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THE DRAMA OF DISILLUSIONMENT IN MODERN JAPANESE LITERATURE UNTIL 1923¹

THE MAIN PROBLEMS IN THE INTERPRETATION OF THE POETRY OF HAGIWARA SAKUTARŌ

INTRODUCTION

The outstanding Japanese poet Hagiwara Sakutarō (1st Nov. 1886—11th May 1942) has been called the "Japanese Baudelaire". This comparison contains both, the evaluation of the importance of his creation in the

¹ The term "modern literature" according to the majority of the specialists in Japanese literature embodies the literature of the end of the nineteenth century and of the whole twentieth century, that is the period marked by the influence of European civilization. Conventionally, three sub-periods, corresponding to the reign of the three emperors, are being distinguished: Meiji (1868—1912), Taishō (1912—1926), and Shōwa (since 1926—). In the chapter "The Drama of Disillusionment..." I am using two dates (as the limiting points), which require some explanation, 1910 and 1923. Here is the motivation:

Already at the very beginning, the year 1910 was marked by catastrophe. The forecast of an American astronomer did not come true (on the nineteenth of May Halley's comet and the Earth were to crash together) and two weeks after everybody had hove a sigh of relief, the event that caused anxiety and dismay took place in Japan. The press informed that the great plot attempting on the emperor's life had been liquidated (let us compare this fact with the almost general, at the time, cult of the emperor). Hardly anybody knew then that the majority of the active socialists (some hundred people) were arrested. Twelve people were executed in the following year. This year of terror witnessed the supreme development of naturalism and the development of such literary magazines as "Shrakaba" ("White Birch"), "Mita-bungaku" ("Literature of Mita"), "Shinshichō" ("New Currents") assembling the writers and the poets, the so-called antinaturalists, who in the course of the following years became most representative for the period.

The mentioned reasons prove, I think, that the year 1910, as a limiting point, is more suitable than the year 1912, the last year of Meiji period.

On the other hand, the year 1923 — I have chosen it, though not so well moti-

history of the twentieth century literature of this country and the suggestion of the existing internal similarities bringing together the two poets of different epochs and different as well as distant cultures. Detailed characterization of the poet's output does not constitute the aim of this paper². This study is rather going to be an attempt to present the lyrical hero (the term serves here to define a kind of synthesis of many lyrical subjects appearing in a given collection of poems, in several collections or even in the whole creation of the poet) and the basic, as we suppose, elements determining his character and image. In this case the lyrical hero is the result of gradual generalizations, the product of the synthesis of the particular "lyrical selves" of Hagiwara's poetic works, therefore being, in a way, the outline, the model character. The detailed analysis of the main poetic works and some of the essays of the author of *Tsuki-ni hoeru* (*I am Baying to the Moon*), left out completely in the present study, constituted the basis for this schematization.

Here are the main poetic volumes of Hagiwara: *Tsuki-ni hoeru* (*I am Baying to the Moon*, 1917); *Aoneko* (*Blue Cat*, 1923) and *Teihon-Aoneko* (*Standard edition-Aoneko*, 1936); *Chō-o yumemu* (*I am Dreaming about Butterfly*, 1923); *Junjō-shōkyoku-shū* (*Collection of Naïve Songs*, 1925) containing two parts: *Airensihihen* (*Erotics*) and *Kyōdo-bōkeishi* (*Poems about Homesickness*); *Hyōtō* (*Ice Island*, 1934).

HAGIWARA'S TRAGIC HERO

Basing on the analysis of style and themes, as well as structure and problems in *Aoneko* and the related collections I have separated, as the most important problem, the solitude of the hero who experiences this

vated, from the historical point of view—is not accidental. First of all, it is the year of the appearance of *Aoneko*, the second basic volume of Hagiwara's poetry. Secondly, in the year 1923 the great and real catastrophe, the earthquake, took place in Kantō paralyzing life of the whole metropolis for the period of nearly a year. The matters of culture became also secondary importance. In the third place, soon after the earthquake, the new repressions against the socialists, communists and the pogrom of the Koreans (provoked by the police) living in Japan began. This time the repressions did not frighten the socialists. The considerable activity of the working class can be observed, the intelligentsia veers round towards leftist ideologies. The so-called proletarian literature, extremely dynamic and rich literary and social movement, is born. One should not forget, however, about the precursory role of the magazine "Tanemaku hito" ("Sowere") published for the first time in 1921 and about the creation of the Japanese Communist Party in 1922.

² This is the final part of my doctor's thesis entitled *Literary Output of Hagiwara Sakutarō* written in 1968 under the supervision of Prof. Wiesław Kotański in the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Warsaw University.

situation as intrinsically contradictory, leading a man towards the inevitable total negation of the value of the world, where this situation has become not only possible but also unavoidable. Using several definite examples from the discursive religious, and emotional, as well as figurative layer of his poetic works, I have pointed out the group of problems determining the situation of the isolation and determined by this situation. I have stated that the long period of discouragement, irritation and disillusionment, the feelings which originated from the early phase of seeking for the sense and value of man's life, grew deeper as the years went by and as the new poems and volumes appeared.

The tragic, in its meaning, statement of the poet (to be more precise, of the lyrical hero), "I do not know where I go" (as confronted with the whole poetry) became, in the same time, the confession of a man who was completely lost, unaware of the sense and aim of his own existence. Utter despair, disbelief in everything, that everyday life defines and determines, followed. The past, the present, and the future were brought to the dimension of time and space common to the three of them; there were no values, there are no values, there will be no values which could constitute any reasonable basis of his (the lyrical hero's) existence.

All that does not mean that the hero himself consciously and totally denies the need of such values. On the contrary, his attitude expresses the unquestioned necessity of making his life sensible, meaning here, more human. Completely alienated from the community, he also experiences the strangeness of nature and is not able to control his own "ego"; yet he does not give up in building a link with some other man, with the community. He does not give up the hope of finding happiness, love, "girl", "mother", as he puts it. Yet, this aspiration remains in the sphere of dreams and illusions. He is not able to break outside his own world where solitude is the necessity. The fiction of illusions constitutes the only link with the external world of other people. The hero is fully aware of the absurdity of his own life and actions. He has the feeling of being in the wrong place and living in the wrong way. He knows, somewhere, other people are leading different kind of life, in a community, in a group, united by some common energy, aim or model of conduct. He does not claim that their life is full of sense. But it is better enough (at least, different) to make him desire to join the community (the community seen in this way). Yet the more he desires the deeper is his sense of solitude, the stronger his awareness of his own weakness (debility).

Sorrow, melancholy, wild illusions, mental and physical sufferings (desires) grow more difficult to overcome. Nothing happens in this solitary decaying world. Time seems to have stopped and transformed into the state of painfully experienced loneliness. Somewhere, not far from

him there seems to exist some different life, beautiful and, perhaps, happy. He is living in the outskirts of this world conscious of his own weakness and inability to perform any sensible deed. He cannot rebel, as he would have to rebel, first of all, against his own inner world. He is not tired of any activity, he is weary of idleness, as if forgotten by the others, unwanted by anybody. That is the present of the hero. The past was the line (the process) of degradation of certain values (faith, love, creative and beneficial mutual relations between people). There is no hope for better future either. Solitude, alienation, sorrow, melancholy become invariable and constant for the hero and determining his vision of the surrounding world. Solitude is the feeling he experiences everywhere: when facing nature, in the crowd, in town, and specially in his own room. From time to time the gloomy vision is brightened by the feeling of longing and the illusion of happiness he has experienced or is experiencing. Sometimes the Sun appears, but only just before sunset and then the world is plunged in darkness again.

He is a tragic hero, somehow, leading himself towards nothingness. He does not know why it is so but there is something that keeps him from being active, from making a step, even a desperate one, which would confirm his humanity and would allow him to stop on the way leading him to moral death. His passivity is not merely biological, it is conditioned not only by physical weakness (if physical weakness is of any importance at all in his situation), but mainly philosophical. Fatalism, understood here as a generalization of the negation of will and as freedom limited by external factors, lies at the basis of his attitude. Consequently (in the period of *Ice Island*) he adopts the "philosophy of resignation" as the only possible for him in his world of appearances (dream, illusion, nothingness), in his world devoid of any values.

Let this hero help us in some processes, which we would like to carry out on the new layer. I will try to summon his ancestors and his contemporaries who were the products of the same Japanese culture of the break of the nineteenth and the twentieth century and of the first quarter of the twentieth century.

FUTABATEI SHIMEI AND HIS CHARACTER UTSUMI BUNZŌ

We are going neither to discuss the works of the writer nor to define the works, we are interested in. Yet, let us pay attention to the main character of Futabatei's most important novel entitled *Ukimugo* (*Transitory Cloud*, 1887). This is a novel of particular importance in Japanese

literature as it opens the period of modern Japanese realistic prose and it has deeply influenced the later literary generations.

A young clerk Utsumi Bunzō is the main character of this novel, presenting life and contradictions in the period of violent social and cultural changes in Japan of eighteen eighties. Utsumi wants to be faithful to himself, to his own honesty and straightforwardness, he is unable of flattery and of fussing around. He loses his job in the office and the beloved woman leaves him persuaded by her mother to choose a man of resource, more cunning and selfish. Thus certain social phenomenon is clearly presented: the fate of the hero who cannot get adapted and has either to give up his convictions or to lose everything as he is socially conditioned. The presentation of the hero's personality contained some additional elements which were to turn out extremely strong and unabating in later literature. We mean here futile search for the hero's own way of living and his own place, as well as his lack of decision, his being quickly tired of life, his resignation and disillusionment leading him to the state of inability of performing any activity, the result being his retirement from active social life, thus, bringing solitude. The characters of Turgenev and Goncharov, especially Goncharov's characters certainly influenced the forming of that kind of Futabatei Shimei's heroes like Utsumi Bunzō.

Futabatei used to read and translate those writers and, as his critics say, he was undoubtedly influenced by them³. The author himself confirms this view, stating in the same time that his characters have been taken from the life of his own society. He did not imitate but, as he puts it, he created types⁴. It points to the fact that the author, apart from people dedicated to the construction of the new society, or those thinking only about setting up in the world and able to realize their own, though often limited aims, could also see people who were a wreck in spite of the general notion that the prevailing enthusiasm and belief in progress of the second half of the nineteenth century Japan should not give birth but to-optimists and active people. Nevertheless, in spite of the ruling ideology of these times (belief in progress and reason, in the sense of the performed work which was considered necessary and particularly important for the country) the break of the eighties and the nineties brought amongst the intelligentsia the first doubts, reluctance, inner rebellion which were also revealed in their activities. By the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century more and

³ Compare, e.g., H. G. Karlina, *Tvorcheskiye svyazi Hasegava Futabateya s russkoy literaturoy*, [in:] *Yaponskaya literatura*, Moskva 1959.

⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 42.

more artists have been suffering from disillusionment which becomes the distinctive feature of the consciousness of intelligentsia of the following years. Yet, as it has already been stated, the symptoms of this phenomenon could be noticed even in the end of the nineteenth century.

TRAGIC NATURE OF THE POET KITAMURA TŌKOKU (1868—1894)

The work and the story of the poet Kitamura is very representative of the problem that has been emphasized here. For several years Kitamura has been struggling with disillusionment and nihilism and finally, tired of doubts, hesitations and contradictions of life, committed suicide.

Kitamura's lyrical hero (compare, e.g., the poem *Soshū-no shi*, *Poems of the Imprisoned*, 1889), a rebelling man who is a wreck, is punished for his attempt to fight for his ideals. He is imprisoned and helpless, thus, his disillusionment and despair become even deeper. In *Hōraikyoku* (*A Song from the Legendary Country*, 1891) the hero negates life, curses it and appeals to death as the only way salvation, the only possibility of release from this evil and cruel world. The hero gives up fighting against this world and commits suicide, as did the poet himself some years later.

Inconspicuous, as far as the quantity was concerned, poetic heritage of Kitamura was of great importance in literature, as it became nearly a programme for the poets of the next generation who adopted the solitary attitude and the tragic resignation of Kitamura's hero. The rebellion and the attempt to struggle lost much of their power even with Kitamura's best friend and pupil Shimazaki Tōson in *Wakanashū* (*New Grass*, 1897) and after some years the theme of the struggle with reality, with the social phenomenon disappears nearly completely from the poetry of all outstanding writers, the most striking example of the entire lack of social conflict being that of Hagiwara's poetry where the hero gives up fighting from the very beginning. Kitamura and his heroes, on the other hand, are experiencing helplessness and disillusionments during their fight against antagonistic forces, particularly in the moment of defeat. Their disillusionment is motivated both, subjectively and objectively. As we remember the situation is quite different in the case of Hagiwara's hero who is representative of the years 1917—1923.

I am going to mention one more example of suicide committed in the result of inability of understanding life and bringing any sense in it. I mean here Fujimura Misao (1886—1903) who committed suicide at the beginning of the twentieth century hurling himself into the waterfall Kagon in Nikkō. It is not important for us whether the above mentioned reason for the suicide was really the only one and whether it was precisely the same as formulated in the preceding lines. The important

thing is the reaction of the Japanese society, at large, to the suicide of the eighteen years old student of the Department of Literature. The event had wide repercussions as the annalists of the epoch recorded⁵. A notice consisting of 140 signs engraved by Fujimura on the trunk of a tree growing on the rock (*Gantō-no kan: Experiences on the Mountain Top*) impressed deeply his contemporaries and has been a subject of conversations for a long time. Soon after Fujimura, many young people from among philosophizing youth tried to make away with themselves. This kind of news often appeared in the columns of the papers; Kaneko Mitsuharu, a poet and a critic, was also writing about it in his history of disillusionment⁶.

Thus both, Utsumi Bunzō and the tragic hero of Kitamura (and Kitamura himself), the first one representing, in a sense, the beginning of the modern prose, the latter — the beginning of modern Japanese poetry, were the symptomatic phenomenon, having consequences in later literary creation as well as in the general intellectual formation of Japanese intelligentsia. The mentioned heroes and the real persons: Fujimura and Kitamura, have been alive in the minds of the authors and in the consciousness of numerous circles of readers for a long time. They created some kind of examples of social conduct, they enriched the repertoire of model characters of the later literary works. The myth-making features of "Fujimura's fate" cannot be questioned. "The Case of Fujimura", the man who preferred death to the adaptation to the incomprehensible and hostile world, became a sign, its connotation being, nevertheless, neither clear nor definite. He became a symbol of disillusioned personality unable to overcome despair and confusion in the world. In the same time it became some tragic symptom preying on the minds of Japanese intelligentsia.

THE DISILLUSIONED CHARACTERS OF NATSUME SŌSEKI (1867—1916)

Let us return to the literary characters of the beginning of the twentieth century. Natsume Sōseki, the outstanding writer, is now considered the classical author of Japanese literature.

The main character of the majority of his works (at least of the

⁵ Even in the newer dictionary of modern Japanese literature (ed. Meiji-shoin, 1965) a separate entry is devoted to him. A considerable influence of this event on literature compared to that of Japanese-Chinese and Japanese-Russian wars, the trial and execution of the socialists (1910—1911), the death of the emperor Meiji, the suicide of general Nogi, is being stressed.

⁶ Kaneko Mitsuharu, *Zetsubō-no seishinshi (Intellectual History of Disillusionment)*, Kōbunsha, Tokyo 1965, p. 61.

novels: *Sanshirō*, *Sorekara*, *Mon*, *Kōjin* and *Kokoro*) is experiencing the painful feeling of disillusionment, solitude in the course of his everyday life. The title character of the novel *Sanshirō*, experiences disillusionment as he has been crossed in love, Daisuke in the novel *Sorekara* and Sōsuke in *Mon* have some features in common, their ways towards disillusionment are similar. The older the character, the greater his disappointment, despair, solitude.

The main character of the novel *Mon* (*The Gate*, 1910) tries to find escape in faith. But the faith, religion, does not prevent him from bitterness and disillusionment. In spite of his humility, honesty and intelligence he cannot find a place for himself and is not able to defeat suffering. The final image of the novel is symbolic⁷. Sōsuke goes to the buddhist temple *zen* in Kamakura in order to find out the sense of his own existence thus releasing himself from his mental solitude. Yet, his attempt is a failure. After ten days he left the temple, returned to Tokyo and started to reflect upon his unsuccessful attempt. He looked at himself from a distance and interpreted the situation, he had got into, in a symbolic way. Here is the image (in form of interior monologue) having basic meaning in this novel.

Sōsuke is standing in front of the gate and asks for the gate to be opened. Nobody is coming. "Do not knock, open it yourself" — somebody is telling him. But Sōsuke is standing in front of the gate, lacking courage both, to come in and to leave. He is one of those unhappy heroes who, as the narrator puts it, have to stand at the gate unable to move and are patiently waiting for the time when the end of their days comes⁸.

The main character of the novel *Kōjin* (*Passers-by*, 1914)⁹, which is a kind of big treatise on human solitude, is still looking for the way out and is trying to escape disillusionment. He seems to see three solutions facing him: madness, faith or death. Faith, however, as in the case of the main character of *Mon*, cannot be accepted by Ichirō, the main character in *Passers-by*¹⁰. Certain symptoms of madness are even increasing his sense of solitude. Practically, neither madness, nor faith can liberate man from his drama of solitude. Thus, as Ichirō says, only death is left for him. To live means to remain in constant unrest and suffering. "Our anxiety is the result of the progress of science. Science does not

⁷ Compare, E. McClellan, *The Implication of Soseki's Kokoro*, "Monumenta Nipponica" (MN), Tokyo 1958—1959, Vol. XIV, No. 3—4.

⁸ Compare, *Sōseki-zenshū*, Vol. 9, *Mon*, Iwanami-shoten, Tokyo 1956, pp. 191—192.

⁹ The novel *Kōjin* for the first time issued in numbers in the columns of "Asahi-shimbun" in the years 1912—1913.

¹⁰ Compare, *Sōseki-zenshū*, Vol. 11, *Kōjin*, p. 307.

know where to stop and does not allow us to stop" ¹¹. In this way the author is explaining the cause of anxiety experienced by Japanese intelligentsia of his times. Yet, in the same way as his characters, he cannot see any reasonable solutions, after all, escape or death are the admission of their defeat.

The hero is looking for some support in life, he is trying to find the sense of life. The question "What are we living for" belongs to the basic problems, still nobody can answer it, and the hero's life remains full of anxiety and suffering ¹².

Sensei (Teacher, Master) and his young friend, who is acting as a narrator, are the main characters of the famous novel *Kokoro* (*The Heart*, 1914). During one of the first conversations with his new acquaintance, student-narrator ("I"), Sensei is speaking frankly. He says, "Watashi-wa sabishii ningen-descu" ("I am a sorrowful man", also: "experiencing solitude") ¹³. Later on he states that he does not believe people, he does not even trust himself: "Ningen zentai-o shin'yō-shinai... Watakushi-wa watakushi-jishin-sae shin'yō-shite inai-no-desu" ¹⁴. As he does not trust and believe people (genetic motivation of this attitude is provided in the novel) he is not able to break out from his isolated world. He knows his wife cannot understand him and is suffering seeing him isolated from life and people. Nevertheless, he does not try to confess what he has on his mind, his inner drama rooted in his sense of guilt, thus he is suffering in solitude.

Sensei feels responsible for the suicide of his friend K. with whom he had studied. He thought he had played him a dirty trick proposing to a woman to whom K. had declared his love. Yet as the passing time was increasing his sense of alienation in the surrounding world he has arrived at the conclusion that K., a solitary man, had committed suicide, as solitude he had been experiencing became too painful for him to endure. Several years of despair, stumbling in the situation of conflict between ideal and reality ¹⁵, inability to find sense in his own life devoid of any possibility of fulfilling his dreams, recognition of his own weakness brought K. to the complete negation of himself. When thinking about the causes of his friend's death Sensei became suddenly aware of the fact that his own way of living differs in no respect from that of K. Since that time he himself started to think about suicide ¹⁶.

¹¹ *Ibidem*, pp. 293—294.

¹² *Ibidem*.

¹³ *Sōseki-zenshū*, Vol. 11, *Kokoro*, p. 18.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 32.

¹⁵ Compare *ibidem*, pp. 12, 201 and 228.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 228.

Thus the whole novel is a story of Teacher's disillusionment and narrator's growing solitude, isolation, and alienation. Teacher tells his young friend: "Solitude is the price we all have to pay for being born in this epoch of freedom, independence and our (egoistic) ego" ("Jiyū-to doku-ritsu-to onore-to-ni michita gendai-ni umareta wareware-wa sono gisei-to shite minna kono sabishimi-o ajiwawanakute-wa naranai-deshō")¹⁷.

We need not take this statement literally. History does not confirm the excess of freedom and independence in those years (about 1912). Historical facts seem to be a proof of the just opposite state or they at least point out that man was free so far until his behaviour did not evoke the suspicion that he could threaten the authoritatively established social and political order. Nevertheless, we are not to decide whether the sense of solitude was born because of the excess or because of the lack of freedom. One should only remember that the characters of *Kokoro* were living in the years 1911—1912, in the time when Japan was shocked by the two events of different nature, yet equally important for the intellectual state of Japanese intelligentsia. The former was the arrest, the trial, behind closed doors (1910) and death penalty (1911) of the twelve¹⁸ socialists, the members of the, pretendedly, conspiratorial group, who were accused of the attempt on the emperor's life. The writer Kōtoku Shūsui (Denjirō) and his wife were among them. The arrests all over the country, the mentioned trial and the execution were meant to frighten all looking forward to the reform of social and political life. Consequently, even naturalistic writers gave up social matters and started to deal with the inner life of man. The other event, emperor Meiji's death, shook the basis of the relative order and sense of safety of the Japanese. The emperor's death gave rise to the feeling of uncertainty and sorrow for the epoch of which emperor Meiji had become a symbol. This problem pervaded also the writer Natsume and was reflected in his novel *Kokoro*. Even the main character's fate became conditioned by this external event. Sensei was feeling so much bound with the passing epoch that the emperor's death constituted the additional stimulus forcing him to commit the deed he had been thinking about, to commit suicide.

The sense of the loss in the world, disillusionment, and solitude are presented in the works of the so-called naturalists (Tayama, Mesamune, Tokuda, and others), those feelings are also experienced by the writer Akutagawa (who committed suicide in the year 1927), and by the charac-

¹⁷ *Sōseki-zenshū*, Vol. 11, *Kokoro*, p. 33.

¹⁸ January 1911 out of twenty six persons brought to court, twenty four were sentenced to death, but on the following day the decision concerning twelve of them was changed for life sentence.

ters of many other writers. Those feelings are present both, with Shiga Naoya (*Kinosaki-nite*, In *Kinosaki*, 1917; *Wakai*, *Reconciliation*, 1917; *An'ya-kōro*, *The Way in the Darkness of the Night*, 1922) and with Satō Haruo (*Den'en-no yūutsu*, *Rustic Melancholies*, 1919; *Tokai-no yūutsu*, *Town Melancholy*, 1922), that is, with the writers who publish their works parallelly to Hagiwara. In the same way as the author of *I am Baying to the Moon*, yet unlike the writers of the break of the nineteenth and the twentieth century, they isolate their characters from the political and social problems. The matters of the country or of the motherland seem non-existent for them. They seem utterly alienated from the contemporary society and its fluctuations.

Any scholar has to be puzzled by the reasons of this state. I suppose that the crisis of values in the conditions of the tyrannous totalitarian political system constitutes the main cause. This crisis was experienced by the poet Kitamura, the writers Natsume, Akutagawa, Shiga and Hagiwara to mention the most representative names. This crisis became characteristic of the intelligentsia mainly, which was connected with intelligentsia's not being directly involved in the creation of the "powerful and rich country" or in the development of industry and trade. Thus intelligentsia of this period stood apart and had no possibility of influencing the national policy and economy.

In the first decades of the Meiji period (1868—1888) the new-born intelligentsia was of great importance and was aware of its social usefulness. Translations of literature, original works were to serve the creation of the new society and the new country. They believed that every effort is for the cause ("for the emperor", "for the country"). Besides, by this class, with extreme passion and faith, has been adopted the European culture. The intelligentsia conceived of finding there the answers to all questions, both, of practical and theoretical character. First of all "how to live?", then "what to live for?". European literature could not answer all those questions. It taught reflecting over oneself, over one's fate. It taught looking at oneself, seeking for the basic rule of life, and for the measure of value in oneself¹⁹. The European literature implanted the basis of the liberal bourgeois individualism, which incidentally introduced a lot of confusion, as it has not been always properly understood. Here, we have in mind the problem which Japanese historians of literature and philosophy have called the "awakening of individuality" and personal "ego", already referring to Utsumi Bunzō, the main character of

¹⁹ E.g., the main character of the novel *Kōjin* claims that for himself he is everything, he is the absolute ("Kami-wa jiko-da...", "God is me...", "Boku-wa zettai-da...", "I am the absolute"; compare, *op. cit.*, p. 318).

Ukigumo. European literature has taught Japan to ask questions concerning the sense, the aim of life and human activity in general. Then everything ceased to be so clear and certain as it used to be. Deeply rooted sense of duty to the feudal lord, emperor and the country starts to arouse certain doubts, which cannot be expressed, openly, which are absolutely beyond argument. In this period (that is in the second half of the nineteenth century), however, there still exists extremely definite and genuine interest in the country, motherland and society connected mainly with the nationalistic tendency of the first half of Meiji period. This interest disappears in the literary works of the beginning of the Taishō period.

Yet, in this case where are we to look for the sense and the aim of life? Kitamura Tōkoku was searching for it in Christian religion and in ideal platonic love. Natsume Sōseki, on the other hand, has been already analyzing the symptoms of "neurosis"²⁰, as he called it, and he did not suggest the best, according to him, solution to his protagonist. He pointed certain possibilities, none of which could dispel the doubts, overcome disillusionment and the feeling of solitude. Thus they were left with their more and more senseless existence, a mask on their faces (pretended satisfaction with the appearances of life or death). Death, however, did not diminish the unhappiness of people with whom the character, when alive, could not communicate (e.g. *Kokoro*).

After the year 1911 Nagai Kafū (after the execution of the socialist group) gave up the exploration of the contemporary and began to present people and their loneliness. His characters can see the sense of life in the art of the passed epoch (the writer himself is focusing his interest on the past).

Naturalists²¹ (Tayama Katai, Tokuda Shūsei, Shimazaki Tōson), though occasionally handle the problems of social life and social activity of man (struggle with the feudal relics), make the majority of their characters experience the conflicts of biological nature, instincts, desires, or those mystical by nature, religion, philosophy, in the closed world of inner personality. Even if the events of the outer world coincide with their personal problems in the above mentioned dimension, it still remains merely the conflict of their own psyche, not the objectively existing conflict. Having fallen a prey to the instincts of desire, unaware of the sense

²⁰ Because of the rapid social and cultural changes the Japanese people, as Sōseki put it, became the nation of neuropaths (see, e.g., McClellan, *op. cit.*, p. 123).

²¹ Compare the discussion of Japanese naturalism and the specific features of this trend in: O. Benl, *Naturalism in Japanese Literature*, MN, vol. IX: 1953, pp. 1—33.

of their own existence they suffer, doubt everything and become nihilists. They do not try to act, they remain indifferent. They suffer passively or lead a quiet life observing plants and animals or man's nature. The main characters of the mentioned works are resigned people. Buddhist conception of resignation can be easily detected at the basis of their attitudes, the inclination to the superficial acceptance being the result on the other hand. This peculiar tendency of the Japanese to assume a passive attitude towards the political system of that time, the tendency to submit to the course of life, enables to understand other characters discussed in this paper, representing Japanese intelligentsia of the first quarter of the twentieth century. This tendency also partly explains the passive attitude of Hagiwara's lyrical hero. This hero, as we remember, experienced his dreams and desires, occasionally he even wanted to act but he had given up before he made the first move.

There arises the question why the writers and the poets (or even intelligentsia as a whole) of the end of Meiji period and of the first half of Taishō period (until 1923) avoided social and, above all, political problems. For example, so serious an event as the annexation of Korea, the problems of Korean-Japanese relations twenty one demands of China, Siberian intervention or rice rebellions failed to call forth a response in the writers' works. These subjects did not appear in literature; moreover, the writers avoided all political plots²². This fact is stressed by Yanagida Izumi, Uehara Senroku, Katsumoto Seiichirō, Ino Kenji, the participants of the discussion on the literature of Taishō period. The discussion was published in book form²³. They claim (especially Ino's opinion, p. 26) that the authority of the state was beyond dispute and the writers, in advance, judged their own helplessness and inability of polemics. One can agree with this view. Yet, one should have all additional factors in mind. First of all, writers and poets did not seem to notice this authority of the state as if they were living outside the sphere of its influence. Neither did they notice the fundamental changes occurring in the nationalism of the twentieth century resulting in its being transformed into the expansive jin-goism. Yet, until the end of the nineteenth century the writers used to be active partakers of the events, not passive observers.

Only some of them felt that they were sharing the responsibility for the state of things and they became aware of their duty to express the

²² Together with the creation of the so-called proletarian literature after the year 1923 some writers were dealing with those problems, yet few of those works outlived their time.

²³ Utsumi Yoshimi, *Taishō-bungakushi, Zadankai*, Iwanami-shoten, Tokyo 1965.

ideas agreeing with their own conscience. We should remember here about the so-called "novel of ideas" (*kannen-shōsetsu*) of the period of the Japanese-Chinese war, about the so-called social novel (*shakai-shōsetsu*) of the break of the twentieth century, and about the journalistic and literary work of Kōtoku Denjirō (pseud. Shūsui) and Katayama Sen who were condemning wars and social oppression. Neither can we overlook the *Collection of Socialist Poems* (*Shakaishugi-shishū*) dating from the year 1903. The collection was prohibited to be spread. Again in the year 1904, the outstanding lyrical poetess Yosano Akiko came out with her famous anti-war poem entitled *Do not Die, My Dear* (*Kimi shinitamau koto nakare*). The above examples are the evidence of the awakening of the Japanese artists' interest in the important social and political problems at the beginning of the twentieth century. The trend was, certainly, rather weak but, nevertheless, since the end of the nineteenth century growing more and more important in the intellectual life of the intelligentsia. In this context the poetic (lyrical) and journalistic work of Ishikawa Takuboku is particularly valuable. This innovator in the domain of *tanka*, in spite of his poverty, and weak health sang the beauty of his land, his love for the people, his belief in the sense of life and truth. He wrote about the difficult lot of Japanese peasants and did not avoid political subjects. In his articles and essays he condemned evil dominating the country. When in the year 1910 the arrests began, when in the year 1911 Kōtoku Shūsui²⁴, his wife and ten other socialists were executed, Ishikawa Takuboku did not hesitate to declare himself against the injustice and the cruelty of the state. Another writer, Tokumi Roka²⁵, was even more categorical in his pronouncement. Returning to Ishikawa's attitude in *Jindai-heisoku-no genjō* (*Present State of Stagnation of the Epoch*²⁶, 1910) he is criticizing naturalism and is demanding that literature should have critical attitude towards reality. Yet, the development of Japanese literature after Ishikawa's death (in the year 1912) took a course different from that, recommended by the author of popular until to-day lyrical collections *Ichiaku-no suna* (*A Handful of Sand*, 1910), *Kanashiki gangu* (*Sad Toys*, 1912) and *Yobiko-to kuchibue* (*Hooter and a Whistle*, 1911).

²⁴ Compare G. D. Ivanova, *Osnovy cherty literaturnogo stila Kotoku*, [in:] *Yaponskaya literatura. Issledovaniya y materialy*, Moskva 1959, pp. 56—68.

²⁵ The repercussion of this cruel event in the works of the writers of this period is discussed, among others, by a literary historian, critic and journalist Utsumi Yoshimi in his book entitled *Taishō-bungakushi* (*History of the Literature of Taishō Period*), Chikuma-shobō, Tokyo 1963, pp. 5—18; Tokutomi Roka, see p. 11.

²⁶ Compare the translation of the fragment in *Istoriya sovremennoy yaponskoy literatury* (original title, *Nihon-no gendai-bungakushi*, San'ichi-shobō, Tokyo 1954), Moskva 1961, p. 151.

In the years 1910—1920 most of the artists seem to be only passive witnesses, not interested in politics. Just in Taishō period the awareness of the writer's professional distinction, the awareness of specialization are born. Thus, the argumentation: dealing with politics is the job of the politicians not of the writers. Art cannot perform any utilitarian tasks (e.g., popularity of the adopted from Europe motto "art for art's sake"). The aim of art is to capture the sense of life. What is it concerned with, in this case? First of all, it deals with the inner (mental), biological, and moral life of man as confronted to the life of nature and family relations. Family and home, not society (class), not social phenomena, are the main factors conditioning the character's life. His fate, thus, depends on his family relations; conflicts of the generations (father-son) and conflicts of sex (specially husband — wife) become the first and fundamental reasons of disillusionment, anxiety and alienation. E.g. serious conflict between the father and the son as the representatives of the two epochs, Meiji and Taishō, was at this time the actual conflict. Kaneko Mitsuharu²⁷, cited in this paper, is mentioning many examples from his own experience and observation. Literature provides many patterned situations of this type, giving also the examples of the hero's suffering and anxiety which are motivated by this conflict. When reading Natsume Shimazaki, Tayama, Masamune, Shiga and others we are following the stories of the tormented characters looking for the way out and the solution of their conflicts. The characters leave their homes, search for tranquillity in contemplation, in the open, in traditional art cut off from the contemporary, in religion, philosophy or in the extreme cases in death either aimed at or fulfilled (suicide). Hagiwara has also experienced this conflict.

Let us consider again the attitudes of intelligentsia from a different point of view. We will notice that the correspondence between those attitudes and the pattern of the disillusioned and seeking salvation hero is extremely clear.

In the beginnings of Taishō period peculiar popularity of the new religious sects and the revival of the old ones can be observed amongst intelligentsia. We should mention here, first of all, ōmoto-kyō (Knowledge about the Great Beginning)²⁸ proclaiming spiritual revolution, ittōen (The

²⁷ *Zetsubō-no seishinshi*.

²⁸ Ōmoto or ōmoto-kyō (Knowledge About the Great Beginning) a sect founded in 1892 was the most popular between the Wars (about two million adherents). "The great world will blossom as plum-tree flowers in early spring. The world will be reconstructed and converted into the Kingdom of Heaven under the protection of the Only Rulling God" — here is the basic assumption of the foundress of the sect Deguchi Nao (explanation and quotation after: H. Thomsen, *The New*

Garden under a Lantern)²⁹, and its spiritual leader Nishid Tenkō, the revival of the sects jōdo (Pure Land)³⁰, nichiren³¹, and the rise of interest in zenism³². The increasing interest in Christianity (popularity of the "biblical stories")³³ and the abundance of religious literature are also very significant³⁴. Tolstoy's popularity in those times is also explained by religious reasons, his works were supposed to provide the new interpretation of Christianity³⁵. Intellectual attitude, of the peculiar interest in great systems and ideologies motivating the sense and the aim of human existence, was dominating in this period. Similarly, Hagiwara in his early period, before the publication of *Tsuki-ni hoeru*, devoted much attention and set his hopes on Christianity.

Apart from religion, philosophy was also very popular, especially the European philosophy. Neo-Kantism (Eucken), translations of Nietzsche, Schopenhauer, then of Bergson reach Japan. Literary youth reads Nie-

Religions of Japan, Charles E. Tuttle Company, Rutland, Vermont, Tokyo, 1963, p. 132). Ōmoto is also translated as the "great basis" (compare, W. K o t a ń s k i, *The Outline of the Religious History of Japan*, Warszawa 1963, p. 138).

²⁹ Ittōen (The Garden Under a Lantern), religious sect preaching altruism, submission to the will of God, simplicity, lack of individual, private property. The cult had zenist basis though the adherents of this sect could abide by the cult of their previous religion (compare T h o m s e n, *op. cit.*, p. 224).

³⁰ Jōdo-shū, the buddhist sect of Pure Land (according to the amidistic conceptions of „western paradise where Buddha Amida is living”) founded by Genkū in the twelfth century. The teachings of this sect were not complicated, thus eagerly adopted. Jōdo-shinshū, "True Knowledge of the Pure Land", buddhist sect organized after the death of its actual founder Shinran. The faith in the unlimited mercy of Amida constitutes the assumption of this sect. The monks belonging to the sect, following the example of Shinran, rejected celibacy and fasts.

³¹ Nichiren, buddhist monk, reformer of religion (living in the years 1222—1282), founder of hokke-shū (the sect of the Flower of the Law). *Sutra of the Lotus of the Law* (*Myōhōrenge-kyō*, Sanskrit *Saddharmapundarika-sutra*) is the basic text of the sect. According to the assumption of this sect the full of faith repetition of the title *Sutra of the Lotus of the Law* is enough to achieve salvation. Nichiren-shū is the other name for hokke-shū ("shū", means "sect", a religious "school").

³² Zenism (from "zen", buddhist meditation), a trend within Buddhism, based upon intuitionism, recommending meditation as a way towards illumination equal to the liberation out of the circle of incarnations (reincarnation). Explanations 29, 30, 31 are based upon W. K o t a ń s k i, *The Outline of the Religious History of Japan*, see Dictionary compiled by J. Tobaczyńska.

³³ See, e.g., *Shin'yaku* (*The New Testament*, 1921) and *Kyūyaku* (*The Old Testament*), the former in a form of a story, the latter in a form of an essay rather, by E b a r a K o y a t a, writer belonging to the "White Birch" group.

³⁴ e.g., *Shisen-o koete* (*I Have Passed the Barrier of Death*, 1920), *Taiyō-o uru mono* (*Shooting at the Sun*, 1921) by K a g a w a T o y o h i k o, religious and social agitator, translator and writer.

³⁵ Compare *Taishō-bungakushi*, *Zadankai*, Iwanami-shoten, Tokyo 1965, pp. 27—28.

tzsche and Neo-Kantists. From Neo-Kantism they pass to Schopenhauer and Bergson. Native philosophers are also active, among them Nishida Kitarō, one of the greatest Japanese philosophers of the twentieth century ³⁶.

The young generation of the men of letters of Taishō period (specially until the year 1923) was living in the world of ideas rather than in the real world ³⁷. Writers, poets, philosophers were reflecting above all on the meaning of such categories as love, life, happiness, God. They were looking for the answer to their question about the aim of life, yet they could not find it. Thus, disillusionment which was the starting point of this philosophical quest did not diminish, on the contrary, it was growing deeper. The conviction that "life is tragic" formulated by Nishida in his diary as a fundamental conclusion of some tens of years of his own experiences, was growing stronger ³⁸.

The anarchist and socialist theories and ideologies exercised very strong influence at the beginning of the twentieth century. As soon as the government suppressed the interests, the members of intelligentsia ceased to be interested in the ideologies which advocated the necessity of undertaking some action, they started to withdraw from social and political problems (which, nevertheless, had not interested them very much) ³⁹. "Dangerous thoughts" were persecuted by the authorities. The fact that the participation and possibility of expressing one's opinion in social and political matters were given up did not eliminate the distressing problems from the individual's life. An individual is forced to experience and ponder passively within his own, personal life. Those processes take place in the family circle full of conflicts, where the struggle between the old ethics, morals and customs was particularly strong (especially amongst intelligentsia) ⁴⁰.

³⁶ Compare G. Piovesana, *Main Trends of Contemporary Japanese Philosophy*, MN, Vol. XI: 1955, No. 2 (on the subject of Nishida see pp. 64—65); H. Waldenfels, *Absolute Nothingness. Preliminary Consideration on a Central Notion in the Philosophy of Nishida Kitarō and the Kyoto School*, MN, Vol. XXII: 1966, No. 3—4, pp. 354—391.

³⁷ *Taishō-bungakushi*, p. 28.

³⁸ Compare L. Knauth, *Life is Tragic. The Diary of Nishida Kitarō*, MN, Vol. XX: 1964, No. 3—4, p. 336.

³⁹ For the limited sphere of the problems of home (or family) exhausted the whole attention of the writer.

⁴⁰ Kaneko Mitsuharu, in the cited work, enumerates and discusses many tragic situations caused by the conflict father—son (compare the accounts on p. 75 and on the following pages). The majority of the literary works of the so-called naturalists (about 1905—1914) is, more or less, devoted to the conflicting problems of the family (home).

In this social and ideological situation, when ancient feudal values were denied and the new ones (that could be adopted as their own) did not exist when the individualistic and egocentric attitude of intelligentsia⁴¹ did not allow them to act and to express freely their opinions concerning political problems of their country, nothing was left but plunging in the world of ideas, mainly, imported from Europe⁴². Here are the reasons of the extreme popularity of philosophy and religion in this period. Various propositions of the spiritual regeneration of man and society formulated by religious agitators and artists (writers, poets) were the expression of the positive search, the attempt of salving man from anxiety and disillusionment tormenting him.

Writing, journalistic, and social activity of the members of the "Shirakaba" group ("White Birch") founded in 1910 was of great importance as far as those matters were concerned. Mushakōji Saneatsu, Arishima Takeo, Shiga Naoya and (for a short time) Takamura Kōtarō — those are the names of some members of this group. Confirming their faith in the sense of human life (affirmation of man, nature) the members of the group advocated the necessity of developing the best sides of man so that people would live by the whole of their being, the wholeness of life would be achieved⁴³. E. g. Mushakōji claimed that there existed some will above the individual will ("superindividual will", "jinrui-no ishi", "shizen-no ishi")⁴⁴, which is realized harmoniously by the process of the individual's self-improvement. He thought that an ordinary man adapts himself to his society while an outstanding one adapts the society to himself (cult of great individuality). He is dreaming of the ideal harmonious community (e.g. the attempt of creating an utopian village "atarashiki mura" — "new village" — in 1918). Mushakōji's or Arishima's literary works, however, did not have the power of expression of Sōseki's or Akutagawa's creation. Justice, goodness, happiness, love or harmonious development of man's personality remained abstract categories cut off from the important and conflicting social situations. The heroes were

⁴¹ E.g., one of the characters of the novel *Kōjin* is advising the main character to forget about himself as it would be more convenient and better. The intention of the adviser is that such attitude would diminish the main character's anxiety (see: *Kōjin*, pp. 325—326).

⁴² This is the additional, very important cause of the disillusionment of intelligentsia, who rejected their own tradition for the European one. Having not found answers to their questions in the illusive European tradition intelligentsia returned to the pure Japanese philosophy and culture.

⁴³ Compare *Istoriya sovremennoy yaponskoy literatury*, p. 199.

⁴⁴ Inagaki Tatsurō, *Kindai-nihon bungaku-no jūbō* (*Aspects of Contemporary Japanese Literature*), Miraisha, Tokyo 1957, article entitled *Shirakaba-no sobyō* (*Sketches on Shirakaba*), p. 35.

not free from doubts and disappointment. The artist could not break away from the drama of solitude which was typical of the majority of the great writers and poets of the years 1910—1923. In spite of the noble ideals expressed in the columns of the paper "Shrakabe", in spite of the numerous works in praise of man, the artists themselves turned out to be too weak to break the conflicts that were preying on their minds. Arishima Takeo, one of the main representatives of the group, the author of *Aru onna* (*A Woman*), committed suicide in 1923. The last issue of the "White Birch" appears in this very year. The group breaks up.

After the year 1923 the increase of the new social and cultural phenomena can be observed⁴⁵. The sense of life is discovered in action, in the affirmation of active existence, in the struggle for the improvement of the situation of the classes suffering most painfully from social injustice. There appear new groups of writers, poets, playwrights and artists who see the fundamental sense of art (and literature) in its being involved in (and in its serving) the fight aiming at the change of social relations⁴⁶. Within few years there appears an extremely dynamic tendency to the so-called proletarian literature which until the year 1933 was one of the most important among all the cultural and social phenomena in Japan. Under the influence of this literature very important changes

⁴⁵ This is not the place for more detailed historical reflections. Yet at least some short explanation seems necessary. In the period in question the year 1918 should be specially considered from the viewpoint of social and economical history. This year marks the beginning of the new social and economical situation. World War I turned out to be very profitable for Japan. The years 1914—1918 were the period of prosperity. The end of the war brought the general depression. The so-called rice rebellions and strikes were spreading over the country. In the same time, to a high degree under the influence of the October Revolution, the revival of the interest in socialism and Marxism can be noticed together with the first evidence of the organizing workers' movements. Meanwhile, a part of intelligentsia does not remain indifferent to the changes in Russia and to the atmosphere in the post-war Europe. The leftist ideological tendencies, however, became of special importance only after the year 1923.

It clearly means that the division into periods taking into account social and economical data, the date of the end of World War I cannot be left out. On the other hand, although some scholars are using this date, I have serious objections against applying this limiting point to Japanese literature and culture at large as there is no valid motivation here.

⁴⁶ Already in the year 1921, in the declaration of the magazine "Tanemaku hito" ("La Semanto") struggle for the truth (that is "the truth of the revolution", the last word was crossed out by censorship) becomes the main aim of the group of writers and social workers presided by Komaki Ōmi who had been inspired by the ideas of Barbusse's group Clarté. See N. Y. Feldman, *Iz istorii yaponkogo proletarskogo literaturnogo dvizheniya*, [in:] *Yaponskaya literatura*, p. 155.

take place in the attitudes of the "non-proletarian" writers, the new tendencies and groups of writers who have to become aware of the occurring changes and to assume some (new) attitude toward them start to emerge. This, however, is the separate chapter in the history of Japanese literature and it does not come into the scope of this paper.

Hagiwara wrote his most important poetic works before the year 1923, when the above mentioned tendencies were still in their preliminary stage being of no importance in public life. For Hagiwara, as well as for the majority of his contemporary artists, those tendencies did not exist. Naturalism and the so-called "novel about oneself" were the phenomena Hagiwara, according to his convictions, constantly condemned. Yet, it does not mean that his conception of the hero was contrary to that of naturalism. Those heroes have, in fact, much in common, specially the already mentioned categories: disillusionment, resignation, solitude. These categories are also valid for many other writers of Hagiwara's times opposing naturalism, e.g. Natsume Sōseki, the creator of the modern Japanese psychological novel. Mori Ōgai apart from Sōseki the greatest writer of this period, actively engaged in educational work, was also against naturalism. In his works dating from the years 1909—1912 he created a hero whose strong will and fortitude condition his attitude and who is decided to overcome the greatest obstacles in order to achieve his aim (the hero modelled on the traditional *samurai* attitude) whereas the writers of the "White Birch" group presented their hero as an idealist, full of humanitarian ideals, characterized by his aspiration to achieve the specifically understood wholeness of life. Hagiwara's hero, on the other hand, is a completely passive and weak man, convinced of the unattainability (for himself) of happiness, of the impossibility of finding any aim.

I have presented the characters and tendencies, both, related and opposed to the trend which is basic for many considerations. I was trying to show, in short, the way in which the drama of disillusionment and solitude visible in the literary works of the end of the nineteenth century gradually with the passing years of the beginning of the twentieth century was becoming the essential problem of the increasing number of works, writers or the whole tendencies. I have shown that the described pattern of the hero is most prominent in the years 1910—1923. If we remember that Hagiwara published his first volume in the year 1917 (his experiments with *tanka* form apart his poems had appeared in papers already in 1913, when he was a fully fledged artist), we notice that his development took place just in the years of the special increase in literature of the problems in question. The discussed works of the greatest writer

of the time Natsume Sōseki date from the years 1910—1914. We know that Hagiwara was reading them and was deeply moved by the question about the aim of life, the question which was repeated in different forms on the pages of *Passers-by* (*Kōjin*).

We also know that Nietzsche, Schopenhauer, Poe, Baudelaire, Dostoyevski belonged to Hagiwara's favourite readings. He could chose some other writers and it is possible that he was reading other authors as well. Yet "the great pessimists" impressed him (and not only him) very much and left their mark on his works. Still, I do not doubt that the origin of the disillusioned and solitary hero should not be looked for in those works, though their importance in the formulation of the torment of the contemporary man in Japan cannot be questioned. Later on, I have stated that the disillusionment of intelligentsia, the patterns of which (i.e. of disillusionment) can be found in the works of literature, was born in the family conditions and was directly determined by the changes of values, the sense of crisis of values and the actual crisis of values at the beginning of the twentieth century. This crisis of values was the result of the specific phenomena accompanying the development of Japanese totalitarian state. The problem being extremely complicated constitutes the material for a separate study. In this paper I have only tried to prove that Hagiwara's lyrical hero as a pattern personality having his equivalents in the literature of the very period in which the works collected under the titles *Tsuki-ni hoeru* and *Aoneko* were created, as well as in earlier literature. I have also stated that this type of the disillusioned hero had its actual prototypes, Kitamura Tōkoku, Fujimura Misae, and the examples of the disappointed and tragic people compiled in the *Spiritual History of Disillusionment* by Kaneko Mitsuharu. It is Kaneko who claims that the whole history of Japanese intelligentsia since Meiji through Taishō until Shōwa (to be more precise, until the senseless tragedy of the war) is the history of disillusionment. This statement should not be treated literally, as it is a metaphorical generalization. Yet the importance of the problem implied by the metaphor cannot be ignored.

What were the real reasons of the crisis of values and of the disillusionment of intelligentsia? The problem remains open for sociologists and historians. I have only indicated certain premises of this kind of research. A specialist in the research in literature, on the other hand, reconstructs, analyzes the patterns of behaviours (attitude) incoded in a literary work.

One can doubt whether the process of modelling (which as applied to a literary and artistic work still remains at the stage of experiments) is serving any purpose, whether it brings any possibility, constitutes

any means making the knowledge of the work easier to attain. I think, it does. It will enable, first of all, a better and more conscious arrangement of the contents of the work, it will allow to improve its immanent description.

We are not working on any literary work just in order to describe it. This description is to serve some purpose. The essential aim of the description is the knowledge of the world leading to the changes or the strengthening of the existing order. In this sense the description is a glance into the future, to be more precise, is a possibility of such a glance. "Art is the organization of our behaviour in future, is the onward programme" ⁴⁷, as art is creating new, ideal and open repertoire of behaviour, both, positive and negative, i.e., the kinds of behaviour that are fully or partially accepted by individual (or group) and those that are fully or partially rejected. As soon as a work of art (poetry) becomes a socially functioning fact, the dialogue between the individual (group) and this work begins, the dialogue being also the act of choice. This choice of behaviour of attitude (which being internalized) is manifested in the new attitude towards the specific activity which is "thought" not executed. Thus art has its share in changing the world by signaling the need of the change. When describing a work, patterning its contents we reveal the signals it contains we try to understand them and discover their functions. They can be understood by the multi-layer examination. The relations on the level of the presented world constitute the first layer to be examined. Those relations are established by the author (poet) by means of elements of a language specially chosen out of the vocabulary of his surroundings. Those elements are organized in such a way that the object, the denominate (T. Kotarbiński's term), the relations between the object, features attributed to them etc. are meant to create an image of the world which should be changed or an image of the world that should exist. Yet this is not enough to grasp the full value of a work. The examination of the relations between the system of conceptions conveyed in this work and the state of culture which had given birth to them, and later the confrontation of the results of those comparisons with the evolution (tendencies in the development) of the society in which the definite cultural forms are operating, all these are also necessary. Only this kind of analysis enables the understanding of the possible function of the work in question in this particular society. Those facts fully justify the necessity of patterning, both on the level

⁴⁷ L. S. Vygotskij, *Psichologiya iskusstva*, Moskva 1965, *passim* (quoted after S. Żółkiewski, *O regulach analizy strukturalnej* (*About the Principles of Structural Analysis*), "Kultura i Społeczeństwo", Vol. X: 1966, No. 4.

of literary fiction and on the level of non-literary reality, more so, as literature is not the ordinary reflection of the reality but the separate world of attitudes and presented situations neither reflects it life, nor the world but it creates specific "artistically formulated" patterns of life and of the world ⁴⁸.

In Hagiwara's poetry no reflection of the image of the author nor of any other actually existing person (or group) can be detected. Nevertheless, there is a consistently presented pattern of attitudes of a disillusioned and solitary man progressing towards his moral death (not real death) towards nothingness and self-negation. This takes place in the dimensions of the world of phenomena (of physical phenomena) of the real world as no other world exists for the hero (neither Eden, nor "Pure Land", not even *nirwana*...). Thus "nothingness" and "self-negation" should be understood here in a special way. Nothingness and negation are not absolute, complete, executed by death (extinction). No, death is no solution. No escape from disillusionment and destiny is possible. Thus, only submission to the course of things, reconciliation, compromise and resignation are left for the hero which means the return to the traditional Japanese attitude. It was just this resignation which became the philosophy of life in this world of "nothingness", or rather of appearances in which man was not able to find any real values. For the hero those values seem to exist in the ties with other people. The lack of those relationships and the need for them are the causes of his strongest feelings. He wants neither "salvation" nor fame, not even the approval of his notherland and of the state. He is longing for "being together" with another human being ⁴⁹, with a sensitive man who could

⁴⁸ Compare S. Żółkiewski, *Zagadnienia stylu (The Problems of Style)*, Warszawa 1963, exempli gratia p. 129.

⁴⁹ Not only were they (i.e. pessimists) attached to nature, but they kept warm spots in their hearts for companions and never ceased to long for humanity, in the midst of their hermitage. Saigyō, in his life of a solitary traveller, enjoyed tranquillity and yet in his heart he yearned for life, which he had abandoned on his own accord.

Weary as I am
of this world,
When autumn comes
and the moon shines serene,
I feel I should like to survive.

Even Bashō's life as a solitary wanderer was deeply imbued with longing for companions.

When confronting the above statement of Nakamura with Hagiwara's hero (notice, not with Hagiwara himself who was not a hermit, did not avoid society life) we are faced with the striking identity of the attitudes of the disillusioned and solitary poets (in the XIIth and XVIIth centuries, of the past and Hagiwara's

understand him. This yearning, this desire for the contact is a signal of the need of change; the need of new different situation in which man could find the sense and the value of his deeds, of his behaviour, in which he would feel safe. We do not know what, according to Hagiwara, this world of new human relationships should look like (we only know that the relationships should be "more human"). The hero himself is discrediting, to be sure only in his dreams, the world in which he is living in constant fear and anxiety, in painful solitude. His mad dreams and illusions constitute, in the sense accepted here, the signals of the need of change, of restoring or providing the world with the new values. Hagiwara, as a poet and also his hero of his last poems, restores for himself things he had been constantly rejecting at the beginning: native tradition of culture and customs and the patterns of behaviour it has determined. It is the way towards salvation (liberation from the climactic situation) as well as the way towards the hero's defeat.

My choice of the above problems was not accidental. I consider them essential for the pattern of Hagiwara's hero. Let us look at those problems from a different viewpoint, from that of the peculiar character of the Japanese way of thinking and behaviour.

Hagiwara, I think, is quite right in his interpretation of the problem of resignation in his essay entitled *Shijin-to shukumeiron* (*Poet and Fatalism*)⁵⁰. The author of *Tsuki-ni hoeru* states that the negation of one's will, limitation of freedom under the conditions of many hundred years old tyranny had inevitably resulted in fatalistic attitude⁵¹. In India, China, and Japan in the period of shogunat of Tokugawa nearly all society turned into fatalists believing only in the philosophy of resignation ("akirame'-no tetsuiri" [...] "minshū hotondo zembu-ga 'akirame'-no tetsuiri-o shinzuru shukumeironsha-de aru koto").

Later on, the poet writes that Indian buddhism, which in its essence is the philosophy of fatalism, when penetrating other countries of the East was shaping human attitudes. Thus one can suppose that the attitude

hero. They are joined by their longing for contact (ties) with another man. "That such sentiment was not only limited to some men of letters in the past is clear enough, when we look into our own minds a little deeper" (*op. cit.*, p. 552).

⁵⁰ HSZSh., V, p. 181.

⁵¹ Nakamura reads as follows: "The attitudes of resignation and submission in every matter of life were imposed upon people under the feudal regime, since, it was told, everything was predetermined as the consequence to the causes in one's previous life". Later on Nakamura states that in comparison with the Indian and Chinese Buddhism of "pure land" the elements of escapism from this world are relatively weak in Japan, becoming increasingly insignificant in the periods approaching our contemporary times (*op. cit.*, p. 546).

of Hagiwara's lyrical hero is motivated by the real spiritual formation of Japanese people modelled during several centuries of the influence of buddhism and of feudal social and philosophical system.

Those observations of the poet, relevant as they are, require some additional explanation as the problem is far more complicated.

Buddhism in its process of being assimilated in Japan was a subject to some, rather essential, transformations. This was proved in the work of Prof. Nakamura Hajime. The changes of buddhism during the assimilation enable to define more precisely some important features of the Japanese way of thinking.

Generally speaking, the whole metaphysics of the extramundane life was simplified. Japanese buddhism became the religion concentrating on the matters of this world and of the life on earth⁵², abandoning the problems of death and the after-life. The world in which man is living now and here is the only one recognized in Japan. This is probably the reason of looking for absolutes in the world of phenomena⁵³ (real phenomena) not in the transcendent world. In other words, the basic values, the sense of life were seen and were to be found in this world, in the only world of which man is a part. Thus the affection, love for nature, thus, attacking great importance to the human relationships. Nature, not gods (not religion) often appears in literature and art. If the motifs of references to nature were removed from *haiku* hardly anything would be left⁵⁴, gods, abstractions were alien to Japanese people. Religious "teaching" rejecting the value of this world and life for the sake of after-life, the possibility of salvation in some future incarnation that cannot be foretold, all these could not find many followers in Japan. Things of this world, things that could be achieved in this life were valuable. Neither struck root the theory of the impurity of this world (being of primary importance in Hindu buddhism)⁵⁵. Life in this world was appreciated and enjoyed, of course, as much as the existing social and political system rendered it possible.

Things I have just described, owing a great deal to the valuable reflections of Prof. Nakamura, can serve as basic premises in the creation (if we would attempt it) of the pattern of the Japanese culture since the consequence of the Japanese attitude ("this worldliness", "this world central" and "apprehension of the absolute in the phenomenal world")⁵⁶ are far reaching.

⁵² Compare Nakamura Hajime, *op. cit.*, p. 542.

⁵³ Compare *ibidem*, p. 527 and later (also 540 and 553).

⁵⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 553.

⁵⁵ Compare *ibidem*, p. 550.

⁵⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 527—552.

Concentration of attention on the worldly things remains in close relationships to the "absolute" faith (confidence) in the fundamental (and formalized) mutual ties between people. None of the abstract ideals, none of the general universal instructions but the principles of co-existence, things that are good for a group, for a family, not for individual are really good, are the criteria of valuation of the Japanese.

Even the above mentioned principles of co-existence (in a group, in a family) must have their personification in form of a "head", the individual to whom they become completely subordinated.

Then, attaching little importance to the so-called higher (metaphysical etc.) religious values strengthens the interest in "particular human nexus", Japanese "Thinking tends not to go beyond this bound" ⁵⁷.

If we remember here about the problem of the awakening of the "sense of individual" within the Japanese, the meaning of this statement will become more significant. This awakening, we can say in this place, means the break up of all that used to constitute the basis of life of the Japanese society. It results in the impairing of the importance of the head (of the family, group, nation) and the ruin of the basis of all valuation. There are no gods, no ideals of the kind of family, group or nation happiness (compare frequent slogans "for the country", "for the emperor").

What is left? What is to be done in the period of the shaken foundations of the mutual relations between people, in the period when nearly all basis of the organization of community fell into discredit and made the individual weak and helpless? A Japanese is left to search for the new values, new patterns of human existence mainly by means of adopting new thoughts, ideas, conceptions of life coming to Japan from Europe and America (i.e. from the heterogenous cultures) and bringing new doubts and anxieties.

In the same time it is, as we have noticed, one of the main sources of the disillusionment so dramatically experienced by the majority of Japanese creative intelligentsia since the beginning of the twentieth century until the present day. It is also the basic factor focusing the interests of the Japanese on the native tradition, towards the soothing sources of their own culture.

Translated by Ewa Byczkowska

⁵⁷ *Ibidem*, pp. 311, 450—460, 304 and 450.

DRAMAT ROZCZAROWANIA WE WSPÓŁCZESNEJ LITERATURZE
JAPŃSKIEJ (DO 1923 ROKU)

GŁÓWNE PROBLEMY INTERPRETACJI POEZJI HAGIWAR Y SAKUTARŌ

STRESZCZENIE

Hagiwara Sakutarō (1886—1942) nazywany jest Baudelaire'em japońskim ze względu na znaczenie w rozwoju poezji swego kraju, jak i na podobieństwa w budowie świata poetyckiego. Rekonstrukcja modelu bohatera lirycznego służy tutaj zarówno pokazaniu podstawowych cech poezji autora *Tsuki-ni hoeru* (*Wyję do księżycy*, 1917) i *Aoneko* (*Niebieski kot*, 1923) oraz porównaniu z reprezentatywnymi bohaterami dzieł japońskich końca XIX i pierwszego ćwierćwiecza XX wieku. Autor omawia głównie problem osamotnienia bohatera i przeżywanie tej sytuacji jako wewnętrznie sprzecznej oraz prowadzącej do negacji wartości świata. Poza tym na przykładach powieści Futabateia Shimeia (1864—1909), poezji Kitamury Tōkoku (1868—1894), prozy Natsume Sōseki (1867—1916) i in. przedstawia postępujący proces rozczarowania odzwierciedlony w literaturze. Konfrontuje go z postawami odmiennymi — także w dziedzinie religii — i dochodzi do wniosku, że pierwszoplanową przyczyną rozczarowania inteligencji japońskiej jest kryzys wartości spowodowany wielu czynnikami — przede wszystkim zburzeniem tradycyjnych podstaw wartościowania i brakiem nowych. W wyniku oddziaływania kultury europejskiej poznano, co prawda, odmienne ideologie Zachodu, przyniosły one jednak nowe wątpliwości i niepokoje. Pisarze i poeci końca XIX oraz XX wieku dali temu wyraz w postaci wizji nowego typu bohatera, bezradnego, rozczarowanego i osamotnionego.

Powyższy tok rozważań daje również okazję do prezentacji wielu problemów literatury oraz cech specyficznych kultury japońskiej.

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