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Editorial Note

Dear Readers,

We proudly bring you the Spring 2026 fascicle, featuring three research papers and three book reviews.

Two of the former represent linguistics. Radosław Nowak provides a comprehensive overview of the theory and literature concerning the ostensible irregularities in the semantography/morpography of the Japanese script, and follows up with a discussion of how these aspects affect the consistency of Japanese language description. Meanwhile, Eleonora Yovkova-Shii tackles a crucial issue of the shortage and inadequacy of self-learning resources for beginner users of the Japanese language, exemplifying her argument with the notorious difficulties learners have in distinguishing between the subject-marking use of -*wa* and -*ga*. As a solution, she introduces a newly developed online tool designed specifically to remedy a range of problems highlighted in the paper. Finally, the paper in religious studies by Naoki Magata recontextualizes Hideo Kishimoto's perspectives on religion by integrating them under the concept of modernization.

The topic of modernization is also present in all three reviews. Each discusses a publication dealing in some way with Japan's transition to modernity in all its complexities and ambiguities. Nobuyuki Matsui evaluates a monograph by William Steele (*Rethinking Japan's Modernity*), for which the said transition is the core subject, and whose author attempts to reveal new facets of the beaten track that is the history of Meiji Japan. Yifei Wang analyzes Alicia Volk's exploration of Japanese art in the US-occupation era (*In the Shadow of Empire: Art in Occupied Japan*) with its sociopolitical and ideological implications. Victor Laubenstein and Sophia Huerta Nunes critically examine Gregory Smits' newest compendium on the history of the Ryukyu Islands (*The Ryukyu Islands: A New History from the Stone Age to the Present*) in the context of post-modernist approaches to history and the chances for new insights that they bring.

While celebrating the release of this new Fascicle, we also remain deeply saddened at the early March news of the sudden passing of our author, peer, and friend, Agata Fijałkowska, Ph.D. We dedicate this issue to her loving memory. It is our sincere intent to pass on to the world the competence, dedication, and kindness that she had taught us. You will find more on Agata and her legacy in the in memoriam piece by Aleksandra Jaworowicz-Zimny.

We also invite you to revisit Agata's paper, ***The Political Economy of ISA's Decision-making: The Case of the Residence Card Checker Application***, that we were honored to publish in Silva Fasc. 66:
https://silvajp.web.amu.edu.pl/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Silva-66.pdf#page=32.

We are continuously awaiting your contribution proposals at silva.iaponicarum.quarterly@gmail.com. We also remind you about the August 27–30 EAJS 2026 conference in Poznań – despite the digital era reigning supreme, this big-scale event will provide a wonderful opportunity for all of us to get together onsite.

All *Silva*-related updates are announced at our homepages (https://silvajp.web.amu.edu.pl/;
https://pressto.amu.edu.pl/index.php/silvajp/index). Likewise, we encourage you to follow our Facebook profile (https://www.facebook.com/silvaiaponicarum/).

Cordially
引き続きどうぞよろしくお願いいたします

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In Memoriam: Agata Fijałkowska
(20 August 1984 – 26 February 2026).
A personal memory

by Aleksandra Jaworowicz-Zimny

Everyone called her Agatka, an endearment that felt suitable for her tiny posture and outstandingly approachable attitude.

I first met Agatka in 2009 when she joined our group in the fourth year of the Japanese Studies program at Adam Mickiewicz University. She had just come back from a one-year-long break spent on a scholarship in Nanjing, meaning that she needed to continue her studies in Poland with us, her *kōhais*, instead of her original group.

We weren't friends back then, not yet. We just talked between classes, when she had a moment while running to another course, as she was also enrolled in Chinese Studies at the time. Constant movement and task overload turned out to be characteristic feature of hers for years to come. Considering her busy schedule and the lack of a particularly close bond between us, I was more than surprised when in 2010, the year I spent at Hokkaido University, I received a Christmas gift from her. Out of all the people I knew, she was the only one who decided that Polish gingerbread would make Christmas in Japan feel better. Because that is who Agatka was.

We parted ways after graduation: Agatka pursued a PhD at National Chengchi University from 2012 onward, while I came back to Hokkaido University two years later. Our paths crossed again when I visited Taiwan with my mom in 2016 and contacted Agatka for suggestions. Despite leaving Taipei the next day, she invited us for dinner to a beautiful teahouse on Maokong Mountain and presented a whole list of recommendations that made our stay in Taipei truly magical.

I think it was after then that we really got to know each other. She sent me my favourite taro cakes, while I packed Hokkaido-limited sweets and green tea for her. I learned about her constant trips between Taiwan and Japan and her job as a tour guide. I realised how passionate, hard-working, and incredibly strong she was. She never started her own family but was irreplaceable for her chosen one: the instant problem-solver, as reliable in helping others as she was reluctant to ask for help when she needed anything herself; the most beloved aunt to all of her friends' children; and the greatest believer in her beloved ones' talents and abilities. But being a caring, generous, supportive friend was only one side of Agatka. At the same time, she was also a fighter. No surprise that she found her greatest joy in kendo practice! She held herself to the highest, perfectionistic standards, and expected the world to do the same. She wanted fair workspaces, equal rights for everyone, safe spaces for animals, good service in restaurants – and she was vocal about it. From protests for a free Palestine to critical reviews on the Internet, she supported justice, freedom, democracy, and fairness in every form.

This attitude also shaped her identity as a political scientist. In 2022, she defended her thesis *The Dynamics of Policy-Making Process in Kantei: The Case of the Accommodation Industry in 2018 Immigration Law Reform*, vividly engaging in the issues of foreigners' rights in Japan. The rights that impacted her directly, as she had resided in Japan since 2017. She never called herself a scholar, she was too humble to, and to some extent was too tired of some things she saw in the academic world. Nevertheless, it never stopped her from always sharing her expertise with less experienced researchers seeking her advice, reading and critically examining publications, recommending the most valuable ones to her friends, or writing high-quality papers. *The Political Economy of ISA's Decision-making: The Case of the Residence Card Checker Application* was published in *Silva Iaponicarum*, Fasc. 66. The draft of another one, *The Policymaking Patterns under Shinzō Abe's Strong Kantei (2012–*

2020): The Case of the 2018 Immigration Act Amendment, still sits in my email account. It is so hard to believe it will stay there, unfinished. I last saw her in September 2025, the day she learned about a health emergency in her family. It didn't take her long to decide that she needed to wrap up her almost ten-year-long life in Japan and move back to Poland. Too busy with all the errands, she could not have known that ignored, untreated pneumonia and sudden complications following it would become the reason she never reached home.

Agatka's actions over the years showed everyone around her how to care for others, how to stand up for them, how to make the world a better place through work, engagement, words, love, and the big and small decisions made every day. The world lost so much light that day in February. I can only hope that what she taught us will be enough to carry on even a small part of it. Agatka, we will keep paying forward all the love and kindness you gave us to make the world a better place. We owe that to you.

I miss you.

RESEARCH PAPERS

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The ambiguous descriptions of Japanese morphography and agglutination: a critical analysis of relations between graphemics and morphology in the Japanese language

ABSTRACT
In a *morphographic script*, graphemes represent morphemes; in an *agglutinative language*, monosemous morphemes attach onto lexical ones to convey grammatical meanings. Although these definitions are generally accepted, the former lacks the nuance needed to accurately describe grapheme–morpheme relations within the Japanese writing system, and the latter is often overlooked in accounts of Japanese morphosyntax. This paper identifies these mismatches and draws connections between Japanese morphography and descriptions of Japanese morphology. Sections 1 and 2 examine how *kanji* characters may correspond to exactly one morpheme, more than one morpheme, or less than one morpheme; and how different scripts represent different morpheme types. Section 3 outlines logical and terminological inconsistencies in Japanese grammars. Section 4 links features of the writing system to the ways Japanese morphosyntax is analyzed. The paper concludes that treating certain inflectional morphemes as lexical items may stem from the "division of labor" between morphographic *kanji* and phonographic *kana*.

KEYWORDS: agglutination, Japanese grammar, Japanese language, Japanese writing system, *kanji*, morphography

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Introduction

This paper has two main objectives: to establish what *kanji* 漢字 (and, to a lesser extent, *kana* 仮名) characters actually represent within the Japanese writing system and to highlight the connections between the linguistic units represented by units of writing and the ways Japanese grammars[1] describe agglutinative phenomena within the language. Unfortunately, existing accounts on both Japanese morphosyntax as well as the typology of its writing system are inconclusive and fragmented, leaving the academic discourse with an imperfect understanding of these areas of the language. This paper argues that at least some of the underlying causes of this situation stem from the Japanese writing system itself, highlighting the numerous ways that *kanji* characters can relate to units of the Japanese language, and examines how the mixed, morphomoraic nature of the Japanese writing system as a whole has influenced the interpretation of Japanese nominal and verbal inflection.

Several trends can be observed in the descriptions of Japanese as a language, including its writing system. Morphologically, it is widely regarded as agglutinative (Coulmas 2018a: 117; Hasegawa 2015: 3; Hasegawa 2018: 3; Horie 2018: 65; Huszcza et al. 2003: 115; Jabłoński 2021a: 99–100, among others), while its writing system is described as mixed as a whole (Coulmas 2003: 182; Handel 2019: 6, 196; Hasegawa 2015: 50; Rogers 2005: 275; Seeley 1991: 1) with the subset of *kanji* characters typically considered morphographic (Daniels 2018: 85; Joyce and Masuda 2019: 249; Rogers 2005: 272; Wasilewska 2019: 201; for other descriptors, see 1.2.). This paper contrasts how these terms are usually understood with actual graphemic and morphological phenomena in the Japanese language. Common definitions of these terms are presented below as a basis for this analysis.

Inflection is the process of adding affixes (bound morphemes[2] which can also be called *suffixes* or *endings* in the case of Japanese) to lexical

[1] The term *grammar* is understood in this paper as "a comprehensive description of a language, focusing on, but not limited to, its morphology and syntax". Similarly, a *grammarian* is a person concerning oneself with such a description. *Descriptive grammar* means "the description of a language as it is", as opposed to *prescriptive grammar* meaning "the description of a language as it should be". The term *grammar* is sometimes also used to jointly refer to morphology and syntax, as opposed to other areas of language such as phonology or semantics (Crystal 2008: 218). Such use is avoided in this paper, barring the term *grammatical* adopted as a commonly used synonym for *morphosyntactic.*

[2] A *bound morpheme* is one that cannot occur on its own (Crystal 2008: 59). This paper adopts the term chiefly in order to highlight the non-independent status of these units, a fact that will be crucial in Section 4.

morphemes (*stems*) in order to convey grammatical meanings without changing the grammatical class of the morphemes to which they are attached (Crystal 2008: 243–244; Fromkin et al. 2017: 46–48). Moreover, this process is regular categorically, semantically, and systemically [3] (Grzegorczykowa 2008: 95–96). This is opposed to *derivation* which creates new lexical units – often belonging to a different grammatical class than the original morpheme – in an irregular fashion[4] (Fromkin et al. 2017: 44; Grzegorczykowa 2008: 95–97).

Inflection can be further divided into *agglutinating inflection* and *fusional inflection*. In the former, inflectional morphemes are monosemous (each has only one meaning), the boundaries between morphemes are usually clear-cut, and each grammatical function is typically expressed with a single morpheme (Comrie 1989: 43–45; Grzegorczykowa 2008: 187). In languages exhibiting fusional inflection, one inflectional morpheme can encode multiple meanings; functionally distinct morphemes may be homophonic; and a single grammatical meaning can in some cases be expressed with more than one morpheme (Grzegorczykowa 2008: 187–188). The terms *agglutination* and *fusion* are used in this paper in this stricter sense, referring to types of inflection and excluding derivational processes; this narrow understanding of *agglutination* can be also found in other sources (Grzegorczykowa 2008: 187; Jabłoński 2022: 12; Polański 1999: 21; Tanaka et al. 1988: 19–20; Velupillai 2012: 458).

Morphography, on the other hand, is generally defined as the use of distinct graphemes to represent different morphemes. The term also applies to primarily phonographic systems where alternate spellings are used to differentiate homophonic morphemes. It should not be confused with orthographic depth, which concerns the consistent spelling of a single morpheme across its allomorphs (Rogers 2005: 275). As previously noted, *kanji* are generally considered morphographic, and thus may be termed as

[3] *Categorical regularity* means that there exist different but regular sets of rules for various *classes* of lexemes such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, or their subclasses. *Semantic regularity* signifies that the change in meaning of an inflected words is regular, for example the *-ing* morpheme attached to the stems of English verbs always points to the progressive aspect or gerund. Finally, *systemic regularity* means that all slots in the inflectional *paradigm* of a lexeme can be filled regardless of whether such word-forms are pragmatically useful. For example, every noun in Polish can be inflected in the vocative case used mostly to directly address people – even if the noun in question signifies an object that is unlikely to be conversed with directly (Grzegorczykowa 2008: 95–97).

[4] For this reason, bound morphemes can be further classified as either *derivational* or *inflectional*. *Derivational morphemes* are generally semantic in nature, combining with lexical morphemes in irregular ways that cannot be presented as a consistent paradigm. *Inflectional morphemes*, on the other hand, are mostly syntactic in nature, attaching to lexical morphemes in a regular, systematic manner to form inflectional paradigms (Bloomfield 1973: 159–160; Grzegorczykowa 2008: 92–93).

morphograms or, less commonly, *morphemograms*. The typologically neutral term *sinogram*, highlighting their genealogical link to the Chinese script, is also adopted throughout this paper as a synonym for *kanji character* in line with its usage in recent literature (Handel 2019: 2; Jabłoński 2022: 19; Wasilewska 2019: 17; Wnuk 2023: 74), and for convenience.

Several other basic terms are also used in this paper. A *lexeme* is understood as an abstract unit of the lexicon of a language with distinct lexical (i.e. not morphosyntactic) meaning. One lexeme can contain within itself various *word-forms*—iterations of the same *lexeme* differentiated by the morphosyntactic information attached to it. For example, *die*, *dies*, and *died* are three word-forms of the same English lexeme *die* (Matthews 1991: 26–31). The term *word-form* is furthermore often shortened to *form* in this paper to avoid redundancy.

The following sections of this article examine this terminology in detail in the context of the Japanese writing system, language, and their descriptions. Sections 1 and 2 outline the typology of the Japanese writing system, focusing on regularities and irregularities in grapheme-morpheme correspondence. When analyzing grapheme-morpheme relations, this paper takes an analytic approach rather than a holistic approach, focusing on individual examples of *kanji* use in order to introduce nuance into the discussion of Japanese morphography. Section 3 addresses various approaches to Japanese nominal and verbal morphology, highlighting inconsistencies in traditional accounts. Section 4 juxtaposes these descriptions of Japanese morphology with the features of the writing system discussed in Sections 1 and 2. The paper concludes that these features may partly account for the incongruences identified in Section 3.

Block examples, separated from the main text, are numbered and consist of five lines of text: a romanized morphemic transcription; a morphemic breakdown of the example; a graphemic transcription; the original conventional spelling; and a translation. In the graphemic transcription, the parts written in *kanji* are indicated with small caps (EXAMPLE) while sinogram and script boundaries are indicated with vertical lines (|). In one case (Example 1-1), an additional line is included between the morphemic breakdown and graphemic transcription, providing a lexical breakdown of the compound noun analyzed as the noun in question consists of otherwise independent nominal elements. Non-existent phrases and spellings are marked with an asterisk (*). Inflectional morphemes are glossed following the terminology of Huszcza et al. (2003). Finally, all example words and phrases are provided by the author of this paper according to his best linguistic knowledge, unless stated otherwise. As Japanese often allows for

multiple spellings of the same word-form, to ensure consistency all example spellings come from the two dictionaries listed at the end of the reference section – where the full list of entries referenced in this paper can also be found.

1. General typology of the Japanese writing system – the moraic *kana* and (mono)morphographic *kanji*

As mentioned in the introduction, the Japanese writing system is widely described as mixed, with the subset of *kanji* characters labeled *morphographic* (Daniels 2018: 85; Rogers 2005: 272; Wasilewska 2019: 201), *logographic* (Frellesvig 2010: 13), or even *ideographic* (Hasegawa 2015: 44; Jabłoński 2021a: 13), and the subset of *kana* characters as *moraic* (Handel 2019: 221; Honda 2009: 215) or *syllabic* (DeFrancis 1989: 58; Hasegawa 2015: 47). This paper advocates for the consistent use of the terms *morphographic* and *moraic* respectively, as they capture the nature of the Japanese scripts the most accurately. The rationale is discussed in the following subsections.

1.1. The simple: the moraic *kana* scripts and basic conventions of Japanese text composition

Although the typology of *kana* scripts is not the main interest of this paper, a brief discussion of the topic is necessary to provide context for the following sections. A *mora* is a unit of rhythm that underpins the Japanese phonological system equal in length to a short open syllable; a consonantal coda, a long vowel, or a long consonant lengthen the syllable by one mora each. The Japanese pitch accent is mora-based, as pitch shifts occur only between moras, even within a single syllable (Honda 2009: 215; Huszcza et al. 2003: 62). This phonological structure likely shaped the development of the native *hiragana* 平仮名 and *katakana* 片仮名 scripts, in which each grapheme typically represents one mora. As a result, syllables may be written with one or more graphs depending on their moraic length (Coulmas 2018a: 115). For instance, the monosyllabic onomatopoeia *fūn* フーン ‘hmm’ standing for the sound of vocal deliberation or mild surprise is written with three graphs, reflecting its three moras. Therefore, *hiragana* and *katakana* are best described as *moraic scripts* (Honda 2009: 215; Rogers 2005: 61), or perhaps *moraries*—a rare term in English literature but attested in other languages (cf. Polish *morariusz*) (Wasilewska 2019: 203).

This convention is broken only in the case of digraphs used to write moras with palatalized consonants followed by *a*, *u*, or *o*[5], such as *kya* きゃ／キャ, *shu* しゅ／シュ, or *myo* みょ／ミョ (Hasegawa 2015: 54). Even then, the special non-moraic status of the graphemes *ya* や／ヤ, *yu* ゆ／ユ, and *yo* よ／ヨ is highlighted by writing them in lowercase. The exception to this exception is the lowercase *tsu* っ／ッ[6], which is used to signal that the following consonant is long (geminated) and constitutes a standalone mora (Huszcza et al. 2003: 62).

The trends of script usage in modern Japanese are as follows. *Hiragana* is, so to speak, the default *kana*. In texts intended for adult, fluent users of Japanese, it is mostly used to write inflectional affixes (while lexeme stems are typically written in *kanji*), many of the lexical adverbs, as well as other units that either have no *kanji* spelling(s) or whose *kanji* would be too difficult for an average reader (Seeley 1991: 1–2). It is also used in materials intended for readers whose command of *kanji* characters is not sufficient to read texts in the conventional orthography. *Katakana*, on the other hand, is used to write "scientific terms, expressive vocabulary, names and loan words from languages other than Chinese, and for emphasis" (Hasegawa 2015: 54). This method of composing written texts using a mixture of *kanji* and *kana* where each script has its own distinct function is called *kanji kana majiribun* 漢字仮名交じり文 'writing with a mix of *kanji* and *kana* characters' (Frellesvig 2010: 157, 266). Additionally, the final mora(s) of a mixed *kanji-kana* lexeme written in *hiragana* are traditionally called *okurigana* 送り仮名. Beside representing inflectional endings, the role of *okurigana* is to clarify the pronunciation of the *kanji* character it is attached to (Kindaichi et al. 1988: 315). For example, in the word-form *deru* 出る '[one] leaves', the first *kanji* grapheme 出 represents the stem of the verb *de-* and the second *hiragana* grapheme る – the *okurigana* portion of the word – represents the inflectional affix of the non-past tense. At the same time, it disambiguates the reading of the *kanji* 出 as *deru* is the only word-form written with the combination of 出 and る in this order. This disambiguation is necessary as many Japanese morphemes are homographic, i.e. they are written with the same *kanji* character. The character 出 itself may stand for several morphemes and can be read in multiple different ways depending on the

[5] Due to space constraints, novel *katakana* character digraphs used to write non-native moras are omitted from discussion.

[6] Graphs in this paragraph are organized as follows: *hiragana*／*katakana*.

context, such as *da* in *dasu* 出す ‘to take out’ or *gai* in *gaishutsu* 外出 ‘[the act of] going out’.

However, this disambiguating function is mostly limited to the conjugated forms of verbs and adjectives, as well as some select nouns and adverbs. It is not typically used to disambiguate nominal morphemes of both Sino-Japanese and native Japanese origin such as *kō* 行 ‘to go; to carry out’ and *gyō* 行 ‘to go; to carry out; line’; *mon* 門 ‘gate’ and *kado* 門 ‘gate’; or *in* 印 ‘seal; mark’ and *shirushi* 印 ‘mark’; as well as some verbs and their inflected forms. This exacerbates the problem of homography within the Japanese writing system (Honda 2009: 226–231).

Despite the existence of digraphs, the typology of the *kana* scripts and the overarching Japanese writing system is relatively clear. While some terminological variation exists across sources, most scholars agree on the basic grapheme-linguistic unit relationship in *kana*, which is best described as *moraic*. The Japanese writing system is mixed, employing several different scripts. The “division of labor” between *kanji, hiragana*, and *katakana* described in the paragraphs above, however, is a simplification of the much more complex reality of *kanji* and *kana* usage; a few examples of the intricacies thereof are described below.

1.2. The regular: one-to-one grapheme-morpheme correspondence in basic nouns and adjectives written with *kanji*

As previously noted, *kanji* characters are described in varying ways across the literature. One of the oldest – and most problematic – labels is *ideographic*. Once common in Western accounts of Chinese characters (Coulmas 1999: 82, 224–225; Wnuk 2024: 44), the term is now controversial as it implies that such characters encode ideas directly, bypassing linguistic representation. This notion undermines the very definition of writing as inherently tied to language[7] (Handel 2019: 4, 41).

Instead, the terms *morphographic* and *logographic* are generally advised, as both emphasize that graphemes described as such correspond to meaningful linguistic units (ibid., 8). The term *logographic* is contested however, as no known script consistently uses graphemes to represent entire words as the term would imply (Osterkamp and Schreiber 2021: 48; Rogers 2005: 14; Sampson 1985: 39). Moreover, while some graphemes may indeed represent

[7] Technically, the term “ideogram” might be applied to a category in Xu Shen’s (c. 58–c. 148 CE) traditional, etymological classification of sinograms, the *shiji* 指事 ‘characters pointing to abstract things’, i.e. ideas. Even then, scholars avoid this term due to its association with non-linguistic symbolism, preferring alternatives such as *characters denoting concepts* (Wasilewska 2019: 44) or simply *iconic* (Handel 2019: 48).

multiple morphemes (Handel 2019: 61), the term *word* itself remains contentious as there is no universally accepted definition that one could use to objectively determine what constitutes a single word and what does not (Elbourne 2011: 1; Polański 1999: 645–648). As Joyce (2011: 71) points out, many compound lexemes in Japanese that would traditionally be considered independent *words* – such as *yamazakura* 山桜 'mountain cherry', *tozan* 登山 'mountain climbing', or *hitobito* 人々 'people' – can be divided into constituent morphemes, each written with a single character.

Although the definition of a *morpheme* as the smallest meaningful unit of language (Fábregas and Scalise 2025: 1, 26; Matthews 1991: 103) can still be quite vague, as what qualifies as a morpheme may differ from a synchronic and a diachronic perspective (see subsections 2.1. and 2.2. for examples from the Japanese language), it seems a more appropriate terminological base than a term with no clear definition. This paper therefore endorses *morphography* and *morphographic* as the standard terms for scripts where morphemes are the primary linguistic unit represented. Admittedly, the number of morphemes represented by a single grapheme can vary (Handel 2019: 61). When individual graphemes represent more than one morpheme, the term *polymorphemic* is recommended; when they represent exactly one, *monomorphemic* should be used[8].

The one-to-one correspondence between graphemes and morphemes holds up for many simple (i.e. not compound) nouns and predicative adjectives[9]. Most basic Japanese nouns – such as *mizu* 水 'water', *kaze* 風 'wind', *oya* 親 'parent', *ie* 家 'home, house', *saka* 坂 'slope', *machi* 町 'town', *kasa* 傘 'umbrella', or *koi* 恋 'romantic love' – are monomorphemic and written with exactly one grapheme in their uninflected forms. Hence, the graphemes themselves can also be considered monomorphemic in these contexts (or, perhaps more precisely, *monomorphographic*[10]).

[8] These terms themselves are rare but not novel, being attested, for instance, in Handel (2019: 9, 21) or Osterkamp and Schreiber (2021: 48).

[9] This part of speech is traditionally known as the *i-adjective* (Hasegawa 2015: 66), referencing its dictionary form ending in *i* い. This paper, however, adopts the term *predicative adjective* from Huszcza et al. (2003: 146), which highlights its ability to function as a standalone predicate. A similar term, *inflected adjective* (Jabłoński 2022: 164), underscores its inflectional properties, as opposed to the other adjective type, often called *na-adjective*, *nominal adjective*, or *adjectival noun* (Hasegawa 2015: 66; Jabłoński 2022: 164), which requires the copula in order to function as a predicate.

[10] This term would emphasize that the grapheme does not *itself* consist of a single morpheme but rather *represents* one. However, in papers focusing specifically on graphemics such as this one, such a distinction may appear verbose; thus, the simpler term is adopted. The same rationale applies to *polymorphemic* and *semimorphemic*.

Similarly, although basic Japanese predicative adjectives in their so-called citation forms consist of two morphemes, one lexical and one inflectional marking the non-past tense, a clear one-to-one grapheme-morpheme correspondence remains observable. For example, in *akai* 赤い '[is] red', the lexical morpheme *aka-* is written with the *kanji* character 赤, while the inflectional morpheme is separated from the stem through the use of the *hiragana* moragram *i* い. The same holds true for many more native predicative adjectives such as *aoi* 青い 'blue', *samui* 寒い 'cold [of weather]', *atsui* 熱い 'hot [to touch]', *yoi* 良い 'good', *warui* 悪い 'bad', *furui* 古い 'old [of a thing]', *karai* 辛い 'spicy [of food]'. There are, however, many exceptions to this rule (see 2.1. for further discussion).

The most salient and regular one-to-one grapheme-morpheme relationship can be seen in so-called Sino-Japanese vocabulary. These are lexemes borrowed from Chinese throughout Japanese history, as well as words created in Japan using morphemes borrowed from Chinese (Kindaichi et al. 1988: 423). As can be seen in 1-1, they can be quite easily divided into constituent morphemes.

1-1	*koku-ritsu*	*koku-go*	*ken-kyū-jo*
	country-establish	country-language	to.hone-to.seek-place
	'national'	'national language'	'research institute'
	KOKU|RITSU	KOKU|GO	KEN|KYŪ|JO
	国立	国語	研究所

'National Institute for Japanese Language and Linguistics'

This complex compound noun consists of three otherwise independent lexemes, *kokuritsu* 国立 'national', *kokugo* 国語 'national language', and *kenkyūjo* 研究所 'research institute'[11], each of which is built from two or three bound Sino-Japanese morphemes. Morpheme boundaries neatly coincide with character boundaries, forming a perfect one-to-one relationship. This is an almost universal pattern in Sino-Japanese words, mimicking the grapheme-morpheme relationships in Chinese (Handel 2019:

[11] Although these lexemes can indeed be considered independent units of the Japanese lexicon overall, when compounded in this way, without any inflectional markers that would typically indicate syntactic relationships between them, they can also be viewed as a single lexical unit, *Kokuritsu-kokugo-kenkyūjo* 国立国語研究所 'National Institute for Japanese Language and Linguistics', and in fact, they frequently function as such. Combining compound Sino-Japanese lexemes to create new, even more complex lexical units is a practice widespread in the Japanese language (Kageyama and Saito 2016: 23, 32).

31), and I suggest the term *monomorphemic* be used when describing such characters as well. Despite not being part of the original Japanese morphemic system, these Sino-Japanese units can be considered morphemes because of their relative regularity of meaning across lexemes in which they appear. Additionally, they remain productive and can be used to create new pseudo-Sino-Japanese lexical compounds. Although it is rather uncommon in modern Japanese as direct loanwords are favored instead, new Sino-Japanese compounds are still created *ad hoc* quite often in art and literature. However, the most important reason why these morphemes retain their morphemic status may be their close association with sinograms, which are widely considered to be meaningful units. A salient proof of this is the fact that Sino-Japanese morphemes are often understood and taught as Sino-Japanese *readings* of *kanji* characters (or *on'yomi* 音読み 'sound readings'), as opposed to native Japanese readings (or *kun'yomi* 訓読み 'learned readings') (Kobayashi et al. 2016: 94; Rose 2017: 21–22; Taylor and Taylor 2014: 276–277). In other words, when learning to write in Japanese you start from the meaningful character and not its corresponding unit of speech; the principal question is not *how to write* a lexeme, but rather *how to read a kanji* – it is implicitly assumed that *kanji* do have meanings. This creates a kind of feedback loop that causes the association between graphemics and semantics to persist even when the unit of speech assigned to a character has been desemanticized. This is why the term *graphomorpheme* is sometimes used to refer to a single (Sino-)Japanese morpheme and its assigned sinogram simultaneously, highlighting their functional unity (Jabłoński 2021a: 125) and monomorphemicity.

2. In-depth typology of the Japanese writing system: deviations from the monomorphemic principle in *kanji*

Although the monomorphemic *kanji* and clearly phonographic *kana* constitute the basis of the Japanese writing system, sinograms can be used in many more ways than the simple grapheme-morpheme relationship discussed in (1.2.). These include writing multiple morphemes with a single character; incorporating part of a lexical morpheme into *okurigana*; and the use of polygraphs. Such cases are discussed in this section.

2.1. The irregular: semimorphemic graphemes, polymorphemic graphemes, and polygraphs

The first significant deviation from the monomorphemic principle is in how parts of the stem of an inflected lexeme may be incorporated into *okurigana*. Despite the reforms introduced shortly after World War II with the intention

of aligning spelling conventions with Japanese speech (Seeley 1991: 153), some etymological features of the former Japanese orthography have been retained to this day. For this reason, there exists a subclass of predicative adjectives ending in *-shii* whose stems are not fully written in *kanji* (see 2-1).

2-1 *kanashi-i*
sad-NPST
KANA|shii
悲しい
'[is] sad'

One of the word-forms of this adjective type used to be the bare stem, without any inflectional ending attached (for example: *kanashi* 悲し '[is] sad') (Frellesvig 2010: 90–93). As such, the last mora of the stem came to be written as *okurigana*, most likely as a part of the disambiguating principle discussed in (1.1.); this writing convention has made its way into modern orthography. The many other adjectives of this kind include *atarashii* 新しい 'new', *kuyashii* 悔しい 'regrettable', *ureshii* 嬉しい 'joyous, happy', *munashii* 空しい 'empty, hollow', *sabishii* 寂しい 'lonely'.

Another deviation from the one-to-one grapheme-morpheme correspondence in adjectives stems from lexicalization of former inflectional markers. For instance, the adjective *ōkii* 大きい 'big' is derived from the former adnominal form *ōki* 大き of the archaic adjective *ōshi* 大し 'big' (Daijirin 1995). The modern spelling reflects this etymology, even though synchronically, the mora *ki* can be considered part of the stem.

Similarly, derived adjectives such as *urayamashii* 羨ましい 'envious' or *natsukashii* 懐かしい 'nostalgic' – created from the verbs *urayamu* 羨む 'to envy' and *natsuku* 懐く 'to become familiar with' respectively (*ibid.*) – also have traces of their etymology visible in their spellings. Although the morpheme *-(a)shi-* is no longer productive and as such could be considered part of the stem in modern Japanese, the current spelling of these adjectives retains the etymological relationship, leading to an ambiguous grapheme-morpheme relationship. This spelling convention does, however, help to keep the *readings* of characters consistent across different lexemes using the same sinogram. In both *natsuku* 懐く 'to become familiar with' and *natsukashii* 懐かしい 'nostalgic', it is the *natsu-* portion of the word that is written in *kanji*. At the same time, it limits the already significant number of possible readings ascribed to a single character.

I have not identified any publications discussing this phenomenon in terms of grapheme-morpheme relations, which means the academic community is left without proper terminology to describe it. I propose the term *semimorphemic* as a descriptor for such situations, as it is only part of a morpheme that is represented by its assigned grapheme in these cases. On the surface, this is a deviation from the very definition of morphography as a feature of a script in which graphemes correspond to (whole) morphemes. However, it is undeniable that the specific part *natsu-* of the morpheme *natsuk-* can only be represented by this specific *kanji* character (excluding an entirely phonographic representation with *kana*), and that this character has been assigned to it on the basis of the meaning of the morpheme it is a part of. On the other hand, the character 懐 is never used to represent the sequence *natsu-* in lexemes that are morphologically and semantically unrelated to the morpheme *natsuk-*[12]. In this way, the core notion of morphography – that graphemes of a morphographic script should in some way represent meaningful units of language – persists.

The opposite situation occurs when one grapheme is used to represent two or more morphemes. This includes lexicalized compounds of otherwise free lexical morphemes, as well as combinations of lexical and derivational morphemes, usually frequent and highly lexicalized, in which the latter was "incorporated" into the grapheme for ease of writing. Examples of such cases are provided below.

2-2	*kokoro-*	*-zash-i*
	heart-	-to.point.to-NMN
	KOKOROZASHI	
	志	

'aspiration, goal, a thing one strives for'

2-3	*mizu-*	*-umi*
	water-	-sea
	MIZUUMI	
	湖	

'lake'

[12] Alternatively, one could interpret the *kanji* character and the *kana* characters following it as representing the morpheme *natsuk-* (or *natsukashi-*) jointly, making *natsukashi-* 懐かし a trigraph. Nonetheless, the *kana* characters can be assigned their respective moras regardless of context. Thus, if one maps parts of the morpheme onto singular graphemes prioritizing the obvious, i.e. the *kana* characters, it is hard not to come to the semimorphemic interpretation.

2-4 *aka-* *-gane*
red- -metal
AKAGANE
銅
'copper'

2-5 *hanash-i*
to.talk-NMN
HANASHI
話
'conversation, story'

2-6 *shirush-i*
to.point.to-NMN
SHIRUSHI
印
'mark, symbol'

The lexicalization of the compounds above is accentuated by a complete graphemic separation from their etymology (barring 2-5 and 2-6); this can be seen clearly when presented with their etymological but non-normative spellings, which would be *kokorozashi* *心指し, *mizuumi* *水海, and *akagane* *赤金 respectively (Daijirin 1995). Moreover, the lexemes in examples 2-2 through 2-6 are not just lexicalized compounds of archaic morphemes. All these morphemes are still widely used in modern Japanese, leaving no doubt about their morphemic status. I suggest that the term *polymorphemic* be used when describing such characters. Although this term has sporadically been used in the literature (Handel 2019: 61; Wasilewska 2019: 222), it remains uncommon. This term can also be used to describe cases in which a character represents more than one morpheme but less than two. For example, in the diachronically compound verb *shirizoku* 退く 'to retreat', 退 represents the morpheme *shiri* 'back' and the *zo-* portion of *zok-* 'to move away'[13]:

[13] Ambiguities regarding verb stem representation are explored further in Subsection 2.2.

2-7	*shiri-*	*-zok-u*
	back-	-to.move.away-NPST
	SHIRIZO|ku	
	退く	

'to retreat'

Finally, there are the so-called *jukujikun* 熟字訓. These can be defined as spellings[14] of native Japanese words using *kanji* characters selected solely for their combined semantic value (Sato 2018: 314, 320). No single morpheme, or even part of a morpheme, can be assigned to individual characters in these lexemes (Honda 2021: 191). A non-exhaustive list of these is included in the *jōyōkanjihyō* 常用漢字表, the official list of characters and readings to be used in public documents and newspapers (Bunkachō 2010a). Examples include *kesa* 今朝 'this morning', *ototoi* 一昨日 'the day before yesterday', *asatte* 明後日 'the day after tomorrow', *tsuitachi* 一日 'the first day of the month', *Tanabata* 七夕 'the *Tanabata* festival', *itoko* 従兄弟 'cousin', and *Yamato* 大和 'Japan'[15].

[14] The Japanese term approaches the subject from the opposite perspective: *jukujikun* 熟字訓 literally means 'native Japanese *readings* of compound characters', marking the *pronunciations* of these words as the irregular element, while from the speech-comes-first point of view, it is their *spellings* that are irregular. This convention is understandable, however, as it reflects the view that it is the *kanji* that have readings and not *morphemes* that have assigned characters, as noted above. This in turn results from the process by which Chinese characters were adapted to the Japanese language: scribes were initially more concerned with how to *read* sinograms in Chinese texts than with how to *write* Japanese words. A salient proof of this approach is the graphemic overdifferentiation of certain lexemes. For instance, the lexeme *oba* 'aunt' can be written as 伯母 if the aunt in question is an older sibling of one's parent and as 叔母 if she is a younger sibling. In Japanese, the differentiation is purely graphemic and results from assigning the same reading to two phonetically and graphemically distinct Chinese lexemes. Notably, *oba* is also a case of *jukujikun* (Frellesvig 2010: 263–266, 268).

[15] To add more nuance to this discussion, some of these readings can be traced back to *kambun kundoku* 漢文訓読 '[the practice of] reading Chinese texts in Japanese', a type of simultaneous translation of classical Chinese texts into Japanese using conventionalized translations of Chinese characters (Frellesvig 2010: 258–274). However, it is not a universal rule. Although rare, *jukujikun* also include modern loanwords, such as the lexeme *tabako* 煙草 'cigarette' from Portuguese *tabaco* (Daijirin 1995) written with the two characters 煙 'smoke' and 草 'grass' (or, more commonly, in *katakana* as タバコ). Moreover, some scholars argue that *kanji* in *jukujikun* directly represent "meanings", closely resembling the notion of ideography mentioned earlier. For example, Sato (2018: 320) claims that "the meanings of the two characters, *now* (今) and *morning* (朝), represent the word meaning *this morning*". However, it remains uncertain to what extent it can be argued that a specific unit of meaning is really assigned to each character, or what "units of meaning" the lexeme

Some of the so-called *jukujikun* can be analyzed into constituent morphemes diachronically, making it somewhat plausible to connect those morphemes to single *kanji* characters. However, synchronically, these words function as single, indivisible units. Therefore, it seems much more reliable to explain this phenomenon as involving polygraphs that refer to their assigned morphemes collectively, a convention not uncommon in other scripts.

2.2. The chaotic: verbs

Although all possible types of morphography, monomorphemic, polymorphemic, and semimorphemic, have been exemplified in the previous sections, the part of speech in which semimorphemic use of *kanji* is the most common is verbs. Japanese regular verbs can generally be divided into two conjugation groups: consonant verbs (also called *u*-verbs) that have stems that (typically) end on a consonant, and vowel verbs (also known as *ru*-verbs) that have stems that end on a vowel[16] (Hasegawa 2018: 65). As Honda (2021: 190) notes, inflected word-forms of Japanese lexemes are usually written with a mixture of *kanji* and *kana*. What he fails to mention is that the sinograms used to spell consonant verbs almost always omit parts of the stem (see 2-8 to 2-10), while the sinograms used in spelling vowel verbs may represent either the entire stem or just part of it – with the latter case being more common (see 2-11 to 2-14).

2-8 *kaer-u*
to.go.home-NPST
KAE|ru
帰る
‘[one] goes home’

2-9 *atatamar-u*
to.get.warm-NPST
ATATA|maru
温まる
‘[it] gets warm’

in question consists of in the first place. One would also likely struggle to explain how the concepts of *great* 大 and *harmony* 和 relate to the morpheme *Yamato* 大和 ‘Japan’.

[16] Another set of terms for these conjugation classes is *godan* 五段 ‘quinquigrade’ and *ichidan* 一段 ‘monograde’ respectively (Frellesvig 2010: 392). However, these terms are not used in this paper, as they are based on the five-stem theory disputed in (3.2.)

2-10 *kawar-u*
to.change-NPST
KA|waru
変わる
‘[one] changes’

2-11 *kae-ru*
to.change-NPST
KA|eru
変える
‘[one] changes [something]’

2-12 *atatame-ru*
to.warm-NPST
ATATA|meru
温める
‘[one] warms [something]’

2-13 *mi-ru*
to.look-NPST
MI|ru
見る
‘[one] looks’

2-14 *tabe-ru*
to.eat-NPST
TA|beru
食べる
‘[one] eats’

Among these, only the verb in 2-13, *miru* 見る ‘to look’, contains a monomorphemic grapheme. In other cases, at least a phoneme, or sometimes an entire syllable of the stem, is written phonographically with *hiragana*. Some of this can be explained by etymology. For example, in the verbs *atatamaru* 温まる ‘to get warm’ and *atatameru* 温める ‘to warm’, the *-mar-/-me-* parts can be considered diachronically as allomorphs of a verbalizing morpheme and as such not as a part of the stem (Kiyose 1995:

13). In this case, the grapheme 温 could be considered monomorphemic. However, as the morpheme *-mar-/-me-* is no longer productive in modern Japanese, a semimorphemic interpretation is also possible.

In other cases, the semimorphemic use of *kanji* comes from the moraic nature of *kana* scripts. The stem of a consonant verb typically ends in a consonant, and this consonant forms a single mora with the following vowel. Since dividing a single mora across multiple graphemes is generally disabled within the Japanese writing system, the final consonant of the stem is incorporated into the *kana* character which simultaneously stands for the first vowel of the inflectional ending (see 2-8).

Overall, the Japanese spelling conventions seem to be primarily concerned with keeping the *reading* of the character consistent across different lexemes instead of accurately mapping their morphemic structure, as mentioned above. The underlying rule for spelling vowel verbs in the *jōyōkanjihyō* (Bunkachō 2010a) appears to be that, when possible, the final mora of the stem should also be written in *kana* (2-14). Moreover, for transitive-intransitive verb pairs, the spelling conventions in the *jōyōkanjihyō* aim to retain consistent character readings by moving the *kanji-kana* boundary a mora back from where it would typically be located in consonant verbs (2-10 and 2-11). This preference for consistency is sometimes extended to adjectives as well (cf. *atatakai* 温かい ‘warm’ with the verbs *atatamaru* 温まる ‘to warm’ and *atatameru* 温める ‘to warm up’ discussed above, or cognate sets such as *kemuru* 煙る ‘to smoke’ and *kemutai* 煙たい ‘smoky’). Although some of these lexemes may contain derivational morphemes from a diachronic perspective, these spelling conventions yield many synchronically semimorphemic graphemes.

On the other hand, polymorphemic graphemes are also quite common in spellings of compound verbs and their derivations. Many alternative spellings are widely used and accounted for by normative sources like dictionaries (Daijirin 1995, Shimmeikai 1999), further blurring the grapheme-morpheme relationships in Japanese writing. In the examples below, all spellings included in the two referenced dictionaries are listed:

2-15 *tach-i-agar-u*
to.stand-NFIN-to.rise-NPST
TA|chi|A|garu, TACHI|A|garu, TACHI|AGA|ru
立ち上がる、 立上がる、 立上る
‘to stand up’

2-16 *mōsh-i-de-ru*
to.say-NFIN-to.step.out-NPST
MŌ|shi|DE|ru, MŌSHI|DE|ru
申し出る、　申出る
‘to offer’

2-17 *mōsh-i-de-Ø*
to.say-NFIN-to.step.out-NMN
MŌ|shi|DE, MŌSHI|DE
申し出、　申出
‘to offer’

2-18 *osh-i-ire-ru*
to.push-NFIN-to.insert-NPST
O|shi|I|reru, OSHI|I|reru
押し入れる、押入れる
‘to shove in’

2-19 *osh-i-ire-Ø*
to.push-NFIN-to.insert-NMN
O|shi|I|re, OSHI|I|re, OSHI|IRE
押し入れ、押入れ、押入
‘[Japanese style] closet, wardrobe’

2-20 *tach-i-ir-i*
to.stand-NFIN-to.enter-NMN
TA|chi|I|ri, TACHI|I|ri, TACHI|IRI
立ち入り、立入り、立入[17]
‘[the act of] entering, entry’

[17] To make things even more convoluted, this last spelling is context-dependent, being used chiefly in the phrase *tachiiri kinshi* 立入禁止 ‘no entry’.

As can be seen by comparing the morphemic and graphemic transcriptions, some sinograms in this type of spellings can be semimorphemic (e.g. 立 in *tachiiri* 立ち入り '[the act of] entering, entry' representing only part of the verb stem *tach-*), some polymorphemic (e.g. 立 in *tachiiri* 立入 '[the act of] entering, entry' standing for both the stem *tach-* and the bound morpheme *-i*), or unambiguously monomorphemic (e.g. 出 in *mōshideru* 申し出る 'to offer' encoding precisely the single morpheme *de-* 'to step out'). The choice of spelling depends on the context and, even more so, on the personal preferences of the writer, making Japanese orthography – especially when it comes to verbs – unpredictable and chaotic.

The core argument of this section is thus perfectly illustrated by the character 立. In 2-15, it can be interpreted as either semimorphemic or polymorphemic depending on the spelling chosen by the writer. However, it can also be used monomorphemically, as for instance in the word *kiritsu* 起立 'raising, standing up' where it represents the morpheme *ritsu* 立 'to stand; to establish'. In this way, one *kanji* character can be polymorphemic, semimorphemic, or monomorphemic depending on lexical and graphemic context. Admittedly, cases of poly- and semimorphography are mostly observed within the native Japanese stratum of vocabulary or, in other words, in *kun'yomi*.

Despite all of the above, it is important to reiterate that describing *kanji* characters as *morphographic* is an accurate description. As mentioned earlier in the paper, even when the grapheme and morpheme boundaries do not coincide, sinograms still consistently represent specific parts of morphemes or specific combinations of morphemes; their use is not arbitrary. That up to 50% of Japanese vocabulary is of Sino-Japanese origin (Kageyama and Saito 2016: 28; Taylor and Taylor 2014: 260) and graphemes in this type of lexemes are almost uniformly monomorphemic is also not to be understated. Nonetheless, when analyzing specific cases of *kanji* use, a more nuanced terminology than just *morphographic* becomes necessary, as was indicated in the current section.

One more key observation that becomes clear upon closer examination of the examples presented above is the tendency for lexical morphemes to be written fully or in part in *kanji* while inflectional morphemes are almost exclusively represented by *kana* characters. This fact, as well as the irregularities described in this section, bear some unique consequences for descriptions of Japanese; they are presented in the sections (3.) and (4.).

3. Japanese morphology: inconsistent accounts on Japanese morphology and syntax

Even though most, if not all, scholars agree that Japanese is agglutinative, there remains ongoing debate regarding the true nature of its agglutination. For instance, many inflectional morphemes are treated as derivational by traditional grammarians: case endings such as *ga* (subject marker) or *o* (direct object marker) are described as *joshi* 助詞 'particles', standalone parts of speech that are combined with nominal elements through compounding (Jabłoński 2021a: 10, 60). This approach is disputed by other scholars (Jabłoński 2022: 68–69). Similarly, many verb and adjective forms are considered compounds of multiple lexical units called *auxiliary verbs* (Hasegawa 2015: 78; Shibatani 1990: 224–225) even though they are bound inflectional morphemes, unable to convey any linguistic meaning without being attached to a lexical morpheme (Huszcza et al. 2003: 160–165). These issues are explored in this section.

3.1. Nominal elements and their inflection

Japanese sources generally do recognize the distinction between inflectional and derivational morphemes (Tanaka et al. 1988: 304; Tsujimura 2014: 143), though some of them accept the addition of affixes such as *ga* or *no* to noun stems as examples of agglutination (Tanaka et al. 1988: 19). Definitions of these phenomena are also in line with those found in general linguistic sources. For instance, Tanaka et al. (*ibid*., 18–20, 303) define inflection as the process of communicating grammatical meaning by altering a word's form through affixation, among other methods, providing examples of this phenomenon in non-Japanese nouns that do not require changes in the stem (e.g. German *Mensch* 'man' and *Menschen* 'men' or English *tree* and *trees*). Tsujimura (2014: 144) writes: "Inflectional morphemes do not generate different words, unlike the way in which derivational morphemes do; instead, inflected forms are variants of the same word, and for this reason inflectional morphemes do not change the category of the word". By this definition grammatical phenomena within Japanese agglutination, such as the act of adding the aforementioned grammatical markers *ga* or *no* to nominal elements[18], should be widely accepted as examples of inflection. Peculiarly, this is not the case. A significant portion of Japanese grammarians assert that Japanese nouns *do not undergo inflection*

[18] Nominal elements are understood here as not only nouns proper but also other elements that function like nouns in most or some contexts, such as nominalized forms of verbs, adjectives, numerals, numeral classifiers, or even entire clauses.

(Kindaichi et al. 1988: 118; Tanaka et al. 1988: 77). This is perhaps best captured by the definition of agglutination provided by Iori (2017: 184): "an agglutinating language […] has the characteristic that morphemes expressing grammatical categories (sentence constituents) are attached following the stem of a predicate to form a string". Under this approach, a morphological analysis of agglutination is limited to elements that can constitute a predicate, and it is done so on syntactic grounds, conflating the two levels of analysis.

The above is the traditional Japanese approach to nominal morphology and many attempts to solve this logical inconsistency have been made within its framework. The most common solution is as follows: morphemes such as *ga* or *no* are not case *markers*, they are case *particles* and as such "word-external elements" (Honda 2009: 219). It is not the noun that is inflected for case, but rather particles "intervene" between nouns and verbs in order to indicate their syntactic relations. These *particles*, then, are considered to be an entirely independent part of speech. One argument supporting this view is that "other elements" can be placed between the stem of the noun and the *particle* or – another term at times used to refer to these markers – the *phrasal clitic* (Hasegawa 2015: 91; Nakamura 2018: 249; Tsujimura 2014: 126), as can be seen in 3-1 (after Nakamura 2018: 249, original glosses retained).

3-1	*Tarō-to*	*Hanako-dake-ga*	*eki-kara*	*arui-ta.*
	Tarō-and	Hanako-only-NOM	station-ABL	walk-PAST
	TA|RŌ|to	HANA|KO|dakega	EKI|kara	ARU|ita.
	太郎と	花子だけが	駅から	歩いた。

'Only Tarō and Hanako walked from the station.'

Firstly, treating the so-called case particles in this way challenges the definition of an *inflectional morpheme* itself, which is described as an affix (bound morpheme) added to a lexical morpheme in order to convey grammatical meaning without changing the grammatical class of the morpheme to which it is attached (Crystal 2008: 243–244; Fromkin et al. 2017: 46–48). For comparison, under such an approach the Polish morpheme *-by* indicating the conditional mood (Bielec 2012: 78; Brooks 1975: 170; Sadowska 2012: 404) would be considered a *particle* as it can be freely separated from the verb (compare *zrobiłby to od razu* 'he would do it immediately' and *od razu by to zrobił* 'he would do it immediately'), sometimes alongside other inflectional morphemes such as the first person singular marker *-(e)m* (*zrobiłbym to od razu* 'I would do it immediately' vs.

od razu bym to zrobił 'I would do it immediately'). There are even instances where this separation is mandatory (compare *on poprosił, abym wyszedł* 'he asked me to leave' and the incorrect **on poprosił, aby wyszedłem*). However, it does not deter Polish grammarians from treating morphemes such as *-by* (conditional mood) or *-(e)m* (first person singular) as inflectional, agglutinative markers (Bańko 2007: 49–52).

Secondly, it is important to state that these *particles* are still bound morphemes that cannot act on their own; they have no meaning without the nominal elements they are attached to. Moreover, there *is* a finite set of them and they *can* be organized into a declensional paradigm, one that is admittedly extensive (Jabłoński 2022: 68–69). They never change the grammatical class of the morphemes to which they are attached, are phonologically dependent on the stems they are attached to, and cannot be cut off from the stem by anything but another inflectional marker. This is unlike, for instance, English prepositions, which can be separated from nouns by entire phrases. All of this points to the conclusion that they should not be analyzed as lexical items.

Nakamura's argument can be further challenged by analyzing *dake* and similar items as case markers (Jabłoński 2022: 68–69), though this discussion lies beyond the scope of the present paper. A clearer understanding of the Japanese declensional paradigm and how it compares to those of other languages requires resolving the definitional inconsistencies outlined earlier. The failure to acknowledge the inflectional nature of these so-called "particles" undermines any attempt to describe them systematically within a paradigm. The exact functions of these markers are still up for debate, but for such a debate to start they need to be recognized as primarily grammatical.

3.2. Verbal elements and their inflection

Similarly to nominal elements, verbal elements[19] are also described in two fundamentally different ways. One approach is the classical Japanese perspective (hereinafter: the traditional (Japanese) approach) taught in Japanese schools, where most inflectional markers, if not all, are treated as *jodōshi* 助動詞 'auxiliary verbs'. These are referred to as independent items that attach to the inflected stems of verbal elements and undergo conjugation themselves (Shibatani 1990: 221). The other approach, proposed mainly by

[19] Verbal elements are understood here as both verbs proper and predicative adjectives since they also can be conjugated and function as independent predicates, even if their conjugational pattern is more limited than that of verbs.

non-Japanese scholars (ibid., 227), is the synthetic approach, which views these so-called *jodōshi* as purely inflectional, bound morphemes that attach to lexical morphemes (Huszcza et al. 2003: 160–165).
The traditional approach is as follows: the verb is conjugated into five different forms (except the copula, which has six) with different endings; the root (the unchanging part of the verb understood in moraic terms) and the ending *together* form the stem. To this stem, various auxiliary verbs are appended[20] (Kindaichi et al. 1988: 122; Shibatani 1990: 224–225) (see Table 1).

Word-form name	'to die'	'to look'	Auxiliary verbs
mizen (irrealis)	*shi-na*	*mi*	*nai, n(u), seru, saseru, reru, rareru*
ren'yō (adverbial)	*shi-ni*	*mi*	*ta, masu, tai, sō, tari, te, tsutsu, nagara*
shūshi (conclusive)	*shi-nu*	*mi-ru*	*rashii, sō, to, kara, ga*
katei (hypothetical)	*shi-ne*	*mi-re*	*ba*
meirei (imperative)	*shi-ne*	*mi-ro/mi-yo*	

Table 1. Conjugated forms of Japanese verb "stems" with example auxiliary "verbs" that can be attached to them (Shibatani 1990: 224).

This method of describing verb inflection raises questions about the definition of the *stem* as the (mostly) unchanging part of the verb. The term *auxiliary verb*, on the other hand, implies that these elements appended to verbs to indicate tense, voice, and other grammatical categories possess lexical status. An alternative would be to classify markers such as *-(r)are* (passive voice marker), *-te* (gerund marker, among other uses), or *-tari* (exemplificative marker) as inflectional morphemes, and such descriptions of Japanese exist. The argument against this synthetic approach is as follows: elements such as *-(r)are* should be regarded as *verbs*, or at least *derivational suffixes*, because they themselves inflect, for instance, by taking tense markers. The status of elements such as *-te* or *-tari* as inflectional is questioned on the basis that "they all connect two clauses, the function not normally associated with the inflectional endings" (Hasegawa 2015: 152; Kiyose 1995: 6; Shibatani 1990: 227–228). This argumentation, however, is undermined by terminological inconsistency. For example, Honda (2009:

[20] These "verbs" are sometimes understood more in terms of script than morphology, being described as "*kana* characters that, in the case of verbs, are appended after the *kanji* to indicate tenses and other grammatical categories" (Hasegawa 2015: 52).

219) and Hasegawa (2015: 152) regard words such as *mirareru* 見られる 'to be seen' as *derivations* from the original verb (in this case *miru* 見る 'to see') – a *derivation* being by definition a new lexeme (Crystal 2008: 138) – while at the same time dubbing it "the passive *form*" of the verb. In this way, the fundamental differentiation between derivation and inflection is lost.

This line of reasoning, if accepted, could have tremendous implications for grammars of the world's languages. For comparison, the Polish past tense marker *-ł-/-l-* (as in: *zrobił* 'he did'), a bound morpheme unable to be used on its own, would also need to be described as an *auxiliary verb* rather than as an *inflectional ending* since it can "inflect further" by taking markers of mood (*zrobiłby* 'he would do'), person (*zrobiłem* 'I did'), or both (*zrobiłbym*, 'I would do'). In fact, this would be a perfect parallel with the traditional Japanese approach, in which the past tense marker *-ta* is considered a lexical item, i.e. an auxiliary verb that can itself inflect further (Shibatani 1990: 228). However, this not the case since these patterns in Polish are usually recognized as pure inflection or, more specifically, as examples of agglutination, a subcategory of inflection (although Polish on the whole is usually classified as fusional; Bańko 2007: 48–52). This approach is in line with the linguistic definitions of inflection and inflectional morphemes, while the traditional Japanese approach seems to prioritize erroneous assumptions about morphosyntax, such as the claim that inflectional morphemes cannot fulfill syntactic functions.

As mentioned above, Japanese word-forms can also be analyzed as synthetic, as in 3-2. The ability to attach additional inflectional markers – such as the past tense morpheme *-ta* – onto the *-(r)are-* passive morpheme does not necessarily mean that it is inflected; it may simply be regarded as an instance of agglutination of the main, lexical verb. After all, semantically, it is not the "passiveness" expressed by the morpheme *-(r)are-* that happens in the past, rather the past tense remains a feature of the action – for example of eating (see 3-2 and 3-3) – expressed by the lexical stem. It is also not uncommon for agglutinative word-forms to contain multiple inflectional morphemes (Comrie 1989: 43–44). One should not let the non-final status[21] of the morpheme obscure the fact that *it cannot be used independently* (see 3-3) and as such does not fulfill the definition of a lexical item.

[21] That is to say: the fact that it has to take another inflectional marker for the word-form to be complete, such as the passive *-(r)are-* marker that has to connect to at least a tense or finiteness marker such as *-(r)u*, *-ta* or *-te*.

3-2 *tabe-rare-ta*
to.eat-PASS-PAST
TA|berareta
食べられた
'[it] was eaten'

3-3 **rare-ta*
PASS-PAST
rareta
られた
'???'

Elements such as *-te* or *-tari*, on the other hand, are denied inflectional status on functional grounds as the function of connecting clauses is deemed atypical for inflectional endings. Again, if such a view on language were accepted, the grammatical status of elements such as the Polish and English participle markers would also need to be reconsidered. Especially in Polish, the participial morpheme *-ąc* serves solely the purpose of introducing another clause (*Uczył się, słuchając muzyki.* 'He studied [while] listening to music.') [22] . Function cannot therefore be the primary ground for morphological classification. Additionally, the *-te* or *-tari* markers are bound morphemes that lack meaning outside of their combinations with verbal elements, just like *-(r)are*.

The problems described above disappear when one assumes that *any bound morpheme attached to the stem of a nominal or verbal element, whether directly or following after other bound morphemes, is inherently inflectional in nature* as long as it does not change the grammatical class of the lexeme and the process of attaching it to the stem is regular and paradigmatical. While a distinction between semantic (e.g. tense) and syntactic (e.g. finiteness[23]) functions of inflectional morphemes should be acknowledged (Polański 1999: 186, 377), such differentiation presupposes an initial recognition of their fundamentally inflectional status. Moreover, viewing

[22] It is worth noting that Japanese verb forms ending in *-te/-de* can also be described as participles (Jabłoński 2021c: 196–199). The corresponding English *-ing* form is somewhat more ambiguous and functionally diverse, but it is likewise non-finite, unmarked for tense or person (Crystal 2008: 189–190). Nonetheless, it is usually listed as an inflected form of the verb (Castairs-McCarthy 2002: 39–40; Don 2014: 23, 80).

[23] Some sources consider finiteness to be a proper category of the verb, despite its often syntactic function (Cristofaro 2007: 92).

(most) Japanese verbal suffixes as purely inflectional has no negative implications for the understanding of Japanese morphology and syntax. Adopting such an understanding has led primarily non-Japanese (Shibatani 1990: 227–228) grammarians to devise comprehensive tables of potential interconnectivity between Japanese inflectional morphemes (Huszcza et al. 2003: 248; Jabłoński 2021b: 396–403), thereby facilitating a better understanding of the underlying morphological mechanisms. Morphemes such as *-te*, *-tari*, or *-rare-* are treated in these tables as parts of the conjugational paradigm, the first two as non-finite markers, and the last one as the passive marker (Huszcza et al. 2003: 204, 237, 242; Jabłoński 2021b: 396–403).

Gaps in descriptions of Japanese morphology become apparent when consulting sources based in the traditional Japanese approach to morphology described above. Some grammars, such as Cipris and Hamano (2002), entirely omit systematic presentations of inflectional markers, offering no tables of word-forms or paradigms. Even comprehensive works like Kindaichi et al. (1988) fail to include declension paradigms and often exclude morphemes traditionally labeled as "auxiliary verbs" from their conjugation charts. They also lack accounts of how verbal markers interconnect.

In some cases, internal inconsistencies arise. For example, Yamada's grammar treats verbal markers as part of the conjugational paradigm but regards nominal markers as independent lexemes (Kindaichi et al. 1988: 137). Hasegawa (2015: 75–78), on the other hand, treats certain word-forms of verbs as inflections while describing others – also formed in a paradigmatical way – as derivational. While some newer works present adnominal markers in lists resembling declensional paradigms, they still treat these as standalone *postpositions*, likened to English prepositions such as *to* or *along*, invariably favoring semantics over morphology and syntax (Katsuki-Pestemer 2003: 13–14). Overall, despite frequent references to agglutination, few scholars analyze Japanese morphology systematically from an agglutinative perspective. This is a serious problem, as it obscures the mechanisms by which grammatical markers combine as *they cannot do so freely as they are not lexical units.*

4. Parallels between Japanese graphemics and descriptions of Japanese morphology

Sections 1 and 2 described the ambiguous relationships between the graphemes and morphemes of the Japanese language that arise within the subset of *kanji* characters due to a variety of factors. Firstly, the moraic

nature of Japanese phonography as well as the tendency to prefer general legibility over a clear grapheme-morpheme correspondence often make it impossible for morpheme-morpheme and grapheme-grapheme boundaries to coincide. Secondly, lexical morphemes exhibit a tendency to be written with *kanji* while inflectional morphemes are typically represented with *kana* characters with some notable exceptions. Section 3 briefly highlighted some of the most prominent inconsistencies in grammars of the Japanese language, such as the classification of inflectional morphemes as independent parts of speech. This section aims to juxtapose these features and point out a few similarities between the two.

4.1. *Okurigana* and descriptions of Japanese agglutination

The intersection of Japanese graphemics and morphology takes the form of *okurigana* and the rules governing its usage. As mentioned in (1.1.), its primary role in *kanji kana majiribun* is representing inflectional endings, and clarifying the pronunciation of the *kanji* character it is attached to (Kindaichi et al. 1988: 315). Hasegawa (2015: 52) specifically defines *okurigana* as "*kana* characters that, in the case of verbs, are appended after the *kanji* to indicate tenses and other grammatical categories". Two things become evident in this statement, the most salient one being the mix-up of morphology and graphemics. A more accurate description of the function of *okurigana* would be to specify that it is *inflectional morphemes* that indicate grammatical categories, and *okurigana* characters merely represent them (as well as, quite commonly, parts of the stem). Indirectly, however, this definitional conflation of graphemics and morphology betrays a tendency to view language through the lens of writing that becomes even more obvious upon a closer inspection of the rules governing the usage of *okurigana*.

The rules of adding *okurigana* to *kanji*, as defined by the Japanese Agency for Cultural Affairs (*Bunkachō* 文化庁), are vague and full of exceptions (Bunkachō 2010b). The general guidelines are as follows (Kindaichi et al. 1988: 315; emphasis added by the author of this paper).

1. *For words that conjugate, conjugational endings are appended.*
2. For derivations and other related words, their mutual relationships are taken into account and the part before the *conjugational ending* is also appended. This also applies to words that could otherwise be misread.
3. *No* okurigana *is added to nouns*.
4. For adverbs, adnominal elements, and conjunctions, the last syllable of the word is written as *okurigana*.

5. *Okurigana* should be used to minimize the possibility of words being misread or difficult to read.
6. Traditional uses of *okurigana* should be respected.

A few things are of note here. Firstly, conjugation is the only type of inflection mentioned here, with the implication being that it is the only type of Japanese inflection overall. Secondly, the definition of *okurigana* seems to imply that if a lexeme is written with a mix of *kanji* and *kana*, only the *kanji* and the *okurigana* can be considered integral parts of it. Thus, if by definition nouns cannot possess *okurigana* (and they cannot, as declension is clearly absent from the ruleset), whatever is added after them is not part of the same lexeme. If it is not part of the same lexeme then it cannot be an inflectional marker and must thus be considered a separate part of speech – namely, the *particle* – and as such defined in lexical terms. This line of reasoning seems to underlie the peculiar similarity between the definition of *okurigana* and the classification of so-called "particles".

Of course, one might argue that the causality here is reversed and it is the preexisting concept of "particles" as an independent part of speech that led to this definition of *okurigana*. However, the tradition of representing the stem of a lexeme and the inflectional suffixes attached to it in a morphographic and a phonographic manner respectively dates back to at least the 8th century CE, in the *senmyō* 宣命 'imperial edicts' and *norito* 祝詞 'liturgies'. These texts exhibited a feature atypical for the time they were composed in; although mostly written morphographically, some inflectional markers attached to lexical stems were represented phonographically, with *kanji* used for their phonetic value. Additionally, the *kanji* representing these markers were written in a smaller size to further differentiate them from the stems. A similar orthography can be observed in another 8th century text, the *Man'yōshū*, although without the script size differentiation (Seeley 1991: 54; Vovin 2020: 8–16, 28). From the middle of the Heian period (794–1185), *kanji kana majiribun*, which is the style of writing used to write Japanese today, started gaining popularity. It is in this style that inflectional suffixes are written in *kana* while lexical stems are represented by *kanji* characters (Frellesvig 2010: 157, 266). The academic study of Japanese, on the other hand, began much later, with one of the first extensive grammars of Japanese being published as late as in the 17th century (*ibid*., 302), while the modern discipline of linguistics developed even later – the first chair of modern linguistics in Japan was created in 1898 (Coulmas 2016b: 170). It is thus logical to assume that the preexisting writing conventions might have influenced the newly forming discipline.

This is not an uncommon occurrence. Coulmas (2016a: 39–40) notes that "laying down rules for language is entirely reliant on writing" and that the existence of written texts, especially those held in high regard like religious and governmental ones, necessarily influences how languages are described and used (including speech). He posits that the primary tool of linguistic analysis is writing to this day, even in fields such as phonetics and phonology where precise transcription systems (such as IPA) are an essential tool. The most basic linguistic concepts such as the phoneme, sentence, or word also hinge on writing to some extent (Coulmas 2018b: 26–28). Again, it is therefore not unreasonable to assume that writing conventions have influenced descriptions of both Indo-European languages and Japanese, rather than the other way around. The repercussions of this influence are still observable today.

4.2. Verbal elements

As discussed in 3.2., inflectional forms of Japanese verbal elements are traditionally described in terms of auxiliary verbs attached to inflectable "stems". This analysis is a direct consequence of the Japanese writing system, or more precisely, of the *kana* scripts. As *kanji* and *kana* characters cannot stand for units smaller than moras, a problem arises when the boundary between lexical and inflectional morphemes cuts through a mora (Shibatani 1990: 225). Thus, in the case of verbal elements such as *kaer-u* 帰る 'to come home' (see also 2-8), it is impossible to separate the last consonant of a stem and the first vowel of an inflectional ending in writing. This is one of the reasons why the five stem theory arose and accounts for the semimorphemic character of many *kanji* characters in certain contexts.

On the other hand, looking back (4.1.) to the rules of adding *okurigana* to *kanji*, one might notice that, unlike declension, the existence of conjugation is in fact recognized. However, the rules also state that whatever is written after the *kanji* of a conjugatable word is an inflectional ending. This understanding aligns with the original views on Japanese conjugation that treated the last consonant of the stem of consonant verbs as a part of the traditionally understood inflectional ending. In this way, the five-stem theory (see 3.2.) distorts the definitions of both the stem and the ending (see Introduction).

The problem of why inflectional markers attached to verbs are considered to be "auxiliary verbs" (see 3.2.), however, is slightly more complex. One possible explanation for this could lie in the fact that inflected forms of Japanese verbal elements are notoriously long, usually consisting of a single lexical morpheme and multiple inflectional ones. The rules of *okurigana*,

however, do not specify what exactly constitutes a *word that conjugates* and *where exactly* okurigana *ends.* Moreover, the rules imply that it is the *kanji* that is the core of the lexeme, with no reference to actual word-form morphology. It is then quite possible to treat anything other than the *kana* characters closest to this "core" as separate entities, especially since agglutinative word-forms can usually be divided into constituent segments relatively easily, with just one function assigned to each. This is further exacerbated by the fact that many of the Japanese inflectional morphemes such as *-(r)are-* (passive), *-(s)ase-* (causative), or *-e-/-rare-* (potential) end in a vowel, making it easy to separate them from any other morpheme following them both phonetically and graphemically. Such a segment can then be ascribed a lexical meaning.

Admittedly, there also exist non-graphemic reasons for why one might interpret some inflectional suffixes as lexical units. For instance, some word-forms of Japanese verbs include morphemes characteristic for adjectival conjugation. This seemingly violates the rule that inflection should not change the grammatical class of the lexeme [24] and might lead to the conclusion that such markers should not be considered part of a synthetic word-form. Another factor might be the influence of foreign grammars (cf. Kindaichi et al. 1988: 117–118, among others); a detailed discussion of these questions, however, falls beyond the scope of the paper.

Considering all of the above it can be concluded that treating verbal markers as independent lexical items and separate parts of speech goes against the definition of inflection. There is nothing lexical about morphemes such as *-(r)are-* or *-(s)ase-*; one cannot use them in a sentence without an accompanying lexical morpheme. They carry no meaning other than grammatical ones, and they ultimately do not change the grammatical class of the morphemes to which they are attached in a regular manner as part of a paradigm, disqualifying them as derivational. There is, then, little reason to treat them as anything else but inflectional.

Conclusions

This paper focused on inflected parts of speech, namely nominal and verbal elements, with particular emphasis on nouns, predicative adjectives, and verbs. Due to space and scope constraints, non-inflected parts of speech such as lexical adverbs and non-predicative adjectives were excluded. For the

[24] At the same time, it is important to note that the distinction between verbs and adjectives may be ambiguous (Wierzbicka 1995; Pustet 2000) and the classes may overlap in some cases, as with Japanese adjectives inflecting for tense and other typically verbal categories.

same reasons, many nuances regarding grapheme-morpheme relationships *within* the stems of nominal and verbal elements have been omitted (for a discussion of this topic, see: Honda 2019). A future study could examine grapheme-morpheme relationships across all Japanese parts of speech in greater depth, as various kinds of morphography can be observed in adverbs as well. A statistical analysis of grapheme-morpheme relationships within a representative sample of the Japanese lexicon could also offer valuable insights into the nature of Japanese morphography.

Similarly, this study did not seek to redefine Japanese morphology, settling for juxtaposing the existing frameworks. Whether one views Japanese agglutination in terms of inflectional paradigms or independent lexical elements expressing grammatical meaning through compounding, it *is* possible to describe Japanese morphology and syntax comprehensively and wholly. However, the latter approach hinders grammarians from doing so in a systematic way. If inflectional endings are listed as separate entries in dictionaries – as they often are (Daijirin 1995, Shimmeikai 1999) – and explained primarily in terms of their semantics, then it effectively undermines the description of consistent, unified inflection paradigms. Such paradigms would not only aid in understanding Japanese as a language, especially its morphology and syntax, but also help foreign learners by presenting Japanese inflection in a more regular, systematic way.

The analysis of various types of graphemic representation of verbal elements specifically has revealed the three basic ways in which graphemes can be related to morphemes within the Japanese writing system. In monomorphemic representation, the boundaries between morphemes and graphemes overlap. In semimorphemic representation, only part of the morpheme in question can be unambiguously related to the character with which it is written. Finally, polymorphemic representation occurs when more than one morpheme is written with a single character. I demonstrated how these inconsistent relationships between graphemes and morphemes may influence morphological analysis of Japanese lexemes, leading to treating certain parts of the stem as inflectional endings. On the other hand, the "division of labor" between *kanji* and *kana*, in which inflectional morphemes are almost exclusively written in the latter script, influences what elements are considered parts of the same word-form. Since inflectional endings are visually distinct from the stems to which they are attached it is easier to come to the conclusion that they are independent lexical items – a conclusion which, upon closer examination of Japanese morphology using widely accepted definitions of inflection and agglutination, appears erroneous.

It is evident that Japanese descriptive grammar requires paradigmatic approaches that apply rigorous linguistic criteria in order to formulate internally and externally coherent explanations of grammatical phenomena. While formulating language-specific theories can be helpful, they should always be based on consistent linguistic frameworks and terminology. On the other hand, the field of writing system studies necessitates a more extensive terminology to accurately describe the morphography of the Japanese writing system. Scholars need to be aware of the ambiguities in the relationships between graphemes and linguistic units in Japanese writing, as well as how the mixed nature of the system and the dissonance between character and morpheme boundaries can influence grammars of the Japanese language. Moreover, it is crucial to remember that speech should always take precedence over writing when examining grammatical structures; writing can be a valid object of study in its own right but should never serve as the basis for explaining speech. Only when the biases that stem from writing conventions are recognized can they be actively countered.

Abbreviations

ADN	Adnominal form
NFIN	Non-finite form
NMN	Nominal form
NPST	Non-past tense
PASS	Passive voice
PAST	Past tense

Symbols and typographic conventions

*	Non-existent phrases or spellings
-	Morpheme boundary (morphemic transcription)
|	Script or sinogram boundary (graphemic transcription)
SMALL CAPS	Part of a phrase written in *kanji* (graphemic transcription)
regular font	Part of a phrase written in *kana* (graphemic transcription)

Author Contributions

The author confirms the sole responsibility for the conception of the study, presented results, and manuscript preparation.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares that they have no conflict of interest.

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うら-やまし・い [5] 【羨ましい】 （形）[文]シク うらやま・し
うら-や・む [3] 【羨む】 （動マ五［四］）
おおき オホキ 【大き】
おおき・い オホキイ [3] 【大きい】 （形）
おお・し オホシ 【大し】 （形ク）
おし-いれ [0] 【押(し)入れ】
おし-い・れる [4] 【押(し)入れる】 （動ラ下一）[文]ラ下二 おしい・る
こころ-ざし [0] 【志】
こころ-ざ・す [4] 【志す】 （動サ五［四］）
しり-ぞ・く [3] 【退く】
そ・く 【退く】
たち-あが・る [0][4] 【立(ち)上がる】 （動ラ五［四］）
たち-いり [0] 【立(ち)入り】
たちいり-きんし [0] 【立(ち)入り禁止・立入禁止】

た・べる [2] 【食べる】 （動バ下一）[文]バ下二 た・ぶ
なつかし・い [4] 【懐かしい】 （形）[文]シク なつか・し
みず-うみ ミヅ— [3] 【湖】
もうし-で マウシ— [0] 【申(し)出】
もうし・でる マウシ— [4] 【申(し)出る】 （動ダ下一）

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あがる【上がる】【上る】
おしいれ【押し入れ】【押入】[0]
が [一]（格助）
たちあがる【立ち上がる】【立上る】[4][5][0]:[4][0]
もうしでる【申し出る】【申出る】マウシデル[4]:[4]

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日本語文法の習得と教材の役割—助詞「は」と「が」を事例に—

Japanese grammar acquisition and the role of the textbooks – from the perspective of the particles *wa* and *ga*

ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on the role of the teaching materials for grammar acquisition in Japanese. One of the most difficult aspects in the acquisition of grammar for learners is distinguishing among the grammatical patterns that have similar functions. However, most of the textbooks created mainly in Japan do not provide sufficient information on how to distinguish similar grammatical patterns. The problem is that such textbooks are designed for the direct method of teaching multilingual classes and have limitations on the information they can present. Consequently, it is important to provide additional opportunities to learners by creating supplementary materials to fill in the areas that the main texts cannot cover. The discussion in this paper will be exemplified using the particles *wa* and *ga*. The arguments for the difficulties in the distinction between *wa* and *ga* are based on misuse examples extracted from the learners' corpora. The reason for dealing with *wa* and *ga* is that, although these particles are taught at the earliest stage of education, most of the learners have difficulties with the distinction between these particles, and even advanced learners often misuse them. Again, the descriptions of the functions of these two particles in the existing textbooks are inconsistent and vary from book to book. Finally, this paper introduces an online tool created to support the study of grammar and displays the description of *wa* and *ga* in it.

KEYWORDS: Japanese language education, grammar acquisition, particles *wa*/*ga*, teaching materials, supplementary resources

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はじめに

日本語学習者にとって、習得や運用が困難な文法がある。日本語学習者が文法で特に困難と感じているのは類義表現の使い分けであるが、教材には、学習者が類義表現の理解や的確な運用に必要な情報が十分に提示されていない（ヨフコバ四位・稲葉・久保田 2020）。しかし、特に日本国内で広く使用されている教材の多くが、多国籍クラスのための「直接教授法」に基づく授業を想定し作成されているので、教材には詳細な内容や複雑な記述を提示することが難しいという事情もある。そのため、教室で使用されている教材で十分な対応がなされていない部分の補充をし、より深い学びを促すには、補助的学習リソースの開発が必要である。

本稿では、類義表現の使用で見られる学習者の誤用に着目し、誤用が、教材における類義表現の使い分けに必要な情報の不足に起因することを論じる。また、誤用の改善に役立つオンラインの文法学習支援ツールについて紹介する。学習者の誤用および類義表現の考察には、助詞「は」と「が」を事例として用いる。

1. 文法学習と教材の役割

外国語文法学習においては、文型の意味・機能の不十分な理解が不的確な産出につながる。文型の学習や適切な理解に関わる要因は様々である。

まず指摘できるのは、学習者の能力や語学学習経験である。これは学習者個人の問題であり、学習者にしかコントロールできない要因である。

次に指摘できるのは、学習指導の方法である。学習指導という要因の役割は非常に大きい。しかし、これも指導を行う側に委ねられており、個人差がある[1]と言える。また、近年、自律学習が進んでおり、指導者に頼らず、独学で学ぶ学習者も増えている。

最後に指摘できるのは教材である。教材は、全学習者に同じような形で同じような情報を提供している。そのため、ここで取り上げられている要因の中で、最も客観性が高く、また学習への影響も客観的に測れる要因であるといえる。

[1] ここでいう個人差というのは、だれが何をどのように教えるかということの個人差という意味である。

本稿では、日本語文法の習得を教材と関連付けて考慮し、教材の役割について考察する。本稿で文法について特に焦点を当てたいのは類義表現である。類義表現が数多く存在するため、本稿では、助詞「は」と「が」を例にとり、考察を行う。

2.「は」と「が」

「は」と「が」を考察の対象にする主な理由は二つある。
日本語教育では、助詞「は」と「が」は日本語文型の中で最も早い段階（初級のはじめ）で導入される文型の一つである。にもかかわらず、学習者にとってはこれらの助詞の使い分けや運用が困難であり、学習者が上級になっても誤用が多い。
さらに、どの教科書でも取り扱われている文法項目であるが、その記述や記述に使用される概念および意味的特徴が大きく異なり、一貫性がない。

2.1.「は」と「が」の意味と用法

日本語学習者による「は」と「が」の習得について考察するまえに、従来の研究で、「は」と「が」の意味と用法がどのように記述されてきたか、簡単に確認しておく。
助詞「は」と「が」に関する研究は膨大である。また、分析に用いられるアプローチもまちまちである。
伝統的に、「は」と「が」は異なる性質を持つ助詞として分類されてきた。「が」は、「を」「に」「で」「と」などと同じ格助詞として分類されてきた。一方、「は」は格助詞のカテゴリーに含められず、異次元のもの、つまり、文の主題を表し、文を「主題」と「解説」に二分するという特別な機能をもつ助詞として分類されてきた。
「は」と「が」が同次元で比較されるきっかけをつくったのは久野（1973：27–28）の分類である。久野は、「は」と「が」の機能を文の情報構造と関連付けている。
久野は、「は」に関しては「主題」（1）と「対比」（2）の用法を区別している。

（1）太郎<u>は</u>学生です。（久野 1973: 27）
（2）雨<u>は</u>降っていますが、雪<u>は</u>降っていません。（久野 1973: 28）

一方、「が」に関しては、「総記」[2]（3）、「中立叙述」（4）、「目的語／目的格」（5）という三つの用法を区別している。

（3）太郎が学生です。　（久野 1973: 28）
（4）雨が降っています。（久野 1973: 28）
（5）僕は花子が好きだ。（久野 1973: 28）

久野の分類により、「は」と「が」を、文の構造における「旧情報」と「新情報」のマーカーとして捉える記述が広まった。久野の分類は、基本的に、機能に基づいた分類であるが、「が」の三つ目の用法に限っては、異なった基準、つまり統語的役割という基準が用いられている。
「は」と「が」の用法の区別に用いられるさらなる基準は、叙述（文）のタイプ、いわゆる「文の二元論」である（三尾 1948、野田 1996）。それにより、文は大きく二種類、つまり「判断文」と「現象文」[3]に分けられている。前者には「は」、後者には「が」が用いられる。野田（1996）は、「現象文」と「眼前描写」を区別し、「無題文」の下位タイプとして分類している。また、「現象文」と「眼前描写」は重なることもあるが、同じではないと主張する。
尾上（2001）は、従来指摘されてきた「が」の用法に、さらに「問い返し」／「驚き」という用法[4]を加え、その例として、以下の（6）を挙げている。

（6）A：見ろよ。こんな大きなねずみを取ったよ。
　　B：大きくはないよ。小さいよ。
　　A：このねずみが小さい⤴？

名詞文における「は」と「が」の振る舞いが特殊である[5]ため、名詞文（コピュラ文）に特化した研究が数多くある。名詞文は、「は」と「が」の機能により、「措定文」（7）、「指定文」

[2] 「排他」ともいう。
[3] 「眼前描写」ともいう。
[4] 尾上は、このタイプの用法について次のように説明している：話者は「相手の発言内容の中核的部分を一旦自分の言葉に直して受け止め、文末のイントネーションとともに相手に投げ返して、驚き、不信などを表す」（2001: 20）。
[5] 例えば、名詞文には無題文がなく、すべての文は有題文である。

（8）、「倒置指定文」（9）というタイプに区別されている（三上 1953、上林 1988、天野 1995）。

（7）田中さんは医者である。
（8）田中さんが医者である。
（9）医者は田中さんである。

このように、「は」と「が」の機能・用法の記述や分類は様々であり、時には同様の機能・用法が異なった概念をもとに記述されることがある。
本稿では、両助詞の対等な比較を行うために、同一の統語的機能に注目し、主語（主格）を示す「は」と「が」のみについて考察する[6]。また、単文（主節）を中心に議論を進めるが、学習者の誤用を論じる際に、複文にも触れる。
従来の研究において同一現象の記述に用いられる「無題文」、「中立叙述」、「眼前描写」、「現象文」といった多様な概念の使用で生じ得る誤解釈を避けるため、本稿では、これらのタイプの文における「が」の用法を「中立叙述」として整理し、述べる。

2.2. 学習者の誤用

日本語教材に提示される「は」と「が」について考察する前に、これらの助詞の使用で見られる学習者の誤用について見ておきたい。学習者の誤用については、学習者コーパスから抽出した例をもとに、誤用パターンを検証する。学習者の誤用の検証に用いるデータベースは以下のとおりである。

・『寺村誤用例集データベース』[7]
・『多言語母語の日本語学習者横断コーパス（IJAS）』[8]（中納言 2.7.2 データバージョン 2024.03）

[6]主語以外の項の主題化に使われる「は」、目的格として使用される「が」、また「は～が」文は本稿の考察には含めない。
[7]「同用例集は、諸外国からの留学生が書いた作文に見られる日本語の誤用を収集・分類したもので、1985～1989 年度の科学研究費補助金特別推進研究『日本語の普遍性と個別性に関する理論的及び実証的研究』の一環として行われた『外国人学習者の日本語誤用例の収集・整理と分析』の資料をまとめた報告書とのことです。」（HP より）。
[8]「日本を含む 20 の国と地域で、異なる 12 言語を母語とする日本語学習者 1000 人の話し言葉および書き言葉を横断的に調査し、データを収集したコーパスです。コーパスの名

「は」と「が」の誤用には 2 つのパターン、つまり「は」を使うべきところで「が」を使っているということと、「が」を使うべきところで「は」を使っているということがあるが、本稿では以下のように分けて考察する。

A: 単文の主語
1)「は」を使うべきであるが、「が」を使っている
2) 「が」を使うべきであるが、「は」を使っている[9]

B: 複文の従属節（埋め込み文）の主語
3)「が」を使うべきであるが、「は」を使っている

用例においては、誤用を［］で示す。「は」と「が」以外の誤用は改変せず、原文のまま（ママ）に示す。〈〉に学習者の国籍を示す。

では、具体例を見てみよう[10]。
（10）～（13）には、「は」を使うべきところで「が」を使っているという誤用例を示す。

（10）私［が］もっと深い学問をほしい（ママ）ために日本へ来た。（『寺村誤用例集』〈台湾〉）
（11）最近の勉強と論文を書くこと［が］いかがですか。（『寺村誤用例集』〈台湾〉）
（12）ヤンさん［が］かとうさんの奥さんに冷いお茶をもらって、飲んだあと（ママ）気持ちがよくなった。（『寺村誤用例集』〈中国〉）

称は『多言語母語の日本語学習者横断コーパス』、略称は『I-JAS（International Corpus of Japanese as a Second Language）』です。」（HP より）。以下 IJAS と呼ぶ。

[9] 文が使われている文脈抜きではどちらの助詞が適切かの判断が難しい（どちらも使える）場合がある。本稿で使用するコーパスでは、文が使用されている文脈を明確に示している文章の情報も掲載されているので、助詞の正用／誤用の判断の際、文章の確認も行っている。

[10] 『寺村誤用例集データベース』を事例に見ると、「は」を使うべきところで「が」を使っているという誤用と「が」を使うべきところで「は」を使っているという誤用はほぼ同じ割合で、540 例中、それぞれの誤用の例が 140 例ずつ確認できた。

（13）私たちの部屋［が］２階にあります。（『寺村誤用例集』〈フィンランド〉）

以下、上記の例の誤用の要因について若干の考察を加えたい。

（10）の文は作文の冒頭に使われている文である。この文は、「主題」と「解説」に二分される構造の例であるため、主題である「私」には「は」の使用が適切である。では、「が」の誤用には一体どのような原因が考えられるのだろうか。断定は難しいが、一つの可能性として考えられるのは、指導でよく言われる「初出の主語に「が」を使う」（cf. 表 1 *Japanese for Busy People* の解説）という説明の影響である[11]。

（11）は、上記の四例の中で、唯一の名詞文（コピュラ文）であるが、この文も明確な二分構造の文である。一方、疑問詞を含んでいることで他の文と異なり、二分構造における「旧情報」と「新情報」の部分の見極めは容易なはずである。しかし、教室活動でもしばしば見られる疑問詞を含んだ文における「は」と「が」の誤用[12]から、学習者が疑問詞を含んだ文の構造、またその構造における「は」と「が」の役割を理解していないということがうかがえる。

（12）は並列関係にある複文であるため文の構造パターンは（10）と同じである。

（13）は、主格に「は」を使うべき所在文である。所在文と存在文は普遍的な構文であるが、日本語学習者にとってはなぜかこの二つの構文の区別が難しく、助詞の使用で誤用が多く見られる。その原因の一つには教科書の影響が考えられる。特に日本国内でよく使用されている教科書では、この二つの構文は別々の課で導入されることが多い[13]が、構造の関連性に気付かせる情報が教科書には提示されていない。また、教材によっては、所在文の課と存在文の課が離れており、存在文が導入されている頃には、学習者が導入済みである所在文のことを忘れていることもある。教材について論じる 2.3.

[11] ただ、この文は、（12）同様に、従属節を含んでいる複文であるため、文全体の特徴を考えず、複文の主語に「が」を使わなければならないというルールのみを考え、学習者が「が」を使用したという可能性も否定できない。

[12] 教室活動で最も多く見られる疑問詞を含んだ文の誤用は、「だれは～／なには」のように、疑問詞主語に「は」を使うというパターンである。

[13] たとえば、『できる日本語』（2011）や『まるごと』（2013）。導入の手順が教科書によって異なり、存在文が導入されてから所在文が導入される場合もあれば、逆の場合もある。

で改めて所在文と存在文の問題について考察する。
『寺村誤用例集データベース』には、対比の「は」の誤用例[14]もいくつか掲載されているが、ほとんどの例は非主語の例であるため、ここでは取り上げない。
次に、教室活動の中でも多く見られる 2)（「が」を使うべきところで「は」を使っている）の誤用パターンについて見てみたい。

（14）文化てきなたてもの［は］たくさんあります。（『寺村誤用例集』〈イラン〉）
（15）こんなはなし時間（ママ）［は］一番うれしかったです。（『寺村誤用例集』〈台湾〉）
（16）バスケットを開けると、犬［は］飛びます。（『IJAS』〈英語話者〉）

（14）が使われている文脈[15]から、この文は、主語に「が」を用いるのが適切な「中立叙述」の文である。（15）は、久野（1973）の分類における「総記」（「排他」）にあたる用法である。（14）にも（15）にも「が」ではなく、「は」が使われている主な要因として考えられるのは、「は」のなじみやすさである[16]。さらに、学習者が「が」の使用を決定づける文の構造（「が」を使う条件）を十分に理解していないということも指摘できる。
（16）の用例は IJAS のコーパスから抽出した例である。IJAS の用例集には、絵に関する作文（ストーリーテリング）が複数収録されている。その一つは、図 1 にある絵のストーリーテリングである。（16）はその絵の場面④について作成された文である。以下に、IJAS にある母語話者の作文をもとに、ストーリーテリング 1 「ピクニック」について期待される内容と場面④の記述を例示する。

[14]たとえば、「かんじ［が］かけますが、よみかたはできません。」（『寺村誤用例集』〈マレーシア〉。
[15] この文は、「昔、イランの首都には文化的な建物がたくさんありました」という文脈で使われている。（https://www2.ninjal.ac.jp/teramuradb/compositions/12.01.02.html）
[16] 教科書では、主語(主格)に「は」が使われることが多い。

「朝、ケンとマリはサンドイッチを作りました。二人は地図を見て、今日向かう場所について話し合っています。そのため飼っている犬がサンドイッチのバスケットに入ってしまったのに気付きませんでした。今日はいい天気で、二人はピクニックを楽しみました。しかし、いざお昼ご飯を食べようとしてバスケットを開けてみると、なんと飼い犬**が**飛び出してきたのです。バスケットの中を見ると、残念なことに作ってきたサンドイッチはすべて食べられていました。」（IJAS【日本語母語話者】）。

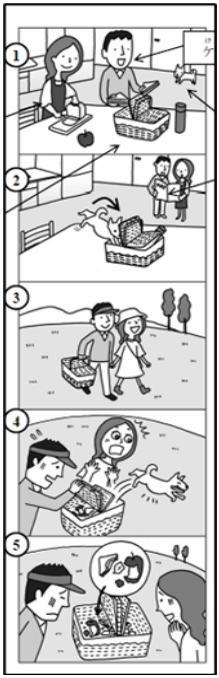

図1「ピクニック」
https://chunagon.ninjal.ac.jp/ijas

（16）では、母語話者の作文に見られるように、主語（下線の文の中の主語）に「が」を使うべきである。その「が」は、特殊な用法の「が」であり、尾上（2001）が指摘する「驚き」の「が」である。このタイプの「が」の用法に関しては、教科書にはほとんど情報がなく、学習者には認識されにくい。

最後に、複文について簡単に見ておきたい。初級では複文はほとんど扱われないので、複文の従属節（埋め込み文）における主格助詞の使い方についても指導がなされない。しかし、学習者が上級になっても、複文における主格助詞の誤用が多い。また、最も多く見られる誤用は、主節と従属節の主語が異なる場合に、従属節（埋め込み文）の主語に「が」ではなく「は」が使われているものである。以下に例を示す。

（17）私は、来年の大学費［は］たりないために夏休の前に、アルバイトを探がして行きました。（『寺村誤用例集』〈台湾〉）
（18）しかし、国の両親［は］日本へ来る予定があったのだ（ママ）から、私は国へ帰りませんでした。（『寺村誤用例集』〈台湾〉）

（19）あの女は、ヤンさん［は］えきの前（ママ）でんわしたときあた（ママ）人です。（『寺村誤用例集』〈スリランカ〉）
（20）もし、人々［は］ブティーアナを養えば、生活が幸福になると言われる。（『寺村誤用例集』〈マレーシア〉）
（21）私［は］以前から関心を持ってきたことは国の経済発展と成長である。（『寺村誤用例集』〈インド〉）

2.3. 教科書における「は」と「が」の扱い

「は」と「が」の使い分けは学習者にとっては難しい。類義表現の使い分けの困難さの背景には様々な要因がある。一般的に指摘されている要因の一つは、学習者の母語の影響である（市川 2006 ）。学習者の母語の影響は否定できない大きな要因ではあるが、上記の誤用の例からもわかるように、誤用は、様々な母語を持つ学習者[17]に共通して生じる。

本稿では、母語の影響を考察の対象外とし、学習指導において重要な役割を果たす教材に焦点を当て、教材の観点から誤用の要因を明らかにすることを試みる。

一般的な学習過程[18]では、「は」は 1 課で導入され、しばらくしてから「が」が導入される[19]が、多くの教科書の場合、主格に用いられる「は」と「が」の初出の課が離れている。

外国語学習で、一つの意味・機能に対して複数の文法形式の使用が学習者を困惑させる原因となっている。そのため、「は」と「が」の場合も、「が」が導入されると、学習者から「『は』と『が』は何が違いますか？」と、しばしば聞かれる。学習者の疑問は、教科書には「は」と「が」の類似または相違に関する情報が十分に提示されていないということに深く関係している。

では、日本語教材（総合教科書と学習者向けの解説書）には「は」と「が」についてどのように提示され説明されているのか、簡単に見てみたい。

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[17] 上記の例を抽出したコーパスに収録されている例を作成した学習者の主な母語は以下の通りである：インドネシア語、スペイン語、タイ語、トルコ語、ドイツ語、ハンガリー語、フランス語、ベトナム語、ロシア語、英語、韓国語、中国語、ポルトガル語、ペルシャ語、マレー語、フィンランド語。

[18] ここでいう一般的な学習課程というのは、教室環境で特定の教科書を用いて、「易＞難」という難易度を上げていくいわゆる「積み上げ式」の学習課程のことである。

[19] 「が」が導入される課は教材によって異なる。

学習者向けの教材には、日本語学で用いられている記述方法および専門用語（概念）は当然使えない。しかし、翻訳を提示している教材であれば、より複雑な記述が可能である。以下の表 1、表 2 に、いくつかの教材の例を示す。教科書の考察には、『みんなの日本語初級I 翻訳・文法解説英語版 第 2 版』（2013）、坂野他『げんき』（2013）、国際日本語普及協会 *Japanese for Busy People*（*JBP*）（2008）を用いる。解説書については、友松・和栗『初級日本語文法総まとめポイント 20』（2004）、グループジャマシイ『日本語文型辞典 』（2015）、Makino & Tsutsui *A Dictionary of Basic Japanese Grammar*（1986）、Maynard *An Introduction to Japanese Grammar and Communication Strategies*（1990）を参照する。教科書に関しては表 1、解説書に関しては表 2 にまとめる。

表 1 が示しているように、「は」の解説がない教科書もある。一方、「が」の記述には一貫性がなく、あるものには統語的役割（主語）、別のものには語用論的機能（情報のタイプ）が用いられ解説されている。また、「が」に関しては、多くの教科書では、存在文のみにフォーカスが当てられ、存在文での機能に特化した記述がなされている。*Japanese for Busy People* には、用例を用いて「は」と「が」の比較を行っているという、他の教科書に見られない特徴がある。

教科書名	課	文型（用例）	解説
みんなの日本語	L.1	N[20]は～です	は [21]indicates that the word before it is the topic of the sentence
	L.10	N があります／ N がいます	the thing or person is treated as the subject and marked with が
げんき	L.1 L.8	N は～です QW が V[22] 「ロバートさんが沖縄に行きました。」	※「は」の解説無し ・the question word which is the subject is never followed by は； with が extra emphasis is made on

[20] N は主語の名詞（Noun）を指す。
[21] 表 1 と表 2 にある下線は本稿の筆者によるものである。
[22] QW は疑問詞、V は動詞を指す。

		「だれが【×は】沖縄に行きましたか？」	Robert, the new piece of information ＊「ロバートさんは沖縄に行きました。」 describes what Robert did
Japanese for Busy People	L.8	～にNがあります／Nは～にあります 「1かいにレストランがあります。／ 「レストランは1かいにあります。」	が：subject marker the subject is introduced for the first time; the speaker believes the information to be new to the listener ※「は」の解説無し

表1 教科書における「は」と「が」の記述

次に、解説書（文法練習帳、文法辞典）における記述について見てみたい。学習者だけを対象としている参考書や文法辞典は少ない。また、初級に特化している参考書や文法辞典も少なく、一般的に日本語読解力が高い読者層向けのものが多い。
参考書や文法辞典では、「は」と「が」は、多くの場合、その語用論的役割、すなわち情報のタイプとの関連から記述されている。疑問文を用いて、両助詞の用法を比較しながら情報構造の違いを示そうとする解説書（*An Introduction to Japanese Grammar and Communication Strategies*）もある。

書名	文型（用例）	解説・意味の記述
初級日本語文法総まとめ　ポイント20（2課）		・伝えたい情報の前に「は」を使う（取り立て、対比） ・伝えたい情報の後に「が」を使う（描写、～は～が文、複文）
日本語文型辞典	だれが／【×は】来ますか	が indicates that the noun is the subject
A Dictionary of Basic Japanese Grammar	だれが／【×は】来ますか	・*wa* marks a topic or a contrastive element；the speaker assumes that the

		hearer knows the referent of *wa* ・*ga* : focus, subject
An Introduction to Japanese Grammar and Communication Strategies	Q:どの人がスミスさんですか。 A:あの人がスミスさんです。 Q:スミスさんはどの人ですか。 A：（スミスさんは）あの人です。	contrasting *wa* and *ga*

表 2 解説書における「は」と「が」の記述

日本語学習者にとっては、「は」より、「が」の運用のほうが難しい。それには複数の理由がある。一つは、教材では、一般的には、主語に「は」が用いられることが多く、学習者にとっては「は」の方が馴染みがある。もう一つは、「が」は機能が多く、学習者が複数の機能の区別で混乱する。さらに、有標性の観点から見ると、「は」は無標に近い形式であるのに対し、「が」は有標な形式として捉えられる。そのため、「が」は「は」よりも使われ方が限定的である。

では、「が」の用法が教科書ではどのように提示されているか、日本国内の日本語の授業で最も多く使用される『みんなの日本語　初級』（2012）を事例に考察したい。考察の結果は表 3 にまとめる。

課	用法（構文）	用例
10	存在文 （N に N がある／ N に N がいる）	・机の上に写真があります。 ・あそこに佐藤さんがいます。
27	①N ができる ②N が N です	①駅の前に大きいスーパーができました。 ②日曜大工が趣味です。
29	アスペクト構文 （V テイル）	窓が閉まっています。
30	アスペクト構文 （V テアル）	地図がはってあります。
32	自然現象の描写	あした、雨が降るでしょう。

35	①自然現象の描写 ②N がいいです。	①春になれば、桜が咲きます。 ②北海道旅行なら、6 月がいいです。

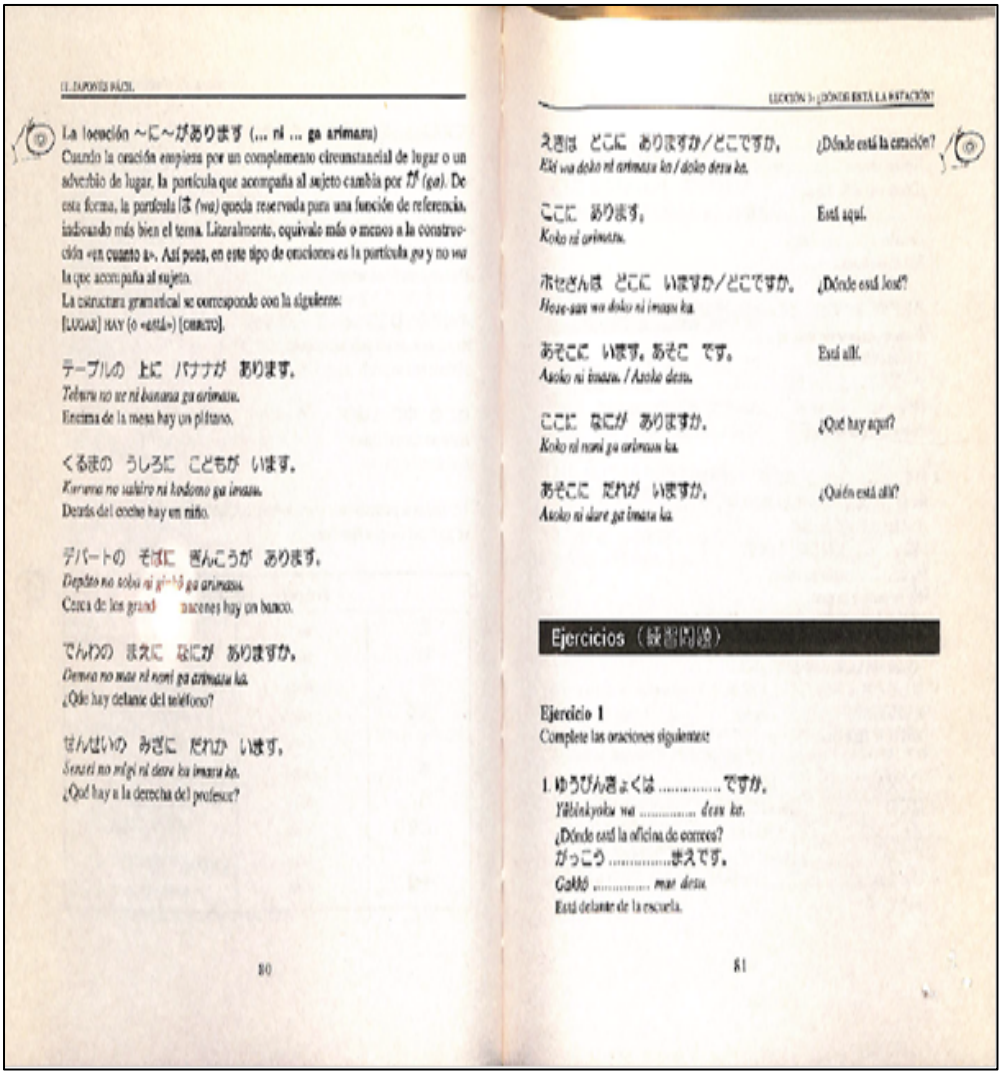
表 3『みんなの日本語』（初級）に出現する主格の「が」の用法

表 3 が示しているように、『みんなの日本語』では、「が」の導入は構文のタイプに沿ってなされている。一方、表 1 の教科書における「は」と「が」の記述では「主語」という概念が一般的に用いられている。しかし、同じく主語に関わる「は」との違いについては言及がない。

日本国内で作成されている教科書の著者は基本的に日本語母語話者であるため、文法の記述は母語話者の視点からなされている。そのため、提示されている情報が必ずしも学習者のニーズに合っているとはいえない（ヨフコバ四位・稲葉・久保田 2020）。特に、学習者が最も知りたい類義表現の違いや使い分けに必要な情報が教材には十分に提示されていない。

では、海外の場合はどうなっているのだろうか。

海外では、多くの教科書の作成に非母語話者教員が携わっており、著者自らの学習経験を活かした教材作りがなされているということが報告されている（ヨフコバ四位・久保田・稲葉 2021、ヨフコバ四位・稲葉・久保田 2022）。そのため、類義表現に関しては同じ課の中で提示されることが多い。以下では、スペイン（*El japonés fácil* 2004）とウズベキスタン（ *Yapon tili*, Xalmurzayeva 2005）の教科書における「は」と「が」の提示方法について取り上げる。



EL JAPONÉS FÁCIL

La locución ～に～があります (... ni ... ga arimasu)
Cuando la oración empieza por un complemento circunstancial de lugar o un adverbio de lugar, la partícula que acompaña al sujeto cambia por が (ga). De esta forma, la partícula は (wa) queda reservada para una función de referencia, indicando más bien el tema. Literalmente, equivale más o menos a la construcción «en cuanto a». Así pues, en este tipo de oraciones es la partícula ga y no wa la que acompaña al sujeto.
La estructura gramatical se corresponde con la siguiente:
[LUGAR] HAY (o «está») [OBJETO].

テーブルの　上に　バナナが　あります。
Teburu no ue ni banana ga arimasu.
Encima de la mesa hay un plátano.

くるまの　うしろに　こどもが　います。
Kuruma no ushiro ni kodomo ga imasu.
Detrás del coche hay un niño.

デパートの　そばに　ぎんこうが　あります。
Depāto no soba ni ginkō ga arimasu.
Cerca de los grand　　aceney hay un banco.

でんわの　まえに　なにが　ありますか。
Denwa no mae ni nani ga arimasu ka.
¿Qde hay delante del teléfono?

せんせいの　みぎに　だれか　います。
Sensei no migi ni dare ka imasu ka.
¿Qué hay a la derecha del profesor?

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LECCIÓN 3: ¿DÓNDE ESTÁ LA ESTACIÓN?

えきは　どこに　ありますか／どこですか。　¿Dónde está la estación?
Eki wa doko ni arimasu ka / doko desu ka.

ここに　あります。　Está aquí.
Koko ni arimasu.

ホセさんは　どこに　いますか／どこですか。　¿Dónde está José?
Hose-san wa doko ni imasu ka.

あそこに　います。あそこ　です。　Está allí.
Asoko ni imasu. / Asoko desu.

ここに　なにが　ありますか。　¿Qué hay aquí?
Koko ni nani ga arimasu ka.

あそこに　だれが　いますか。　¿Quién está allí?
Asoko ni dare ga imasu ka.

Ejercicios（練習問題）

Ejercicio 1
Complete las oraciones siguientes:

1. ゆうびんきょくは ..... ですか。
Yūbinkyoku wa ..... desu ka.
¿Dónde está la oficina de correos?
がっこう .....まえです。
Gakkō ..... mae desu.
Está delante de la escuela.

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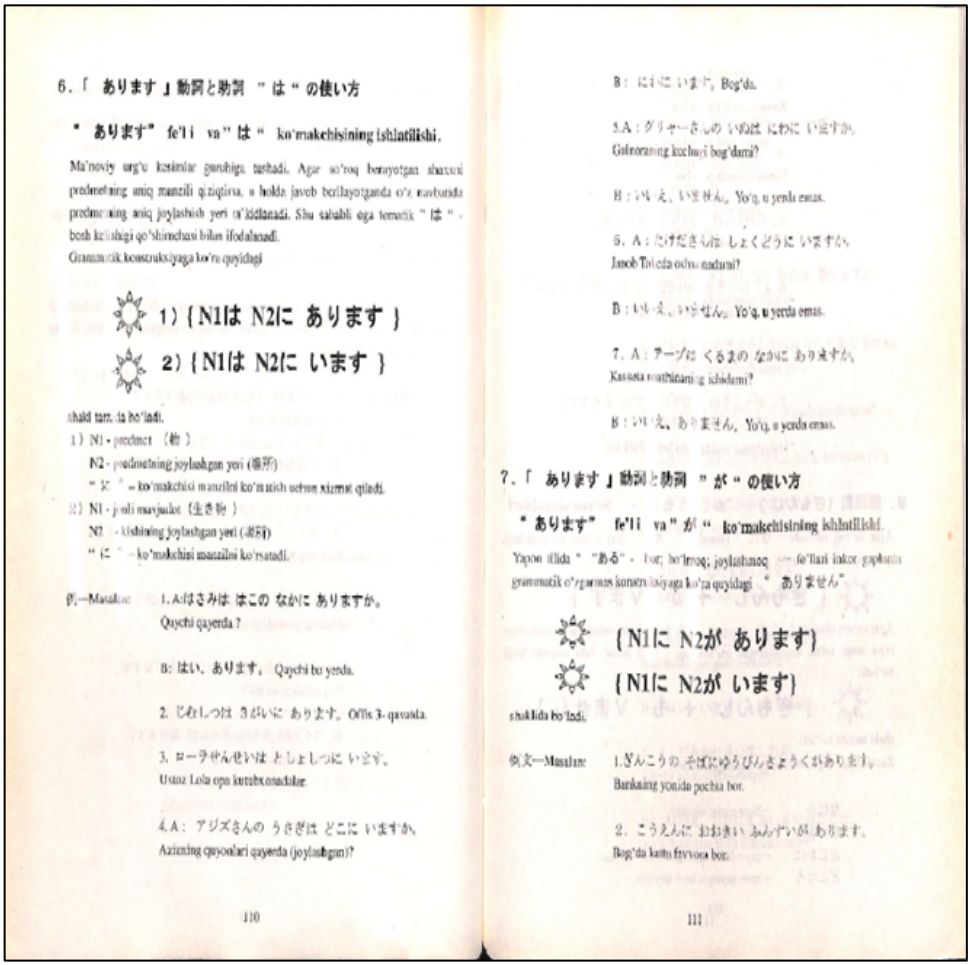
図 2 *El japonés fácil*（2004）における助詞「は／が」（所在文、存在文）
（ヨフコバ四位・久保田・稲葉 2021: 89）



6.「 あります 」助詞と助詞 " は " の使い方

" あります" fe'li va " は " ko'makchisining ishlatilishi.

Ma'noviy urg'u kesimlar guruhiga tushadi. Agar so'roq berayotgan shaxsni predmetning aniq manzili qiziqtirsa, u holda javob berilayotganda o'z navbatida predmetning aniq joylashish yeri ta'kidlanadi. Shu sababli ega tematik " は " - bosh kelishigi qo'shimchasi bilan ifodalanadi.
Grammatik konstruksiyaga ko'ra quyidagi

1) { N1は N2に あります }

2) { N1は N2に います }

shakl tarzida bo'ladi.

1) N1 - predmet (物)
N2 - predmetning joylashgan yeri (場所)
" に " - ko'makchisi manzilni ko'matish uchun xizmat qiladi.

2) N1 - jonli mavjudot (生き物)
N2 - kishining joylashgan yeri (場所)
" に " - ko'makchisi manzilni ko'rsatadi.

例—Masalan: 1. A:はさみは はこの なかに ありますか。
Qaychi qayerda ?

B: はい、あります。 Qaychi bo yerda.

2. じむしつは 3がいに あります。 Ofis 3- qavatda.

3. ローラせんせいは としょしつに います。
Ustoz Lola opa kutubxonadalar.

4. A: アジズさんの うさぎは どこに いますか。
Azizning quyonlari qayerda (joylashgan)?

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B: にわに います。 Bog'da.

5. A: グリャーさんの いぬは にわに いますか。
Galnoraning kuchuqi bog'dami?

B: いいえ、いません。 Yo'q, u yerda emas.

6. A: たけださんは しょくどうに いますか。
Janob Takeda oshxonadami?

B: いいえ、いません。 Yo'q, u yerda emas.

7. A: テーブは くるまの なかに ありますか。
Kassata mashinaning ichidami?

B: いいえ、ありません。 Yo'q, u yerda emas.

7.「 あります 」助詞と助詞 " が " の使い方

" あります" fe'li va " が " ko'makchisining ishlatilishi.

Yapon tilida " "ある" - bor; bo'lmoq; joylashmoq — fe'llari inkor gaplarda grammatik o'zgarmas konstruksiyaga ko'ra quyidagi " ありません"

{ N1に N2が あります }

{ N1に N2が います }

shaklida bo'ladi.

例文—Masalan: 1. ぎんこうの そばにゆうびんきょうくがあります。
Bankaning yonida pochta bor.

2. こうえんに おおきい ふんすいが あります。
Bog'da katta favvora bor.

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図 3 Xalmurzayeva, *Yapon tili*（2005）における助詞「は／が」（所在文、存在文）
（ヨフコバ四位・稲葉・久保田 2022: 99）

スペインとウズベキスタンの教科書では、所在文と存在文が同じ課の中で出現し、特に、ウズベキスタンの教科書に明確に見られるように、これらの構文における「は」と「が」の使用の違いを意識させるために、構文が並行して提示されている。

海外の教育現場では、学習者の母語が使用できるため、直接法によって教育が行われている日本国内の教育現場に比べ、学習者への文法の説明においてより大きな活用の可能性を有する。

3. 補助教材の役割

近年、学習者が教科書以外のツール、主としてインターネットから情報を得ることが多くなってきている。インターネットは利便性が高いが、問題点もある。たとえば、検索によって得られる情報の信憑性などである。また、文法について説明を提供しているサイトが多数あるが、その中のどれが自分のニーズに合い、有益であるかを見極めることは学習者にとって難しい。さらに、文法に関しては、断片的な情報の提示が多く、文法全体の体系が見えてこない。
次に、補助教材の役割を考えつつ、文法を体系的に記述し、また学習者のニーズに配慮したオンラインツールを紹介したい。また、そのツールにおいては「は」と「が」がどのようになされているかについても確認する。
文法の学習（自律学習も含めて）を支援するオンラインで利用できるリソースが増えている。例えば、『日本語文型バンク』、『機能語用例文データベース「はごろも」』などである。『はごろも』は、データ駆動型学習（Data Driven Learning, DDL）のツールとして開発され、文法の産出活動を支援するツールである。『はごろも』は、学習者自身がコーパスから抽出した豊富な例文を見て言語の特徴に気づくという学習者主体の問題解決学習を支援することを目的としている。そのため、文型の用法を理解するために必要な用例が多数提示されているという大きな利点がある。一方、中上級以上の学習者を主な対象としているため、初級の学習者にはやや難しい。

4. 『日本語参照文法』

初級のみを対象とした、オンラインで利用できる文法の補助教材はまだ少ない。また、特に不足しているのは、学習者のニーズが高い類義表現の使い分けについて情報を提供しているリソースである。このような状況を改善すべく、近年、『日本語参照文法』（https://sansyo-bunpo.net/）が開発された。以下、『日本語参照文法』の特徴について紹介する。

4. 1.『日本語参照文法』の特徴

『日本語参照文法』には大きな特徴が三つある。一つは、オンラインで無料で利用できるため、多様な学習環境にいる多様な学習者が自らの都合（学習時間や学習場所）に合わせ、学習できるという利点である。もう一つは、文型の記述は、その使用にあたり、理解が必要な意味や用法を、類似する他の文型との比較の観点からなされているということである。さらにもう一つは、便利な翻訳機能が付いているということである。翻訳にはGoogleの自動翻訳が使われ、図4に示すような形で、ページの内容を翻訳できる。

図4 Google翻訳による翻訳のための画面

初級の文法教材の開発を困難にしている原因の一つが学習者の読解力であるため、翻訳機能を備えることによって、リソースの利便性や価値が高まる。『日本語参照文法』は、130か国語への翻訳が可能であるため、多様な学習者が文法の説明を母語で読むことができる[23]。図5には、「が」のページの一部とそのポーランド語訳（ポーランド語訳は不完全な部分がある）を示している。

[23] 翻訳には自動翻訳機能が使われているため、言語によって翻訳の質が異なり、不完全な翻訳もあるが、大凡の意味が伝わるため、日本語の知識を十分に有していない学習者にとっては有益である。

図 5『日本語参照文法』の「が」のページとそのポーランド語訳

4. 2.『日本語参照文法』における「は」と「が」の記述

本稿では、「は」と「が」を中心に、類義表現の習得の問題および教科書における記述について見てきたので、最後に、『日本語参照文法』に提示されている「は」と「が」の記述の特徴について見てみたい。

『日本語参照文法』には、初級の 120 の項目の情報が収録されている。それぞれの項目の記述ページには次のような内容が記載されている（文型によって記載内容が異なる場合もある）。

・基本情報
・使い分けが必要な文法・文型
・文型を使う上で理解が必要な情報
・機能（複数の機能の場合は、機能１、機能２・・・のように、機能ごとに記述されている。）
　・機能（または用法）の用例
　・使い分けが必要な文法・文型
　・使い分けが必要な文法・文型の用例
　・使い分けが必要な文法・文型の違い
・誤用例

では、簡単に「は」と「が」のページの内容を見てみよう。
ページの冒頭（図 6-1,6-2）には、「基本情報」が掲載されている。また、使い分けが必要な他の文法項目も提示されている。「は」の場合は助詞「が」と「を」であり、「が」の場合は助詞「は」と「を」である。
2.1.で論じたように、専門書などでは、「は」と「が」の記述には様々な概念が用いられている。また、教科書の分析が示したように、教材にも「は」と「が」の記述には一貫性がない。一方、学習者が文法の学習や運用の手がかりとして求めているのは「ルール」である。そのために、多様な用法を持つ文型を記述する際、包括的に記述できる概念の提示が重要であると考える。『日本語参照文法』では、その概念を、「は」と「が」について、「古い情報／新しい情報」として用いている。

図 6-1『日本語参照文法』の「は」のページの冒頭

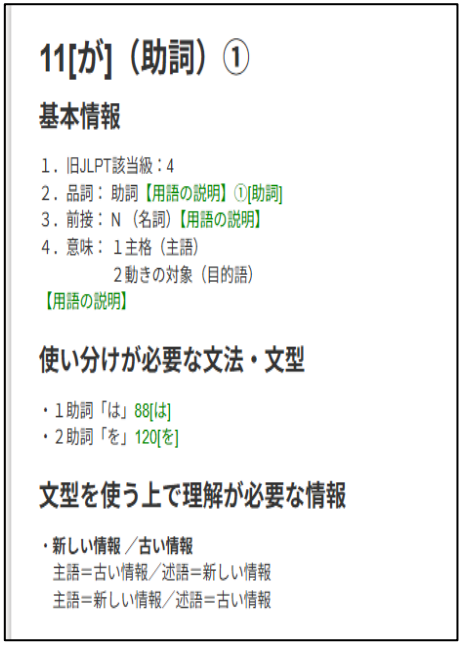
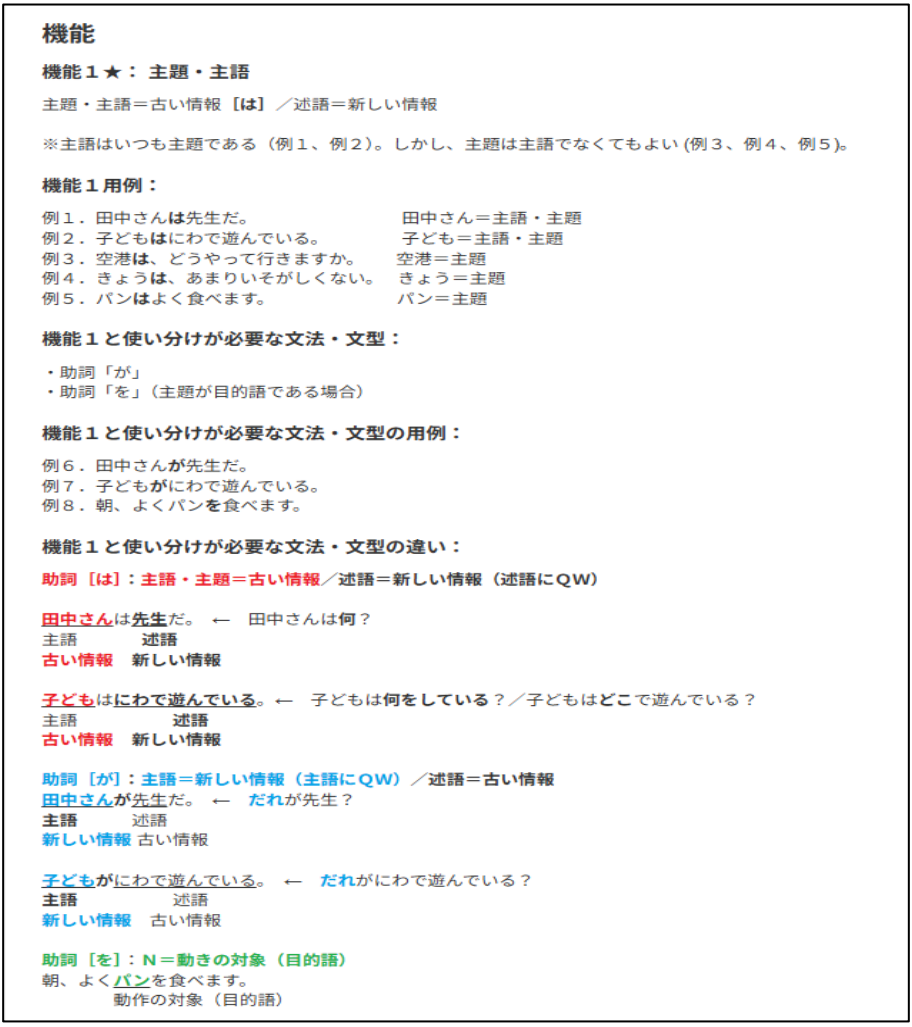


図 6-2『日本語参照文法』の「が」のページの冒頭

次に、「は」と「が」の機能がどのように記述されているか、実例を見てみよう。

『日本語参照文法』では、「は」「が」の機能について、まず統語的アプローチ（文における項の統語的役割）に基づき、「主格＝主語」と「対格＝目的語」（「が」の場合）という機能が区別されている（図 7-1、7-2、7-3）。



機能

機能１★：主題・主語

主題・主語＝古い情報【**は**】／述語＝新しい情報

※主語はいつも主題である（例１、例２）。しかし、主題は主語でなくてもよい（例３、例４、例５）。

機能１用例：

例１．田中さん**は**先生だ。　　田中さん＝主語・主題
例２．子ども**は**にわで遊んでいる。　　子ども＝主語・主題
例３．空港**は**、どうやって行きますか。　　空港＝主題
例４．きょう**は**、あまりいそがしくない。　　きょう＝主題
例５．パン**は**よく食べます。　　パン＝主題

機能１と使い分けが必要な文法・文型：

・助詞「が」
・助詞「を」（主題が目的語である場合）

機能１と使い分けが必要な文法・文型の用例：

例６．田中さん**が**先生だ。
例７．子ども**が**にわで遊んでいる。
例８．朝、よくパン**を**食べます。

機能１と使い分けが必要な文法・文型の違い：

助詞［は］：主語・主題＝古い情報／述語＝新しい情報（述語にQW）

田中さん**は**先生だ。　←　田中さんは**何**？
主語　　述語
古い情報　新しい情報

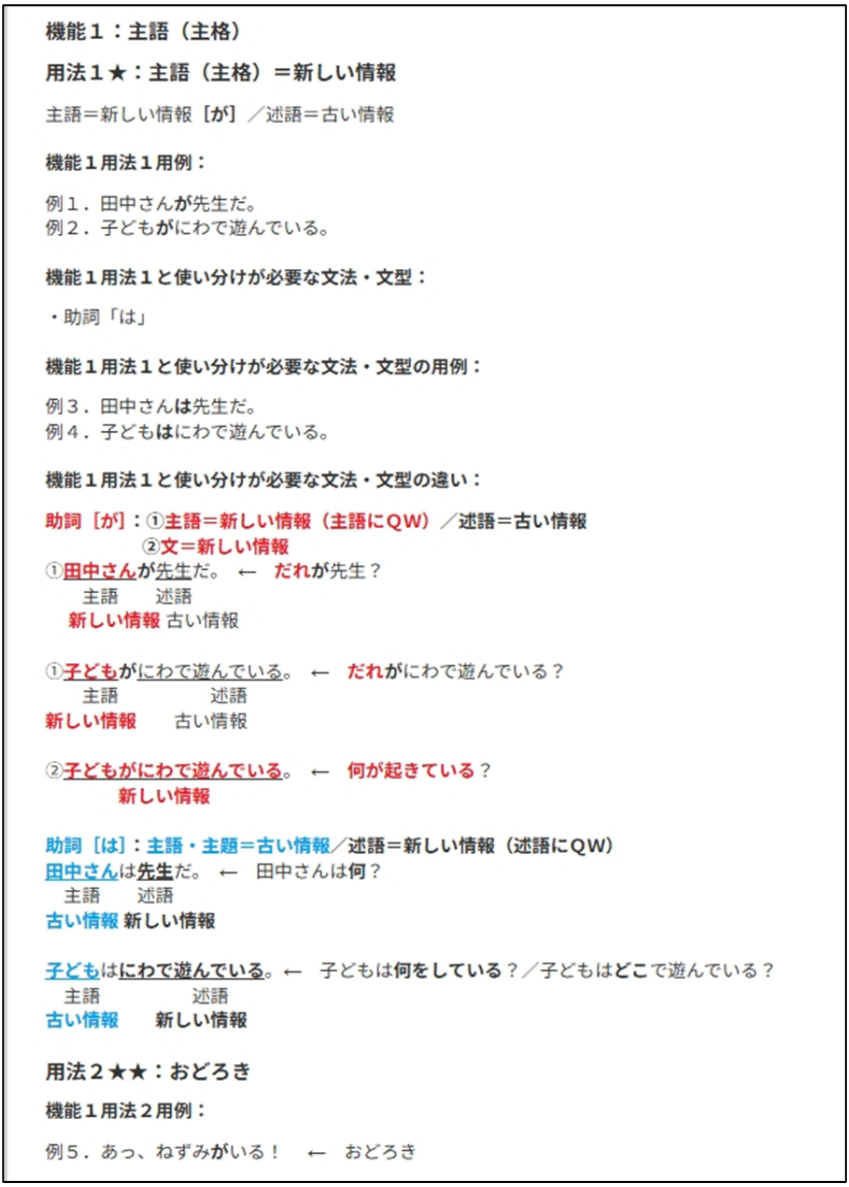
子ども**は**にわで遊んでいる。←　子どもは**何をしている**？／子どもは**どこ**で遊んでいる？
主語　　述語
古い情報　新しい情報

助詞［が］：主語＝新しい情報（主語にQW）／述語＝古い情報
田中さん**が**先生だ。　←　**だれ**が先生？
主語　述語
新しい情報 古い情報

子ども**が**にわで遊んでいる。　←　**だれ**がにわで遊んでいる？
主語　述語
新しい情報　古い情報

助詞［を］：N＝動きの対象（目的語）
朝、よくパン**を**食べます。
動作の対象（目的語）

図 7-1『日本語参照文法』の「は」の機能 1



機能１：主語（主格）

用法１★：主語（主格）＝新しい情報

主語＝新しい情報［**が**］／述語＝古い情報

機能１用法１用例：

例１．田中さん**が**先生だ。
例２．子ども**が**にわで遊んでいる。

機能１用法１と使い分けが必要な文法・文型：

・助詞「は」

機能１用法１と使い分けが必要な文法・文型の用例：

例３．田中さん**は**先生だ。
例４．子ども**は**にわで遊んでいる。

機能１用法１と使い分けが必要な文法・文型の違い：

助詞［が］：①主語＝新しい情報（主語にQW）／述語＝古い情報
②文＝新しい情報
①田中さん**が**先生だ。 ← **だれ**が先生？
主語 述語
新しい情報 古い情報

①子ども**が**にわで遊んでいる。 ← **だれ**がにわで遊んでいる？
主語 述語
新しい情報 古い情報

②子どもがにわで遊んでいる。 ← **何が起きている**？
新しい情報

助詞［は］：主語・主題＝古い情報／述語＝新しい情報（述語にQW）
田中さん**は**先生だ。 ← 田中さんは**何**？
主語 述語
古い情報 **新しい情報**

子ども**は**にわで遊んでいる。← 子どもは**何をしている**？／子どもは**どこ**で遊んでいる？
主語 述語
古い情報 **新しい情報**

用法２★★：おどろき

機能１用法２用例：

例５．あっ、ねずみ**が**いる！ ← おどろき

図 7-2『日本語参照文法』の「が」の機能 1

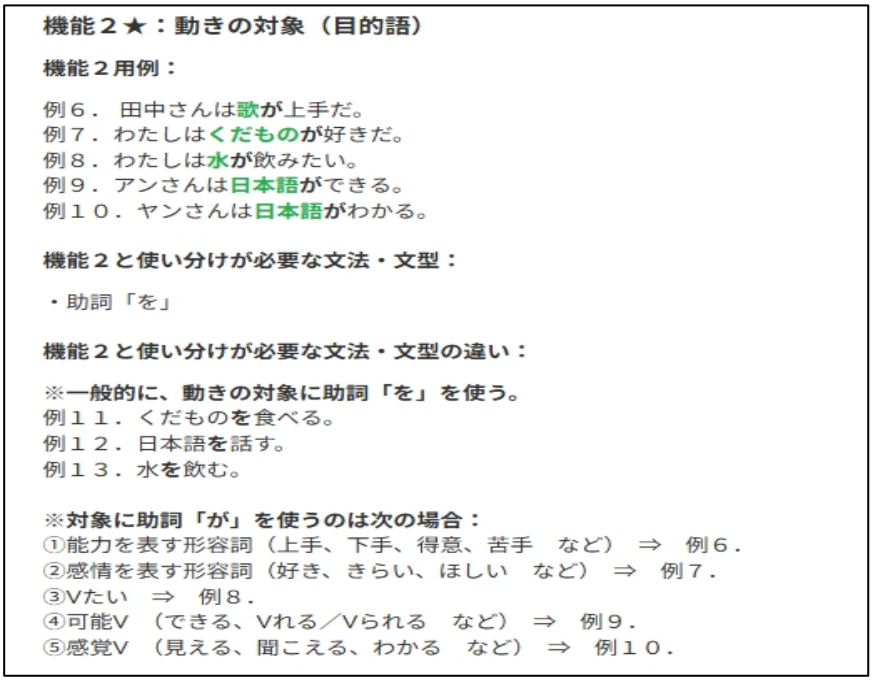


図 7-3『日本語参照文法』の「が」の機能 2

そして、「主語」に関しては、情報構造（古い情報／新しい情報）の特徴に基づき、「は」と「が」は対比して記述されている。

「古い情報／新しい情報」という概念を用いれば、学習者の用例に多くの誤用が見られた、「が」によって表される「驚き」（「が」の機能 1 用法 2）という用法も包括的に記述できる。「驚き」と「新情報」の間には、一見、関係がないように思われるが、「認識できていない情報」（‘unprepared mind’[24], Slobin & Aksu 1982）と関連付ければ、説明が付く。

「新情報／旧情報」という概念は、「が」と「は」の多様な働きを記述するのに有効な概念である。また、「が」と「は」を類義表現

[24] Slobin & Aksu (1982) の考察によれば、発話時において、聞き手（読み手）の意識が語られているできごと（または、できごとに関する情報）を受け入れる準備ができていない（‘unprepared mind’）場合は、そのできごとの情報（「驚き」、「発見」、「不信」、「不満」など）も「未知」（つまり、「新情報」）として認識されるということである。

として包括的に記述できる利点があり、まさに学習者が求めている「ルール」なのである。
学習者の作例からも明らかになったように、誤用の多くは学習者が文の情報構造を理解していないということに起因する。そこで、学習者に情報構造について知識を与え、また、「は」と「旧情報」、そして「が」と「新情報」の関連性を認識させれば、「は」と「が」の学習効果が上がり、誤用が減るのではないかと考える。
情報のタイプという概念は初級の学習者にとっては決して理解しやすい概念ではないが、リソースには翻訳の機能が備えられているからこそ、このような記述方法が可能だと思われる。
『日本語参照文法』の翻訳ページには、原文の同時表示も可能である（図 8）ため、学習者は、翻訳文を読みながら原文の説明や用例を確認できる。
『日本語参照文法』のように、翻訳機能を備えたリソースであれば、難しい概念も、翻訳を通して、学習者に伝えることができる。補助教材の役割はこのような学習支援にこそあるのではなかろうか。
日本語の 4 技能の学習について学習者を対象に実施されたアンケートでは、文法の学習において、類義文型をまとめて学びたいと考える学習者が極めて多いことが示されている（ヨフコバ四位・稲葉・久保田 2020：94）。『日本語参照文法』は、「は」と「が」に限らず、初級の全文型（たとえば、「V ている／V てある」、理由の「から／ので／ため」、条件の「と／たら／ば／なら」、「受け身／使役／使役の受け身」、授受動詞、概言モダリティの「そう／らしい／よう」など）に対して、類義表現との使い分けに特化した記述を行っているため、学習者のそうした要望に応える、学習に有用なリソースであるといえる。

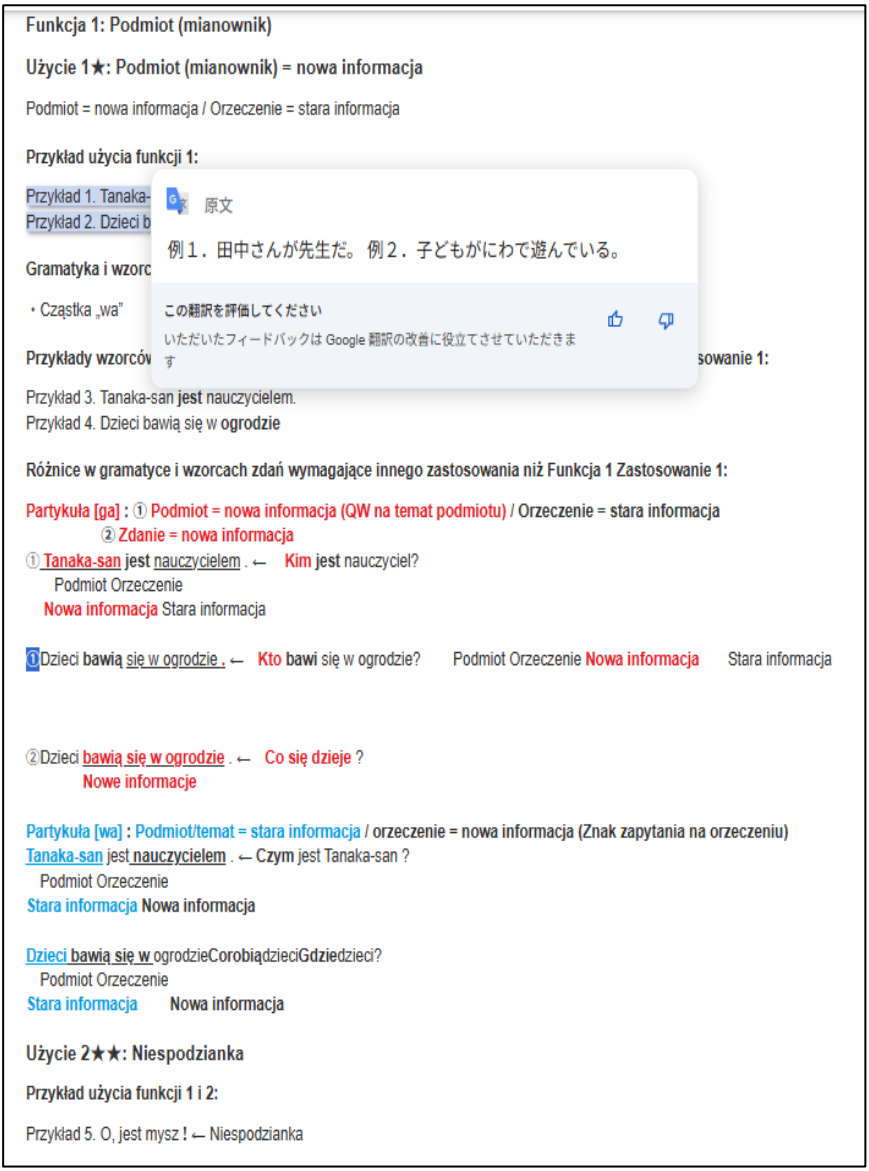


図 8「「が」の機能 1」（ポーランド語訳）

おわりに

日本語学習者にとっては、助詞「は」と「が」のような類義表現の習得や運用は難しい。そのため、学習者はそういった表現の運用に役立つ明確な解説を求めている。しかし、既存の教材の多くは学習者のニーズには十分に応えていない。一方、教室での指導および使用教材には限界がある。特に、直接教授法を前提として作成されている日本国内の多国籍クラス向けの教材が提供できる情報には限りがある。海外で作成・使用されている教材には、学習者の母語で文法説明を提示できるという利点があるが、その教材が想定している言語が母語の学習者にしか理解できないという欠点がある。
このような教材状況を改善すべく、学習者のニーズに対応し、かつ多言語に対応できる普遍的な補助教材の開発が重要である。本稿で紹介した『日本語参照文法』は、特にニーズが高い初級文法の学習に役立ち、また類義表現の学習および運用の問題解決を目指した補助教材として開発された。

Author Contributions
The author confirms the sole responsibility for the conception of the study, presented results, and manuscript preparation.

Conflicts of Interest
The author declares that they have no conflict of interest.

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宗教の死・自由・幸福—
—岸本英夫における「近代化」について
Death, freedom, and happiness in religion: On Hideo Kishimoto and "modernization"

ABSTRACT
This paper examines the thought of Hideo Kishimoto, a Japanese scholar of religion. Kishimoto's work has traditionally been divided into two areas: reflections on life, death and mortality, shaped by his experience suffering from cancer; and his post-World War II role as an advisor on Japanese religions to the General Headquarters (GHQ). These two areas have not been considered together, leaving Kishimoto's thought insufficiently understood as a coherent system. Focusing on the concept of "modernization", this study therefore provides an integrated account of his scholarship. It shows that he consistently viewed religion as oriented toward human "happiness" and saw modernization as the means to achieve this aim. By unifying two aforementioned areas of research, the study constructs a more accurate understanding of Kishimoto's thought than has previously existed, inviting reflection on the state of religion in contemporary Japan.

KEYWORDS: Hideo Kishimoto, religion, views on life and death, freedom of religion, modernization, Yasukuni Shrine

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はじめに

日本の宗教学者である岸本英夫(1903~1964)について論じる。彼の父である岸本能武太(1866~1928)は、同志社英学校在学中に新島襄(1843~1890)より洗礼を受けており、また、東京帝国大学で宗教学講座を創設しその初代担任教授となった姉崎正治(1873~1949)との交流もあった。岸本は、こうした人々の影響下にありながら、神秘主義をはじめ、インドや西洋、日本などにおける様々な宗教のあり方を研究した。そして、岸本が述べる宗教の本質は、後に確認するように、個人の「幸福」のためにあるということに、最終的には集約される。

だが、宗教をそのように考えた岸本の死後である現代の日本では、1995 年のオウム真理教による地下鉄サリン事件や、2022 年の旧統一教会を恨んでいた山上徹也の安倍晋三殺害事件、その旧統一教会と政治家の癒着、また靖国神社へ政治家たちが参拝する問題などを挙げれば、宗教が人間の「幸福」のためにあるとは必ずしも考えられない。こうした日本の現状において、岸本の宗教観に触れる意義は、宗教がいかにして人間の「幸福」となるかを一考する契機となることにある。

さて、本論で論じる前に留意しておくべきことは、岸本に関する先行研究は主に二分されている、ということだ。そのひとつは、1954 年に岸本が癌を患い、死の恐怖に苦しんだ経験から生まれた生死観[1]についてである。これに関しては、中村みどり(2013)が、1926 年から始まる初期の岸本の神秘主義研究から、彼の死の直前 1963 年の「幸福」を得るためとする宗教観に至るまでの軌跡を辿った上で、岸本の死についての考えを、癌前後のものと比較しながら、いかにして死の恐怖を克服していったのかという彼の思想の遍歴を論じている。中村は、「人間にとって本当に重要なのは、個人の生命ではなく〈生命〉であり、生きている人は全て、同じ〈生命〉を生きる仲間である」(中村 2013: 100)とし、「〈生命〉を拡充する仕事に専念することで〈生命〉をわが生命と感得できる。そこに生死を超えた本当の幸福がある」(中村 2013: 101)と岸本は述べたと結論付けた。つまり、同じ命を持つあらゆる他者のために、死にゆく自ら

[1] 本来ならば「死生観」だが、岸本は「生死観」と述べている。先行研究では、言い換えて死生観と用いている研究ノート(宮嶋 2025)もあるが、本文では岸本の用語に則る。

が仕事をすることで、何か残せるものがあれば、それは死の恐怖を克服する「幸福」となる、ということだ。
もうひとつは、第二次世界大戦で日本に勝利したアメリカの GHQ が日本を占領した後に神道の取り扱いについて苦慮していたため、岸本が主に日本の宗教について教えることを目的に GHQ の顧問として雇われ日本政府との仲介をした、その活躍についてである。これに関しては奥山倫明(2003、2009)が、簡潔に岸本の占領期の活躍をまとめ上げて述べている。岸本がその経験を記した「嵐の中の神社神道」の基となったと思われる日記を紹介していることも興味深い(奥山 2009)。また司令部側と岸本の交流を踏まえると「完全に一方的な強要として神道指令が出されたわけではない」(同、28)という指摘も、岸本の記録を辿る上で重要な発見である。しかし、岸本のそうした活躍は、岸本英夫そのひとの研究というより、例えばアメリカの占領期について(ウッダード 1988)、または神道指令の起草過程についての研究(大原 1990)で間接的に触れられていることが多い。
このように、大きく分けて 2 つの分野における岸本についての先行研究があるが、その両方を同時に考え、全体的な岸本の思想体系を論じる試みは不十分であった[2]。
本論文では、岸本の宗教論を体系的に総括するため、彼が述べる宗教の「近代化」に焦点を当てる。この概念を軸にして、彼のテクストを読むことで、彼の宗教観の一貫性が明らかになるのだ。

1. 岸本の「近代化」の定義について

岸本は 1952 年「これからの私達の宗教」で「近代化」された「近代的教養」の特徴を 3 つ挙げる。

[2] 全体的な岸本の思想体系を論じる試みとしての最新の研究は、磯前順一、マーク・R・マリンズ、高橋原 2025-2026 .『GHQ 民間情報教育局と＜信教の自由＞政策―神道指令と宗教学者・岸本英夫』全六巻.東京:クレス出版.がある。特に、第一巻『占領期日本の政教分離と「信教の自由」―GHQ/SCAP の神道指令と岸本英夫の宗教学』(2025)、第二巻『岸本宗教学と「宗教」の定義』(2025)、第三巻『岸本英夫と神道指令』(2025)は、本論文のテーマと関連するだろう。しかし本論文の執筆及び投稿時期と、同書の刊行日が重なっていたため、その研究成果を反映するには至らなかった。同書の岸本についての膨大な研究に感謝しつつ、それを反映し、岸本の宗教論のより子細な研究は、今後の課題とする。

第一に「ヒューマニズム的傾向」[3]、第二に「合理主義的態度あるいは批判精神」、第三に「実証的態度または科学的精神」である(岸本 1975–76/ 6: 11–23)。これらの「近代的教養」を受け、現代人は、宗教の教義にあるような奇蹟が信じられなくなり、かつてのようにそれが重要でなくなってきていると述べる。むろん、岸本もこの影響下にある。こうした具体例を岸本自身の人生から提示しよう 。彼は 1963 年「わが生死観」でこのように述べている。

> 私は、実は子供の時には、敬虔なキリスト教徒の家庭に育った。私自身も子供らしい熱心な信仰をもっていた。しかし、青年時代に、私は奇蹟を行うことのできるような伝統的な人格神信仰は、どうしても信じることができなくなった。その意味で、神を捨てたのである。そして、同時に死後の理想世界としての天国や浄土の存在は、まったく信じないようになった (同、213)。

岸本は成長するにつれて「近代的教養」を培うことで、宗教の奇蹟 、超越的理念を信じられなくなっていった。だが宗教はそれで終わるのではなく、その本質的な機能は残り続けると岸本は主張する 。そして、宗教は「近代化」していくべきだと肯定的に受け止めている。

これに関してはこれから確認していくが、岸本が論じる「近代化」にはそれだけでなく、否定的な側面もある。それは人間に死を忘れさせたことだ。また、肯定的な側面を挙げるなら、それは「信教の自由」をもたらしたことである。そしてこの 2 つの側面では、どちらも人間の「幸福」の達成が前提として考えられており、それこそ

[3] ヒューマニストという言葉は、アメリカの宗教界では、人格神の存在を信じない宗教者を指す意味で用いられ、有神論者 (theist)に対する語であり、宗教全体を否定する無神論者(atheist)と区別されている(岸本 1975–76/1: 279)。そうした宗教思想におけるヒューマニストの代表者として、岸本はジョン・デューイ(1859~1952) を挙げていることも見過ごせない。岸本は自らも翻訳した『誰でもの信仰』(デュウイー 1951)を基にデューイについて、1952 年「人間主義の宗教」、1956 年「信仰のあり方」などで論じている。後者では、岸本曰く、デューイは『誰でもの信仰』のなかで、宗教は超自然的な奇蹟を行うことではなく、人間の幸福を成し遂げるためにあるとしている故に、近代科学が宗教と衝突することで宗教の力が失われると言われていても、その付随的側面である超自然的な現象が失われるのであって、幸福の達成のための宗教的役割は残り、また 16 世紀以来発達した科学の発明や発見が人間の幸福となるなら、それも宗教的な営みであるのだと論じている(岸本 1975–76/6: 65–66)。後に確認することになるが、こうした論述だけでも、岸本がデューイの宗教論から多大なる影響を受けていることは明白である。

岸本にとって宗教の持つ最大の意義なのだ。これを解明するために、岸本が考える「近代化」を軸にして、この 2 つの側面を確認する必要がある。まずは否定的な側面について論じる。

2. 近代化と死

岸本の宗教論を述べる上で、彼の死についての考え方、つまり生死観は非常に重要である。これに関しては多くの先行研究があり、基本的には彼の癌の闘病生活の文脈で語られている[4]。まずは岸本の生死観がどのようなものだったのか振り返ろう。

1954 年、客員教授としてスタンフォード大学に滞在していた頃に岸本は癌を患う。それ以降、死に直面したことで死への恐怖が生まれ、それに苦悩した経験を基に、岸本は死について多く論じるようになった[5]。こうして生まれた岸本の生死観が非常に印象的であり、彼の著書を読む人々は特にその点に注目している[6]。

岸本は、癌の発病とその度重なる再発による闘病生活で十数回ほど手術を繰り返し[7]、死と間近に向き合い続けた。それ故に、死の恐怖を克服する術を考え出そうとする。1955 年「アメリカで癌と闘う記」では、自分の仕事が自分の死んだ後も残るということが慰めとなると述べ、確かに死の恐怖を克服する術を考えており(岸本 1975–76/ 6: 107)、同様の言及が翌年の 1956 年「死・人間・文化」(同、266–267)、同年の「 死の問題に解決はあるか」(同、270)にもある。

だが、1958 年「死」では「これは、結局のところ、部分的な慰めでしかない」(同、288)と見做されている。そして次のように述べる。

> 死の問題は、どうしても解かなければならない問題として、人間の一人一人に対して、繰り返し提起される。どうしても解か

[4] 例えば、小野(2008)、小松(2012)、中村(2013)、長崎(2018)を参照されたい。

[5] 枚挙に暇がないが例えば、1956 年「死の問題に解決はあるか」、1960 年「死についての想い」、1961 年「死を見つめて生きる」などがある。また、むろん癌以前に岸本が死について考えていなかったということではない。例えば日本人の自殺や宗教と死の関係性について、それに世界大戦という時代背景もあり、そこから岸本は死について考察し、多く論じていた。例えば 1944 年「生死観三態」、1948 年「生死観の類型――生死観四態――」がある。

[6]例えば、岸本の死についての論考のいくつかが選ばれ文庫本化された『死を見つめる心 ガンとたたかった十年間』(1973)は第 18 回毎日出版文化賞を受賞している。

[7]結局それは二十数回にまで及んだと 1961 年「別れのとき」(岸本 1975–76/6: 144)に記されている。

> なければならないけれども、どうしても解くことができない。これは、永遠の証として、永久に、人間の上に残るのであろう(岸本 1975–76/6: 290)。

結局のところ、癌罹患後から 4 年の間に生み出された死の恐怖を克服する術は打ち砕かれる。その契機を示すのが「死」であり、そこにはニヒリズムに陥っている文章が残されている。要するに、1958 年まで、癌を患った後の岸本は、実のところまだ決定的な死の恐怖の問題の解決というものを見出せずにいた。
だが、1959 年頃から光明が明確に見え始める。順に確認しよう。例えばその年に発表された「日本文化の問題」では、日本人のハラキリ、神風の特攻について述べられている。それらの行為を西洋人は理解し難く、日本人は死への恐怖がそれほど強くない、日本の文化のレベルが低いからそうするのだと誤解しているとする。だが、岸本は、西洋と日本の死の問題には大きな差異があると考え次のように述べる。

> 日本人の死に対する態度の展開は、根ざすところが深い。いかなる困難な環境も、いさぎよくこれを受け入れて、心を乱すことなく、それに耐えてゆくという日本人の文化類型と密接な関係をもっている。（中略）人間が直面するもっとも困難な場面は、死である。日本人は死に直面したばあいを想定し、そのばあいに備える文化類型を展開した。心を乱すことなく、いさぎよく、死を受け入れることを理想とする文化類型である。いかに死ぬかということが、日本人にとっては、一生の中で、なしとげるべき重大な仕事になっている。(中略)神風タクシーや、バンザイ突撃も、けっして、日本人には、死に対する恐怖感が少ないからではない。非常のばあいには、死の恐怖すら、乗り越えさせるような修養が、平生から積まれているからである(岸本 1975–76/4: 48)[8]。

[8] この岸本の主張の正誤を厳密に語る技量は筆者にはない。だが岸本と特攻隊については補足しよう。これは確かな特攻隊賛美と見做してもよい。引用したような文章が岸本の著書には度々散見される。1944 年「生死観三態」や 1948 年「生死観の類型――生死観四態――」では、岸本自身としては死地へ旅立つ若者へのエールとして、または戦場で散った兵士への純粋な慰めとして述べていたのだろう。この点に関して哲学的に考察するなら、マルティン・ハイデガー(1889~1976)の思想を引き合いに出せる。岸本とハイデガーの死への考え方の共通点については小松奈美子が既に論じている(小松 2012: 117)。だがそれには、ある危うさも孕んでいるということは念頭に置きたい。何故なら、ハイ

このように岸本が考える、冷静に死と向き合う日本人としての自らの文化的アイデンティティが、死の恐怖を克服する一つの要因となったと仮定できる。実は 1958 年 11 月から 1959 年 1 月にかけて、岸本は「ユネスコの十年間にわたる大きな「東西文化価値の相互理解」という企画の一環として、欧米に講演旅行」(岸本 1975–76/4: 225)に行っていた。その間、岸本は 38 回の講演を行い、パーティーや新聞記者会見などの会合に 50 回を超えて参加していた(同、226)。この多忙な西洋の旅のなかで、自らの文化を教える東洋人として、日本人としての立場を求められ、岸本自らの日本人としてのアイデンティティが強調されていくのは不可避的であったと言える。だがそれこそが死の恐怖を克服する一つの要因となったと考えることもできる[9]。

そして、1960 年「現代人の生死観」では、近代産業によって死ぬことのない機械が導入され効率化された社会で、「自分は機械のように、常に健康であると考えるような形の思考形式が、その社会で優位を占める。そこでは、人間の死は、すべて他人事として取り扱われる」(岸本 1975–76/ 6: 294)、つまり「近代文化は、人間に、死を忘れさせる文化」(同、293)だと述べ、「すなわち、人間が、死という問題を抱いて生きている限り、死を忘れすぎた生活が、人間に深い幸福をもたらすとは思われない」(同、296)と岸本は確かに警告するが、死を意識しつつ死の恐怖に打ちのめされないための心構

デガーの思想がナチスドイツに共鳴していたことを踏まえれば、その対比として岸本の大日本帝国への共鳴もあると仮定できるかもしれないからだ。だが一方で、「信教の自由」を認めない戦時下にあった日本の国家主義への批判や、1963 年「日本人の「精神力」反省」(岸本 1975–76/6: 193–196)で特攻隊のような闘争精神への批判を岸本は残しているが故に、事態は複雑である。これに関してはいずれまとめて論じたい。

[9] この考察は所以のないことではない。『岸本英夫集第四巻 東西の文化』の松本滋の末尾の解説で、岸本が若い頃から神秘主義を研究しており、内的経験の重要性に深く関心を示していることを踏まえ、彼が 1957 年頃から日本の文化や宗教の特色の内的経験を重視し、西洋文化やインド文化に対置しながら、自らの文化的アイデンティティの主張をしていたという指摘が既にあるからだ。そして同年の岸本のヨーロッパ旅行や、本論で述べたように翌年の国際宗教学会議の活動によって、その主張の傾向を強めていったことも松本は述べている(岸本 1975–76/4: 330–331)。この松本の考察は本論で言及した年代と凡そ重なる。また岸本は 1956 年「死の問題に解決はあるか」で禅に注目し、その精神的修行が死の恐怖の克服を助けるとも述べている(岸本 1975–76/6: 270)。これらを踏まえれば、岸本の日本人としての文化的アイデンティティの自覚が、死の恐怖の克服に繋がったのだと一考できる余地は十分にある。筆者は既に述べたように、そうした背景のもとに行った岸本の多忙な海外講演が、その大きな分岐点であったと考える。

えとして「自分としては、これこそ、自分の一生にとっての道であると考えるような」「 人生の理想」(同、302)を持つことが必要だとも述べる。

> 理想を追求する生活の中に、自分の生命よりも、もっと大切なものができている。それは、自分の生命を超えたものである。それゆえ、それは自分の死と一緒になくなる性格のものではない。それは死も冒しえないものである。人間のこの激しい闘いの場において、それが、もっとも力強い自分の支えになる。そのように、よく生きることを、私は生死の問題の解決の大切な方法と考えるのである(同、303–304)。

そしてその次の年である 1961 年「別れのとき」では、その題名の通り、死とは「別れのとき」[10]であり、旅支度をするようにしっかり死ぬ準備をしておけば悩む必要はないと考えるようになる。そして、1962 年「死をみつめる心」では、「ガンに苦しみながら、そのガンに感謝するような気持で生きているというのが、現在のいつわらざる心境である」(同、173)と、また 1964 年「癌の再発と闘いつつ生きる」では、「私の癌は、私に、人生を深く見る目と、ほんとうによく生きる生き方とを教えてくれた。私は癌をおそれながら、しかし同時に、癌に感謝するような気持で日々を過ごしている」(同、169)と述べ、癌を肯定するような境地に至る。このようにして 、岸本は自らの生死観を確立していった。
しかし、このように死について語るのは、彼の癌罹患に即してだけでなく、既に引用した「現代人の生死観」で「近代文化は、人間に 、死を忘れさせる文化」であると、岸本が述べていた背景があることにも留意しなくてはならない[11]。岸本が殆どの場合肯定的に受け入れている「近代化」には、実はこうした否定的な側面がある。

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[10] この発想は、1960 年「成瀬先生の宗教観」(岸本 1975–76/6: 121–127)にある通り、日本女子大学の創設者であり女子教育に尽力した成瀬仁蔵(1858~1919)の影響下にある。岸本は、成瀬が肝臓癌で亡くなる前に行った告別講演の原稿を読み、自らの境遇との共通性を見出し、成瀬の死との向き合い方に感銘を受け、そこから死を「別れのとき」と捉えるようになったのだ。この成瀬の影響は既に、小野谷(2008)、小松(2013)等によって多く指摘されており、むろん確実であるが、筆者としては本論で述べたように、岸本の日本の文化的アイデンティティの自覚に注目したい。

[11] これは既に註で挙げた岸本の生死観についての先行研究の不足点でもある。

それ以前では、癌罹患から翌年の 1955 年「人間と宗教」でも岸本は、人間が死に直面する問題を担当していたのが宗教だったが、「近代文化が進み、社会生活の水準があがるにつれて、死の意味が変わってきた」(岸本 1975–76/1: 8)と述べる。現代では医療の発達や平均寿命が延びたことで「死の影におびえなくなっている」(同、9)。岸本は現代文化の一つの特徴を「個人の死を忘れた文化」(同)であるとする。故に現代では宗教が「死の問題を説かなくなっている」(同)。このことから、「現代社会が、宗教の終焉を弔うかの響きをもっている」(同、7)と述べる。

しかし、宗教はなくなるのではない。死とは別に宗教が扱っているものがあると述べる。それが「有機的な一個体としての人間の、総合的な満足や生きがい」(同、11)についてである。これは宗教の歴史から見てもそうであり、現代において宗教がそれを担当しなくなったとしても、これに関して考えるものがあれば、改めてそれを「宗教」(同、12)と呼ぼうと岸本は述べる。

そして 1963 年「現代人と宗教」で、「人間にとって何が真の幸福であるかの問題を考える役割を務めたものは、歴史的に考えてみると宗教であった」(岸本 1975–76/6: 27、強調筆者)と述べるのだ。

ここまでの論及を一度まとめよう。「近代化」は、本来宗教が扱っていた人間の死を忘れさせる契機となり、従来の宗教の意義を奪った。だが、「近代化」した宗教には別の役割があり、それは「幸福」の問題を考えるきっかけを与えることだった。これは、「近代的教養」を持ちながらも実際に死の恐怖に陥った岸本が、仕事を「幸福」として掲げ、癌に打ち勝ったという、この体験談に基づいて考えられている。つまり、「近代的教養」を持つ死を忘れた人々に対し、予め人間は死ぬ運命であるということを念頭に置きながら生きることが、死の恐怖を克服するための生きがいの発見に繋がり「幸福」になれるのだと、岸本は教えるのである。

最後に 1962 年「私の心の宗教」から一節を引用してこの章を終えよう。

> 人間にとっては、きわめて身近にある自分の仕事の中に、意味を発見して、それに打ち込んでゆくことに、人生の本当の幸福がある、ということであります。死に直面しながら、死後の生命というものをたよりにしない私にとっての、人間の問題の解決の鍵は、このようなところにあるのであります。これが、私の宗教で

あり、これが、私が、毎日、生きてゆこうとしている気持であります(岸本 1975–76/6: 187)[12]。

3. 近代化と信教の自由

ここまで「近代化」がもたらした否定的な側面である、死が忘れられることについて確認した。次はその肯定的な側面である「信教の自由」について、岸本の GHQ の顧問としての活動を基に論じる。

この体験記録は 1963 年「嵐の中の神社神道」にある。これは岸本の実際の日記を基にして書かれており、その複写がオレゴン大学図書館に所蔵されている。既に紹介したように、この資料に触れながら、岸本の GHQ の顧問としての活動について論じた奥山倫明が、今後検討するべきであると挙げた、1945 年の占領期宗教改革が何を前提としてなされたかという問いに対して(奥山 2009: 29)、岸本の主張の範囲内で言えば、それは「近代化」と「信教の自由」また「政教分離」であると答えることができる[13]。これからそれを確認しよう。まず問題となるのは靖国神社の存続についてである。

第二次世界大戦での日本の敗戦後間もない 1945 年 10 月 11 日、岸本は文部省より、GHQ の顧問となるよう依頼を受けた。その際に彼が特に深く関わったのが、総司令部民間情報教育局長のダイク代将とその部下である神道及び宗教政策を担当したバンス博士である。

当時のアメリカでは「国家神道というものこそ日本人を狂信的な戦闘にかりたてる魔術の種に違いない」(岸本 1975–76/5: 10)と考えら

[12] 補足しよう。既に註で示した通り、癌以前にも岸本は死について宗教的側面からの考察を残している。その際に死の恐怖を克服する術を挙げており、「別れのとき」の着想を除けば、概ね癌後のそれと同じである。例えば「生死観三態」では、「自分の生命を打ち込んできたもの」があれば「そこに肉体の生命に代る永遠の生命」があり、「それが自分の死後も輝き栄えてゆくことを思う心の歓び」で「死の恐怖を超えることができる」とある(岸本 1975–76/6: 231–232)。先行研究においても、中村みどりは岸本は仕事が幸福であると癌前後問わず一貫して述べていたことを指摘している(中村 2013: 95.101)。こうした一貫性は、次章そして結論を述べる上でも重要なので留意されたい。

[13] 同時にこの視点は岸本の GHQ の顧問についてまとめた先行研究全体の不足点でもある。どのような信念を掲げ、岸本が顧問に就いて助言をしていたのかを明確にし、それを軸にしなければ、彼の全体的な宗教観にある一貫性は見えてこない。本論ではその要素のひとつが宗教の「近代化」とそれに伴う「信教の自由」、「政教分離」であるとしている。また、岸本のその活躍についての他の先行研究は例えば、奥山 (2003)、星野(2017)などがあるが、全体的に見て、岸本の生死観に関する研究よりは断然少なく、それに関しては特に高度な専門的知識を要するとはいえ、注目度が低いことが伺える。この偏りが岸本に関する研究を二分化させ彼の思想体系を包括することを妨げているのだ。

れていたと岸本は述べる。要するに、特攻隊を動員するような日本という好戦的国民の本質にあるものが国家神道だとされていた。また、アメリカの価値観だけでなく、当時の世界的世論もまた「国家神道を、偏狭な国家主義思想に凝り固まった、きわめて扇動的な宗教であるとみなすこと」(岸本 1975–76/5: 10)だった。

> 国家神道の廃止の問題は、単に一宗教の問題としてだけでなく、全占領政策中の根本政策の一つとしてとりあげられていたほどであった。それは日本の軍備をなくすと同じ位重要なレベルの問題とされていた。軍隊だけを解体しても国家神道をそのままにして置けば、いつの日にか日本には軍国主義が復活して、連合国に対して復讐の刃をとぐようになるだろうと、多くの欧米人は考えていたのである。
> このように、神社をつぶせというのは、単に当時の欧米諸国における広い世論であっただけでなく、きわめて強い、すこぶる激しい世論であった(同、11)。

神社を潰すことに関しては、GHQ で宗教政策をしていた W・P・ウッダードも実際に、軍国主義的神社は宗教施設でないから日本政府に解散させ、財産の没収を命じるよう提案した宗教課のスタッフがいたことを記している(ウッダード 1988: 188‐189)。
だがここで留意しなければならないことがある。アメリカは「信教の自由」を尊重しており、その理念は日本にも向けられていたということだ。国家神道が日本の宗教なら、それを廃止することは、日本人の「信教の自由」を侵害することになる。占領政策は、軍隊をなくし、戦争責任者の逮捕や戦争裁判などを行い、日本が再び戦争を起こす原因を排除しようという目的があったが、一方でその最大のものとして考えられ、本来ならば排除されることとなる国家神道は、「信教の自由」の下では守らなければならない。それ故に総司令部はジレンマに陥っていたという(岸本 1975–76/5: 12)。
また、総司令部の人々は誤解や先入観から「神社神道と神道的国家主義をまったく同じもののように考えていた」(同、14)。そして「神官こそ偏狭な国家主義思想の扇動者」であると信じ、また官社と民社という区別があり殆どが後者であったのにも拘わらず、神社は「すべて官国幣社的性格をもっていて、直接に国家によって管理経営されている」と考えていた(同、15)。

そこで岸本は「総司令部の人々に、神道に対する正しい認識を得させるのには、実地に神社なり祭典なりを見せるのが何よりだと考え」(岸本 1975–76/5: 16)、終戦の年の秋に催される靖国神社の臨時大祭の見学を提案し、それにダイク代将やバンス博士も賛同した。
1945 年の秋頃、岸本曰く神社の半数は閉鎖させられることも不思議ではない情勢であり、総司令部は特に、靖国神社と護国神社を軍国主義の象徴であると信じていた(同)。それ故「靖国神社のことで総司令部側を刺激しないようにすることは、靖国神社のためにはもちろん、全部の神社を救うためにも肝心であった」(同)。
靖国神社側は、自らの神社の命運だけでなく他の護国神社や一般の神社の命運を握っていたことを知らずに 11 月 19、20 日に「臨時大招魂祭」を行おうとした(同、17)。占領軍の命により陸海軍省が廃止されるかもしれず、その場合は合祀ができなくなる可能性があり、その前に全戦没者のための招魂慰霊式を予定していたが、本来それは当時の状況を考えれば「非常な冒険」(同)だったという。
大祭前夜の当日、岸本はバンス博士から、防諜本部(CIC)よりダイク代将に靖国神社の大祭の開催に疑問があるという電話が入ったと 、こっそり告げられる。そしてバンス博士から「明日のダイク代将の印象いかんでは、靖国神社の運命が決定的なことになってしまうかもしれない。それは、日本の神社全体の処置にも響くだろう」と伝えられた岸本は、直感的に「このような出来事のゆえに、靖国神社をつぶしてはならない」と感じた(同、19)。
こうした事態を踏まえ求められるのは、靖国神社が軍国主義的雰囲気を纏っていないことを印象付けることであった。岸本はこの連絡を受けた後、靖国神社へ向かい、軍の祭典委員会へ自ら話をつけに行った。その結果、プログラムのいくつかの変更をし、軍楽隊を平服の都の音楽隊にし、大祭の祭典委員長梅津美治郎陸軍大将を除き出席する軍人の衣装を軍服ではなく、一般人と同じように背広を着るようにした。このように軍国調のない祭りを演出しようと画策したのだった(同、24)。
この演出が功を奏し、元々靖国神社の大祭には軍国主義的な行事や扇動的な説教があると考えていた認識が変わり、ダイク代将は、神道には欧米で考えられているような危険性はないことを報告した

(岸本 1975–76/5: 25)[14]。こうして、岸本の一案によって変更された靖国神社の大祭は、靖国神社そのものだけでなく、ひいては日本の神社全体を救った一要因であったと言えよう[15][16]。

[14] この岸本の策略は、祭典に出席していたダイク代将等だけでなく W・P・ウッダードにも効果があった。岸本が祭典前に訪れた際に関するウッダードの記録には、「岸本は、彼の行動がおそらく靖国神社の命運にかかわるだろうと感じていたので、すこぶる神経質になっていた。しかし彼にできたことは、責任ある指導者たち、ほんの数週間前まで日本軍の主人であった人たちに、この神社が存亡の危機に瀕していると告げることだけだった」、そして 11 月 20 日の式典は「平穏無事のうちに終わった」(ウッダード 1988: 188)とあるが、ここに岸本の記述との差異がある。岸本は何もできなかったのではない。むろん、靖国神社が軍国主義的であることを司令部側は疑っていなかったが、岸本の計画による演出の恣意性に無知であれば、戦後のその祭典が想定していたほどの軍国主義的雰囲気がなかったことに、より一層の好印象を受けていただろう。また、ウッダードは 1946 年に再来日したため、この祭典には参加していないが、上記の認識が共通のものとなっている恐れがある可能性を踏まえれば、その背景には、岸本による隠された演出効果があったことを指摘しておく必要がある。

[15] またダイク代将たちはこれをきっかけに他の神社の祭典の見物を希望し、中氷川神社の祭典にも赴いた。その際も好印象だったと岸本は述べる(岸本 1975–76/5: 26)。

[16] 靖国神社存続を巡るこの岸本の隠れた活躍の意義について、当時の状況に基づき補足する。大原康男の研究が示すように、後に本論で語る神道指令の、10 月 23 日から始まり公布されるまで凡そ 6 度に亘る草案の修整において、一貫して「信教の自由」の保障が掲げられており(大原 1990)、占領初期からその意向があったのは確かで、それ故に岸本の活躍なくとも靖国神社とその他の神社は存続していた可能性は十分にある。しかし、念のため以下のことに留意しておくべきだろう。神道指令が 12 月に公布される前に、占領軍側は、可能な限り日本政府が自ら進んで国家神道の廃止と政教分離を実現するよう求めていたが、それを諦めた時期があり、岸本曰く 10 月末から 11 月初めである(岸本 1975–76/5: 60)。その期間に行われたのが、まず 10 月 29 日のダイク代将と姉崎正治との会談である。司令部側は日本の宗教学者の権威である姉崎から日本の事情について詳しく伺おうとしたが、実際には期待していた結果を得られずにいた。この会談の模様を見ていた岸本は、普段は何事も率直に意見を述べる姉崎だが、その時彼らしくなかった理由を、終戦後すぐに日本の状況を把握するのが姉崎といえども難しかった、更には会談の直前に日本政府のトップクラスから様々な注文を受けてそれを通そうと尽力して自由に振舞えなかったからではないか、と推測する(同、63)。また他にも、日本政府と司令部の間で練り上げられていた宗教団体法に代わる宗教法人令が 12 月 28 日公布される前に、民衆からそれに関する意見を伺おうと 11 月 5 日に日本の宗教家たちを集めたが、文科省側から指示された通りの意見を述べるばかりで、ダイク代将は些か業を煮やし、岸本も「時の権力者にさからわぬ習性がしみ込んだためだろうか」と積極的に自らの意見を出さないことに対して不満を漏らしていた(同、38)。司令部側からのこうした悪い印象があった状況を踏まえれば、岸本の靖国神社存続危機における対策は重要であったと言える。岸本は神道指令の内容を事前に確認した際、神社の閉鎖の命令がないことに安堵したと綴っている(同、74)。それに対する司令部側の意向については、ウッダードによると、バンス博士は神道指令の最初の二つの草案では神社の存続を認めていたが、後にこの問題に触れなくなったのは、それに関する情報を集めた上で慎重に判断するために延期したのだとされている(ウッダード 1988: 189)。このことから、司令部側にも、神道指令が公布される過程で、「信教の自由」という前提がありながら、超国家主義的要素を取り除

だがそれだけで占領軍による日本の宗教政策はむろん終わらない。この靖国の大祭の後、問題となったのは、1945 年 12 月 15 日に公布された神道指令についてであった。岸本によるとそれは「占領期間を通じて、宗教政策の基本となるもの」であり「新憲法の宗教に関する規定を方向づけ」「宗教、思想、教育、その他の各分野にわたって、はかりしれない影響をもたらした」(岸本 1975–76/5: 57)。そして岸本英夫という宗教学者は、「神社の運命を左右するこの指令について、日本中で日本人としてただ一人、あらかじめそれを閲読する機会を与えられた」(同、70)のである。神道指令の原案は、予め日本側には見せないようにされていたが、この原案に誤解に基づく点があるといけないと考えたバンス博士は、マッカーサーにそれを渡す 5 日前に、岸本を信用した上で秘密裏に読むように頼み、意見を伺ったのだ(同、69-70)[17]。

バンス博士たちが考案した神道指令は、日本人や神道を蔑ろにしようとしたのではなく、彼らなりの人間としての理想を持ち「新しい自由な民主的な日本の再建」を願い起草されたのだと、岸本の体験記録を読む限り確かにそのように理解できる(同、81)。

神道指令は、近代的な「信教の自由」が背景にあり、戦時中にあったような国家と神道の密接な関係を分離すること、つまり「政教分離」を要求している。要するに、神道指令は神道などの日本の宗教が再び軍国主義を煽るための国家の道具とならないように、そして人々が強制されず自由に宗教を信仰できるように起草されたのだ。

ではまさしくこの「信教の自由」について、岸本はどう考えるのか。「信教の自由」そして「政教分離」の過度の徹底について、あ

くための神社の廃止の有無に関して、少なからず錯綜や迷い、またはかなり慎重なところがあり、岸本もそれを感じ取り、その先行きに不安になっていたことが分かる。そして、神道指令公布後にバンス博士が見送った神社の存続についての議題が再び上がり、1946 年の夏に宗教調査が始まり、従来の軍国主義的と見做された神社は、戦没者を鎮める「正当な宗教的機能」を果たしているとし、1948 年に存続が認められたのだ(ウッダード 1988: 189–190)。総じて考えれば、靖国神社及び他の神社の存続の危機の打開に貢献したのは岸本だけではないが、岸本の活躍もそれに密かに、しかし大きく関わっていると言える。

[17]ここで語られる「国体」という言葉を取り除くかどうかの議論は興味深いが、本論では触れないでおく。

る危惧を抱いてはいるが[18]、基本的にそれらを積極的に受け入れるべきだとしている。確認しよう。

岸本は、1947 年「近代宗教精神と神社神道」で「神社神道が、新しい文化の中に、意味ある存在としてその生命を持ち続けるためには、どう変わっていかなければならないかという問題」(岸本 1975–76/5: 89)を二つ提起する。「終戦後の事情の変化に伴う当面の問題」と「近代文化、近代精神の大きな流れが必然に神社神道のまわりにまき起こす渦巻」の問題である(同)。

前者の問題に対する解決策として岸本が挙げるのは「信教自由の精神の確立のために神社神道を国家から切り離すこと」、「神社神道の中から軍国主義的要素を拭い去ること」、「過激なる国家主義思想をその中から取り除くこと」(同、89–90)である。このことから岸本が「信教の自由」と「政教分離」を受け入れる必要性を積極的に説いていることが分かる。

後者の問題については、その根底に「疑えるものはどこまでも疑え」という近代精神にどれだけ神社神道は耐えられるか、どのような神道の要素が時代を超えて残るのか」(同、92–93)という疑問があると岸本は述べる。「知的に疑えるだけ疑ってみるという態度である」「近代精神」(同、93)の下では、神の存在などの超越的なものに依存した宗教的で不合理な教義は受け入れられなくなってしまう。だが一方でその精神には他にも「人間の発見、人間性の目醒めを強調」し「人間のこの世の生命と現実の生活とを、限りなく尊いものと考える」特質があり、「それが宗教に反映した結果、宗教が神中心から人間中心に、教団中心から民衆中心に移りつつある」、つまり「宗教のために人間があるのではなくて、人間のために宗教があ

[18] 1957 年「信教の自由の分かれ道」で岸本は、「信教の自由」により保証された宗教法人法のもとで新しい宗教団体が生まれるが、免税などの恩恵がある故に、一方では宗教法人の制度の乱用と「信教の自由」の原理が脅かされる可能性を懸念している (岸本 1975–76/5: 263–264) 。また、「政教分離」の危険性として 1963 年「憲法と宗教」では「もし、政教分離の考え方がゆき過ぎると、それは、国家の宗教に対する全面的な無関心を助長することになるおそれがある」(同、275)とある。確かに、日本国憲法第 3 章「国民の権利及び義務」における第 20 条には、「国及びその機関は、宗教教育その他いかなる宗教的活動もしてはならない」とあるが、強制を求めない一般的な宗教教育すら、怪しげに感じ忌避される風潮があるならば、それは打開するべきであろう。また、岸本は 1950 年「日本の宗教とアメリカの宗教」で、アメリカと日本の人々の宗教の身近さに大きな差があると指摘しながら、日本では宗教の教養がない人が多く、そうした人々が人生に行き詰った際に、怪しげな宗教に飛びついてしまうことを憂慮している(岸本 1975–76/4: 290)。

る」とされるようになる(同、95)。この事態を踏まえ、近代文化の上に神社神道が永らえるためには「近代的批判に堪えない部分をはっきりと精算し去る必要がある」(岸本 1975–76/5: 98)と岸本は厳しく説いたのだった。ではその後の宗教の具体的な役割はどうなるのか。

同年の「神社神道の生きる道」では、宗教の使命を「生命の歓び」、「精神的な歓び」とし、「それは、この悩みの多い人の世に光と慰めを与え、日々の生活の中に、永遠の理想と力強い生き甲斐を感ぜしめる。かような歓びを与え得るところに宗教の本質的な性格と機能とがある」と冒頭で述べる(同、99)。その上で、戦時中の「偏狭なる国家主義、排他的なる民族主義」(同、102)を持った国家神道はこの本来の宗教の本質に反していること、また、神社や宗教が、それ自体またはそれに従事する神職のためにあるのではなく、個人や民衆のためにあり、そうした宗教の意義を再認識する重要性を岸本は述べるが、ここで注目すべきは「歓び」である。

1952 年「これからの私達の宗教」で、霊魂や天国と地獄などの不合理な存在が信じられなくなった「近代的教養」を持つ者たちについて次のように岸本は述べる。

> 近代的な立場に立って考えた場合に受けいれられないと思われるような要素は、すべて宗教から取り除いてしまわざるを得ないのである。そうした上ではじめて、私達は何の不都合も感ずることなしに宗教を持つことができる。かくして後、私達は宗教のみが与え得る心の歓び、心の慰めを心おきなく味わい楽しむことができるのである(岸本 1975–76/6: 15)。

しかし、従来の超越的な教義なしに、「近代化」された宗教はどのようにその「心の歓び、心の慰め」を捉えるのか。そのためには「永遠なる理想の光」を考えることだと岸本は述べる。

> 永遠なる理想の光を心に点ずることによって、私達も宗教的な歓びに与り得ることを主張したいのである。永遠なる理想の光の基盤をなすものは理想である。理想とは人間の行為の目あてである。人間の憬れ求めて追及してゆくものである。理想があれば人の心に希望が湧く。そして人生が明るくなる(同)。

岸本は、むろん単純ではないと前置きしているが、ここではその点は措き、更に引用しよう。

> 自分にとって自分の生命をかけるにも値するような深い大きい理想を見出し、それを全人間的な感激をもって追求し追い求めてゆくと、その理想はやがて永遠なる理想が心の中にできて、それが精神生活を照す光となるのである。永遠なる理想の光というものは、したがって半ばは主観的な価値である(岸本 1975–76/6: 16)。

> いかなる理想であろうとも、それに向かって全生命を打ち込み続けていくならば、そこにおのずから永遠なる光が点じられてくるのである。そして輝かしい宗教的な歓びが湧き起こってくる。（中略）かような永遠なる理想を把握するのは結局各個人のめいめいの仕事であり、人任せではできない。自分が自ら求めて努力することなしには、けっしてこの光は心に点ぜられることがないのである(同、16–17)。

この引用したテクストから、「宗教的な歓び」が個人的なものと関連していることに注目されたい。つまり、「近代化」された宗教は私的な領域にあるとする「信教の自由」が確約されているからこそ、「歓び」が生まれるということである。岸本が「近代化」によってもたらされた「信教の自由」を肯定し、重視するのは、宗教の本質としての「歓び」を獲得するためなのだ[19]。

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[19] 宮嶋俊一は、岸本は宗教学を「客観的な学問」としたが晩年は主観的に宗教をあからさまに語っていると指摘する(宮嶋 2025: 165)。また、長崎誠人は、岸本の「別れのとき」の着想は、天啓のように受けた非合理的なもの、要するに、死は「自己の主体的な問題」として捉えられていると主張している(長崎 2018: 70)。確かに岸本自身も自らの態度を「宗教」として捉えているし、客観的には死の恐怖の克服を論じてはいないと言える。だが、岸本は「信教の自由」を重視し私的領域にあるものとして宗教を捉えた。それ故に、岸本は自らの宗教についての語りに矛盾はないと考えていたのかもしれない。また、長崎(2018)は結論において、岸本の宗教の定義を提示しながらも、一般的な宗教の概念に集約してしまっている。本来の岸本の宗教の定義から見れば、齟齬はなく、理性的に導かれたとも言えるし、「別れのとき」の着想を受ける素地は初期から十分にあった。だが確かに宗教はドグマを含み、非合理的として周知されているのは間違いない。また、長崎が論じた、経験と超越という二元論を結びつける岸本の「超越」的な宗教のあり方は非常に興味深く、現代の宗教のあり方を考えるために重要であろう。こうした意味で、宗教を合理的、非合理的という二元論を超えて再考する必要があるし、更には宗教を主観的、つまり私的な領域に収まるものとしてだけでなく、その公的な領域への作用も含め、同様に私的と公的領域という二元論すら超えて、再考する必要がある。

4. 幸福のために

ここまで「近代化」における否定的な側面と肯定的な側面を確認した。次はこの 2 つの面を突合せ同時に見ることで、岸本の宗教思想における一貫性を見出そう。

「近代化」によってもたらされた「信教の自由」という肯定的な側面を辿る上で先に引用した「宗教的な歓び」について書かれたテクストは、岸本の癌罹患以前に書かれている。だがこれを読むと癌罹患以後に考えられた彼の宗教理念と重なり合うものが見えてこないだろうか。

既に引用した癌後の「私の心の宗教」では「人間にとっては、きわめて身近にある自分の仕事の中に、意味を発見して、それに打ち込んでゆくことに、人生の本当の幸福がある」(岸本 1975–76/6: 187)とあった。これは、既に確認したように、癌による死の恐怖に怯え、再発と手術が繰り返される中、西洋での講演の仕事を数多くこなす中で生まれた岸本の宗教観である。

だがこうした考え方はまさに癌罹患以前にも既にあったと言える。「近代化」によって死が忘れられるという否定的な側面を辿ることで見出された岸本が考えるこの「幸福」は、癌罹患以前では特に「宗教的な歓び」として表現されていたのではないか。その「歓び」とは、自分自身が、ひとりの主体が、命をかけて成し遂げようとする努力によって「永遠なる理想の光」を点ずることで生まれるのであった。そう、これは癌罹患後に岸本が「近代化」した宗教の本質と見做したものと同じであると考察できる。何故なら、癌罹患以前の「宗教的な歓び」と癌罹患後の「幸福」は、どちらも個人が何かを成し遂げようと尽力すること、という共通点があるからだ。

また、補足しておくが、1936年「修行の素材としての心」、1937年「宗教心理の問題としての禅と念仏」、1940 年「宗教神秘主義論」、そして 1949 年「行の心理」などで述べられている、キリスト教やインドの宗教、仏教の神秘思想や修行という、個人の経験や心の状態についての岸本の研究が特に初期に多くあった背景を踏まえれば、宗教は個人のためにあると彼が述べていたという証明は、より妥当なものとなろう[20]。

[20]岸本の宗教学を包括することを掲げながら本論であまり触れずに、漸くここで補足し述べた、彼の研究において重要である神秘主義と修行についてだが、簡略的に省くことを

要するに、終始岸本が考えていた「近代化」した宗教の一貫した要素とは、個人の「幸福」を目的としていることであり、これが主に二分化され、研究されていた岸本の宗教観を結びつける絆となるのだ。

おわりに

本論では、これまで二分化されて考えられていた岸本の宗教に関する先行研究を包括するために、「近代化」という用語を主軸としながらテクストを辿り、岸本が考える「近代化」された上でもたらされる宗教の意義を探った。

1 章では、まず「近代化」という岸本の用語を確認した。それは、宗教における奇跡というものが、合理的な思考を学ぶ「近代的教養」を身につけることで信じられなくなってしまうという宗教の危機をもたらすものであったが、岸本の主張ではそれでも宗教は終わらないとされた。その新たな意義とは何かを、以降の章で彼のテクストに沿って見出すという見通しをここで立てた。その手立てとなるのが、「近代化」の否定と肯定の両側面を照らし合わせることだった。

2 章では、「近代化」の否定的な側面は、「近代化」された文化によって人間の死が忘れられることであると確認した。岸本は癌を患ったことで死を間近にして恐怖を感じ、その問題を提起したのだった。死について考えることを忘れると、人間はいずれ「幸福」ではなくなってしまう、だからこそ死の恐怖に耐えられるほどの生きがいや理想そして仕事、つまり「幸福」を見出さなければならないと

可能にした所以はむろんある。岸本は、1961 年「宗教的態度の類型について」で、「個人の場における宗教的現象」を「宗教的態度」とし(岸本 1975–76/3: 268)、その類型として四つの要素を挙げるが、ここで注目すべきは以下の二つである。一つは、生きるための意味を得るための究極の理想や目的を見出そうとする「「理想的希求」の要素」(同、270)と、一つは日常とは異なる特殊な神秘体験を味わい神秘家が現れるようになる「「融合沈潜」の要素」(同、271)である。そして「それらの要素の相対的な強弱関係の組合せが、個人の人格の中に形成されている宗教的態度の全体的性格を決定する重要な契機となる」(同)と岸本は述べている。要するに、特に初期に多かった宗教の神秘体験と修行という研究の対象を、「「融合沈潜」の要素」として自ら集約し、それが「宗教的態度」の類型の一つとして、「理想希求」などの他の要素と関連し合いながら、それぞれ大なり小なり個人において作用しているとする、こうした晩年の岸本の主張が、結局のところ本論の証明と一致し、それらの研究背景があるからといって例外にはならないからだ。また、冒頭で述べたように、先行研究では、初期の神秘主義研究から後期の宗教研究に至る流れを中村みどり(2013)も述べている。

岸本は主張し、それが実際に自身の死の恐怖の克服にも繋がったのだ。このように至上の「幸福」を発見することが、奇跡を信じられなくなってしまう人々における「近代化」された上での宗教の役割なのだと岸本は考えた。

3 章では、「近代化」の肯定的な側面である「信教の自由」について確認した。岸本の GHQ の顧問としての活躍をテクストに沿って改めて辿ることで、靖国神社の存続危機の打開や神道指令の公布に携わった彼には、その行動の基盤として「信教の自由」が掲げられていることが判明した。それは、戦時中のように人々が軍国主義的雰囲気を纏う宗教を強要されないよう「政教分離」をした上で自由に宗教を信仰し、且つ神道がこれからも続くための考えであった。二度と国家主義に陥らないように「信教の自由」と「政教分離」を受け入れ、近代化的批判に堪えない要素を取り除いた宗教は、神のための宗教から人間、個人や民衆のための宗教となる。そうして一人ひとりが「永遠なる理想」を掲げ「宗教のみが与え得る心の歓び、心の慰め」を得ることができるようになるのだ。岸本がこう述べるのは、「近代化」による「信教の自由」が、宗教の本質としての個人の「歓び」の獲得に至る重要な要素であると考えていたからである。

4 章では、以上の「近代化」における肯定と否定の両側面を踏まえ、岸本が GHQ の顧問として活躍した癌罹患以前であれ、彼が死の恐怖を克服した癌罹患以後であれ、どの文脈でも、彼の宗教観の目指すところは、個々の主体的な「幸福」にあると、一貫して考えていたということを導き出した。要するに、「近代化」された宗教の本質は、個人の「幸福」のためにあるということだった。

予てより岸本にあったこの考え方だが、一度死の恐怖により崩れかけた。しかし、それを乗り越える過程で、例えば「別れのとき」として死を捉えることで、より確固としたものとして築き上げられたと言える。一方で、先行研究では、この「別れのとき」としての死が強調されるあまり、「幸福」という岸本の宗教観における一貫性とその重要性を、看過してしまうきらいがあった。また、GHQ 顧問としての岸本の活躍においても、その活動自体が注目されるあまり、彼において「信教の自由」が「幸福」のために掲げられていたということが見失われてしまっていた。それ故に、岸本に関する先行研究は二分化され、彼の宗教観を包括的に把握できずに、あるい

は論じられずにいた。本来は「幸福」を目指すことこそ、人間のための「近代化」された宗教の最大の意義であり、岸本の宗教観に一貫してあるものなのである。

Author Contributions
The author confirms the sole responsibility for the conception of the study, presented results, and manuscript preparation.

Conflicts of Interest
The author declares that they have no conflict of interest.

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REVIEWS

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BOOK REVIEW

Review of *Rethinking Japan's Modernity* by M. William Steele. Cambridge, Mass and London, 2025. 352 pages

In historical studies, it is essential to avoid reducing historical processes to a linear narrative. However, focusing only on extremely micro-level events to avoid it can lead to losing sight of the entire picture. M. William Steele's *Rethinking Japan's Modernity*, drawing on various historical materials, highlights the multiple voices and emotions of people from the last days of the Edo period (*bakumatsu*) onward at a micro level. By presenting Japan's "modernity" not as a linear process, but as an arena of debates, conflicts, and transnational interactions, it offers a way to avoid the above dilemma. Viewed through the lens of "Enlightenment" symbolized by Fukuzawa Yukichi's call to "leave Asia and join the West", modern Japanese history often appears as a linear catch-up narrative of events after the impactful arrival of the Black Ship. Reduced to its most basic elements, the historical plot runs as follows: the shocking arrival of the Black Ship that opened the Tokugawa shogunate to the Western great powers, the Meiji Restoration after the civil war, victories in two wars with Qing and Russia, and the defeat in World War II after Japan's imperialistic expansion.

Steele's project is to multiply historical actors and sources and place the process of Japanese modernization in an international context separate from the master narrative presented above. However, he does not swing his pen like an axe, trying to offer a sweeping historical narrative. Instead, what stands out in his work is his method of recovering muffled voices and surfacing the emotions of ordinary people. In doing so, he does not aim to deny the nationalist, single-track narrative altogether; instead, he seeks to reposition it as one voice among many within the broader, contested space of Japanese experiences in modernity.

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This book consists of thirteen chapters. Although each chapter takes up a distinct topic, they all encourage readers to weave multiple voices and angles together in organic ways and interpret what the Japanese modernization was in the constellation of multiple subjects and voices. Steele's approach enables his readers to move beyond a single narrative perspective on history and to sense the anxieties, fears, and hopes of the people in the past amid turmoil and social transformation. It also presents a rhythm of history in which Japan's modernization did not proceed in a straight line, but rather as a mixture of various emotions and voices.

The author, needless to say, is a leading specialist in late-Edo and Meiji Japanese history, and has previously written works such as *Alternative Narratives in Modern Japanese History* (Steele 2003). To extend that title, *Rethinking Japan's Modernity* does more than illuminate the "light" of Japan's Enlightenment modernity. It also casts an attentive gaze on the "shadows": Japanese people who were tossed about by modernity's promises, and the things lost, forgotten, or left behind in the wake of modernization and westernization.

Chapter 1 reframes the familiar story of Japan's "opening", ushered in by Commodore Perry's Black Ships, by presenting it through the *vistas* that Californians cast across the Pacific. In 1848, Americans, propelled westward by the so-called frontier spirit, reached California. How, then, did they envision Japan lying beyond the Pacific? Drawing mainly on newspaper articles of the time, Steele reveals a strong public enthusiasm for expanding free trade and a commitment to a civilizing mission. In this way, he opens the late-nineteenth-century American history onto the Pacific, showing how Japan's "opening" came into focus within that westward-looking vision.

Chapter 2 turns to a woodblock print titled *Kaei Nenkan-yori Kome Sōba Nedan-narabi-ni Nendaiki Kakinuki Daishimpan*, 'A new publication of rice market prices and chronicle of selected events beginning with the Kaei era' (嘉永年間より米相場直段并年代記書秡大新版), to illuminate how ordinary people lived and how they felt from the arrival of the Black Ships through the turmoil of the late Tokugawa period and into the Meiji Restoration. From this woodblock print, published in 1868, Steele vividly reformulates both the everyday life of Edo's townspeople and the crushing hardships they faced. As the political order that had persisted for over 250 years began to falter, a sharp inflation, illustrated by skyrocketing rice prices, swept through society, pushing many further into poverty. On top of that came earthquakes, tsunamis, storms, and epidemics. As the author aptly notes, for those living on the eve of Meiji Japan, "There is no hope for the future" (p. 55). In short, it was a dark time. Read alongside Chapter 1,

Chapter 2 reveals a striking contrast: while California's "vistas" imagined a bright, expansive future for Japan, the people within Japan itself were descending into what Steele calls an "apocalypse", a plunge into the deepening shadows of the *bakumatsu* years.

Chapter 3 shifts the spotlight from the well-known westernizer Fukuzawa Yukichi to the largely overlooked Fukuzawa of the late Tokugawa years, revealing his views on politics and the state before the Meiji Restoration. Steele, drawing on his English translation of a petition that Fukuzawa submitted to the Tokugawa house in 1866, demonstrates that Fukuzawa actually supported a shogunate-centered regime for a newly unified country. The details are best left to the book itself, but in essence, Fukuzawa envisioned a post-opening Japan in which the Tokugawa would discard the old feudal structure and assume the position of a constitutional monarchy.

Chapter 4 reconsiders the popular notion of the Meiji Restoration as a bloodless revolution by examining satirical cartoons that circulated widely in 1868. Many of these prints portray children in Edo at play or scenes featuring commoners, while simultaneously hinting at political actors such as the Satsuma and Chōshū domains, the Aizu, and the Sendai. By examining this visual archive, Steele illustrates how these cartoons, which were shared among ordinary people, reflect the anxieties that influenced daily life from the final years of the Tokugawa period. Some of the prints rely on wordplay unique to Japanese, and one of the joys of this chapter is Steele's thoughtful translations. For instance, the rendering of the cartoon *Bammin Odoroki* (万民おどろ木), which depicts people scrambling under a "money tree", as "The people *wood* be shocked".

Chapter 5 takes up the figure of Sada Kaiseki, a little-known thinker who championed *expelling the barbarians* before the Meiji Restoration and later criticized the flood of new Western goods entering Japan. At first glance, Sada may seem like a stubborn traditionalist resisting the Enlightenment spirit embodied by Fukuzawa Yukichi. And yes, there is undoubtedly some truth to that impression. But Steele's close reading of Sada's writings reveals something more nuanced. Sada was not merely rejecting the West; he was urging Japan to think seriously about and actively experiment with its own path to "civilization" instead of relying entirely on Western models. He traveled the country giving public talks, created visual materials showing what kinds of foreign goods were pouring in, and even published a pamphlet titled *Baka-no Banzuke* (馬鹿の番付) 'A ranking of fools', a sharp satire skewering those who unquestioningly embraced Western lifestyles.

Chapter 6 turns to another relatively obscure figure, the parody writer Mantei Ōga. Like Sada, Ōga resisted the Meiji modernity – but he did so

with a dose of humor. This chapter focuses on Ōga's 1895 *Katsuron Gakumon Suzume* (活論学問雀) 'Sparrows at the gates of learning: A spirited debate', a parody of Fukuzawa Yukichi's 1872 *Gakumon-no Susume* (学問のすすめ) 'Encouragement of learning', the quintessential manifesto of the Enlightenment-era Meiji. Steele includes an English translation of *Sparrows.* Ōga's sharp critiques and biting satire directed at Fukuzawa reveal a contrasting perspective on Enlightenment modernity. This viewpoint blends humor with a sense of unease, presenting playful, skeptical, and sometimes anxious counterpoints to the era's sincere optimism.

Chapter 7 draws the readers' attention to Katsu Kaishū. Katsu served as a military commander under the Tokugawa regime in the final years of the shogunate and famously negotiated the peaceful handover of Edo Castle to the new Meiji government. After the Restoration, he compiled a wide array of documents – some dealing with the shogunate's finances and military affairs, others concerning its foreign relations. Alongside these public and administrative writings, he also authored *Bakufu Shimatsu* (幕府始末) 'The last days of the Shogunate', a 1895 memoir based on his own experience. In that memoir, Katsu underscores the stability of public institutions and social order during the Tokugawa era, while emphasizing that the Meiji government could only function because it was built upon that foundation. In other words, Meiji was not a complete break from Edo, but a continuation made possible by it. From this perspective, Steele offers a counterview to the traditional narrative of rupture which gave rise to the Enlightenment-era Meiji; what he describes is a view that draws attention to historical continuity and to those who were sacrificed or sidelined in the Restoration – in short, to the losers as well as the winners.

Chapter 8 offers an overview of Fukuzawa's final published work, i.e., the 1891 essay *Yasegaman-no Setsu* (痩せ我慢の説), 'On fighting to the bitter end', together with an English translation. In this short piece, Fukuzawa casts a critical eye on figures such as Katsu Kaishū and Enomoto Takeaki, who led the Hakodate War. Although both had belonged to the defeated side, they nonetheless went on to occupy important posts in the new Meiji government. According to Fukuzawa, although these men enabled the formation of the Meiji state through compromise, they lacked *yasegaman*, the stubborn resolve to keep resisting the Satsuma-Chōshū forces to the very end. Here, Fukuzawa's own political philosophy comes sharply into view: in contrast to Katsu's emphasis on conciliation and accommodation, Fukuzawa stressed the importance of establishing a strong state by force, if necessary.

Chapter 9 revisits the common assumption that the *mingei* (民藝) or folk craft movement, championed by Yanagi Sōetsu, was a uniquely Japanese development that began in the 1920s. Steele shows that the enthusiasm for finding beauty in everyday objects and collecting them was hardly confined to Japan; it was an international response to the industrialization, urbanization, and mechanization that swept across the world from the mid-nineteenth century onward. In fact, as early as the beginning of the Meiji era, the archaeologist Edward Sylvester Morse was already an avid collector of local crafts. Yanagi's own interest in the folk craft was directly shaped by his exchanges with the British potter Bernard Leach. Many Japanese and Western collectors alike were turning their eyes toward folk objects. It was within this broader surge of interest that Yanagi's folk craft movement could take shape. At its core was a way of seeing: a gaze that found beauty in everyday life. However, more deeply, it reflected a growing fascination with the creativity of ordinary people.

Chapter 10 examines how the Japanese public reacted to the 1920 Anglo-Japanese Alliance. With this treaty, Japan was recognized on the international stage as a nation standing alongside the Western great powers. The public response was overwhelmingly celebratory, one might even say euphoric. People welcomed the alliance as a promise of peace and prosperity. From this, Steele concludes that nationalism does not necessarily lead to "xenophobic or imperialistic" attitudes; it can just as well nurture "peace and cosmopolitanism". This resonates to some extent with the conciliatory, unity-oriented vision that Katsu had emphasized. However, given the trajectory Japan would follow in the years ahead, one may be tempted to consider how fragile, perhaps even illusory, this form of nationalism ultimately was.

Chapter 11 concerns the massive famine that struck the Tōhoku region between 1905 and 1906, and how domestic and international organizations mobilized humanitarian relief. As Steele notes, this relief effort was "the first major example of joint domestic and international disaster relief operations" (p. 239). The *Christian Herald*, based in New York, reported on the devastation in Tōhoku and raised donations; the American National Red Cross also contributed funds through the Japanese Red Cross. Newspapers within Japan organized their own fundraising campaigns and joined the humanitarian effort. In sharp contrast, the Japanese government responded sluggishly to the crisis and even urged the suffering population to rely on "self-help", revealing a striking lack of effective policy. Situating modern Japanese history within the broader expansion of international humanitarian

aid is illuminating, mainly because this perspective is often overshadowed by Japan's contemporaneous victory in the Russo-Japanese War.

Chapter 12 focuses on the Great Kantō Earthquake, which occurred on September 1, 1923, in order to reinterpret the meaning of the catastrophe through the visual images captured on postcards, a medium that had become increasingly widespread in Japan in the early twentieth century. Postcards circulated as an intuitive, almost instantaneous way of conveying events. However, they did far more than simply record ruined buildings and destroyed cityscapes. These images showed the collapse or disappearance of landmarks associated with modern urban life, symbolized by buildings, entertainment districts, etc. Postcards became a medium through which people confronted deeper questions: Where do we come from, and where are we headed? They prompted a kind of anxious self-reflection about Japan's modern trajectory. While postcards eventually lost prominence with the emergence of newspapers, periodicals, and radio, Steele illustrates how unconventional sources can provide new perspectives for reinterpreting history.

Chapter 13 highlights Kume Kunitake's ambivalent perspective on modernity. Kume, who traveled with the Iwakura Mission and later helped lay the foundations of modern Japanese historiography in the early twentieth century, spent his life continually questioning Japan's future under the growing influence of Western modernity. Having witnessed the mass destruction of the First World War, Kume sometimes leaned toward overvaluing the cultural maturity and social stability achieved during the Edo period. Yet at the same time, his historical outlook was never confined to a narrowly defined national history. On the contrary, it remained open to international interactions and global entanglements. In this sense, Kume's historical vision captured Japan's past, present, and future into a broader perspetive through a multifaceted gaze, while also approaching the process of modernization itself as something inherently ambivalent.

Finally, the Epilogue turns to *Meiji Taishō Shōwa daiemaki* (明治大正昭和大絵巻), 'The great picture scroll of the Meiji, Taishō, and Shōwa eras', published in the popular magazine *King* on January 1, 1931. Using this picture scroll as its central source, the chapter examines how it visualizes Japan's trajectory from 1868 to 1930. The history it portrays is anything but smooth or linear. What stands out, however, is an episode from February 9, 1930, when Wakatsuki Reijirō, having attended the London Naval Conference, delivered a radio address encouraging Japan to commit to international peace, and many Japanese welcomed his words. What can be

seen from this are the emotional currents and everyday efforts of people who longed for peace amid a turbulent, anxiety-ridden modern age.

Although the themes of the individual chapters differ significantly, together they paint a complex picture of "Enlightenment modernity", filled with ambivalence, light and shadow, hope and anxiety, progress and tradition. Steele's aim is not simply to read less-noticed sources, but to trace the double-edged rhythms of Japanese modernity through a diverse constellation of media: woodblock prints, postcards, magazines, and more. This constellation forms a complex past that includes both triumph and loss. Since it is composed of many fragments, it is highly challenging to grasp the entire picture from any single vantage point.

Steele's method might be described as what Peter Burke, drawing on Mikhail Bakhtin, called "polyphonic history" within the field of cultural history (Burke 2010: 479). It is "dialogue rather than monologue", "multiple stories rather than a single Grand Narrative" – in short, a "multiplication of voices". Of course, even under the single label of polyphonic history, the range of possible emphases is wide. One example is the "vision of the vanquished" (Wachtel 1977), a crucial perspective within polyphonic approaches. Wachtel carved out the calamity brought by the Spanish Empire to indigenous peoples of the Aztecs and the Incas in the sixteenth century using literary and poetic expressions and chronicles left by local people. By doing so, Wachtel's rich historiography succeeded in relativizing the existing historical framework centered on the Spanish side of the historical view that established the master narrative of European expansion, the dichotomy of the Old and the New Worlds, and revealed how traumatic the experience was for indigenous people.

Although one cannot make the Japanese experience of modernization equivalent to the above experiences of the indigenous peoples of the Aztecs and the Incas as the "vision of the vanquished", one can find a polyphonic history of Japan as the "defeated" in John W. Dower's *Embracing Defeat* (1999) that reformulates postwar adaptation of people to democracy through interactions with the American occupation forces. Steele's book clearly resonates with this viewpoint. In this book, the vision of the defeated emerges through diverse ideas, satirical voices, and visual materials that push back against the civilization discourse championed by Fukuzawa Yukichi. These people and records are not "the vanquished" in any direct or literal sense. However, they testify to the exhaustion, anxieties, and alternative visions of Japan's path that emerged amid the pressures of Westernization.

Having characterized and evaluated Steele's work in this way, one should not overlook a hidden pattern of transformation in Japanese historical perspectives, even though this book does not highlight it. On the one hand, Fujizawa, Katsu, Sōda, Ōga, and Kume, as stakeholders across both eras, illustrate how people's perceptions of modernization are linked to the historical realities of the Edo and Meiji periods, despite the apparent rupture between them. On the other hand, when Steele discusses Yanagi, the Great Kantō Earthquake, the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, and the chronicle in the Epilogue, the significance of the Edo era as a reference for the past fades from his narrative. Instead, he focuses more on the themes of peace and internationalism that he hopes to achieve in the future.

Admittedly, people witnessing the damage caused by the Earthquake share a sense of unease about their identity in modern life. However, the unease is no longer anchored to the historical referential point of Edo and Meiji. Thus, it can be seen that the historical realities of Edo and Meiji gradually decreased around the 1920s, when urbanites enjoyed modern life. The unease in modern life, in turn, is expressed more vaguely, as shown by the novelist Akutagawa Ryūnosuke's farewell note: "a vague uneasiness" (*bon'yari-shita fuan*, ボンヤリした不安). Taking this transformation in a historical sense into account, the "multiplication of voices" regarding the sense of historical reality at that time is the task Steele poses for the readers.

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BOOK REVIEW

Review of *In the Shadow of Empire: Art in Occupied Japan* by Alicia Volk. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2025. 464 pages.

Earlier scholarship has often portrayed the immediate years following the Asia-Pacific War as a period of artistic inertia or stagnation in Japan. Alicia Volk's *In the Shadow of Empire* challenges this narrative. By foregrounding artworks created during Japan's occupation era, Volk delves into an array of artworks across different media by demonstrating the thematic concerns they conveyed; the intellectual debates they engaged; and the transformations and continuities they embodied from the prewar period into the years of occupation.

The book consists of five chapters, along with an introduction and an epilogue. The introduction outlines the historical context that frames the book: the democratization of art in post-imperial Japan during the U.S. occupation, a period marked by the United States' emergence as a dominant global power the Asia-Pacific War. The first chapter further examines the complexities and upheavals of this transitional moment, situating the key figures discussed throughout the book within their historical contexts. The subsequent chapters, organized around a series of case studies, explore occupation-era art productions from multiple lenses, addressing diverse media – including painting, printmaking, and sculpture – as well as the experiences of women artists.

Volk opens the introduction with the dramatic reversal of Japan's fortunes during the Asia-Pacific War. Whereas Japanese fighter planes had once dominated the skies over mainland China with extensive bombing raids, by the autumn of 1944 American air power controlled the Asia-Pacific airways, devastating large areas of Japanese cities. The shift in military dominance foreshadowed Japan's post-war trajectory under U.S.-occupation. Surveying the field of postwar Japanese art history, Volk succinctly points out what she

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calls a "mutual forgetfulness" between the two countries regarding both the war and the occupation (p. 8), a dynamic that has produced a "yawning amnesic void" in the historical narratives of twentieth-century Japanese art made during the occupation era (p. 9).

To delineate the intellectual atmosphere of this historical moment, Volk introduces Kitawaki Noboru's 1949 oil painting *Quo Vadis* as an emblematic expression of the uncertainties, the dilemmas, and the predicaments faced by Japanese artists – and the people more broadly – in the immediate post-war years. Volk's discussion of Kitawaki's work also sets-up the central question that runs through the subsequent chapters: when the legacy of the wartime past still looms over the present, and individuals are suddenly confronted with an unprecedented degree of personal choice, which path should be taken?

In the introduction, Volk has also identified the Gordon W. Prange Collection at the University of Maryland as one of her primary archival sources, which houses an unparalleled archive of Japanese-language printed materials produced during the occupation-era (p. 33). She also draws extensively on the National Archives in College Park, Maryland, which contains a vast repository of U.S. military and administrative records. Together, these archives provide complementary perspectives on the occupation: the Prange Collection preserves those from occupied Japan, while the National Archives documents the viewpoints and policies of the occupying authorities.

The first chapter walks the reader through the tumultuous transition from the wartime period to the occupation era, revealing both the conflicts and contradictions as well as the striking continuities that endured across both periods. At the core of the democratic mandate for art after the war lay the question of the relationship between the individual and the collective, the part and the whole. During the war, a mythologized body politic (*kokutai*) had subsumed individual autonomy, demanding its assimilation into the collective. Consequently, in the postwar art world, artistic autonomy emerged at the center of debates and was repeatedly addressed by different groups. Yet the very notion of an "art world", as Volk succinctly points out, reveals a fundamental dilemma since its very existence has been taken for granted and never really been questioned (p. 40). Comprising a constellation of both established and emerging organizations, the art world functioned to secure the artist's professional and social standing while also providing the framework through which art, as a form of expression, became legible to both artists and the public. However, the unquestioned acceptance of the art world's existence bares similarity with the wartime subsumption of the

individual into the collective on the epistemological level. This tension ultimately produced an ironic situation: despite many artists' deep commitment to democracy and dismantling the structure of wartime state, their activities could only coalesce around what Volk describes as, borrowing Matsumoto Shunsuke's term, "a certain power or paradigm" (p. 80).

Organized chronologically, the first chapter traces the shifting contradictions of the Japanese art world from 1940 to 1941 – when it had been fully absorbed into the wartime state – through to the democratization mandate of the early occupation and then into the reverse course (*gyaku kōsu*). The reverse course marked a shift in U.S. policies in occupied Japan, which pivot around 1948 amid rising Cold War tensions. At the center of these transformations was the fraught question of artists' war responsibility. The debate about their responsibility exposed a deep frustration over the rapid retrenchment of establishment artists and institutions into the postwar art world. Through figures such as Yokoyama Taikan and Fujita Tsuguharu, Volk demonstrates how the government – particularly the Ministry of Education – as well as the elite artists associated with the Imperial Art Academy moved swiftly to preserve the privileged position they had enjoyed under the wartime order, often without meaningful reflection (p. 58).

As a reaction to the conservative establishment and in an effort to rebuild the art world, the Japan Art Association, or Nichibi, came into formation. This organization served as a key institutional node in the book, as many of the artists discussed across its chapters were members, including Matsumoto Shunsuke, Uchida Iwao, Fukuzawa Ichirō, Ono Tadashige, Hongō Shin, and Akamatsu Toshiko. Yet Nichibi also failed to confront the issue of artists' war responsibility. As Volk notes, artists endeavored to gradually redirect the debate from reckoning with the past to envisioning the future, producing a significant blind spot that later commingled with an emerging discourse of victimhood as Cold War tensions intensified (p. 70).

Through an analysis of Uchida Iwao's *Come Sing Along! (People Protecting Culture)* (*Utagoe-yo Okore* [*bunka-o mamoru hitobito*]), Volk further illustrates how artistic antagonism shifted during the reverse course, increasingly targeting the United States amid the Occupation's deepening alliance with Japanese conservatives. The Japan Communist Party (JCP), with which many of the artists discussed in the book were affiliated, exerted a significant influence on the postwar art world and contributed to the internal disputes within Nichibi that ultimately led to its fracture. The fraught relationship between art, politics, and ideology introduced here recurs throughout the book as a persistent concern for the postwar art world.

The second chapter centers on the founder of the Art Culture Association, Fukuzawa Ichirō, whose wartime arrest – introduced in the first chapter as an example of the coercive inclusion of artists during the war – serves as the historical backdrop for Volk's analysis. Volk positions Fukuzawa's 1948 oil painting *Monument to Defeat in War* (*Haisen-no Kinenhi*) as an emblematic work that crystallized the ideological conflict of the immediate postwar period. She argues that the painting stakes out "a position with respect to ideological battles between left and right, and between liberal modernists and radical leftists, in a time of profound anxiety and intense struggle over both ideals and representation" (p. 87).

Volk traces the pictorial genealogy of this work back to Fukuzawa's wartime and early postwar paintings. Examining three seascape paintings from 1942 – *Returning Geese* (*Kigan*), *Sea (1)* (*Umi* [1]), and *Sea (2)* (*Umi* [2]) – she argues that these works express disorientation rather than wartime triumph. This ambivalence intensified in Fukuzawa's immediate postwar production, culminating in his 1946 series *Fantasies Inspired by the Inferno from Dante's Divine Comedy* (*Dante Shinkyoku Jigokuhen-ni Yoru Gensō*), whose inferno imagery Volk interprets as a "veritable purgatory" reflecting both the occupation era and the psychological aftermath of forced ideological conversion (*tenkō*) (p. 101). She further identifies the 1948 painting *Fighting Group* (*Tatakau Gunzō*), depicting a writhing mass of unclothed bodies, as a direct precursor to *Monument to Defeat in War*. Volk suggests that this work drew on wartime visual idioms, including the "deathly battle scene" genre associated with Fujita Tsuguharu and imagery of Mount Fuji painted by Yokoyama Taikan (p. 109). Read in relation to Mount Fuji's wartime status as a symbol of the *kokutai*, the pyramidal mass of bodies in *Monument to Defeat in War* becomes, in Volk's interpretation, "a bitter rebuke of the pernicious wartime ideal of *kokutai* and of the utterly useless, defeated war that was fought in its name" (p. 117). In this way, Volk reads Fukuzawa's painting as a temporal collage of the artist's earlier artistic endeavors, reflecting a continuing and evolving struggle that persisted from the wartime to the postwar era.

Volk also highlights the motif of ruins in *Monument to Defeat in War*, arguing that ruins function as a "perfect vehicle for representing the persistence of the past in the present" (p. 119), particularly as the institutional structure of the wartime art establishment continued into the postwar period – a continuity that deeply frustrated Fukuzawa. At the same time, Volk draws attention to Fukuzawa's response to the ideological rupture unfolding within the artistic left. While the JCP adopted a hardline stance against literary and artistic modernism, Fukuzawa instead prioritized the

artist's individual autonomy (p. 120). Through examining Fukuzawa's discussion with Hongō Shin (who is central to the book's fourth chapter), Volk underscores Fukuzawa's conviction that the social role of art lies in mediating the "opposition" between the individual and the collective (p. 122). In this way, Volk returns to the argument she introduced at the beginning of the chapter, proposing that the painting should be understood as a site of confrontation where opposing stances, and even different temporalities, collide; a future "overthrowing" a present within which the past remains embedded (p. 123).

Chapter three opens by foregrounding the materiality of prints (*hanga*), which, as Volk highlights, was the primary reason printmaking appeared to hold particular promise for the new democratic age. The medium's accessibility seemed to evidence its fundamentally popular – or democratic – nature. Volk organizes the chapter by juxtaposing two types of prints, each representing contrasting visions of the artists behind them. On the one hand, the creative prints (*sōsaku hanga*) artists adopted an essentially modernist stance, seeking to elevate the medium's status and secure its recognition within the established art world. On the other hand, proponents of people's prints (*jimmin hanga*) regarded printmaking as inherently political and promoted it as a social medium created by and for the working class.

Through this juxtaposition, Volk reveals the central issues at stake in the postwar debate. The first concerns the authorship. Creative print artists insisted on the individual artist's sole authorship of an image and placed the artist's subjective expression at the center of artistic production, in keeping with modern art theories originating in Europe. Advocates of people's prints, by contrast, emphasized the communal potential of printmaking, grounded in the medium's accessibility and reproducibility, and sought to enable the laboring masses to create their own prints. Many artists associated with the movement went to live and work with communities in peripheral regions (*chihō*), hoping to introduce printmaking both as a form of expression through which people could develop their own proper subjecthood and culture and as a tool of social liberation. A key inspiration for these artists was Chinese woodblock prints, which sought direct representation of social and political realities and offered Japanese artists on the left a model for emulation toward the completion of the Japanese democratic revolution (p. 159).

Another question that lies at the core of the debate between these two stances is the audience. Onchi Kōshirō, as the representative of creative prints, insisted that "an artwork should emerge in response to form itself, not to something external to it", emphasizing the autonomy of art and the artist's

independence from the audience (p. 163). Examining Onchi's post war practice, Volk highlights his formalist experimentation, in which printmaking became increasingly abstracted into a process of image-making (p. 166). Artists associated with people's prints sharply criticized Onchi's "art for art's sake" approach, arguing that he failed to recognize that the artistic qualities he valued in prints were inherently tied to social conditions and even to specific social classes (p. 163). For people's print artists, printmaking functioned as a social medium grounded in continuous exchange between artists and workers (p. 181). Yet Volk also points out a revealing irony: as their practices evolved people's print artists, similar to Onchi, gradually moved away from the woodcut medium toward the primacy of the image (p. 180).

The chapter concludes by examining the reception of both movements, where Volk expands her scope of discussion to the level of international exchange. Onchi's immediate postwar print practice was closely associated with the souvenir market and increasingly targeted toward English-speaking buyers. In tracing the developing relationship between the occupiers and the occupied, Volk highlights the role played by American collectors. She further traces how creative prints entered American exhibitions and came to be received in the United States as a representative form of contemporary Japanese art. Onchi's abstractions in particular became highly sought after by major American museums. People's prints were also circulated internationally as projects of transnational solidarity and grassroots people's diplomacy. Their first overseas exhibitions were held in China, contributing to a dialogue with Chinese printmaking, before their next stop "aimed at the heart of the beast" – the United States (p. 188). Nevertheless, Volk concludes the chapter by pointing out the bleak reality behind both prints' seemingly universal reception: both people's prints and creative prints have been "art-historical losers" (p. 196), their transnational receptions largely absent from art histories written in both the United States and even in Japan. Moreover, despite their stylistic and ideological alignment with America's Cold War Other, people's prints surprisingly found no place in a disciplinary system of value and judgement that was itself shaped by Cold War ideology. This observation resonates with Volk's earlier challenge to the "still-present Cold War frame of knowledge" introduced in the book's opening chapter (p. 32).

Chapter four, "Listen to the Voices of the Sea", shifts the medium of focus from prints to sculptural monuments. Although monuments are amongst the most compelling forms of a society's cultural expression, they also became one of the most divisive forms of art in Japan during the occupation due to the reverse course and the intensification of the Cold War. As the chapter's

title suggests, Volk centers her discussion on Hongō Shin's sculptural monument, *Voices of the Sea* (*Wadatsumi-no Koe*), presenting it as an emblematic example of postwar peace monuments that exposed the contradictions and tensions embedded in the notions of peace, democracy, and freedom in the final years of the occupation.

Through a compelling formal analysis of the sculpture and comparisons with precedents such as Kitamura Seibō's *Brave Special Attack Corps Hero* (*Tokkō Yūshi-no Zō*) (1944), Volk highlights the notion of humanity (*ningeisei*) within Hongō's leftist-leaning intellectual milieu. The sculpture's idealized youthful male body – representing a student sacrificed in war – evokes a range of historical associations, including the wartime state's eugenic policies and hygienic campaigns. At the same time, what makes this sculpture particularly poignant, as Volk points out, was Hongō's portrayal of the figure's inward-looking posture and contemplative psychological state, suggesting an inner conscience governed by reason and intellect (p. 235).

The timing of the sculpture's creation further intensified the controversy that would surround it. While Hongō was working on the monument the Korean War had begun and the Red Purge of communists was unfolding across Japanese universities. Within this historical context, *Voices of the Sea* emerged as a highly contested object, whose shifting locations reflected broader societal anxieties and fissures. Despite the inherent immobility expected of monumental sculpture, *Voices* proved remarkably mobile: rejected installation in the University of Tokyo, it was temporarily displayed at peace gatherings in the early 1950s before eventually being installed at Ritsumeikan University. Volk further follows the sculpture's afterlife in the post-occupation period, when it became the target of violence during the student protests in the late 1960s. Reflecting on its destruction, she cites a protesting student who accused the statue itself of symbolizing a "false peace" – a critique that revealed the growing disenchantment surrounding Japan's postwar democratic ideals.

In the fifth chapter, Volk expands upon her earlier journal article (Volk 2020) and examines two prominent women artists of the postwar period: Migishi Setsuko and Akamatsu Toshiko (also known as Maruki Toshi). While both artists were deeply engaged with questions of liberation and contributed significantly to postwar artistic production, they pursued markedly different creative paths shaped by their respective ideological commitments. Compared with the artists discussed in earlier chapters, Migishi and Akamatsu articulated their positions from the perspective of

women artists, a point Volk underscores by opening the chapter with Migishi's statement: "History has given us our first chance" (p. 254).

Volk devotes the chapter to examining Migishi's and Akamatsu's competing visions for the role of art in a democratic society. In Migishi's case, she refused to submit her work to any external authority or political authority and insisted that art was fundamentally a personal endeavor. Volk identifies this stance as explicitly modernist, and notes that Migishi emphasized the separation between the artist and the general masses. Migishi's understanding of liberation and independence was closely tied to her vision for the postwar Japanese art world, which also fueled her critiques of its current establishment. Yet the persistent gendered interpretation of Migishi's work became a source of deep frustration. Volk cites Migishi's own words from the early 1950s, in which she lamented that everything had been a mistake from the beginning simply because she had been born a woman (p. 278). In 1954, Migishi left Japan for an extended stay in Europe and would not return until 1988.

Akamatsu's career developed along a strikingly different trajectory. Volk illustrates this contrast through a diagram that maps Akamatsu's artistic practice along a horizontal axis between artist and audience, in contrast to Migishi's vertically oriented model. Volk traces the evolution of Akamatsu's work from the immediate postwar through the reverse course: from *Hunger* (*Ue)* (painted in 1944 but revealed in 1946), in which the artist declared a determination to speak the *truth* with her brush, to *Emancipation of Humanity* (*Kaihō Sareyuku Ningensei*) (1947), which expressed her belief in humanity's future liberation. By 1948, however, her work had darkened in tone and started to adopt the theme of mother and the child. Volk then centers her discussion on Akamatsu's collaborative project *Atomic Bomb Pictures* (*Gembaku-no Zu*) (1950), created with her partner Maruki Iri. Volk highlights that during this project, Akamatsu and Maruki came to recognize that their authority as artists was necessarily partial and that their own perspectives needed to be supplemented by those of many others in order to represent the "totalized reality" of the atomic bomb (p. 298). Volk interprets the project as a new form of democratic artmaking grounded in dialogue and collective testimony. The series ultimately came to embody Akamatsu's commitment to the women's and peace movements and her belief in the transformative potential of art. By early 1956 the series had expanded to ten paintings and had been exhibited internationally in thirteen countries.

To conclude the chapter, Volk draws the reader's attention to a striking similarity between Migishi and Akamatsu's creation despite their differing artistic visions: both positioned themselves at a distance from the Japanese

art world (p. 302). This observation underscores a broader historical reality—that neither Akamatsu's vision of proletarian empowerment nor Migishi's rejection of gender as a defining social category would be realized during the occupation period. Volk concludes by noting that, despite both artist's profound commitment to the liberation of women, as far as the *art world* was concerned, such promises would exist more as ideals than lived realities well beyond the postwar years.

The book's epilogue reflects on the contested meanings of peace, freedom, and artistic practice in Japan at the end of the American occupation. Through a comparison of two works from 1951 – Akamatsu Toshiko's satirical drawing *Goddess of Liberty, This Is Peace* (*Jiyū-no Megami, Heiwa-yo*) and Inokuma Gen'ichirō's mural *Freedom* (*Jiyū*)—Volk demonstrates how artists articulated sharply divergent responses to the emerging Cold War order. Akamatsu's image condemned the nuclear violence and geopolitical power underlying the U.S.-led "peace", aligning itself with leftist and anti-imperialist critiques, while Inokuma's pastoral mural presented a serene vision of prosperity and leisure that aligned with the cultural ideal of postwar reconstruction and stability. By juxtaposing these works, the epilogue underscores how artistic representations of peace and freedom were deeply entangled with the political divisions and competing visions of Japan's place in the postwar world.

The epilogue then situates these artistic debates within the broader political turmoil surrounding Japan's regained sovereignty in 1952, including the mass protests of "Bloody May Day" and the rise of activist art aligned with labor and leftist movements. Works such as Suzuki Kenji's *Occupation of the People's Plaza* (*Jimmin Hiroba Senryō-no zu*) exemplified attempts by artists to intervene directly in political struggle and to visualize popular resistance to the U.S.–Japan security framework. At the same time, the author traces how a new postwar art establishment centered on museums, critics, and international exhibitions began to consolidate in Tokyo, promoting artists whose work resonated with Euro-American modernism while marginalizing more overtly political practices. In its final reflection, the epilogue critiques the Cold War biases embedded in global art history that have privileged movements like Gutai because of their compatibility with Western avant-garde narratives. By contrast, the book advocates a more expansive art history attentive to the messy, contested, and contradictory artistic responses produced in the shadow of both the Japanese and American empires.

Volk's book makes a significant contribution to existing scholarship on the still underexplored artistic activities of the occupation era. The study unfolds

through the theoretical questions introduced in the opening chapter – particularly those of relationality and incommensurability – and Volk consistently follows through on this conceptual framework. This theoretical coherence allows her to examine how artworks operated within complex political and cultural networks while maintaining a clear methodological through-line across the book. In this way, Volk's analysis successfully reveals the entanglement of art and artistic practice with broader geopolitical and ideological contexts.

Writing at a moment when the war has grown increasingly distant for contemporary generations, Volk closes the book by reminding readers of the continued presence of U.S. military bases across Japan as lingering reminders of the enduring legacy of the occupation. By challenging global art historical narratives that remain largely structured around Euro-American canons, Volk brings attention to materials and practices long marginalized by dominant paradigms. She identifies the persistence of Cold War frameworks in shaping the writing of art history and positions her study as an intervention into these inherited structures of knowledge. In doing so, the book opens a productive horizon for rethinking the relational dynamics that shaped postwar art and for understanding artistic production across overlooked sites in the shadow of empire.

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BOOK REVIEW

Review of *The Ryukyu Islands: A New History from the Stone Age to the Present* by Gregory Smits. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2025. 488 pages.

The history of the Ryukyu Islands has generated a substantial and growing body of scholarship across multiple languages, reflecting the multiple forces that have shaped the archipelago. Within English-language scholarship, Okinawan scholars such as Tanji (2006), Matsumura (2015, 2024), and Shimabuku (2019), among others, have discussed the shifting regimes of sovereignty and governance that have shaped the islands at local and transnational levels. Their work constitutes a critical historiographical intervention grounded in different historical narratives, as well as in the lived experiences of Okinawan communities, making them accessible to broader audiences beyond Japan. Within this expanding field, much of the most recent contributions have been on critical reexaminations of the conceptual framework of "Okinawa", encouraging scholars to interrogate the assumptions through which the region is defined and how its history has been narrated (Mori and Takahashi 2025: 4). For example, academics such as Kiyohiro Yamane (2017) have developed the path of "de-Okinawan" studies as a field to destabilize the epistemic frameworks that have reduced "Okinawa" to a fixed and self-evident object of analysis. This is especially relevant for scholarship produced by Western scholars, as these recent contributions highlight the methodological challenge of engaging histories

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deeply entangled with long-term imperial and colonial dynamics without reproducing their epistemic assumptions.

Within this broader scholarly context, Gregory Smits' *The Ryukyu Islands: A New History from the Stone Age to the Present* (2025) is one of the most recent surveys of Ryukyuan history in English, providing a brief look into the more foundational aspects of this region from the earliest accounts of human presence to the year 2024. According to Smits, the work was conceived as a graduate-level textbook, combining a fact-based approach with recent historiographic trends and discussions "to provide a bibliography sufficient to facilitate more detailed study and research by interested readers" (p. 1). In this sense, it aims to be both an introduction and a point of entry into specialized literature, condensing Smits' forty years of experience in the field. Throughout the book, the author offers historiographical interventions, which are best understood as careful, and in many respects conservative, rearticulations of established analytical traditions within Anglophone and Japanese historiography.

The book is organized into four chronological parts, preceded by an introductory chapter offering a broad overview of Ryukyuan history and historiography. Part One, "Prestate Societies, 35,000 BP–1490", opens the narrative with six chapters that trace the islands from their earliest inhabitants to the emergence of the first Shō dynasty. Part Two, "Development and Transformation of the Shuri Empire, 1490–1630", follows over three chapters spanning from the consolidation of power under Shō Shin to the Satsuma invasion. Part Three, "The Mature Theatrical Kingdom and Its Collapse, 1630–1880", spans six chapters covering the kingdom's peak and eventual annexation by Meiji Japan. Finally, Part Four, "The Modern Era, 1880–2024", closes the book with four chapters bringing the history of Okinawa up to the year before the book's publication.

In the opening chapter, Smits outlines a number of "common misconceptions" he intends to address, such as a belief in the unbroken descendancy of the Ryukyuan population and notions of isolationism, unification, and independence that remain in contemporary narratives (pp. 2–7). The introductory chapter also provides a basic framework for understanding Smits' position on the most controversial topics regarding Ryukyuan history, to which he offers a critical analysis based on "past historical reality" (p. 4). Smits' historical perspective accompanies an open critique of the overuse of early narrative sources, legends, and later official histories that most of traditional historiographical approaches have been built upon, sources he treats as unreliable or "not ideal" (pp. 25, 42, 87, 329). This does not mean that such sources are absent from the book, but rather

that Smits treats them as secondary to material evidence. As he notes, "if read cautiously and against the grain, they can reveal useful hints about early Ryukyu" (p. 58). Accordingly, he places these textual sources within an interpretive framework grounded primarily in archaeological data, physical anthropology, political economy, institutional development, and long-term structural change, with a particular emphasis on maritime exchange networks and evolving regimes of sovereignty and diplomacy as key drivers of historical transformation (pp. 27, 28, 61). This choice points to a methodological commitment to materialist-structuralist history, which allows Smits to formulate a structured account of early historical dynamics and to challenge traditional historiography with well-established analytical tools. On the other hand, his approach also narrows the range of local written sources and, consequently, the historical voices that are incorporated into the narrative.

This position becomes clear in the first part of the volume, on "Prestate Societies", where Smits reconstructs the demographic and political foundations of early Ryukyuan history. He advances the thesis that large-scale immigration during the Gusuku period (ca. 1100–1500, p.18) produced a decisive break with earlier populations, arguing that the groups responsible for early state formation were more "physically and culturally closer to mainland Japanese populations" than to the islands' prehistoric inhabitants (pp. 43, 55, 64). This claim is supported by a generalized synthesis of archaeological and genetic evidence (albeit without precise citation), reflecting an effort to situate Ryukyuan historical developments within broader regional patterns of migration and institutional diffusion. The conceptual terminology used by Smits in this section – particularly the category of "prestate" – is analytically problematic insofar as it transforms heterogeneous historical narratives into a singular, implicitly teleological temporality structured around a state-centered genealogy. This terminology risks reproducing the homogenizing historicism that has been subject to sustained critique by Walter Benjamin (2012 [1940], VII, 256), Edmundo O'Gorman (1977 [1958]), Michel Foucault (2012 [1996]), Reinhart Koselleck (2004, 19–21), Dipesh Chakrabarty (2007), and Masashi Haneda (2018).

Smits' most original contribution in this section lies in his reinterpretation of early political organization. Rejecting agrarian surplus models derived from mainland state formation theories, he argues that maritime trade, raiding, and tribute relations constituted the primary motors of political authority in the archipelago. The so-called "three principalities" are redefined as competing centers of control over long-distance exchange,

oriented toward managing access to Chinese tribute networks rather than administering land and population (p. 93). In this framework, the formation of a unified bureaucratic state in the 15th century marks the gradual consolidation of a tribute-oriented polity whose sovereignty was defined primarily through external recognition.

Part two of the book traces the consolidation of court institutions, the standardization of ritual and bureaucracy, and the elaboration of what Smits calls "classical Ryukyuan culture" (p. 137). This cultural development is interpreted primarily through processes of reappropriation of practices mainly from Korea and Japan, with the production of sacred spaces, rituals, and court ceremonies. The transition to the early modern period introduces the concept of an "empire within empire" to describe Ryukyu's ambiguous sovereignty under Satsuma after 1609, a process which is analyzed through Ryukyuan administrative centralization and diplomatic constraint, while the Satsuma rule was systematized mainly through taxation and fiscal supervision (p. 218). Here, however, the analysis rests more on secondary literature, with comparatively limited engagement with primary sources.

Taken as a whole, the first half of *The Ryukyu Islands* provides a reconstruction of state formation models based on maritime political economy, and the integration of archaeological and institutional evidence. These chapters present the book's most substantial contributions, particularly in their challenge to agrarian determinism and territorial conceptions of sovereignty. At the same time, because the framework remains within a strictly materialist and structuralist tradition that has long shaped East Asian historiography, rather than fundamentally reshaping the conceptual field the book refines and consolidates an existing analytical paradigm, offering a coherent synthesis that is methodologically conservative even where its conclusions diverge from the traditional historiography.

In part three, Smits moves on to the history of the Ryukyu Kingdom from the reforms associated with Shō Shōken and Sai On in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to its formal dissolution in the 1870s through the process known as *Ryūkyū shobun* (the Ryukyu Disposition). Smits characterizes this long period as the era of the "Mature Theatrical Kingdom", a concept intended to capture the relative political stability achieved through institutional consolidation and performance of Ryukyu's diplomatic relations with China and Japan. According to this interpretation, the kingdom's survival after 1609 depended largely on its ability to manage the "theatrical" dimension of diplomacy while concealing its political subordination to the Tokugawa *bakufu* and the Shimazu domain (pp. 227,

230). Alongside this conceptual framework, Smits provides detailed institutional analysis of the Shuri royal government, examining reforms to customary practices, legal structures, and administrative procedures aimed at strengthening economic efficiency and political control. Smits highlights the kingdom's diplomatic position between the tributary systems of Ming dynasty and Qing dynasty China and its subordination to Satsuma, thereby underscoring the challenges Ryukyuan authorities faced in navigating competing and often contradictory frameworks of sovereignty (pp. 234, 243).

He also provides a critical examination of the exploitative practices imposed on the northern and southern islands of the Ryukyus, where poll taxes, sugar monoculture, and forms of indentured labor produced long-lasting experiences of hardship and resentment toward Shuri-centered rule (pp. 253, 259, 268, 273). In doing so, he explicitly acknowledges the imperial dynamics through which the Ryukyu Kingdom itself exercised domination over other islands, demonstrating a notably critical stance toward the kingdom's power structures.

This section also introduces Smits' discussion on ethnogenesis, the formation of an ethnic group (pp. 224, 292–295, 319–320, 357). One of his main arguments is that there is no evidence that the Ryukyu Islands constituted a single ethnic or cultural group in the sixteenth or early seventeenth centuries. He contends that, under early modern conditions, new ethnic identities emerged "not necessarily in terms of objective reality but in terms of people's imagination" (p. 224), a theme he had looked at in his previous book (Smits 1999). He states that the first ones to regard themselves explicitly as Ryukyuans were the elites in the Shuri-Naha region in the late eighteenth century, then among northern islanders, and only later among southern and ordinary populations. Furthermore, he argues that Ryukyuan identity developed in parallel with the emergence of Japanese national identity in the early 1880s (p. 293–294).

Smits ties these discussions together in the fourth part of the book, in which he turns to the "modern period". Drawing on Wendy Matsumura's book *The Limits of Okinawa* (2015), he begins the section by acknowledging that "Okinawa, however conceptualized, was inadequate to describe, contain, or label the diverse communities across Okinawa Prefecture" (p. 350). Smits traces the uneven processes through which Ryukyuans were redefined as Okinawans and incorporated as Japanese subjects through the creation and consolidation of Okinawa Prefecture. Smits highlights the "Culture Wars", a series of assimilationist interventions through which Okinawans were constructed as racially distinct and culturally backwards – most visibly in

events such as the Hall of Peoples (*Jinruikan*). At the same time, pressures toward assimilation were evident in school uniforms and the use of local-language tags (*hōgen fuda*) to punish students for speaking Ryukyuan languages. The author shows how these practices together sought to regulate bodies, language, and everyday conduct, reinforcing the constructed superiority of mainstream Japanese culture and promoting the belief that conformity to it was necessary for economic and social advancement in Okinawa Prefecture (pp. 366, 368–372). He critically shows how comparisons between Okinawans and colonial subjects of the Japanese Empire became a common rhetorical strategy for asserting Okinawan cultural inferiority (p. 370), and therefore shows that cultural differences were real and existed at multiple social levels, varying between and even within the islands.

Smits states that in the present it is "relatively easy for people living in Okinawa Prefecture to combine local and national identities" and that in the early twentieth century "real and imagined layers of possible identity were often in conflict" (pp. 366–367). In this same section, he asserts that "the vast majority of people who live in the Ryukyu Islands today unproblematically regard themselves as Japanese and with good reason. People who dream of a restored Ryukyu Kingdom are unlikely to be found in Okinawa Prefecture or any other part of Japan" (p. 357). While Smits recognizes the coexistence of local and national identities, this assertion raises significant analytical concerns because it conflates two distinct issues. Although most people in Okinawa do not seek the restoration of the Ryukyu Kingdom, this does not translate into, nor does it necessarily relate to, the claim that people "unproblematically" regard themselves as Japanese. Making such an assertion carries important political, academic, and social implications, particularly when studying, teaching, and conducting research in Okinawa. The absence of widespread support for restoring the Ryukyu Kingdom does not necessarily imply that people "unproblematically" regard themselves as Japanese, nor does it adequately capture the layered, and often critical forms of identification that could be articulated by many Okinawans (Inoue 2007; Ginoza 2015, 2016; Yamashiro 2019; Kishi 2020).

As argued by scholars such as Ginoza (2015) and Kishi (2020), Okinawan identity is fluid (in the sense of being relational and historically conditioned), shaped by the persistent presence of U.S. military bases; the economic disparities between Okinawa and mainland Japan; and the ongoing erasure of Japanese and U.S. state violence against Okinawans. From this perspective, the lack of support for restoring the Ryukyu Kingdom does not preclude the coexistence of Okinawan and Japanese identifications,

even when these are complex or internally contradictory. Rather, such identifications may be shaped by critical understandings of Japan's historical and ongoing discrimination against Okinawa and the Ryukyuan islands that are revealing of how people regard and position themselves (Ginoza 2015). Indeed, some of the survey data Smits himself cites, such as the high percentage of respondents who acknowledge persistent structural disparities between Okinawa and mainland Japan (p. 407), point precisely to these unresolved tensions rather than to an unproblematic identification with the Japanese nation-state.

The importance of recognizing this complexity is also related to the way Smits presents the Battle of Okinawa, the subsequent U.S. occupation, and Okinawa's contemporary history. The limitations of this section become most apparent in his treatment of the Battle of Okinawa and its aftermath. While his account rightly emphasizes the responsibility of the Japanese state in the mass suicides – during which the Japanese military pressured Okinawan civilians to take their own lives prior to the arrival of U.S. forces – the narrative remains largely linear and gives comparatively little sustained attention to U.S. responsibility or to how wartime devastation became structurally linked to the long-term militarization of the islands (pp. 383–386).

The transition from wartime to U.S. occupation is covered overly briefly, moving quickly from the appropriation of land for military bases to the claim that rent payments and base employment ultimately benefited the local economy (pp. 393, 397, 399). Although Smits acknowledges sexual violence, political repression, economic dependency, and the dispossession of land under U.S. rule, the analysis lacks the same degree of sustained critical engagement that characterizes earlier sections of the book. This is not to suggest that Smits fails to provide a historiographically grounded account of the U.S. occupation, but that the way this history is narrated reflects a form of critical selectivity. While he successfully documents the subordination of Okinawan populations under U.S. military authority, the analysis stops short of situating these processes within a broader framework of U.S. imperial governance, not just in Okinawa and Japan, but in East Asia. This absence is particularly striking given Smits' earlier critical attention to the imperial dynamics of both the Ryukyu Kingdom and the Japanese Empire. While he carefully analyzes the structures through which the Ryukyuan state exercised extractive domination over peripheral islands and the mechanisms that the Japanese Empire implemented assimilationist and racializing policies through, he does not apply a comparable analytical framework to the U.S. military presence. As a result, the problems associated

with U.S. rule appear less as manifestations of an overarching imperial-colonial structure and more as distinct historical developments.

After briefly addressing the period of U.S. occupation, including the long-term governance of the islands by U.S. military authorities and the popular mobilization for reversion to Japanese sovereignty in 1972, Smits turns to the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Here, he draws on surveys conducted by the *Asahi Shimbun* to examine Okinawan perspectives on key political questions, including attitudes toward Japanese sovereignty, regional inequality, and the continued presence of U.S. military bases. He also examines the rise of tourism as a dominant sector of Okinawa's postwar economy, gradually displacing the military base system as its primary foundation. In doing so, Smits critically examines Japanese nationalist narratives that portray tourism as peaceful and restorative while obscuring its entanglement with the legacy of war and militarization. Yet, his analysis again centers primarily on Japan and gives comparatively less attention to the role of the United States (pp. 409, 411).

In this final chapter, Smits refers to the present and to future challenges facing the Ryukyu Islands, addressing the local economy, regional geopolitics, and environmental concerns. He emphasizes Okinawa's strategic role within Japan's relationship with China, presenting it as increasingly central and potentially destabilizing. He also examines ongoing environmental conflicts surrounding U.S. military bases, particularly the controversy over Henoko, highlighting the extensive ecological damage associated with their continued presence (pp. 415, 420, 423). Although the chapter succeeds in condensing a long and complex historical trajectory, its analytical depth appears to cover only until 1995, following the rape of a minor by U.S. servicemen and the emergence of the so-called third wave of protest (Tanji 2006). Subsequent feminist, environmental, human rights, and anti-base movements, central to Okinawa's contemporary political landscape (Tanji 2006; Abe 2011; Shimabuku 2019; Mori 2023), receive comparatively limited attention

If this section seeks to cover Okinawa's history until 2024, its comparatively muted critical stance toward the U.S. military empire becomes especially significant, as it limits attention to and understanding of its ongoing impact on Okinawa's contemporary condition and its position within the U.S.-Japan security alliance. The absence of explicit engagement with U.S. imperialism as a structuring force is particularly consequential, as it obscures the extent to which Okinawa's postwar condition has been shaped by its incorporation into the global network of U.S. military power. This analytical asymmetry becomes especially significant in light of the book's broader argument,

which otherwise demonstrates considerable rigor in identifying imperial formations as central drivers of historical process and change. As recent scholarship has emphasized, a postcolonial analytical perspective is necessary to understand how Okinawa's incorporation into U.S. military networks has continuously shaped its economic and political constraints, as well as the local realities, and how this process remains central to the regions' present situation (Oshiro 2025: 76).

It is also important to note that Smits' treatment of Okinawa's contemporary economy reflects an analytical separation between tourism and militarization that overlooks their structural interdependence. While tourism is presented as the primary driver of economic activity, the U.S. military presence is addressed only marginally in economic terms. Although this may show the historical shift from an economy once centered on military bases to one increasingly oriented toward tourism, this framing leaves insufficient attention to the ways in which these sectors remain historically and structurally interconnected. As Okinawan scholars have argued (Ginoza 2016; Oshiro 2025), analyses of Okinawa's postwar economy must attend critically to the interlocking operation of "the three k's" – *kichi* (U.S. military bases), *kōkyō kōji* (public works), and *kankō* (tourism) – and US geopolitical objectives in Asia. Ayano Ginoza applied the concept of "militourism" (drawing from Teresia K. Teaiwa) in the context of the Ryukyus, to highlight how Okinawa is produced as a space in which militarization and tourism are mutually reinforcing: Okinawan land, labor, and culture are mobilized for tourism in ways that materially sustain the U.S.-Japan security alliance. Similarly, Akino Oshiro argues that Okinawa's economic growth has been structured in ways that sustain U.S. strategic presence and influence, while constraining local economic development within the imperatives of broader geopolitical agendas (Oshiro 2025: 76).

Taken together, Smits' approach to ethnogenesis and identity, along with his analysis of imperial formations in the Ryukyu Kingdom and the Japanese Empire – and his more limited engagement with the structural implications of U.S. imperial power – becomes especially significant in the final pages. These analytical choices heavily inform one of his most important conclusions, shaping how he interprets the relationship between historical population dynamics and contemporary claims to Ryukyuan indigeneity. He argues that the Ryukyu Islands were inhabited by diverse Paleolithic and Neolithic populations that no longer exist as distinct groups, and that the most significant demographic shift occurred between the eleventh and twelfth centuries with the arrival of migrants from Korea and Japan, as well as smaller numbers of Mongols and Alans. On this basis, he concludes that

this complex population history "complicates the narrative of certain social activists who claim that there exists today a group of people that we could reasonably describe as indigenous Ryukyuans" (p. 416).

This assumption reveals that Smits' definition of indigeneity is limited to biological continuity or genealogical purity and overlooks how it is also constituted through historical notions of ancestry and land, as well as through processes of dispossession, marginalization, and resistance to colonial and imperial interests. In the case of the Ryukyus, dismissing contemporary indigenous claims through the lens of ancient population heterogeneity risks obscuring the historical processes through which such claims have emerged. The successive colonialisms of the Japanese Empire and U.S. military occupation have been central to shaping the conditions under which indigenous consciousness and epistemologies have emerged and continue to develop in Okinawa. The Ryukyuan people remain unrecognized as an indigenous group by Japan, and claims to indigeneity, while neither monolithic nor directly analogous to other indigenous frameworks, constitute an important dimension of culture, memory, political struggle, and self-understanding in Okinawa and across the Ryukyu Islands (Ginoza 2015; Chibana 2020; Oyakawa 2025; Heianna 2025).

This section of the book is also notable for the density and explicitness of its engagement with existing scholarship as Smits directly cites and debates other authors more than in earlier parts of the book. While this approach strengthens the chapter's historiographical grounding, it also raises a methodological question regarding the uneven distribution of citations across the volume. Earlier periods, for which sources are sparse, are often narrated with minimal explicit referencing, whereas the "modern period" (precisely the period for which substantial English-language literature exists) shows a more carefully situated scholarly dialogue. This contrast highlights how Smits tends to present his arguments regarding the earlier periods in a more authoritative and direct way, making claims without the same degree of explicit engagement with historiography.

Smits' work can be placed alongside a broader tradition of structural and political-economic histories of the Ryukyus and East Asia that have emphasized long-term causality, institutional developments, and regional integration (Kerr 2000 [1958], Akamine 2016). The book's principal contributions lie in its archaeological synthesis and diplomatic reinterpretations, many of which build directly on arguments developed in Smits' *Early Ryukyuan History* (2024). Moreover, his long engagement with Japanese historiography makes the volume a valuable resource for early-stage scholars and an important point of reference for readers seeking to

understand the foundational debates and interpretive frameworks that structure the more traditional approaches to Ryukyuan history. At the same time, the placement of references at the beginning of each part – rather than alongside the specific claims they support – undermines the book's pedagogical premise as an introductory "graduate-level textbook", limiting both its transparency and its utility for "interested readers" seeking to trace specific claims to their original bibliographical sources. Furthermore, his theoretical standpoint, although not clearly indicated by the author, shows a separation from more recent historiographical currents concerned with narrative, colonial epistemology, and historical subjectivity, which becomes increasingly significant in the later chapters of the volume where issues of identity and domination become more pressing.

In conclusion, this book constitutes a fairly orthodox contribution to a mainstream historical approach to Ryukyuan history. Its synoptic character can prove particularly useful for readers seeking an introduction grounded in materialist and structural analysis, and its attention to economic and institutional histories provides a coherent account that reflects the foundations of Smits' historiographical tradition. However, by remaining largely within an established structural-materialist framework, the book gives limited attention to claims from more recent scholarship that have highlighted questions of positionality, epistemology, or narrative authority. Examples of this issue can be seen in the book's prioritization of material and institutional sources over cultural productions such as local written sources (including the "official histories"), legends and myths, as well as in its reliance on English-language analytical categories rather than engaging with local conceptual vocabularies (pp. 88–89). While these methodological choices do align with a longer historiographical tradition, they also reproduce this tradition's constraints—particularly its tendency to privilege state-centered narratives and structural processes over narrative voice – and neglect Indigenous epistemologies (Smith 2012; Ginoza 2015, 2016). For the "modern period", this stance shows the relative marginalization of the ongoing material and social consequences of U.S. military domination and the contemporary base economy (Abe 2011; Mori 2023; Oshiro 2025), which represents less an interpretive error than a methodological constraint inherent to the analytical tradition in which Smits operates. Ultimately, Smits' approach can be understood as a moderate reassessment of well-established narratives surrounding Ryukyuan history within the limits of traditional historiography, with a limited engagement with recent historiographic trends.

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