freedom, but as a kind of a “waiting room” before entering society. In such

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<sup>1</sup> One very precise source deals with *nanshoku* among *samurai* in the 17th century; *Dokaikōshūki* (*Notes on what is worthless and on arch-enemies*) completed in 1691 was a kind of a census conducted among 243 feudal lords (*daimyō*), where 29 of them declared that they ‘like *nanshoku*’ (*nanshoku wo konomu*) and 4 more declared that they ‘love beautiful boys’ (*bidō wo aisu*) (Takei 2000:9)

conditions, parents started to look for a husband for their daughter shortly after she had her first menstruation, which could be as young as 12 years of age. In both cultures there exist numerous records of girls getting married and having children at the age of 13; 15-year-old prostitutes, 16, 17-year-old concubines and so on. In this context a boy of the same age as a girl able to be a wife, was not considered a child.

Before the Edo period there was no public schooling system in Japan and boys were placed in monasteries temporarily to gain an education and therefore heighten their chances of social advance. It seems that parents were aware of the practices that their sons were subjected to in monasteries but they did not oppose. A Jesuit, father Francis Cabral, noted in a letter written in 1596 that ‘abominations of the flesh’ and ‘vicious habits’ as he called *nanshoku* were ‘regarded in Japan as quite honourable; men of standing entrust their sons to the bonzes to be instructed in such things, and at the same time to serve their lust’ (Spence 1985:225).

A relation between a novice and a monk was that of a master and his disciple. The older partner taught his young fellow the secrets of religious practice or of life’s wisdom and the boy expressed his gratitude in sexual performance. This idea also affected the institution of *terakoya* – small public schools run by monks in the Edo period and the idea of teaching in general. One type of Edo-period homosexual erotic woodblock print depicts such scenes. For example, there is a boy in one room practicing calligraphy while in the neighbouring room his friend is being penetrated by the teacher. The writing boy comments that: “Well, that must be a severe punishment” (Fig. 1) (Shirakura 2005:129).

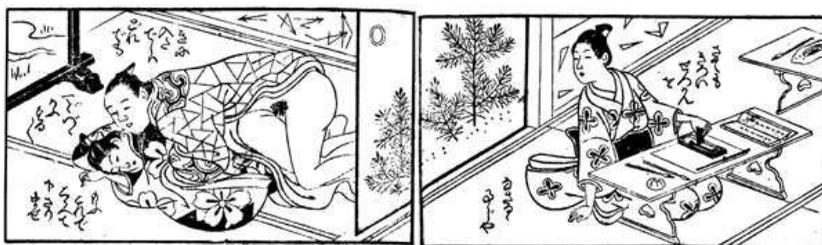


Fig. 1

### **Samurai: Pain and Power**

At the end of the 12th century, when the Kamakura shogunate came to power, Japan entered the period of *samurai* culture. Warriors, who built their culture distinct from the imperial court, took inspiration mainly from

Buddhism and they approved of *nanshoku*, which fitted into their conditions of war and their model of an ideal warrior.

Also, in this case situational factors were important. Women were not allowed in the battlefield and they were rare in military camps, so men found another outlet for their sexual needs. Also, in warriors' society the qualities praised the most were physical strength, which women usually lack, and courage or loyalty to one's lord, which women were thought to be lacking.

*Samurai* homosexual relations reflect actual relations of power between a lord and his vassal. A vassal was always loyal to his lord, serving him in battle as well as in bed. A vassal lover had to swear his fidelity to the lord and to get involved in a romance with another man was considered a betrayal and often ended with the unfaithful lover's death. At the same time the lord was not obliged to have only one lover and shoguns or feudal lords kept numerous male attendants and servants. They behaved like polygamous husbands as mentioned before, which suggests that polygamy is more connected to power than gender – the one who has authority over others can require fidelity from them, while being unfaithful himself, no matter if they are women or boys.

The question of power was very important in pre-modern Japanese male homosexuality. There was no equality, no partnership in such relations. There always had to be the more and the less powerful part in a couple and their roles were irreversible. It can be clearly seen in erotic techniques used in *nanshoku*. The only way of having homoerotic pleasure in old Japan was anal penetration, where the passive partner was the one with less power. Because it was usually painful to the penetrated, it was always clear who was in control in such an act. In Buddhist monasteries the inserter was always the older monk and the insertee was the acolyte. Among *samurai* it was the lord and the vassal. In the case of relations between two men who held the same power, for example two vassals of the same lord, the active part was always the one older in age.

Having said that, only 8 to 10% of the population are so-called 'inborn homosexuals', it is obvious how small the number of men were who could have actually enjoyed being a passive partner in a homosexual act. Edo-period literature, realistic and often sarcastic, shows *nanshoku* from the insertee's point of view. For instance, a collection of anecdotes from 1623, entitled *Laughing after waking up (Suiseishō)*, mentions a young monk, who insults a statue of Kūkai after learning that it was him who brought *nanshoku* to Japan (Nakamura 1975:128). It was common knowledge in Edo period that "nanshoku is a one-sided pleasure", recognized even in an

official 17th century document by Tokugawa Mitsukuni, the feudal lord of Mito. He instructed tax collectors from his land that when they collect taxes in the form of sexual service, it should be taken from women, not boys, because it may be pleasant to women, but to boys it is only painful (Ujiie 2003:57).

Although painful, winning the heart of an influential man was a short and easy way to pursue one's career. For example one of the greatest opponents of Oda Nobunaga, Takeda Shingen, made his own lover, Kōsaka Masanobu one of the top generals in his army (Leupp 1995:53). Tokugawa Iemitsu was known for awarding his favourite lovers with land and important functions in the shogunate, however he also killed one of his lovers for "a real or imagined offence while the two and other retainers were relaxing in a bathtub" (ibid: 144). Thus, *nanshoku* could be a great opportunity for social success but at the same time was an uncertain path, dependent on the lord's moods.

### **Townsmen: Business**

The Edo period was a 250-year period of peace under the strict control of the Tokugawa shogunate. To maintain peace and order, the government established four social classes, the highest of which were the *samurai* and the lowest – a freshly emerged class of townsmen. After the Warring States period (1467–1573), the shogunate was careful to execute its authority over feudal lords and obliged them to live temporarily in the new political centre – the city of Edo. So the warriors stayed in developing towns, spending their money on services and goods provided by the townsmen, while not earning as much as in the previous era of wars. The townsmen got wealthier on serving the *samurai* and with time they gained real economical power. Because they could not use their power in any political activity, limited by severe legal regulations, they focused on culture.

The urban culture of the Edo period was hedonistic and thoroughly sexual. As a matter of fact, *kabuki* theatre, which is now regarded as a refined form of classical entertainment, in the Edo period was something like television is today – simple, often vulgar but attractive and fascinating. Similarly to the English theatre of Shakespeare's times, it was closely related to prostitution. *Kabuki* was originally performed only by women who instantly became the objects of male desire. The shogunate made the same assumption as the Buddhist theorists, that men desire only women and banned them from the stage in 1629. The result was also the same as in the case of the "woman offence" and men started buying young actors. Boys were banned in 1652, significantly a year after the death of the shogun

Iemitsu who enjoyed *kabuki* so much that he would never let his government do such a thing while alive.

One of the important elements of Edo urban culture was the raising of prostitution to the position of art. Pleasure quarters like Yoshiwara or Fukagawa in the Edo period had their own customs and etiquette and being familiar with them gave pride to a really fashionable Edo man. Philipp von Siebold, a physician from the Dutch mission on Dejima in Nagasaki, visited Edo in 1862 and was impressed by how common prostitution was there. He wrote: “It seems that places of this kind are regarded necessary to the Japanese, like for example restaurants. Actually, it is not a problem at all that someone leaves a brothel in the middle of the day, just like he was leaving a cafe” (Nishiyama 1997: 60).

There were common prostitutes affordable to almost everyone and courtesans of a status similar to modern pop-stars – available only to the richest but desired by the masses. However, while courtesans were available mainly in the pleasure quarters and attractive rather to men only, young *kabuki* actors were even more like modern celebrities. Everyone could afford a theatre ticket and going to see a play was not as suspicious to one’s husband as going to a pleasure quarter, so even women could enjoy this kind of entertainment. Therefore, when scholars refer to the fashion for actors as a “craze”, they are not exaggerating. Actors, along with courtesans, set trends for clothing, makeup, hairstyles. Interestingly enough, the women of that time followed the style of men dressed like women, because that is what the actors wore. Fans could also buy woodblock prints depicting their favourite actors, fans or toothpicks with their initials and so on.

In the Edo period *nanshoku* became commercialised. While in previous ages relations between monks or warriors required some kind of a vow, of fidelity and sentiment, in the Edo period it became simply a service for money. Townspeople treated male prostitution simply as one more kind of entertainment, along with female prostitution. And again, clients were mostly not the people who would today be called “real gay”. Most of them were married and enjoyed courtesans as well as boy actors. Because the aesthetics were quite the same as in monastic homosexuality, boys were not masculine but sometimes even hard to distinguish from women. Clients did not identify themselves as gay but simply treated such acts light-heartedly like one more kind of fashionable fun. This attitude is visible in the emergence of two different terms to describe men involved in sex with boys. One is *wakashu-zuki* which means *a boy-liker* and refers to the majority of men described above. The second one is *onna-girai* – a

*woman-hater* and leaves no doubt that such a person preferred male partners exclusively.

The affirmative attitude towards prostitution brought the idea of enjoying sex without commitment or responsibility. This notion appealed not only to townsmen but also to monks and warriors, who abandoned their old ideals of master-disciple or lord-vassal relationships and simply indulged themselves in pursuing sexual pleasure.

The Edo period was that peak moment when *nanshoku* was present in every social class and was widely accepted. First, in this hedonistic society sexuality itself became an important part of mainstream culture, therefore expressing it in literature, the graphic arts and theatre, mentioning it in everyday conversation and practicing it just as openly as going to a cafe was not considered shocking or immoral. In fact, such erotic content was officially illegal for the most part of the Edo period. The shogunate kept on issuing bans on pornographic albums or novels just the same as on *kabuki* theatre, but also as with *kabuki*, it was more theory than practice.

In addition to that, male homosexuality practiced openly by the ruling class and the noble clergy seemed to be a splendid tradition and therefore imitating it let folks feel somewhat better and more refined. The literature of that time has even raised discussion on comparing and evaluating sex with women and with boys, usually arguing that preferring women is ordinary and quite vulgar, while being interested in boys proved a refined taste. In such conditions social tolerance for men's sex with boys was not surprising. Of course, the voices of criticism rose even there, but they were minor in comparison with common opinion.

### **Meiji Restoration: Turning Point**

After opening up to the world in the 1850s, the Japanese realised that Western countries were much more powerful than their homeland. They assumed that the only way to achieve the same level of development was to adopt Western civilisation, so they started following it enthusiastically. When there were any differences between Western and Japanese thinking, the Japanese usually assumed their own inferiority as savages and accepted all Western ideas without argument.

In the 16th century, the Japanese simply ignored severe criticism of *nanshoku* expressed by Catholic missionaries, whom they eventually banned from Japan or executed. At that time the Japanese were stronger, so they were able to dictate the conditions, but in the late 19th century the situation was just the opposite. The Japanese took the homophobic and

sexually restricted ideology of the West as a civilized way of living and they felt ashamed of their vulgar sexualized culture.

Discourse on male homosexuality was turned upside down. Arguments on the refinement of *nanshoku* gave way to critical voices present in the society before. Intellectuals were not only copying Western ideas unfamiliar to the Japanese, but they were also expressing new sentiments which arose in the society. Japan prepared for military expansion and at the beginning of the 20th century the ideal of a man was again a warrior, strong and masculine, not a fashionable but weak and immoral townsman. This notion resulted, on the one hand, in preserving *nanshoku* in the army as the samurai ethos, but on the other hand in condemning homosexual prostitution along with prostitution in general. New Japan was supposed to focus its powers on building a strong country, thus any entertainment was not welcome anymore.

This was the turning point in Japanese male homosexual history. Until the Meiji period *nanshoku* was widely practiced because it was available, accepted and fashionable. Men had sex with boys simply because they were able to, not because they needed to do it. And when finally *nanshoku* was no longer approved of, the ones who were only *boy-likers* gave up on that entertainment. Only the *woman-haters* kept on practicing male love. This is how male homosexuality in Japan reached its modern form, when it became a question of individual preference and not fashion. This concept prevails in contemporary Japan and in Western countries. In the 20th century problems experienced by gay men in Japan were quite similar to the problems European and American homosexuals faced, which mainly concerned social tolerance, gender identity and facing stereotypes.

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Marcin Rutkowski

## **Manga and Anime as Pornography According to Polish Criminal Law**

### **Introduction**

Manga and anime (from here on referred to as m&a) are one of the most known and popular products of Japanese modern culture. They attract a lot of attention, especially among members of the younger generation. But they have also aroused a lot of controversy. Many consider m&a to be full of sex and violence. This is not true in all cases; however, one must admit that some of them meet this description. There are even people; who consider m&a to be a form of pornography (*Uwaga* 2003). Therefore, it is important to determine; whether they are such and, if they are, what would be the juridical consequences of such a situation. As regulations may vary from country to country, my analysis will be based on the juridical system of Poland, which I am most familiar with.

### **The Juridical Status of Pornography in Poland**

First, it is vital to answer the question, what is pornography? Crimes concerning it are described in the Polish Penal Code but the definition of pornography itself is not provided. This burden falls on the shoulders of jurists. One of the more common definitions portrays pornography as a depiction of sexual activities presented in a purely technical context which exhibits sexual organs created for the purpose of sexually stimulating the receiver (Marek 2007:393-396). There are many other definitions (Filar 1977:30-79), but anyone with common sense should have no problem in recognizing it. It should be noted that pornography is not limited to only one type of medium. Various media may fit this definition, such as comics, movies or computer games. What is more, a type of m&a known as *hentai* can definitely be called pornography. Whether a certain media fits this definition might be a matter of discussion; however, there is no doubt that some m&a are created solely for the purpose of sexually stimulating the viewer through the depiction of various sexual activities and are therefore pornography.

While we have answered the first question positively, i.e. that it is sometimes possible to consider animation pornography, we need to analyze the consequences of such a situation. It should be pointed out that the act of possession, or even the production of pornography as such is not considered a crime in Poland; unless some other prerequisites are met. However, anyone who *publicly presents pornographic content an*

*unwilling person is subject to a fine, limitation of freedom or up to 1 year imprisonment (Kodeks karny 1997: art. 202 § 1). Furthermore, anyone who presents pornography a minor below the age of 15 is subject to a fine, limitation of freedom or up to 2 years imprisonment (ibidem: art. 202 § 2). This takes place even if the minor involved is not unwilling and the presentation is not public. This concludes the list of possible crimes when it comes to normal pornography. These regulations do not differentiate between any of its types and are therefore binding in all its forms, including hentai.*

However, there is also so-called hard pornography, which includes sexual activities involving animals, minors or the presentation of violence. While the possession of such materials for one's personal use is not penalized (with one exception, which I will mention later), if someone *for the purpose of spreading produces, records, imports, keeps or possesses or publicly presents pornographic content involving a minor, the presentation of violence or use of an animal, he/she is subject to a punishment of 6 months to 8 years imprisonment (ibidem: art. 202 § 3). Furthermore, recording pornographic content involving a minor below the age of 15 is punishable with a sentence of 1 to 10 years imprisonment (ibidem: art. 202 § 4). What is more, the possession of such materials (i.e. including minors below the age of 15) is penalized by a sentence of 3 months to 5 years imprisonment (ibidem: art. 202 § 4a). Out of all the various types of hard pornography, only in the case of depicting minors below the age of 15 is possession for personal use is penalized. These regulations definitely concern real life pornography which is one that is not merely a form of animation. The question is whether they apply to hentai or other kinds of animation as well.*

### **The Age of the Non-Existent Child**

It should be pointed out that there is a relatively new regulation, article 202 § 4b of the Penal Code, which states that if someone *produces, spreads, presents, keeps or possesses manufactured or processed images of minors involved in a sexual act, is subject to a fine, limitation of freedom or up to 2 years imprisonment (ibidem: art. 202 § 4b). Another effect is that the regulations from art. 202 § 3-4a do not apply to animation, as there are specialist rules that exclude them. This is also another argument which advocates the fact that pornography does not necessarily need to contain real-life people but can also include animated characters. However, the question remains whether hentai can be considered hard pornography in the eyes of the Penal Code or not.*

At first glance, article 202 § 4b is simple and easy to understand. However, it is not so simple when it comes to its interpretation. It should be noted down that it was created as part of the implementation of the EU Council's framework legislation 2004/68/JHA (*On combating...* 2003:art. 1(a)(iii)). This act instigates countries to penalize the creation of pornography involving processed images of real minors or realistic images of non-existent minors. However, the Polish Penal Code does use the word 'realistic'. It requires further elaboration to determine whether this was intentional. According to Prof. Warylewski, this regulation applies to *hentai* as well (Warylewski 2008:5-6). He stated it by presenting them by name, so there is no doubt about the interpretation of his words. On the other hand, Prof. Adamski states that the Council Decision was meant only to restrict the creation of pornography involving realistic images and should not be applied to unrealistic looking characters (Adamski 2008:12-13). Both of these are official opinions requested by the government and therefore are arguments of equal value. Therefore, even further study is required.

We should consider whether there is a way to define the age of the non-realistic fictional character or not. Doing this by means of a movie/comic plot would be impossible, because according to it a character may be of an absurd age. For example a 10-years-old-looking girl might be a 500-year-old vampire. It could also be possible that the age of a character is not mentioned at all. Not mentioning the age in a plot would mean that it is not specified and, therefore, a character cannot be considered to be minor as there is no definite proof. That is; because of the principle *in dubio pro reo*. If it is impossible to prove guilt (in this case resulting from the age of a character) the defendant should always be considered innocent (*Kodeks postępowania karnego* 1997:art. 5). Even if a specialist somehow determined the age of a character, the accused could always claim ignorance of this fact. After all, if specialist knowledge was required to verify its age, one could not expect the average person to be aware of such a fact. This would be an exculpatory circumstance, as all crimes concerning pornography in Polish law can be committed only intentionally. Committing such an act through negligence, even a grave one, would not constitute a crime. Such a method of defining a character's age would also lead to the situation where creators of realistic child pornography would always use such an excuse by stating that all the characters are 18 or above and through such means always escape liability. This would make this law fictional (as it would be completely inapplicable) and such interpretation is not acceptable (Morawski 2004:184).

Another method is measuring characters age *via* their appearance. However, it is feasible only in cases of realistic images. In such a situation, with the help of specialist knowledge of anatomists or graphics, it would be possible to determine, with a certain degree of error, the age of a character. However, these methods would be useless against m&a characters, as they do not meet anatomical requirements. As mentioned before, all uncertainties should be judged in favor of the accused, and, as in the above mentioned situation it would be impossible to avoid them, this would always lead to his acquittal (*Kodeks postępowania karnego* 1997:art. 5). As it is not acceptable to interpret the law in a way that it is impossible to implement, it should be considered that it was not the intention of legislators to apply article 202 § 4b to m&a. The only logical conclusion is that it only relates to the realistic images of minors.

During the debate concerning the amendments of the Penal Code, including article 202 § 4b, Prof. Filar mentioned that the idea of the project was far from perfect and should be amended by means of system interpretation (*Stenogram...* :2008). In light of these words we may consider it to be very poorly made and prone to mistakes. Another argument after that is the matter of age of the created characters. Article 202 § 4b penalizes the possession of pornography including manufactured images of minors, that is people below the age of 18. At the same time, article 202 § 4a penalizes the same action concerning real minors, but only the ones below the age of 15. It also includes more severe punishment than in situations where manufactured images are involved. It is obvious that in the opinion of legislators, pornography involving non-existent minors is less severe than in the case of their real counterparts. We could deduce this from the burden of punishment provided. If we interpreted both articles literally, it would mean that the possession of pornography involving real minors aged between 15 and 17 is not prohibited, while in the case of their animated counterparts, it is still penalized. This would have to lead to the conclusion that created images of minors are at the same time more and less dangerous than the real ones. Such an interpretation would lead to the situation where a person is allowed to possess pornography involving real minors aged between 15 and 17, but would be punished for possession of pornographic content, even if it contained the very same actors, if their images are even slightly processed. This is of course illogical, and, in order to avoid this paradox, this regulation should be interpreted as concerning fictional minors below the age of 15, at least in the case of the possession of such materials, if not in all situations.

Also, D.R. Swenson, in his article *The Internet and Questions of Criminal Law Development* states that unclear criminal regulations should not be binding (Swenson 1999:234). If they were, this would create a situation where, even after the careful studying of the Penal Code a citizen would not know whether a certain action is forbidden to him or not. I am afraid this would be the case when it comes to article 202 § 4b, as even experts have varying opinions in this matter. Therefore, I conclude that this regulation does not concern *hentai*, as they include unrealistic images.

### **Animals and Violence in *Hentai***

Another important problem is the juridical status of animals and violence in animated pornography. As there is no specialist regulation as in the situation of minors, it is even more complicated. If we considered 202 § 3 to be applicable to animation, it would arouse the problem of defining an animal. Because creators of m&a are not bound by anything other than their imagination, they can create beings which do not exist in real life. If it was simply some new sort of animal, like for example a bear with blue fur, there would not be a problem with its classification.

But what should we do with human-animal hybrids? One example of this is the so called; *nekomusume* or catgirl, which is a female with some cat characteristics, spanning from only cat ears to a body resembling more a cat walking on two legs rather than a human. Such a being does not have a counterpart in the real world. However, it would be possible to determine that they are classified as humans. There are sorts of accessories like fake cat ears or tails which are often worn by some m&a fans. Pornographic movies involving people using such accessories would not be considered a violation of 202 § 3 as they are not animals. Following the principle *a maiori ad minus* (Morawski 2004:184), similarly looking animated characters would not be animals as well. However, there are more types of animal-like hybrids that can be created, like werewolves for example. In such a situation it is even more complicated to determine their affiliation. M&a creators have even devised so-called tentacle monsters, which are usually described as aliens or demons. In real life there is no regulation pertaining such beings. It would be impossible to determine whether those creatures are animals.

There is, however, a simple solution for this problem. The prohibition of images depicting minors, animals or violence in pornography is located in the same paragraph. Pornography including minors is even more penalized, as it is the only one which is prohibited to possess even for private use. Therefore, pornography including children is considered by legislation to

be the most dangerous of the three. Only this particular kind has its own regulation when it comes to animation. However, even in such a situation it is a lesser crime than in the case of 'real' pornography. Since the other two are a bit lighter when it comes to real life situations, they are definitely so in the case of *hentai*. There is no special regulation provided in case of animated animals or violence. Therefore, it would be impossible to penalize the production of materials containing them.

If we assumed the opposite, it would mean that pornography including animals or the depiction of violence is more dangerous than the one including minors when it comes to fictional animation rather than in case of real life productions (as the sentence provided for the former one is more severe). This way of thinking would be clearly illogical and therefore unacceptable. Even according to Prof. Warylewski, who approves a wide interpretation of article 202 § 4b, it would be impossible to directly use prior existing regulations in order to punish the production of pornography including the manufactured images of children and that new regulation was required to achieve this goal (Warylewski 2008:5-6). Such new regulation was not created for other kinds of hard pornography. Therefore, I consider that depictions of violence or animals in animated pornography, even realistic ones, are not penalized in Polish criminal law.

### **Important Changes**

It should be noted that, since the lecture I presented at the May conference in Murzasichle, the law has changed. In June 2010 new regulations came into force. While the articles I had brought up during the conference have not changed, new ones have been introduced. One of them, namely article 200b of the Polish Penal Code, is of interest for this material. It states as follows: anyone *publicly approving or encouraging behavior of a pedophilic character is subject to a fine, limitation of freedom or up to 2 years imprisonment (Kodeks karny 1997: art. 200b)*. Even though I did not bring up this issue at that time (as it was not possible for me to foresee this change in the law), I feel obliged to give a few words of explanation.

This new regulation uses the word 'pedophilic' while none of the earlier ones did so. We can, however, assume that legislation had referred to behavior described in art. 200 of the Penal Code, which is sexual interaction with a minor below the age of 15 (*Kodeks karny 1997: art. 200*). The placement of the new regulation (which is close to above the mentioned article 200) suggests it.

While, as stated before, a m&a character cannot be under any circumstances considered a child in the eyes of law, it is not absolutely

certain; that this new law will have no effect on m&a. It does not state by what means a new crime can be committed, so we can assume that any type of public behavior (the use or spreading of various media included) can be punished as long as they state an act of encouragement or the approval of pedophilia. As it even includes products which are neither erotic nor pornographic in content (for example books for children), one can imagine that someone might use m&a for such purposes as well.

It should be noted, however, that such an act would not be judged by the pedophilic character of the used materials (as they can have none of it) but be the intention of one using them. In this situation only the person using such materials would be punished, not the author or the distributor. Someone could, however, accuse them of intentionally spreading such materials for the purpose of propagating pedophilia. If the intention of an author or distributor was not clearly such a goal, he could not be considered guilty.

If someone created or distributed goods that are not child pornography (as such an act is punished by other, harsher regulations), but did it in order to sell them to people with pedophilic tastes, it would be disputable whether he would be sentenced or not. His direct goal would not be the propagation of such behavior but simply a way to gain profit. We could always consider that he knew the consequences and accepted them (*Kodeks karny* 1997: art. 9 § 1), but it would still be problematic. He could defend himself claiming that the distribution of pornography does not necessarily encourage acts (sometimes illegal) presented by it but has the reverse effect, that it decreases the rate of sexual crimes. As many share their opinion, his chances would not be so slim (Bornhoff 1992:543-544; Filar 1977:108-112). Even, if he were proven wrong before the court, sentencing him would be impossible, because the crime listed in article 200b can only be committed intentionally.

At last, I would like to mention that this regulation would probably be of very limited use. That is, because only public approval or the encouragement of pornography is penalized. The possession of any material for one's personal use is not punished by it (though it may violate other regulations). It would also be very hard to punish an author or distributor, as they would most likely deny that the propagation of such ideas was their intent and, without definite proof of otherwise, they could not be considered guilty (*Kodeks postępowania karnego* 1997:art. 5). In any case it would be hard to imagine that anyone, through any means, would try to publicly encourage pornography in Poland, even if his act was not forbidden by law. Such ideals are widely considered by public opinion

to be disgusting and the person would be branded. Therefore, I doubt that this law will be put to use anytime soon.

### **Closing Remarks**

To sum up, I conclude that *hentai* is pornography in the case of Polish law and, therefore, there are some restrictions imposed on it. At the same time it cannot be considered hard pornography. However, as shown above, not all experts agree in this matter. As there are no known court cases including such problems, it is still hard to determine which way the jurisprudence would go. Since a ban on the images of non-existent children in pornography is imposed by the European Union, similar regulations are likely to exist in most European countries. The remarks presented above may not always be directly applicable to foreign juridical systems; however, I believe that some general reflections could be useful in the interpretation of similar problems in countries other than Poland.

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## Six-Dimensional Analysis of Language

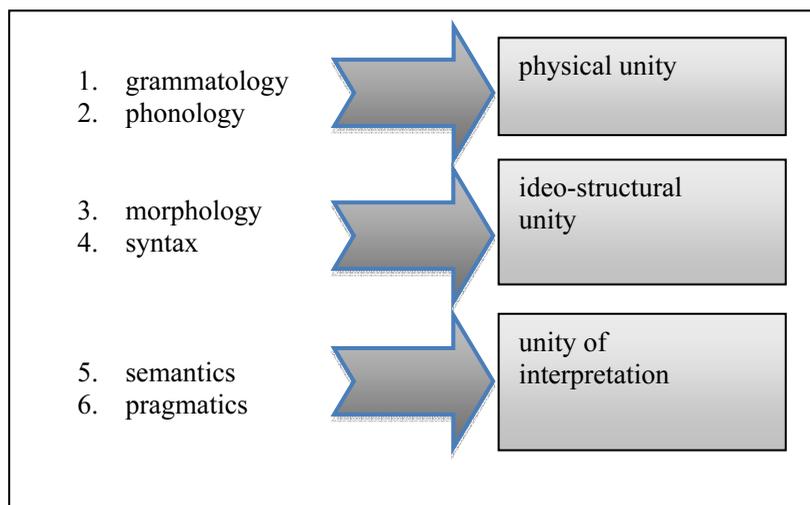
### Introduction

The article aims to introduce the linguistic model developed and taught at the department for Japanese language and literature at Ruhr-University of Bochum (RUB). The model consists of six dimensions of language and is going to be demonstrated with the example of the Japanese language.

The grammatical terms and transcription system (modified *kuñrei-siki* 訓令式) of Japanese words are taken from the Japanese Morphosyntax (Rickmeyer 1995), the Introduction to Classical Japanese (Rickmeyer 2004) and the Japanese language course of the Ruhr-University Bochum (Rickmeyer et al. 2008).

### The Six Linguistic Dimensions of Language

If we look at any spoken and/or written language, we can identify the following six dimensions (compare: Rickmeyer 1998):



The first two dimensions, grammatology and phonology, are physically perceivable: We can see the writing system of a language with our eyes and hear the sound of a person speaking in a particular language. Within this physical unity the dimension of grammatology is not obligatory. Many languages and language variants such as languages from the African

continent etc. have never been put down in writing. If the language is not spoken anymore, it just gets lost. On the other hand we have dead languages like Anglo-Saxon or former states of languages which can be perceived only by written sources as documents, books etc.

The ideo-structural unity of language consists of two parts, which form the commonly used term “grammar”: The morphology and the syntax of a language, which means all possible forms of singular units like words and phrases and the combination of these units to sentences. The term “ideo-structural” implies the underlying theories used for the analysis of the certain language and the deduced rules for morphology and syntax, whilst semantics, i.e. the meaning of words and phrases, and pragmatics, i.e. the particular use of those elements, form the interpreting unity of a language, which is the understanding of written or orally produced language.

In the following chapters I will clarify each dimension in the context of the Japanese language.

### **The 1st Dimension: Grammatology**

As I mentioned before the first dimension of language, the grammatology, is not obligatory for any language or dialect. When compared to the number of languages, there are just a few writing systems. A writing system is not connected to the language it was initially designed and used for. On the contrary, most writing systems were used and if necessary adapted for other languages (obviously I use Roman letters for this English text). In many cases religious or political expansion was responsible for the spreading of a writing system.

Consequently, writing systems are replaceable; there are many examples where a writing system used for a certain language was changed. The reasons for such a change were often also motivated by political or religious circumstances. For instance, the Vietnamese language was originally written in Chinese characters. But since 1945, the Roman letters in combination with diacritics is the official writing system of Vietnam (cf. e.g. Wikipedia: Vietnamese alphabet).

The following examples show the replaceability of writing systems:

The JTB-Dictionary for Japanese visitors in Germany features the following sentences in the Japanese syllables *katakana* 片仮名:

イッヒ ファシュテーエ ニヒト。  
 ケネンズィー ダス ヴィーダーホーレン。  
 シュプレッヘン ズィー ビッテ ラングザーマー。  
 (JTB 2003)

The following lemma for the Japanese word “Japanese” (= *nihōngo* 日本語) in the *daiziseñ*-dictionary can be transferred in Roman letters as following:

日本語:日本の国語。万葉仮名で書かれた古代日本語からの文献をもつ。敬語、男女の言葉の違いの発達などの複雑な面に比して、音体系の変化は比較的少なく保守的である。アルタイ諸語との同系説、南方の諸言語との同系説があるが、結論は得られていない。

*Nihōngo*: *Nihoñ=no kokugo. Mañyoogana=de kakareta kodai-nihōngo=kara=no buñkeñ=o motu. Keigo, dañzyo=no kotoba=no tigai=no hattatu=nado=no hukuzatu=na meñ=ni hi-site, oñtaikei=no heñka=wa hikakuteki sukunaku hosyuteki=de aru. Arutai-syogo=to=no dookeisetu, nañpoo=no syogeñgo=to=no*

One way to transcribe any language in the world is the International Phonetic Alphabet IPA of the International Phonetic Association (cf. IPA). The advantage of this alphabet is that the proper pronunciation is fixed by single letters and diacritics visually and can be reproduced by any person able to read the alphabet. The following example shows some Polish phrases written in IPA combined with the German correspondent form.

[ˌd͡zɛɲ ˈdɔbrɪ]	‘Guten Morgen/Tag.’
[dɔ vʲiˈd͡zɛɲa]	‘Auf Wiedersehen.’
[d͡zɛɲˈkujɛ]	‘Danke.’
[ˈpɾɔʃɛ]	‘Bitte.’
[ɲɛ ˈmɯvʲɛ / pɔ ˈpɔlsku]	‘Ich spreche kein Polnisch.’
[ɲɛ rɔˈzumʲɛm / pɔ ˈpɔlsku]	‘Ich verstehe kein Polnisch.’

## Japanese Grammatology

Looking at the Japanese writing system today we have a combination of two writing types: A syllabographical and a logographical one. In Japanese the term *kañzi-kana maziri-buñ* 漢字かな混じり文 (literally translated as “mixed script of Chinese characters and syllabary”) is used (for this and the following compare e.g. Müller-Yokota 1989, Seeley 1991).

The syllabographical part is formed of two so-called *kana* alphabets *hiragana* 平仮名 and *katakana* 片仮名. The term *kana* 仮名 is derived from *kari-na* 仮り名, which means “borrowed names”. Each consists of 46 syllabograms, in which *katakana* syllables are predominantly used for foreign words and names. The logographical characters *kañzi* 漢字 (literally translated as “Chinese signs”), which originally came from China, are used in combination with the *hiragana* which are mainly used for grammatical morphemes. Phonographical Roman letters are also used, but their use is marginal and restricted, for instance, to scientific terms.

Historically both *kana*-alphabets derived from Chinese characters: Since the middle of the 5th century, Chinese characters were used for the notation of Japanese. These so-called *magana* 真仮名 (literally translated as “real kana”) were read phonologically with Chinese readings adapted to the Japanese pronunciation, which means the logographical meaning of the characters was completely irrelevant. The writing system contained more than 2,000 different characters in different writing styles. The amount of signs results from the use of several characters for one phone. The *mañyoogana* 万葉仮名 are the *magana* used in the poem collection *mañyoosyuu* 万葉集 (literally translated as “collection of a myriad words”, compiled in the 8th century).

In the course of time the *katakana* and *hiragana* derived from *magana*. In the 8th and 9th centuries, Buddhist monks used just parts (*kata* 片 = one part of two parts) of the *magana* characters for annotations in Buddhist sutras written in Chinese. This was based on a printing writing style named *kaisyō* 楷書. The *hiragana* developed from cursive *magana* as a whole sign in the writing style named *soosyo* 草書. They were used mainly by women, which explains why they are called *oñna-zi* 女字 (signs of women) or *oñna-de* 女手 (women’s hand). Because of the huge amount of *magana*, there were also a lot of different *hiragana* and *katakana* signs for each phone. All these so-called *heñtaigana* 変体仮名 or *itaigana* 異体仮名 were standardised in 1900 during the Meiji period (1868-1912). The results of this standardisation process are the *kana*-forms we know as today’s standard Japanese.

Roman letters are not only used today but were used also in the 16th and 17th centuries by Portuguese Jesuits who came to Japan for missionary work and scientific research. The dictionary *Vocabolario da lingoa de Iapam* and the grammar book *Arte breve da lingoa Iapoa* compiled by Joao Rodriguez in the early 17th century, in combination with Japanese prose like *Heike monogatari* fixed in Roman letters, gives us today a clear insight into the phonology and grammar of that time (with Chinese *kañzi* and the Japanese *kana*-alphabets it is not possible to fix single phones like with Roman letters).

### **The 2nd Dimension: Phonology**

Phonology is the second dimension of every language. Phones are the segmental tone items of a tone continuum. If we segment the Japanese word *nihon̄go* from the example above into single phones, we can identify the following phones, as described in the International Phonetic Alphabet:

- 1x: [n̄] = dental-alveolar nasal
- 1x: [i] = close front-vowel
- 1x: [h] = glottal fricative
- 2x: [o; ɔ] = close- or open-mid back-vowel
- 1x: [ŋ] = velar nasal
- 1x: [g] = velar plosive

The phonemic system of a language consists of all semantically distinctive phones of a language that can be classified. Allophones are phones, which belong to one phoneme but are distinctive by their phonetic environment. In contrast to variants of a phone the phonetic distinction is obligatory (see examples of the Japanese phoneme inventory).

### **Japanese Phonology**

The phoneme inventory of today's Japanese can roughly be summarized as follows:

- vowels (V): 5 /a, i, u, e, o/
- semivowels (S): 2 /y, w/
- consonants (C): 13 /k, g, t, d, h, p, b, s, z, r, n, m, ñ/ + 1 glottal stop /q/
- furthermore 5 consonants /t<sup>o</sup>, d<sup>o</sup>, c, f, v/ of modern foreign words

The consonants /k, p, b, r, n, m/, the glottal stop /q/ and the consonants /t<sup>o</sup>, d<sup>o</sup>, c, f, v/ which are used in modern words do not have any allophones.

The rest of the consonants do have allophones. The consonant /s/ for example has two allophones:

- [ç] before /i/ or together with a following /y/: /sisya/ [çiça] 死者 ‘a dead person’
- [s] otherwise: /sasoi/ さそい ‘invitation’

If we take the phoneme /t/, there are three allophones:

- [t̚] before /i/ or together with a following /y/ like in /tityuu/ [t̚it̚içw:] 地中 ‘underground’
- [t̚s] before /u/: /tutu/ [t̚sut̚su] つつ ‘pipe’
- [t] otherwise: /tate/ たて ‘length’

The syllabic final /ŋ/ contains five allophones:

1. [m] before /m, b, p/: /señbei/ [sɛmbɛj] 煎餅 ‘rice cracker’
2. [ŋ] before /k, g/: /señgo/ [sɛŋgo] 戦後 ‘after the war’
3. [N] at the end of a phrase: /arimaseñ/ ありません [arimasɛN] ‘does not exist’
4. [̃] before /s, h, y, w/ and vowels (that is a nasalization of the preceding vowel: /señi/ [sɛ̃i] 繊維 ‘fiber’
5. [n] otherwise: /señtaku/ [sɛntakw] 選択 ‘selection’

(cf. Rickmeyer 1995)

The combination of single sounds into syllables and words in Japanese consists of a very simple syllable construction. A typical syllable consists of a vowel nucleus and starts with a consonantal onset. Even complex formations just add a palatal sound after the consonantal onset like in the syllables /kya, kyu, kyo/ and end with one consonant like /syuñ/.

Structure of Japanese syllables (*oñsetu* 音節):  
± prenuclear elements = consonant, semivowel  
**nucleus = vowel (long or short)**  
± postnuclear elements = consonant

The word accent is set with different tone pitches in contrast to languages which have a stress accent like Modern German.

### 3rd Dimension: Forms of Words: Morphology

When considering the third dimension of a language, the morphology, we should look at the formation of the single units of a sentence, which is how a language combines elements to words and phrases. We can classify languages into different morphological types: Isolating, agglutinative, inflectional and incorporating.

Isolating languages like Chinese don't change the form of words or phrases, but the order of words within a sentence is important.

Agglutinative languages like Japanese use mainly affixes. Agglutination means that dependent elements are combined with an independent nucleus of a word. In contrast to inflectional languages the single elements can be segmented and usually one element has just one function.

In inflectional languages like German (and also in so-called incorporating languages) the forms of words and phrases can be changed. The forms have to suit to each other, which means that a governing form influences the form of a depending form.

The smallest parts of words or phrases which contain meaning or function are called morphemes (parallel to the phonological term phoneme). Morphemes are the realisations of one morpheme. If one morpheme can be realised in more than one way, these morphemes are called allomorphs of one morpheme. (Compare e.g. Bußmann 2008)

### Japanese Morphology

Japanese, being an agglutinative language, uses mainly suffixes. The following explanation is based on Rickmeyer 1995 and 2001. Conditions for Japanese words are that one word consists of:

- at least one lexeme
- facultative affixes (mainly suffixes)
- BUT NO enclitics

$q_r \pm L_r \pm s_r \pm f$ <p>word</p> <p>r = recursive</p>
--

Lexemes (L) are characterized as quite independent; that means:

- they can be a word by themselves
- they can form a word in combination with other elements (affixes)

Therefore, one word always contains at least one lexeme.

All non-lexemes are grammemes. Within words, grammemes are mostly affixes. They are characterized as quite dependent; that means they can form words just in combination with lexemes. Japanese affixes can be divided into:

- prefixes (q-)
- suffixes
  - derivatives (-s)
  - flexives (-f)

Loose grammemes which can be affixed to words without being part of the word are enclitics. Enclitics can be divided into:

- derivantica (=e)
- particles (=p)

A one word phrase (OWP) in Japanese contains one word ± enclitics ± their affixes:

$q_r \pm L_r \pm s_r \pm f$	$\pm p_r \pm e_r \pm s_r \pm f \pm p_r$
word	
One-Word-Phrase	
r = recursive	

Therefore, a word can also be a OWP, but a OWP doesn't have to be a word automatically.

The following OWP shows the agglutinative character of Japanese:

<p>止めさせられなかったらしいですよ。</p> <p>Transcription in Roman letters:  <i>yamesaserarenakattarasiidesuyo</i></p>
--

For the morpheme analysis the following symbols are used:

L	lexeme	
	→ V	lexeme verb
-s	suffix	
	→ -v	suffix verb
	→ -a	suffix adjective
	→ -f	flexive (within an inflectional paradigm)
=e	enclitics	
	→ =v	particle verb
	→ =a	particle adjective
	→ =p	particle
Subcategories of verbs V:		
u	irregular verb	
c	consonantal stem	
v	vowel stem	

If we analyse the phrase into its morphemes we get the following result:

<b>L+s+s+s+s±f=e+f=e+f=p</b> <b>Vv+v<sub>v</sub>+v<sub>v</sub>+a+v<sub>c</sub>±f=a+f=v<sub>u</sub>+f=p</b> ⇒ 1 Lexeme verb (X) with 10 suffixes (-x) or enclitics (=x)		
V <sub>v</sub>	<i>YAME-</i>	to stop
-v <sub>v</sub> -	<i>-sase-</i>	Causative
-v <sub>v</sub> -	<i>-rare-</i>	Passive
-a-	<i>-na-</i>	Negation
-v <sub>c</sub> -	<i>-kat-</i> (< <i>-kar-</i> )	Suffix verb for verbalization
-f	<i>-ta</i>	Perfect
=a-	<i>=rasi-</i>	Dubitative
-f	<i>-i</i>	Non-Perfect
=v <sub>u</sub> -	<i>=des-</i>	Particle verb for politeness
-f	<i>-u</i>	Non-Perfect
=p	<i>=yo</i>	Interjection (emphasizing)

If we take the single parts and combine them into all possible phrases, we get the following phrases:

<i>YAME.sase.rare.na.kat.ta=rasi.i=des.u=yo</i>	
<i>YAME.ta</i>	she stopped
<i>YAME.sase.ta</i>	X stopped her
<i>YAME.sase.rare.ta</i>	she was forced to stop

<i>YAME.sase.rare.na.kat:ta</i>	she was not forced to stop
<i>YAME.sase.rare.na.kat:ta=rasi.i</i>	It seems that she wasn't forced to stop
<i>YAME.sase.rare.na.kat:ta=rasi.i=des.u</i>	It seems that she wasn't forced to stop (more polite)
<i>YAME.sase.rare.na.kat:ta=rasi.i=des.u=yo</i>	It seems that she wasn't forced to stop (polite and with emphasis)

In the Japanese example there is always one phrase which belongs just to the morphological dimension. The English translation on the other side needs to combine different words or phrases into sentences. This leads us to the next dimension of language, syntax.

**4th Dimension: Syntax**

A sentence is the biggest grammatical unity, which can be analysed with morphosyntactic techniques:

- A sentence is a combination of smaller morphological elements (in Japanese: OWPs), which follow certain rules.
- All these OWPs are related to each other by the criterion of dependency, which is given by syntactic rules.

Generally spoken, syntax is necessary to form correct sentences and to decode sentences formed by others.

Greenberg (1960) classifies languages by the order of the constituents: subject (S) object (O) and verb/predicate (V):

- SVO: Chinese
- SOV: Japanese
- VSO: Arabic

Many languages, like German, do not have just one possibility to order these constituents in a sentence. Therefore, this classification considers the prevalent order in a declarative sentence.

## Japanese Syntax

Japanese is an SOV-language, so the main rule of Japanese syntax is

subject – object – verb/predicate

In the context of dependency models, the dominant Japanese syntax rule is the following (Chamberlain 1891: 254): “The fundamental rule of Japanese syntax is that qualifying words precede the word they qualify.” In other words:

The dependent part = DEPENDENS always stands before the governing part = REGENS

For the decoding of Japanese it is important to know that Japanese tends to omit constituents, depending on the context or situation; you have to be aware of the varieties of possible sentence constructions in Japanese.

The last constituent in a Japanese sentence is not dependent on any other OWP/constituent; that means the final constituent in Japanese sentences is always the finite.<sup>1</sup> Considering the verbal attribution, the adverbale constituents are typically attributed to verb V. This is also valid for adjectives, nominal adjectives and adverbs. Atypically, they can be also attributed to a noun. Adnominal constituents are typically attributed to a noun.

Finite constituents: X#

Verbal attribution: Adverbale constituents vX V

Nominal attribution: Adnominal constituents nX N

The rules of Japanese syntax can be demonstrated with the first sentence of the famous Japanese novel *Snow Country* by Kawabata Yasunari, published in 1948 (川端康成 『雪国』).

國境の長いトンネルを抜けると雪国であつた。

Transcribed and split into OWPs we get seven phrases, glossed with their morphological class and chronological number:

---

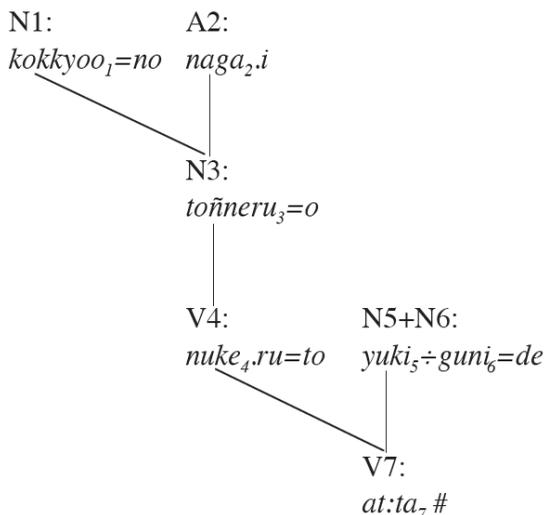
<sup>1</sup> In German, for example, the finite constituent is in second place in a declarative sentence.

kokkyoo=no N1 / naga.i A2 / toñneru=o N3 / nuke.ru=to V4 / yuki÷guni=de N5+6 / at:ta V7 # N = noun A = adjective V = verb
---

The next table shows the dependencies between the phrases:

<b>Dependens</b>	<b>→ Regens</b>
N1: kokkyoo=no	→ N3: toñneru=o
A2: naga.i	→ N3: toñneru=o
N3: toñneru=o	→ V4: nuke.ru=to
V4: nuke.ru=to	→ V7: at:ta
N5+6: yuki÷guni=de	→ V7: at:ta

A tree diagram illustrates the dependencies more clearly (Rickmeyer 2003):



## 5th and 6th Dimension: Semantics and Pragmatics

The next step is to understand and translate the sentence into another language. This leads to the semantical and pragmatical dimensions of language.

Semantics contain the meaning of words and phrases of a language. Looking at the example above, we can identify the following meanings of the particular OWPs:

frontier 1 / long 2 / tunnel 3 / leaving behind 4 / Snow Country 5+6 / was[it] 7 #

The *Snow Country* is quite famous, so there are already several translations in different languages (cf. Rickmeyer 2006):

1) 國境の<sub>1</sub>長い<sub>2</sub>トンネルを<sub>3</sub>抜けると<sub>4</sub>雪<sub>5</sub>國で<sub>6</sub>あつた<sub>7</sub>。  
 Kokkyoo<sub>1,1</sub>=no<sub>1,2</sub>/ naga<sub>2,1.i2,2</sub>/ toñneru<sub>3,1</sub>=o<sub>3,2</sub>/ nuke<sub>4,1.ru4,2</sub>=to<sub>4,3</sub>/  
 yuki<sub>5±guni6,1</sub>=de<sub>6,2</sub>/ at<sub>7,1:ta7,2</sub>#

English:

2) [The train] came<sub>4</sub> out<sub>(3,2)</sub> of the long<sub>2</sub> tunnel<sub>3</sub> into the snow<sub>5</sub> country<sub>6</sub>.  
 (Seidensticker 1957)

French:

3) Un long<sub>2</sub> tunnel<sub>3</sub> [entre] les deux<sub>1a</sub> régions<sub>1b</sub>, et<sub>(3)</sub> voici<sub>(3)</sub> [qu'on] était<sub>7</sub> [dans] le pays<sub>6</sub> de neige<sub>5</sub>. (Fujimori & Guerne 1960)

German:

4) Als<sub>(4,2)</sub> [der Zug] aus<sub>(3,2)</sub> dem langen<sub>2</sub> Grenz<sub>1</sub>tunnel<sub>3</sub> herauskroch<sub>4</sub>, lag<sub>(7)</sub> das “Schnee<sub>5</sub>land<sub>6</sub>” [vor ihm weit ausgebreitet]. (Benl 1947 u.a.)

If you take the meanings of the words, you just have:

- frontier 1
- long 2
- tunnel N3
- leaving behind V4
- Snow Country 5+6
- was[it] 7#

A word-by-word translation then could be:

“Leaving the frontier’s long tunnel behind, it was Snow Country.”

But if one looks at the translations above, it can be seen that all of them added constituents, which are not written in the original Japanese [marked with brackets]:

- German:
  - der Zug = the train
  - vor ihm weit ausgebreitet = spread in front of him
- English:
  - the train
- French:
  - entre = between
  - qu'on = that one
  - dans = in

As mentioned above, a very important characteristic of Japanese is to omit constituents, which are needed in other languages: In this particular example it is not written in the text, who is coming out of the tunnel: A train, a person? Consequently a translator often has to reconstruct sentence constituents out of the context around the text, which leads us directly to the 6th dimension of language, pragmatics.

Pragmatics describe the relation between any linguistic action and the event of the action. The linguistic action LOQI is defined as an event *e* within space-time LOTE (cf. Rickmeyer 2002 and newer lecture scripts):

LOTE (*e*, locus, tempus)  
*e*: LOQI (dicens, audiens, TEXT)

- the event of linguistic action has a linguistic context = relation of the linguistic **context** and the linguistic action
- any event of linguistic action occurs at a certain place at a certain time = relation of the **situation** and the linguistic action

The linguistic precontext is missing in the first sentence of Snow Country: you need the postcontext if you want to know who is acting (even if you know the postcontext, you can't find the answer definitely).

The situation of a linguistic interaction can be explained as following:

- "I'm giving a speech at the moment, here in Poland."
- if I wanted to tell this to my husband later, the situation is different: the speaker is the same (= me), but the listener, the place and the time is different, so the formulation has to be different

Irony and jokes have to be understood always within the context or situation of a linguistic interaction, but there is another part in language which depends highly on pragmatics.

The sophisticated Japanese honorifics system called *keigo* 敬語 demonstrates the dependency of linguistic interaction on context and situation very well:

In linguistic interaction LOQI there are always four possible participants:

- *dicens* = the speaker of the linguistic act
- *audiens* = the listener/reader of the linguistic act
- *agens* = the agent of action V
- *patiens* = the recipient of action V

In respectful Japanese (*soñkeigo* 尊敬語) the speaker *dicens* respects RESP the agent *agens* of the action V (independent of the question, if the agent is the listener or not):

RESP <sup>3</sup> ( <i>dicens</i> , <i>agens</i> = <i>ga</i> , <i>dicens</i> )
--

This formula means, that the speaker *dicens* elevates the agent *agens* of action V higher than himself. The two forms of the Japanese verb *yom.u* 読む (to read)

<i>yom.u</i> > <i>o.yomi</i> = <i>ni nar.u</i> somebody reads > (e.g. the professor) reads
---

for example have the same meaning (= semantics), but the pragmatic situation is different.

In humble Japanese (*keñzyoogo* 謙讓語) the speaker *dicens* elevates RESP the recipient of action V higher than the agent *agens* of the action (even if the speaker and the listener are not *Agens* and *Patiens*):

RESP <sup>3</sup> ( <i>dicens</i> , <i>patiens</i> = <i>o/ni</i> , <i>agens</i> = <i>ga</i> )
---

In other words, the speaker elevates the recipient of action V higher than the agent of action V. An example of a humble form of the Japanese verb *mat.u* 待つ (to wait) in its causative form could be:

*mat.ase.ta* > *o.mat.ase-si.ta*  
I let you wait

Respectful and humble language can be combined in one phrase like in the following example *o.mati-si.te kudasa.i* お待ちしてください (please wait [for the professor]!):

- the underlying form *o.mati-s.uru* is a humbling expression: The speaker (e.g. a secretary in a university) considers the agent of *mat.u*, that is the waiting person (e.g. a student), lower than the person, he is waiting for (e.g. a professor)
- the respectful verb *kudasa.i* honors the agent of *mat.u* and *kudasa.i*

Polite language in Japanese expresses respect to the listener, and not to a constituent of the text: The speaker *dicens* speaks politely RESP to the listener *audiens*, independent of action V:

RESP<sup>3</sup> (*dicens*, *audiens*, *dicens*)

One way to express politeness is the Japanese so-called *desu-masu*-style: The honorific suffix verb *-mas.u* or the honorific particle verb *=des.u* is added for polite expression.

*yom.u* 読む (read) > *yomi.mas.u*  
*mat.ase.ta* 待たせた (let wait) >  
*mat.ase.masi.ta*  
*owari=da* 終わりだ (end) > *owari=des.u*

## Conclusion

The linguistic model above was specified with the example of the Japanese language. But the concept allows the description of any language in its different dimensions. Therefore, it can be used as an instrument for detailed comparative studies to show similarities and differences between any pair of languages not only in general but in particular dimensions. These results can be used to consider further questions like evaluating difficulties in the simultaneous interpreting of specific language pairs, e.g. because of a different syntactical order (cf. Rickmeyer 2006). The comparison may also be useful for didactical implications: If you know the character of the particular dimensions of a language, you can also adapt the

language teaching according to the mother tongue of a learner and the foreign language he or she wants to learn. An educated Chinese learner of Japanese for example probably doesn't need to learn the technique of writing Chinese signs, but has to get used to the different readings of the signs and to the different morpho-syntactical order of Japanese in contrast to the Chinese.

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## On Common Systematic Traits in Two Ideographic Writing Systems: Ancient Egyptian and Chinese

### Introduction

The object of this paper is an attempt to draw systematic analogies between two of the most influential (from a cultural point of view) ideographic<sup>1</sup> systems of writing, which are ancient Egyptian hieroglyphic and Chinese ideographic (*hànzì*). Both of them served (or still do) as the basic writing systems for most developed civilizations of their respective epochs and spheres of cultural influence. Moreover, both have spawned the development of many derivative writing systems. The Egyptian system was used from ca. 3200 BC - 396 AD (McDermott: 12), while Chinese started to be used as a coherent writing system ca. 1200 BC and continues to be used to this day.

It must be noted that in order to pinpoint common systematic traits, the most well-known and well-documented stages of both scripts were chosen. The main difference lies in the appearance of the graphemes in both systems. It is easy to observe that the Egyptian hieroglyphic characters are clearly more graphically explicit and bear much greater resemblance to the actual referents, whereas the Chinese system is graphically stylized beyond the point of recognition of the initial pictographs. The difference lies in the different stages of maturity of both systems rather than in immanent characteristics of both scripts. The Egyptian hieroglyphic script in the classical variant presented here has undergone very little graphic evolution since its beginnings, while the Chinese system has gone through many evolutionary stages to reach the mature stage presented in this paper.<sup>2</sup> Thus, from the evolutionary point of view, perhaps more proper comparison should be drawn between the well-evolved present-day Chinese ideographic system and the much more evolved Egyptian hieratic (or even demotic) system, which was much more graphically arbitrary. Alternatively, on the other hand, classic Egyptian should be compared to Chinese so-called bronze script. However, in the opinion of the author, the diachronic differences in the appearance of characters do not hinder the systematic

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<sup>1</sup> I decided to use the traditionally accepted term *ideographic* throughout the paper, but I must make the reservation that the systems in question are either predominantly (Egyptian) or consistently (Chinese) *logographic*, i.e. the script signs have their counterparts in particular words and morphemes, not the abstract ideas, as would be in the case of pure ideography.

<sup>2</sup> The Chinese ideographs presented here use *kāishū* script, which has been used since ca. 200 AD.

observations of the structure of both, which were the basic reason behind the present study.

The aim of this paper is – on the one hand – the ideographic script for use in ancient Egyptian language, which was in use for a surprisingly long period of time. On the other hand, the second system to be analyzed is the system of Chinese ideographic characters, used previously in a uniform way in many cultures of East Asia, nowadays only in China and Japan (with minor reforms made independently on both sides, and without any recent reforms in Taiwan and elsewhere outside China proper; marginally also in Korea). Although the general idea of the comparison was synchronic, diachronic remarks could not be altogether avoided.

The classification of the Chinese ideographs proposed here diverges in many ways from the classic and commonly accepted six-class classification existing since ca. beginning of the Common Era, but commonly attributed to Chinese scholar Xǔ Shèn, author of the groundbreaking etymological dictionary *Shuōwén Jiězì* (100 AD). The commonly cited basic classification of the Egyptian hieroglyphs into three classes (Davies: 35-43, Dembska: 14-16 etc.) was disregarded too. Instead of proposing my own way to reclassify the bulk of characters, I tried to identify ways of thinking and systematic solutions common to either Chinese and Egyptian script users.

One important reservation must be made when doing any comparisons between two different entities, that is of their possibly common ancestry, interdependence or possibility of borrowing. To the best of today's knowledge, however, no cultural exchange between ancient Egypt and China has been identified, nor do most ancient archaeological findings bear similarity to each other, thus making both scripts justifiably independent.

## **1. Classification of Character-Formation Methods**

The idea of analyzing character-formation methods is based on the semantic complexity of sign types and their semasiological relation to the object they refer to. The simplest relationship between graphic sign and meaning is the ostensive one, i.e. making a graphic representation of the physical object.

Such a one-to-one relationship, however primary and self-explaining, soon becomes insufficient to serve as script in the proper sense. Other mechanisms must therefore be employed to put down ideas hard to express with images. These techniques however prove not to be fully capable of expressing any possible kinds of ideas, which leads to the introduction of the phonetic approach.

When trying to identify character-formation methods, I kept in mind well-known typologies of the characters in both scripts, but tried to apply semantic and diachronic methods to sort out the level of semantic complexity.

### 1.1. Pattern 1 – “Pictographs” or The “Draw What You See” Model

This pattern seems to be the most basic and fundamental of all the ideas behind writing. It can be summed up as drawing a graphical image of a physical object whose meaning the writer intends to transfer. The meaning is conveyed through pictorial resemblance of the image to the object. Virtually all rudimentary systems of writing employ this way of thinking. Some of them do not go beyond that stage (cf. some Native American or Siberian “scripts”).

The “pictograph”<sup>3</sup> character-building scheme is present in all the basic graphemes in both systems.

EGYPTIAN	CHINESE	MEANING
		‘hippopotamus’ <sup>4</sup>
		‘mummy’
		‘ear’
	耳	‘ear’

A transformed image of a human ear

	鳥	‘bird’
--	---	--------

A highly stylized image of a bird; the small vertical dot on top was its beak and four dots in the bottom formed plumage of its tail; the square-like element in the upper part was a creature’s head with an eye inside (today a horizontal line)

	鼓	‘drum’
--	---	--------

This character comes from a drawing that shows a man (right element) beating with drumsticks a huge drum placed on a stand (Wang: 177)

<sup>3</sup> In the case of the Chinese system I decided to put the term *pictograph* in quotation marks, as the characters belonging to this category are clearly not complying with the definition of pictograph – which is an image bearing ‘pictorial resemblance to the object’. It is my strong conviction that no Chinese character in present form bears such a resemblance – i.e. a similarity that enables a dilettante to properly guess the character’s meaning.

<sup>4</sup> Phonetic representation of both Chinese and Egyptian characters are given only when necessary.

Needless to say, this pictorial way of writing is possible only in cases where the tangible, easily recognizable physical objects are spoken about. When adjectives, verbs, or more abstract ideas and grammatical words were concerned, other solutions had to be used.

### 1.2. Pattern 2 – “First Association or Gesture” or “Draw What First Comes to Your Mind” Model

This model is more advanced in the process of semantic abstract thinking, it is one step forward if compared to the previous one. This model has been employed when putting down notions impossible or hard to depict.

Within this model three similar, yet semantically different, patterns may be identified:

- i. a human gesture or appearance suggesting a particular emotion as a sign for this emotion (a person raising their hands in joy → ‘to rejoice’)
- ii. its most obvious metaphoric association is connected with a particular object (flame → bright → white)
- iii. synecdoche (*pars pro toto, totum pro parte* etc.)

Of course, the “obviousness” of the above associations (or the level of metaphoric allusiveness) must be considered heavily culture-dependent (e.g. the semantic change of a Chinese pictograph showing nose to mean ‘myself’, which probably can be traced to the Asian custom of pointing to one’s nose when speaking of ‘me’, instead of one’s chest, as in today’s Western cultures), therefore we must admit some semantic shifts remain today obscure.

As the examples show, this method was used in many cases where there was no possibility to draw the word, which is the case of some abstract ideas, relative adjectives (‘long’/‘short’) etc.

EGYPTIAN	CHINESE	MEANING
		‘to rejoice’
		‘male’
		‘to care for’

A cow ‘caring for’ its young

	大	‘big’
--	---	-------

A picture of a person extending their arms as a gesture meaning “this big”, thus ‘big’

	長	‘long’
--	---	--------

Primarily, a pictograph of a person with ‘long’ hair (three horizontal bars in upper part)

	白	‘white’
--	---	---------

The character was primarily a drawing of a small flame (e.g. from a candle), but extended its meaning to ‘bright’, then to ‘white’ (LI: 3)

### 1.3. Pattern 3 – “Combine Existing Ideographs” or “Mash Up What You’ve Already Devised” Model

This pattern creatively reuses system elements *within* its limits, without expanding its inventory. The meaning of the resulting character is combined from its parts in a variety of semantic mechanisms (including *tatpuruṣa*, *bahuvrīhi* and *dvandva* compounds), thus it is impossible to define in a semantically uniform way. The semantic category is defined in such a way as to correspond to the classical category of *huiyi*, ideogrammic compounds. In the case of Chinese, in many instances there is controversy as to how to analyze particular characters – either as belonging to this group or to the picto-phonetic one, and the space for discussion remains open.

I must stress a high degree of arbitrariness and culture-dependency of these associations: it is not at all obvious that, to cite but one example, a Chinese character 明, being a juxtaposition of characters for ‘the Sun’ (日) and for ‘the Moon’ (月) should carry the (actual) meaning of ‘brightness’, and not, if the reader will allow us a certain degree of fantasizing, ‘heavens’, ‘heavenly bodies’, ‘round (shape)’, ‘day and night’, ‘one day’, ‘weather’, ‘divination’, ‘time’, ‘parent and child’, ‘suzerain and retainer’<sup>5</sup> or any other possible association of the two notions we could think of.

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<sup>5</sup> This particular association is not at all imaginary, as we can see from the etymology of Polish *Księżyc* ‘the Moon’, which comes from *książe* ‘prince, master’ with a suffix *-ic/-yc* ‘a descendant’, thus being “the little master” (as compared to the big one, i.e. the Sun).

EGYPTIAN	CHINESE	MEANING
		‘to be pure; ‘priest’

A compound hieroglyph consisting of ‘man’ and ‘water container’ (→ ‘purity’) characters

		‘crown of all Egypt’
---	--	----------------------

This hieroglyph consists of two characters: ‘crown of Upper Egypt’ (𓄜) and ‘crown of Lower Egypt’ (𓄝)

		‘[god] Sobek’
---	--	---------------

A crocodile was an emblem of the crocodile god, Sobek; the underlying entablement suggests that the character has to do with divinities, and does not mean a crocodile as such

	囚	‘prisoner’
--	---	------------

A ‘person’ (人) locked up within an ‘enclosure’ (口)

	好	‘to love, to like”good’
--	---	-------------------------

A ‘woman’ (女) and a ‘child’ (子)

	休	‘to rest’
--	---	-----------

A ‘person’ (人 or 亻) resting by a ‘tree’ (木)

A special sub-group within this category forms a relatively limited set of characters that may be analyzed as *dvandva* (cumulative) compounds, i.e. graphical reduplication (in some cases, repeating 3 or even 4 times) of the same component, amounting to the meaning of ‘many’, e.g.:

EGYPTIAN	CHINESE	MEANING
		‘many’, [plural suffix]
		‘many ibises’
		‘gods’
		‘lands’
	轟	‘noise’

This compound has been created using three characters meaning ‘carriage’

	林·森	‘wood’, ‘forest’
--	-----	------------------

Doubled or tripled character 木 (‘tree’), thus ‘many trees’ and ‘great many trees’

	多	‘many’
--	---	--------

Doubled pictograph of a piece of meat, thus, ‘many’

#### 1.4. Pattern 4 – “Rebus” or “Use Homophones or Near-Homophones” Model

This pattern is the first one based on the awareness of the phonetic structure of the language. The conclusion that ancient Egyptian or Chinese speakers were aware of the arbitrary nature of language representation (especially phonetics) may be too far-fetched, but nevertheless this model shows a departure from associating the sounds of language only with their meaning (symbolism).

The basic idea behind this model is to reuse the already-created characters not according to their semantic, but to their phonetic value, irrespective of their regular meaning. The basis to such a mechanism is that primary-use characters are devised to mean easily depictable meanings, and the secondary meaning (phonetic loan) is much harder – or utterly impossible – to draw.

An English language approximation of the rule used in this category could be reinterpreting and rewriting a simple sentence which sounds like [ai kæn si: ju:] conventionally spelled as *I can see you* with other, semantically unrelated lexemes-homophones, as EYE - CAN [metal container] - SEA - YEW which all seem to be somewhat easier to depict using images.

EGYPTIAN	CHINESE	MEANING
		‘small, wrong, evil’

A pictograph of a swallow (Egyptian *wr*) was commonly used to denote a homophone *wr* ‘small, wrong, evil’

		‘above’
---	--	---------

A hieroglyph of a ‘face’ (*hr*) was used also for homophonic *hr* ‘above’ (DAVIES: 36)

		‘to’
--	--	------

A pictograph for a ‘mouth’ (pronunciation *r*), was used to write ‘to’ (*r*) as well (DAVIES: 36)

	北	‘north’
--	---	---------

A pictograph of two people standing back to back, used to write the morpheme *bèi* ‘back [of human body]’ was later borrowed to mean *běi* ‘north’; for the original meaning a new character 背 was devised, and the component 月 added meaning ‘human body’ (see next category)

	四	‘four’
--	---	--------

The original pictograph showing nostrils (*sì*) was loaned to mean homophonous numeral ‘four’

	來	‘to come’
--	---	-----------

The original pictograph 來 meant ‘wheat’, a homophone with the verb ‘to come’, with which it soon came to be confused, to the point of 來 taking the meaning of ‘to come’ exclusively. Later, new similar looking character 麥 (or 麦) was devised to mean ‘wheat’

The above category is largely uniform to the traditional *jiǎjiè* category of Chinese characters. It is important to note that the *jiǎjiè* method was far more productive in the archaic stages of Chinese script than it is today. This way of writing was also far more productive in the Egyptian hieroglyphic system than in Chinese.

### 1.5. Pattern 5 – “Phonograms” or the “Using Purely Phonetic Symbols” Model

This model is based on the awareness of the existence of speech sounds. The Egyptian examples show that its speakers (at least those who could write) were aware that it is basically enough to make use of ca. 30 symbols to represent all the phonetic elements of speech.<sup>6</sup>

The method requires higher level of language reflection and analysis, which leads to conclusions on how language is structured using speech sounds. The phonetic script has, by definition, nothing to do with semantics, although it did use pictographic hieroglyphs, but in this case

<sup>6</sup> The Egyptian script disregarded vowels altogether.

they were de-semantized. This model is the most theoretically advanced way of writing, being also the most versatile and the least complex. The problem of keeping all the complexity of ideographic writing and not turning to phonetic script seems to be of an extra-linguistic nature, though. It must be noted, however, that some way of phonetic writing must be present in any viable writing system, e.g. to note foreign words and proper names.

The Egyptians used the phonetic method extensively in their writing, having elaborate sets of one- two- and three-consonant characters, which were often complemented by ideographic determinatives.

The phonetic use of the Chinese characters was employed by non-Chinese nations in their Chinese-derived scripts, the primary example being the Japanese.

EGYPTIAN	CHINESE	MEANING
		pronounced <i>d</i>
		pronounced <i>mt</i>
		pronounced <i>wsr</i>
	羅	pronounced <i>luo</i>
	珈琲	pronounced <i>kāfēi</i> (Chinese), <i>kōhii</i> (Japanese) ‘coffee’
	安加左太 奈波末也 良和	characters used phonetically in old Japanese to be read as <i>a, ka, sa, ta, na, pa</i> (later > <i>ha</i> ), <i>ma, ya, ra, wa</i>

The Chinese system did not use the phonetic principle in case of particular characters, but established a set of characters to write phonetically non-Chinese words<sup>7</sup>

It is interesting to point out that both systems in question did partially use the phonetic principle in their respective writing systems (the Egyptians knew it since at least 2700 BC), but neither had it as a core principle, and neither of them eventually evolved into phonetic script, at least in their native cultural environment. Such a method of writing has been elaborated

<sup>7</sup> Such a phonetic set of characters has evolved independently in Japanese to later become a purely phonetic alphabet *kana*; the phonetic use of Chinese characters in their Sino-Japanese readings is called in Japanese *ateji*. The phonetic principle is widely used in various Chinese dialects, e.g. in Yue.

in external daughter writing systems, such as Proto-Sinaitic or Japanese, both differing linguistically and culturally from the parent systems.

### 1.6. Pattern 6 – “Phono-Semantic Compounds” or “Using Rebus, but Including a Semantic Hint”

The idea behind this model is basically the same as with Pattern 4 (“Rebus”), but in order to clarify the unusual (i.e. purely phonetic) use of a given character(s), writers accompanied it with another character according to its semantic value. The phonetic of the latter was disregarded. This model seems to be diachronically later than rebus and phonetic models. One may hypothesize that the massive emergence of numerous de-semanticized character compounds and uses in the language required clarification of some sort.

EGYPTIAN	CHINESE	MEANING
		<i>sš</i> ‘to write’ <sup>8</sup>
		<i>sš</i> (‘writer’, semantic: human)
		<i>sš</i> (‘writing in general’, semantic: general idea)
		‘ <i>nḥ</i> ’ sandal strap’ <sup>9</sup>

The small vertical element on the right of the hieroglyph signals the character “as such”, i.e. in the ideographic, basic, literal meaning

		‘ <i>nḥ</i> ’ life’
---	--	---------------------

This compound is an example of regressive phonetization – the character  read ‘*nḥ*’ is additionally reclarified by the use of two phonetic symbols, standing for *n* and *ḥ*

		‘ <i>nḥw</i> ’ ‘the living; people’ (semantic: human), phonetic <i>w</i> , plural suffix
		‘ <i>nḥ</i> ’ ‘oath’ (semantic: ‘mouth action’)
		‘ <i>nḥ</i> ’ ‘scarab beetle’ (semantic: ‘beetle’)
		‘ <i>nḥ</i> ’ ‘bunch of flowers’ (semantic: ‘plant’), plural suffix

<sup>8</sup> Examples with *sš* by Davies: 39-40.

<sup>9</sup> Examples with ‘*nḥ*’ by Dembska: 291.

	白	<i>bái</i> [phonetic component]
	伯	<i>bǎi</i> ('earl', semantic: 'human'),
	拍	<i>pāi</i> ('beat', semantic: 'hand'),
	柏	<i>bǎi</i> ('oak; cedar', semantic: 'tree'),
	狍	<i>pò</i> ('guardian dog', semantic: 'dog')
	珀	<i>pò</i> ('amber', semantic: 'jewel'),
	迫	<i>pò</i> ('spur on', semantic: 'road'),
	舶	<i>bó</i> ('ship', semantic: ship)

In the case of Chinese, two basic differences from Egyptian can be observed:

- i. only one phonetic and one semantic component are used at a time
- ii. the phonetic component is itself arbitrary – the reader is expected to have learned its pronunciation beforehand, as it is not known from the context

Semantic values formed a rather stable groups of several dozens categories (taxograms) like 'human activities' 'abstract ideas' 'names of fishes' or 'objects and ideas related to sacrum'. Those semantic groupings are usually called *radicals* in Chinese ideographic script (where they are identical to *xíngshēng* class in the classic taxonomy) and *determinatives* in Egyptian hieroglyphics.<sup>10</sup>

With time, this particular pattern proved to be the most productive of all those discussed here. In present Chinese writing it constitutes ca. 80-90% of all characters used. It also proved to be the most viable model in Chinese character-building, allowing Chinese and non-Chinese languages to expand their sets of characters according to requirements.

The Egyptian system in this category was far more unrestricted, with determinatives being added to other ideographs, phonetic compounds or

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<sup>10</sup> There were about 200 determinatives in Egyptian (Loy: <http://www.jimloy.com/hiero/determin.htm>) and, according to traditionally used classification, there are 214 radicals in Chinese.

phono-semantic compounds, which was often decided by a particular writer. Not infrequently one word was accompanied by two or three determinatives at a time, as in

EGYPTIAN		MEANING
		sw3w ‘go through, go by, travel’ <sup>11</sup>

where two last characters are determinatives meaning ‘road, proceed’ and ‘go, walk’.

## 2. Semantic Components – a Comparison

Both systems made extensive use of semantic keys to give the reader a hint as to how to analyze a character compound or a compound character. The more rarely used a particular character was, the more probable the presence of semantic hints was.

Defining a particular character in such a way is analogous in its mechanism to the process of conceptual classifying, seen in the classifying role of enumerators (classifiers, measure words) in East Asian languages or certain noun classes in Bantu languages. The mechanism is the same: the spectrum of all elements in a given set is structured according to a grid of typological characteristics, which is quite rational, albeit arbitrary.<sup>12</sup>

The use of such semantic components is the only true ideographic moment in both systems: in Pattern 6 they are not meant to be *read*, they have no corresponding morpheme or reading, they only serve logical purposes, and remain to be perceived only, not transposed into any speech sound.

Let us dedicate a while to observe similarities across the class typologies in both systems. The taxonomies elaborated in them are at times surprisingly consistent with each other.

EGYPTIAN	CHINESE	MEANING
	金	‘[objects made of] metal’

The Egyptian hieroglyph portrays probably a piece of metal sheet, while the Chinese character is derived from a composite pictograph of pieces of metal (esp. gold) buried in the ground (OGAWA: 1034).

<sup>11</sup> Example by Dembska: 338.

<sup>12</sup> It is important to point out that the Chinese language uses classifiers, while the Egyptian language did not.

	言	‘abstract idea’
---	---	-----------------

The Egyptian hieroglyph is a papyrus scroll bound with a strap, while the Chinese counterpart was a pictograph of mouth with sounds (words?) coming out of it, and thus took the basic meaning of ‘speaking’ (if used as an independent character); therefore we might metaphorically say that the Egyptians “wrote” about ideas, while the Chinese “spoke” about them.

	亻	‘human [actions]’
---	---	-------------------

The Egyptian hieroglyph is self-explanatory, the Chinese character is a highly reduced version of a picture of a standing person.

	彳	‘going, walking, proceeding’
---	---	------------------------------

The Egyptian hieroglyph shows only human legs, the Chinese character is a person walking

	木	‘[objects made of] wood’
---	---	--------------------------

The Egyptian hieroglyph depicts a tree branch, the Chinese character is a pictograph of a tree.

	宀	‘building, house’
---	---	-------------------

Graphic depiction of a building: in the case of the Egyptian hieroglyph it seems to be a plan of a house seen from above, in the case of the Chinese character it was a cross-section of a house, of which only the upper part, the roof, remains to this day.

	辵	['road' →] ‘proceed’
---	---	----------------------

Both characters represent a pictograph of a road; the Egyptian hieroglyph shows three bushes on both sides.

	舟	‘ship, water travel’
---	---	----------------------

Both components carry the meaning of ‘traveling by ship’ and are pictographs of a small vessel.

	肉/月	‘body, meat’
---	-----	--------------

Both semantic components could mean [animal] ‘meat’, but also [human] ‘body’ (parts) as well.

	行	‘(go through) inhabited lands, road’
---	---	--------------------------------------

The Chinese semantic component (this one belongs to the surrounding type, i.e. phonetic component is written inside) comes from a pictograph which roughly corresponds to the Egyptian one, depicting a street grid in a town, as seen from above. The primary meaning was ‘road’ (LI: 384)

	口	‘actions done with the mouth (speaking, communicating, eating, drinking)’
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The Egyptian pictograph is a whole human figure, with one hand indicating their mouth; the Chinese pictograph shows only an orifice (a mouth).

### 3. Resemblances Between the Etymology of Pictographs

When analyzing the primitive versions of ideographs in both systems we may note certain common points in the way both systems depicted basic pictographs and ideas. While these resemblances are not at all unnatural and inexplicable, they are sometimes arbitrary.

EGYPTIAN	CHINESE	MEANING
	川	‘river’

Both characters come from the depiction of a flowing stream of water, symbolized by three strokes, the only difference being the vertical/horizontal positioning of the original pictograph.

	目	‘eye’, [‘things done by eye’]
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In a somewhat similar way as above, both characters have evolved from the picture of a human eye, the difference in vertical/horizontal positioning being the same as in the example above.

	雨	‘rain’
---	---	--------

The primary pictograph in both cases consisted of a cloud with lines of raindrops falling down.

	風	‘wind’
---	---	--------

Both pictographs feature an image of a sail, but the Chinese added the image of an insect (虫) on it.

	女	‘[activities of a] female’
---	---	----------------------------

Both characters come from the pictograph of a kneeling (or sitting) woman.

	示	[‘offering table’ →] ‘holy’
---	---	-----------------------------

Both characters come from the picture of a small table used to place offerings to the gods and spirits, thus both took the meaning of ‘sacred’, ‘ceremony’.

	服	‘enemy, capture, conquer’
---	---	---------------------------

The Egyptian hieroglyph shows an enemy (a soldier?), kneeling, tied up and facing left; the same etymology is hypothesized (LI: 88) in the case of the Chinese character, whose right component is used to show exactly the same scene.

	心	‘heart’
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Both characters actually depict a (human or animal) heart in a very direct way. They developed in both systems into a symbol of emotions, feelings and wishes.

	日	[‘the Sun’ →] ‘time’
---	---	----------------------

Both ideographs are a simple depiction of the sun's face; note the middle graphic element in both cases; in the Chinese character it is explained as a symbol of shining, not a sunspot (WANG: 31); in both systems the meaning could be extended to any units of time, e.g. days, through the understanding of the Sun as a time-measuring star.

#### 4. Conclusion

The analysis of different patterns of character formation seems to show that the fully developed ideographic script systems, i.e. systems capable of expressing all sorts of content, cannot do without a phonetic principle. Neither system is purely ideographic, and even not purely logographic. Thus, the idea of semantic (ideographic) writing, diachronically primary, appears to develop into phonetic, while basically phonetic systems do not seem to show tendencies to the reverse development.

The analysis of unrelated and culturally distant systems of language and script may provide an insight into the phenomenon of writing. It helps to explain how it came into being, what where the first ideas and mechanisms

utilized by its creators. Further comparative studies on unrelated ancient script systems may shed light on the basics of writing.

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