

**MELJI WOMEN IN SHIMAZAKI TOSON'S EARLY STORIES:  
A STUDY ON THE CHARACTERIZATION OF "KYUSHUJIN",  
"ROJO" AND OTHER WORKS**

*Thesis submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University  
for the award of the Degree of*

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

**P.A. GEORGE**

Centre for Japanese and North East Asian Studies  
School of Languages  
Jawaharlal Nehru University  
New Delhi - 110067  
1996



जवाहरलाल नेहरू विश्वविद्यालय  
**JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY**  
NEW DELHI - 110067

*Centre for Japanese and North East Asian Studies*  
*School of Languages*

Date : 29 February 1996

## **CERTIFICATE**

This is to certify that the thesis entitled "**MEIJI WOMEN IN SHIMAZAKI TOSON'S EARLY STORIES: A STUDY ON THE CHARACTERIZATION OF "KYUSHUJIN", "ROJO" AND OTHER WORKS**" submitted by **Mr. P.A. George** for the award of the Degree of **Doctor of Philosophy** of the Jawaharlal Nehru University is, to the best of my knowledge, his own work. The two stories - Kyushujin and Rojo - have been translated into English for the first time by Mr. George which are appended in the thesis for reference. This thesis has not been submitted to this or any other University for any other degree. I recommend that this thesis be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

**PROF. SATYA BUSHAN VERMA**  
Supervisor

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

During the course of this study, I have been encouraged and helped by many well wishers. The first and foremost among them is my supervisor, Prof. Satya Bhushan Verma, Professor of Japanese, Centre for Japanese and North East Asian Studies, School of Languages, without whose timely advise and guidance, it would not have been possible for me to complete this study. I am greatly indebted to Professor Verma and, hereby, express my wholehearted and sincere gratitude.

I express my sincere gratitude to the authorities of Waseda University for allowing me to conduct my research in their institution and to Prof. Shiro Hara, Professor of Japanese Literature, Economic Department, Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan, for guiding and advising me during my research in Waseda University. I am also indebted to Mr. Yoshiaki Oida and Mr. Hiroaki Nakagawa of Department of Literature, Waseda University, who not only helped me in finding out relevant research materials but also enlightened me with their on knowledge and view on this subject. Similarly, the staff and officers, especially Mr. Kenji Shibata and Mr. Yoshinari Hanao of Kokusai Koryu Senta, Waseda University, had helped and assisted me in several ways to make my stay comfortable. I express my sincere thanks to all of them. I am equally grateful to The Japan Foundation which had provided me with a fellowship under the Faculty Development Programme to conduct

research in Japan for one year from January 1994 to January 1995 without which it would have been difficult for me to complete this study.

I am grateful to the Chairperson, Dr.Rajender Tomar, Centre for Japanese and North East Asian Studies, and my colleagues and staff for their cooperation and help during various stages of this study.

Similarly, it would not have been possible for me to complete this study smoothly without the cooperation and help from my wife, Sophia, who has always supported and encouraged me from behind, while dealing with all domestic matters patiently by herself.

I am also grateful to the staffs of various libraries, especially Jawaharlal Nehru University library, New Delhi, Japan Cultural and Information Centre Library, New Delhi, Waseda University Library, Tokyo, Nihon Kindai Bungaku-Kan, Komaba, Tokyo, and National Diet Library, Tokyo, Japan, for allowing me to use their libraries and helping me in finding out necessary research materials.

Finally, I express my thanks to Mr.T.M.Varghese, who with his great expertise and skill typed and retyped the manuscript several times patiently, and took out the final print out with great care and caution.

P.A. GEORGE



## CONTENTS

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CHAPTER-I:	INTRODUCTION	1-42
CHAPTER-II:	THE EMERGENCE OF NEW MEIJI WOMEN	43-71
CHAPTER-III:	SHIMAZAKI TOSON - HIS LIFE AND WORKS	72-93
CHAPTER-IV:	THE TWO STORIES	94-118
CHAPTER-V:	TOSON'S PROJECTION OF WOMEN AND HIS BIAS	119-177
CHAPTER-VI:	CONCLUSION	178-187
APPENDICES		
(A)	KYUSHUJIN (THE FORMER MASTER)	188-264
(B)	ROJO (OLD MISS)	265-303
BIBLIOGRAPHY		304-317

## CHAPTER I

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The Meiji Restoration (1868) in Japanese history is almost universally acknowledged as the dividing point between traditional and modern Japan, as it had led to a multitude of revolutionary changes in various spheres of Japanese society and the life of its people. Unconventional reforms and changes followed after the Restoration had not only changed the political, social and economic structure of the nation but also led the country to rapid modernization, as a result of Western influence which started few years before and continued for many years after the opening of the country. Especially, for the first twenty years after the Meiji Restoration, Japan had gone through very intensive modernization process under the influence of European and American culture. Amazed by the startling advance and progress in science, technology and political thought and philosophy of Western countries, the leaders of Meiji Restoration earnestly made concerted effort to make their nation modern and advanced like the advanced Western countries. These intelligent and vigilant political personnels in Meiji Government and scholars in various fields, like Fukuzawa Yukichi etc., were also very apprehensive about the military and economic might of Western powers in the second half of nineteenth century. Their

watchful eyes were assessing constantly the political and economic situations of other Asian countries which were colonised by these Western powers. They feared similar fate for Japan also. In order to get rid of such a crisis, and to withstand and resist any external threat they found only one solution that is to modernize the country in both terms of military on occidental lines and economy. Under the sole motto of "Fukoku Kyohei"<sup>1</sup> or a "Rich nation and strong military", these political leaders of post-Meiji Restoration period universally advocated the modernization of their country on Western lines. Unlike the great Asiatic cultures like those of India and China, Japan voluntarily and with set purpose decided to meet Europe half-way and to remodel her national life following Occidental pattern, so that she would be able to counter any threat from Western countries and retain her independence and enjoy full sovereignty. Japan's Westernization was farther and faster than any of the Asiatic countries, and in a short span of only about twenty years after the Meiji Restoration, Japan had already achieved the status of an advanced nation which could compete with any of the advanced Western countries of that time.

However, Japan did not slavishly copy the Western civilization altogether blindly. Its leaders very prudently

---

1 H. Paul Varley, Japanese Culture, p.206; Nakamura Mitsuo, Meiji Bungakushi, pp.14-15.

selected certain aspects of Western civilization and introduced it after rearranging suitably to fit into the Japanese society. Japan has a long history of adoption and introduction of Chinese culture and civilization, but certain important institutions of ancient China never took root in Japanese soil because those were not suitable for their society. It was the same case with Western culture and civilization also. Although they wholeheartedly welcomed the idea of Westernization, they executed it prudently, scrutinizing every aspect of Western culture minutely and experimenting their suitability into Japanese society - a society conventionally set up according to Confucian principles. In fact, the Meiji leaders possessed personal animosities toward the West, particularly for forcing Japan to accede to the 'unequal treaties',<sup>2</sup> which were signed between the Tokugawa Bakufu and the Western nations before the Meiji Restoration. According to this treaty, signed on July 29, 1858, the Western powers had extraterritoriality or in other words, Western residents in Japan had the right to be tried by their own consular courts under their own national laws. The Japanese people considered it as an insult to their national feeling and sovereignty. Therefore, one of the first items in

---

2 H. Paul Varley, op.cit., p.204. Also see, George Sansom, A History of Japan, vol.3, 1615-1867, P.238; G.B.Sansom, The Western World and Japan: A Study in the Interaction of European and Asiatic Cultures, p.286.

the agenda of Meiji government was to get this treaty either abolished or rectified. However, these leaders were by and large pragmatic men who respected the material superiority of the West. Moreover, by the time of Restoration Japanese society had already reached a fairly high degree of maturity in the crucial areas of politics, economics and education. The very existence of these internal conditions enabled the Japanese to grasp and understand the meaning of Western civilization properly and assimilate it into their society successfully.

The Meiji government immediately after the Restoration sent a goodwill mission to America and Europe in 1871, first of all, to persuade the Western countries to revise the 'unequal treaties' and then to get a first hand information about the much advanced Western civilizations. This mission known as "Iwakura Mission"<sup>3</sup> was consisted of prominent personalities, like Iwakura Tomomi, Ito Hirobumi, Kido Takayoshi, and Okubo Toshimichi and nearly a hundred other Japanese. They first of all visited nine major cities in the United States and then travelled to England, and Scotland, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Russia, Denmark, Sweden, Italy, Austria and Switzerland. During their stay in the West, members of this mission earnestly examined and

---

3 G.B.Sansom, op.cit., p.328; Paul Varley, op.cit., p.207.

studied various political systems, education systems, social set up, economic conditions, development of science and technology, defense systems etc. of these developed nations. Upon their return in the next year, the Iwakura mission made various proposals to the government. The Meiji government after studying the mission's report minutely, embarked on various reforms. Hence, a chain of reform activities were to follow one after another, in almost all social spheres, which ultimately moulded the prototype face of the modern Japan. As we shall see later on, all major social and political reforms such as abolition of class system, introduction of universal education system, regulations related to possession of property, family, marriage, divorce, religion etc. had been executed one after another immediately after the return of Iwakura mission in 1872. To the general Japanese public after the Restoration, the idea of progress and Westernization was not only welcome, but extremely stimulating. It was interpreted by them not in terms of spiritual enlightenment but of material accumulations - more facts, more wealth, more strength, more manufacturers, more men, shops and guns. To realize the slogan of 'Fukoku Kyhei' (Rich nation and strong military) it was inevitable for the Japanese to assimilate the Western material culture on a priority basis. This craze for Western things and ideas lasted for about two decades after 1868, described by some Japanese historians as the period of

intoxication. The attitude of the authorities towards the adoption of Western institutions and customs was to a great extent shaped by their anxiety to show to Western nations that the Japanese people had assimilated enough of Western culture to justify their claims to be treated as members of a civilized modern state. They wanted Western nations to agree that the constitution and laws of Japan were enlightened and that her standards of public and private behaviour were high enough to make their country a respectable and worthy member of international society. Therefore during the era of enlightenment, that is between 1868-1888, the only doctrine which could be successfully preached in Japan was a utilitarian philosophy<sup>4</sup> suitable to a country which was aiming at the material development of the nation and the individual.

Fukuzawa Yukichi, renowned philosopher of enlightenment movement and stout proponent of universal education<sup>5</sup> for both men and women, was the leader of this utilitarian philosophy. His visit to America in 1860 and to Europe in 1862 gave him the opportunity to watch and experience directly the wonders of Western everyday life in Western countries. He was amazed by the scientific and technological advancement of the West,

---

4 Fukuzawa Yukichi, Seiyo Jijo, Condition in the Western World (1861-1867).

5 Fukuzawa Yukichi, Gakumon no Susume (An Encouragement of Learning) (1872-1876)



such as telegraph, galvanising process, boiling process in sugar refinery and horse-drawn carriages etc. Upon his return to Japan, Fukuzawa started publishing a book titled 'Seiyo Jijo' (conditions in the West) in 1866. This book contained precisely the kind of information which Japanese at that time were needing to substantiate their shadowy vision of the Western lands. It gave them concise accounts of everyday social institutions such as hospitals, schools, newspapers, workhours, taxation, museums, and lunatic asylums. He argued that Japan could become civilized and strong only if it adopt the Western scientific techniques and introduce teaching of natural sciences, medicine, astronomy, geography etc. on a large scale in an organized manner as in the West. He attacked the traditional pessimistic attitude of Buddhism which taught the people traditionally that "all things are impermanent, suffering is universal, and a man is the helpless victim of his fate", and enlightenment could be achieved only with the help of right views, right intentions, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration. He argued for material prosperity and physical enlightenment of the individual which would ultimately bring wealth and prosperity to country and strengthen its hands so that it can retain its integrity and sovereignty and face valiantly any external threat. He, at the same time cautioned the country against blind, complete

Westernization on Western lines. Instead he preached a balanced adaptation of Western civilization, arranged in such a way that it will not destroy the national character of the Japanese. "We want our learning independent, not licking up the less and scum of the Westerners. We want our commerce independent, not dominated by them. We want our law independent, not held in contempt by them. We want our religion independent, not tangled underfoot by them. In short, we have made the independence of our country our life-long objective, and all who share these aspirations with us are our friends, and all who do not are our enemies."<sup>6</sup> His philosophy was the philosophy of the achievement of this goal, although there were some opposition from certain sections of the Samurai and peasant leaders.

The appropriate and balanced amalgamation of "Western techniques and Eastern ethics"<sup>7</sup> was the main goal of the Meiji leaders, and apart from political leaders and political philosophers, it was the people who were in the literary world who contributed mostly into its realization. All the great literary figures of Meiji period, including Shimasaki Toson whose works are the subject of this study, had been influenced

---

6 Fukuzawa Yukichi, *Jiji Shimpo*, Hatsuda no Shushi, FYD, III, 131.

7 H.Paul Varley, *op.cit.*, p.217; G.B.Sansom, *op.cit.*, pp.339-51.

by the Western civilization and thought in one or the other way. Hence, a detailed study of Western influence on the social, political, economic spheres of Meiji Japan becomes all the more important for this study. In the following pages a brief description of various direct and indirect Western cultural impact on the Meiji Japan during 1868-1890 is discussed.

### **Political and Economic Changes**

The driving force at the restoration and in political life for the best part of early Meiji period was provided by leaders who had been brought up in feudal, or at any rate a feudalistic atmosphere. They were low class Samurai<sup>8</sup> who were ambitious and dissatisfied by the ineffective rule of Tokugawa Bakufu. They were mainly young Samurai of lower ranks from Western Japan who never before had been in political power. However, they had solid military support from powerful domains like, Satsuma Choshu etc. Their outlook was coloured by their antecedents and it was these men, not the bourgeoisie who laid the foundation of a capitalist structure and at the same time developed a political system needed to unify the country and modernize it on the Western lines. These young leaders who succeeded in overthrowing the Bakufu and restoring the emperor based their fight against the bakufu and the emerging external

---

8 G.B.Sansom, op.cit., p.310.

threat on the slogan, "reveal the emperor and expel the barbarians" (Sonno joi). However, after the restoration these same groups of leaders realized the need for modernizing their country, borrowing western technology and knowledge, in order to defend it from any external threat. Hence, the same people who were once advocating the expulsion of barbarians (foreigners), now started stressing the importance of building material wealth and strength of the country, which could be possible only through various reforms. A first glance at the course of events gives the impression that one belief after another, one institution after another, fell before the attack of Western influence. Yet a closer examination shows that many of the important changes that took place in political and social life came about not by direct imitation of Western models but by a natural process of evolution. Certainly, various Western political, social and educational systems were made to direct and indirect examination and scrutiny by the Meiji leaders during the process of creation of various modern, reformed political or social institutions.

The first and foremost achievement of Meiji restoration was the unification of the country into a single unified nation under a imperial government. In the Tokugawa period, Japan was divided into several clans and fiefdoms, although

---

9 W.G.Beasley, The Rise of Modern Japan, p.55; also see, H.Paul Varley, *op.cit.*, p.201.

the shogunate had an overall control over the daimyo. Based on article-1 of the Charter Oath, "Deliberative assemblies shall be established on an extensive scale and all measures of government shall be decided by public opinion",<sup>10</sup> taken by the emperor on 6th April 1868, the Meiji government strived toward the creation of a constitutional government. But, it took almost twenty years more to realize this plan as the Constitution was promulgated in 1889 and the first Diet meeting after the establishment of new Constitution was held in 1890. The first post-Meiji government was a simple structure, consisting of a Supreme Controller and senior and junior councils of state. The controller was an Imperial Prince and his deputies were two court nobles of highest rank, Iwakura Tomomi and Sanjo Sanetomi. These appointments were necessary in order to emphasize the power of the throne and the civil aristocracy, which military aristocracy had for so long usurped. The controllers department was manned by youngish and ambitious but modest origin Samurai from the clans of Satsuma, Choshu, Tosa and Hizen. This government established under the term of charter oath was very ineffective and did not embody any Western form and was not inspired by any Western influence. Therefore, full reorganization of the administrative system was planned and

---

10 Hozumi's version of English translation of the Charter Oath, as quoted in G.B.Sansom, op.cit., p.318.

carried out in 1885. In fact, Japan was not ready for democracy during the early period of Meiji era. But still the Dojokan or Council of state, the supreme organ of the first government was abolished and its place was taken by a cabinet, composed of ministers of the several departments of state and presided by a Prime Minister. Under this arrangement the emperor remained as an absolute monarch, nominally exercising personal rule with the advice of the Prime Minister. This system of government was partially influenced by the German system of the period. The domestic situations of Germany and Japan of that time were similar and the leaders of early Meiji period found it most suitable to their country. In 1881 Ito Hirobumi led a study mission to England, France, Germany and Austria. The greater authority of the monarch and the limited powers of the parliament in Germany seems to him better suiting to the existing needs and conditions in Japan. This choice of conservative German model for the constitution and government also coincided with the change in the attitude of people toward things Western. In fact, by this time the craze for things Western was subsided by a growing spirit of nationalism and craze for Japanese things.

However, a group of young liberal leaders, led by Itagaki Taisuke Eto Shimpei and Goto Shojiro, could not compromise with the conservative and reactionary policies of the government. They, in contrast to the peasant riots and

Samurai rebellions in the early and mid-1870s, began a more peaceful form of political protest, relying on political agitation, local organization, journalistic attacks,<sup>11</sup> and direct petition to the central government. Intellectuals, inspired by Rousseau and British liberal thought also joined this group, giving it somewhat radical fringe. This was the beginning of the freedom and popular rights movement<sup>12</sup> (Jiyu Minken Undo) in the middle of 1870s. Itagaki and his followers organized several agitations under their organization Risshisha, a local political association in the Tosa region, and demanded for the establishment of a national assembly based on a constitution, reduction of taxes, and revision of unequal treaties. The emperor had agreed to promulgate a constitution by 1890. Efforts for drawing up the new Constitution were started from the beginning of 1880s under the leadership of Ito Hirobumi and it was promulgated finally on February 11, 1889.<sup>13</sup> The new Constitution contained a section on the rights of the people, including most of the civil rights, generally accepted in the advanced nations of the West. However, these rights were carefully circumscribed by strict laws and regulations. Promulgation of

---

11 Ibid, pp.321-22.

12 Ibid, pp.311-12. Also see, H.Paul Varley, op.cit., p.213.

13 G.B.Sansom, op.cit., pp.358-68.

Constitution (1889) and establishment of National Diet (1890) were major turning point in the political history of Japan. The successful inauguration of constitutional government, together with a complete remodelling of the legal system in accordance with Western practices, compelled the British in 1894 to give up their extraterritorial privileges in Japan. Soon after, all other Western powers also followed suit.

Prior to the promulgation of the constitution, voting system was introduced, though the electorate was consisted of men only who were paying more than 15 yen in direct tax. Prefectural assemblies were established in 1879 and village, town and ward assemblies in 1880 and city assemblies in 1888. Universal conscription was introduced in 1873, making an end to the concept of a privileged military class, the Samurai or the warriors.<sup>14</sup> Thus within twenty years of coming to power, the new government had cleared away the outdated political system of Tokugawa period and had achieved complete control over the nation and succeeded in convincing the Western advanced countries that Japan had modernized its political and economic institutions.

The Meiji government's economic policies were based on the slogan of "Fukoku Kyohei" or a "rich nation and strong military". Article-2 of the charter Oath by the emperor urged

---

14 For details, please see, Early Meiji: The Political Scene, G.B.Sansom, op.cit., pp.310-77.



the people to unite 'in vigorously carrying out the plan of the government' irrespective of their class or rank. The general public of early Meiji Japan made its first acquaintance with Western economic ideas through the writings of the versatile and prolific Fukuzawa Yukichi. His "Seiyo Jijo" (western conditions), first published in 1867-69 gave some elementary facts on commerce and banking and his Minkan Keizairon (1877) was a popular statement of economic principles. One of the major policies of the new government was the abolition of 'han' system in August 29, 1871 and introduction of prefectures in its place. The new government put the fiefdoms under centrally appointed governors and paid off the daimyo with government bonds. For the Daimyo, their government bonds became an important source of future banking capital. But it was the Samurai (or the warrior class) who were the great losers in this reformation as many of them lost this source of income to survive. In fact, Samurai's hereditary stipends had been cut in half in the reform of 1869 and finally, in 1876 the government forced those Samurai to commute their remaining stipends into lumpsum payments of further reduced value.

A banking system<sup>15</sup> was created in 1872, at first along the lines of decentralized American banks and later on the

---

15 G.C.Allen, A Short Economic History of Modern Japan, p.43.

basis of the centralized banking system of Belgium. The currency was made uniform, and in 1871 the yen was adopted as the unit of value. In order to make budgetary possible, the land tax, the chief source of revenue, which had been paid in percentages of yield, was shifted to a fixed money tax in 1873, and the payers of this tax were recognized as the outright owners of the land. The new government laid telegraph lines throughout the nation to facilitate communication and control. A postal system<sup>16</sup> was created in 1871. It improved the facilities in the existing posts and began to construct railway lines<sup>17</sup> in 1872 with a line between Tokyo and the port city of Yokohama. It also developed a modern munition industry<sup>18</sup> in the lines of Western models so that Japan could be independent of imported Western weapons. Mines were developed and pilot plants in various industries were built. The new government had expanded the existing industries of shipbuilding, cotton spinning and weaving etc. by the mechanization of their plants. Besides this, the new government introduced many other small and light industries like bricks making, glass etc.

---

16 Ibid, p.33.

17 Ibid.

18 Ibid, p.34.

The new leaders clearly realized that to succeed in all these efforts, Japan would have to learn a great deal about the technology, institutions and ideas of the West. They were also aware that their policies would not be successful if there are no educated public capable of supporting a modernized economy and society. In the imperial edict delivered to the family heads of nobles on October 22, 1871, the Meiji Government had clearly instructed its subject to pursue all the means to improve their knowledge and technology. It instructed the people to go abroad if needed and acquire the modern, advanced practical skills of the West. "Nothing is more effective for developing knowledge and improving technology than studying useful subjects with an eye out for the trends in world civilization or acquiring practical skills by going abroad to study in foreign countries. Even for those who are too old for studies abroad, travel overseas to widen one's horizons may be helpful for increasing knowledge.<sup>19</sup> Therefore, some students, including even a few girls, were carefully selected on the basis of their capabilities and sent to study in countries selected with equal care. The government sent students to England to study navy and merchant marine, to Germany for the army and

---

19 The Peerage Act, July 7, 1884; Meiji Japan Through Contemporary Sources, vol.3, 1869-1894, p.89.

medicine, to France for local government and law and to the United States for business methods.

### **Social Changes**

The social changes which followed the Meiji Restoration had far reaching effects on the life of Japanese people. The Japanese people who were leading an isolated social life for more than 250 years in a closed condition under the iron fist of feudalism and a rigid class system, got amazed by seeing the advanced social life of the Westerner. Soon a popular craze for Western civilization swept through the country, among young and old, man and woman. "The sudden opening of Japan", as the scholar Nishi Amane remarked in 1874, was like "the overturning of a bottle" - Western clothing, architecture, food, fashion, even hair cuts spilled out into Japan in indiscriminate ways."<sup>20</sup> Both government and the public realized the urgent need for transforming their traditional society based on obsolete but rigid Confucianist principles into an enlightened, advanced society based on scientific principles and western thought. Specially, they were aware of the "unequal treaties", signed between the Bakufu and Western powers, which gave the Western countries extra territoriality or the right of Western residents in Japan to be tried by their own consular court under their own

---

20 Thomas R.H.Havens, Nishi Amane and Modern Japanese Thought

national laws. This was a humiliating treaty as far as the Japanese concerned, and they wanted to get this revised as early as possible. People of Japan knew that they can acquire the status of an advanced nation only if they come out of their backward social set-up and modernize themselves, by borrowing and adapting western customs and habits.

### **Abolition of Class System**

Article 3, 4 and 5 of the Charter Oath taken by the emperor in 1868 facilitated the process of social reforms and modernization. "All classes of the people shall be allowed to fulfill their just aspiration so that there may be no discontent" (Article 3).<sup>21</sup> This has ensured the public the freedom and liberty to act according to their convenience to achieve the common goal of 'Fukoku Kyohei' or a "Rich nation and a strong military". As a first step to social reformation, the Meiji government abolished the class system,<sup>22</sup> which remained as the backbone of feudal system through out the Tokugawa period, in 1871. During the feudal period, especially during the Tokugawa period (1602-1868), the Japanese society was mainly divided into four classes; namely, the warriors (Samurai), farmers (nomin), artisans (Kojin) and tradesmen (Shomin). The warrior class was the ruling class

---

21 Hozumi's version of English translation of the character oath as quoted in G.B.Sansom, op.cit., p.318.

22 Ibid, p.330.

who enjoyed several privileges and rights which others could not get. All other three groups of people were together called as the 'commoners'. Apart from these four recognized classes, there were also the outcastes (eta) and hinin (non-humans) who were treated like animals by the upper class people. The new law provided legal equality for everybody, including the outcast elements. The warrior class or the Samurai, who were the elite group in the society lost their privileged special status, as the government decreed universal conscription in 1873. Their profession, their revenues and their prestige had vanished or sunk to a low level. And in 1877,<sup>23</sup> the Samurai were denied the right to wear their swords. As a result there were occasional uprisings among Samurai from 1874 onwards but the Meiji government successfully controlled and suppressed them. On the other hand the erstwhile lower classes of the society namely, the farmers, artisans, businessmen (traders) and the eta community (who are known as burakumin now) were conferred with new rights which enabled them to choose their own occupation according to their wishes and even they were allowed to obtain title deed to land. The Japanese are a restless people who believe in action than contemplation. Under the influence of "utilitarian philosophy" advocated by early Meiji government

---

23 Ibid, p.334.

and the thinkers and educators like Fukuzwa Yukichi, etc. the liberated mass of Meiji Japan disposed to accept the theory that a good life can be attained only by assiduous devotion to practical matters.

THESIS

O, 42, 3, M72:9 (Y, 15) N6

A rigid class system was prevailed under the feudal system of Tokugawa period, where the duty and responsibility of each individual had been determined by his status. The society was guided by the hierarchical principles preached by Neo-Confucianism.<sup>24</sup> Although the Tokugawa Shogunate and its authorities had little interest in the purely metaphysical side of New-Confucianism advocated by Chu-Hsi, they found this philosophy the best medium to legitimatize and perpetuate the feudal structure of the society. Neo-Confucianism held that the physical world was based on an inherently perfect order and each individual was guided by 'li'<sup>25</sup> ('ri' in Japanese means principle or reason), and when men failed to comprehend this 'li' of things, social disorder would occur. Hence, Confucianism taught the people to be obedient and loyal to their masters and demanded a strict observation of hierarchical set up of the society based on five primary human relationships; namely relationship between father and son, ruler and subject, husband and wife, older and younger

---

24 Ibid, p.184. Also see, W.G.Beasley, The Rise of Modern Japan, p.16.

25 H.Paul Varley, op.cit., pp.151-53.



brother, and between friends. It was this hierarchical set up and class system which were got abolished by the Meiji government in 1871, as the young leaders were well aware of the fact that in the changed condition of the society, the feudal hierarchy and class system cannot be practicable. Under the new law each individual had the freedom to act according to his will and conscience, like the citizens of the advanced Western countries of that time.

#### **Western Influence on Food, Dress, and Other Social Changes**

Opening of the country and its subsequent contact with the advanced Western nations not only provided the Japanese with social equality but also influenced its eating habits, dress and other social systems. Article 4 of the Charter Oath<sup>26</sup> taken by the emperor laid the way for such social changes as it goes in the following way; "Uncivilized customs of former times shall be broken through and everything shall be based upon just and equitable principles of nature". The new government of early Meiji period persuaded the public to imitate the eating habits, clothing etc. so that they would become modern and civilized like the Westerners. The most important change brought forth into the menu of Japanese people by the Meiji Restoration was the introduction of meat.

---

26 Hozumi's Version of translation of Charter Oath as quoted in, G.B.Sansom, op.cit., p.318.



Meat eating hitherto was prohibited by both Shintoism and Buddhism as it was regarded as defiling worshippers at temples and shrines. However, the authorities assured the public that its consumption does not defile either the worshippers or the shrines because the westerners eat it often and their religion, Christianity, does not ban it. On the contrary, it must be consumed in large quantity for becoming modern. Hence, meat eating had become a status symbol for the enlightened Meiji Japanese. Not only meat, but various other Western dishes became the favourite of the Japanese. Specially, Italian, French, English and American food became very popular.

Kanagaki Robun, a popular comic writer and prolific journalist satirized the scene of beef eating by enlightened Japanese in an eating house, in his famous work "Agura nabe", written in 1871. The typical man of the day, he said was the "beef eater", a westernized swell with long flowing cologne-scented hair, calico underwear peeping from under his kimono, a gingham umbrella at his side, and a cheap Western pocket watch ostentatiously consulted from time to time. Sitting in a new style restaurant, he gobbled down a plate of beef, telling his neighbour how fortunate it was that "even people like ourselves can now eat beef, thanks to the fact Japan is

becoming a truly civilized country".<sup>27</sup> Along with meat eating, having a pocket watch, holding an umbrella, wearing western style underwear and hats were also considered as symbols of civilization.

"Civilization Ball Song"<sup>28</sup> was a kind of game designed to impress on young minds the advantages of Western culture. In this game, they were to count the bounces of the ball by reciting the names of ten objects deemed to be the most worthy of adoption - namely, gas lamps, steam engines, horse carriages, cameras, telegrams, lighting-conductors, newspapers, schools, letter post and steam boats."

Another important item came under direct influence of the West was the clothing. An imperial ordinance in 1872<sup>29</sup> prescribed foreign dress for court and other official ceremonies. Military uniforms of Western type were adopted even before the Restoration of 1868, as they were much more convenient than the traditional Japanese dress. Government authorities made a statement (after the above said ordinance) which stressed the point that the traditional Japanese costume was not appropriate to the times. To achieve the common goal of prosperous and a strong nation, all of its citizens must

---

27 Kanagaki Robun (1871), Agura Nabe, quoted in Donald Keene Modern Japanese Literature.

28 G.B.Sansom, op.cit., p.383.

29 Ibid, p.382.

work together actively and for that purpose Western dress was most appropriate. The rage for Western clothing is described in an early issue of the Tokyo Times: "...in the 2nd and 3rd years of Meiji, the demand for foreign goods remarkably increased. Those who formally looked upon them with contempt changed their minds and even dressed in foreign cloths. Our males adopted the European style. They put on fine tall hats instead of wearing large cues on their heads and took to carrying sticks after discarding their swords. They dressed in coats of the English fashion and trousers of the American. They would only eat from tables and nothing would satisfy them but French cookery."<sup>30</sup> Initially many people opposed the introduction of Western clothing, but as they realized that Western dress was more convenient than their own, without any hesitation they discarded 'kimono' and adopted it. Thus the Meiji Japanese moved one step further toward the final goal of complete westernization.

Various other changes occurred in society as a part of Westernization. The traditional umbrella made of Japanese paper was replaced by Western style umbrella made of cloth. People were instructed to discontinue the traditional fashion of hairdressing. The 'topknot' was abolished and men were asked to cut their hair short and maintain it after the

---

30 Tokyo Times, January 27, 1877, p.46 giving as its source, "Kinji Hyoran - Translation of Japan Gazette".

foreign style. Traditional paper lantern and candles were replaced by "oil lamps" of the West. Traditional bathhouses in Japan were common for both men and women which was a matter of surprise and ridicule by the Westerners. The new Meiji government made a decree which directed the bathhouse owners to separate the male and female bathhouses and maintain proper privacy and decorum by placing screen at the entrance etc. Rickshaw pullers were directed by the Tokyo municipal authorities to dress properly, because it was a shame to expose one's naked body parts according to the Western manner and morality. Staging of naughty, offensive plays was prohibited and strict warnings were issued to theater owners and playwrights. Similarly, spring picture of pornographic art and spring tales or erotic writings were also banned. In 1871, government brought out laws to prohibit the sale of girls as prostitutes or geisha.<sup>31</sup> Traditionally, in Japan, prostitution was not considered as a sin or anti-social activity as other countries do, but when the young leaders of Meiji got convinced that such acts were considered immoral in Western countries, they prohibited it by law.

#### **Impact on Education**

Another important field which was subjected to direct and indirect Western influence after the Meiji Restoration was

---

31 Ibid, pp.385-6.

education. The new leaders of Meiji Japan had recognised the importance of extensive universal education of both boys and girls for building up a modern state. During the Tokugawa period, education was monopolized by the Samurai class and commoners had very little opportunity to acquire it, although the "Tera-Koya"<sup>32</sup> system of education was existing in some quarters of the society. In fact, education was not regarded as a function of the state during this period. However, recognizing the importance of Western subjects, such as medicine, surgery etc., the Bakufu in 1855 had created the Bansho Shirabe dokoro or the office for the study of western writings, initially Dutch books mainly and in 1860 it enlarged the curriculum to include English, French, German, Russian and Chemistry. It did not give much impact on the general public as its scope was very restricted.

"Knowledge shall be sought throughout the world, so that the welfare of the empire may be promoted", article-5 of the Charter Oath taken by the emperor stated.<sup>33</sup> In pursuit of this goal, the new government had created a ministry of education in 1871, which embarked at once on an ambitious programme of education for girls as well as boys. The

---

32 During Tokugawa period, only children of Samurai were given education in Tera-Koya, or temple schools originally. However, later on children of commoners were also admitted.

33 Charter Oath, Hozuni's version, as quoted in G.B.Sansome, op.cit., p.318.

utilitarian philosophy of the intellectuals, pioneered by Fukuzawa Yukichi, stressed the immediate necessity of expanding the universal education on a priority basis. Fukuzawa argued that a country cannot become civilized and rich if its subjects are illiterate. He sighted the examples of the Western countries where advanced universal education of both men and women had not only enlightened the public but also made their countries advanced, especially in the field of science, medicine, and military. In his famous work "Gakumon no susume"<sup>34</sup> (An Encouragement to Learning), Fukuzawa boldly argued that education is the only criterion which determines the future of a nation. "It is said that heaven does not create man above or below another man. This means that when men are born from heaven they all are equal. There is no innate distinction between high and low. It means that men can truly and independently use the myriad things of the world to satisfy their daily needs through the labours of their own bodies and minds, and that, as long as they do not infringe upon the right of others, may pass their day in happiness. Nevertheless, as we broadly survey the human scene, there are

---

34 Fukuzawa Yukichi (1834-1901) published this work in several instalments in the 1870s. He urged students to learn Western languages and, thus, indirectly helped to bring about a transformation in literature. Besides Gakumon no Susume, Fukuzawa also wrote 'Bunmeiron no Gairyaku' (An Outline Theory of Civilization, 1875) Seiyo Jijo (Things Western), Sekai Kuni Zukushi (All the Countries in the world), etc.

wise and the stupid, the rich and poor, the noble and lowly, whose conditions seem to differ as greatly as the cloud and mud. The reason for this is clear. In the Jitsusokyo we read that if a man does not learn he will be ignorant, and that a man who is ignorant is stupid. Therefore the distinction between wise and stupid comes down to a matter of education."<sup>35</sup> Fukuzawa emphasised the introduction of compulsory universal education not just for the sake of individual's enlightenment only but also for achieving the government's goal of Fukoku Kyohei (Rich Nation and Strong military). If the citizens are educated and enlightened they will naturally contribute to the advancement of their country, therefore, it is, first of all, inevitable to give education to the citizen by the government. His opinion although utilitarian in nature was the opinion of the early Meiji government also. He himself founded a school (Keio Gijuku) in 1858 to teach Dutch, English, economics, law and other subjects, which had grown into an outstanding educational institution now known as the Keio Gijuku Daiku (Keio Gijuku University).

In 1871, the government had sent Tanaka Fujimaro, then Minister of education, to Europe and America to conduct a first hand study and investigation of various education

---

35 Fukuzawa Yukichi, An Encouragement of learning, translated by David Dilworth and Umeyo Hirano.

systems prevailed in those countries. However, to his surprise he found that many countries in the West, namely France, Germany, Holland, England, Russia and America had entirely different system of education suitable to their domestic conditions and hence, Japan must also derive an education system suiting to its requirement, by combining various useful elements from different traditions. He returned to Japan in the following year, and the government issued the Education Act and Fundamental Code of Education in 1872, which laid the foundation of state controlled education system. The plan was very ambitious one, providing for universities, middle school elementary schools, normal schools, and technical schools on a larger scale. The statement of policy that accompanied the Education Act stated clearly that education was to be organized on Western line in future. "Learning is the key to success in life, and no man can afford to neglect it", and "Every man shall of his own accord subordinate all other matters to the education of his children", were the two important statements in the Education Act,<sup>36</sup> which made universal education in elementary level compulsory. Eventually, elementary education for six years was made compulsory and inescapable duty of the state in 1880 and its execution was carried out vigorously. The percentage

---

36 Education Act of 1872, quoted in G.B.Sansom, op.cit., p.456.



of children receiving elementary education rose from 46 in 1886 to 61 in 1869 and 95 in 1906.

As mentioned earlier, education was considered by the new government primarily as a tool for government to train obedient and reliable citizens in the various skills required by a state in the path of modernization. This philosophy had the solid support of Shinto religion. In 1886, Mori Arinori, then Minister of education introduced an act which instructed the school administrations to keep in mind always that "what is done in the school is not for the sake of the pupil but for the sake of the country."<sup>37</sup> Further, the regulations creating the new university open with an article stating that the purpose of a university is to teach the arts and sciences essential to the state, and the educational system is conceived throughout not in a spirit of free inquiry but in conformity with strong nationalistic principles of a predominantly utilitarian trend.

However, by 1890, a conservative, anti-foreign wave swept the country demanding the reestablishment of an imperial state, and revamping the education system to create a citizenry with ardent fervour for nationalism and loyal to the emperor. As a first step to the achievement of this goal, the

---

37 Ibid, p.459.

government issued the Imperial Rescript on Education on October 1890. Its full text is as follows:

Know ye, our subjects:

Our Imperial Ancestors have founded our Empire on a basis broad and everlasting and have deeply and firmly implanted virtue, our subjects ever united in loyalty and filial piety have from generation to generation illustrated the beauty thereof. This is the glory of the fundamental character of our Empire, and herein also lies the source of our education. Ye, our subjects, be filial to your parents, affectionate to your brothers and sisters as husbands and wives be harmonious, as friends true; bear yourselves in modesty and moderation; extend your benevolence to all; pursue learning and cultivate arts, and thereby develop intellectual faculties and perfect moral powers, furthermore advance public good and promote common interests; always respect the Constitution and observe the laws; should emergency arise, offer yourselves courageously to the state; and thus guard and maintain the prosperity our Imperial Throne coeval with heaven and earth. So shall yet not only be our good and faithful subjects, but render illustrious the best traditions of your forefathers.

The way here set forth is indeed the teaching bequeathed by Our Imperial Ancestors, to be observed alike by Their Descendants and the subjects infallible for all ages and true in all places. It is Our wish to lay it to heart in all reverence, in common with your, Our subjects, that we may all attain to the same virtue.

The 30th day of the 10th Month of the 23rd year of Meiji.<sup>38</sup>

Although the Imperial Rescript contains only small reference to Education as such, it instructs the people to be obedient

---

38 This is the accepted translation, quoted in G.B.Sansom, op.cit., p.464. Also see, Meiji Japan Through Contemporary Sources, vol.3, Compiled and Published by the Centre for East Asian Cultural Studies, p.128.

and loyal to the Throne and strive toward creating a strong nation in the traditional way of their ancestors. It admonished the public not to follow the Western pattern of culture and civilization blindly as it would destroy the national identity. A regulation issued in 1891 for the guidance of teachers in primary schools laid down the following rule: "In education the greatest attention should be paid to moral culture. Hence, whatever is found in any course of study relating to moral or national education should be taught with care and assiduity. All teaching should be based upon matters essential to life, lessons should be so taught that they may all be turned to practical uses."<sup>39</sup> Thus after about 20 years after the Restoration, the Meiji authorities reoriented its education system, consciously inculcating national obedience and conformity through a standardized and strictly controlled education system.

#### **Christianity and Meiji Intellectuals**

Christianity was first introduced into Japan in the middle of 16th century (1549) by Francis Xavier, a Jesuit Priest. Thereafter, it flourished in certain quarters of Japan, getting special favour from certain Daimyo and even from the Tokugawa Bakufu in the beginning. However, realizing the potential threat of getting colonized by the Western

---

39 Ibid, p.467.

countries the Tokugawa Bakufu banned the preaching of Christianity and introduced rigorous censorship of Western books in order to prevent the entry of Christian books, and sent all the foreign missionaries back to their country. Offenders of the Tokugawa order were executed by the authorities. This hatredness for Christianity remained in the Japanese society throughout the Tokugawa period. Ban on Christianity was not withdrawn at the time of the Meiji Restoration. However, the Iwakura mission which visited America and Europe in 1871 was severely criticized by the Western countries for Japan's rigid laws against Christianity and the maltreatment of Christian believers. As a result, upon the return of the mission the government had withdrawn the anti-Christian edicts and ban on Christianity in 1873,<sup>40</sup> and people were ever since free to choose their religion.

Large number of Meiji youth, especially the proponents of modernization, was attracted to Christianity. However, most of them converted into Christianity not because of their yearning for the religion, but for their zeal and enthusiasm for Western science and knowledge. Christian missionaries in Japan, apart from preaching their religion, also encouraged Western learning and languages, especially English, by establishing schools and Universities. Many of the Meiji

---

40 Ibid, p.470.

youth considered learning of English as the shortest way to the acquisition of Western knowledge. Literary stalwarts of Meiji Era, like Kitamura Tokoku, Shimozaki Toson, Kunikida Doppo, Tokutomi Soho, Uchimura Kanzo etc. were converted into Christianity to study English and for knowing more about Western literature. Some prominent Japanese of the time, like Nakamura Keiu the founder of Dojinsha in 1873, even advocated the introduction and total conversion to Christianity so that the Japanese can master the Western science and knowledge quickly. Fukuzawa Yukichi, although not advocated the introduction or conversion to Christianity, praised Christianity for its world outlook and philosophy and commented it as a good and progressive religion which helped the Western countries to advance.

Unlike Confucianism and Shintoism, Christianity emphasized the Western concept of individualism, which ran counter to the traditional tendency to subordinate or sacrifice the freedom of the individual to the sake of family or wellbeing of the society. This Christian philosophy was very attractive to the liberals of early Meiji, who not only demanded a democratic political set up and freedom and liberty of the individuals but also stressed the need for human rights. The leaders of 'Jiyu Minken Undo' (Freedom and People's Rights Movement) of mid-1870s based their movement mostly on these Christian principles and the conservative

groups in the society branded them as anti-nationals. Christianity advocated equality of men and women in the society, and emphasized the higher education for women and the down-trodden people in the society for their emancipation. Unlike the pessimistic outlook of Buddhist teachings which places everything to destiny, Christianity encouraged its adherents to fight against the social evils and acquire their liberty, and human rights through education and hardwork. Christianity had influenced greatly the world view and writings of romantists and naturalists, like Kitamura Tokoku, Shimazaki Toson etc, of the mid and late Meiji periods, as these writers were greatly moved by the Christian ideals of love, individual freedom and liberation of soul. Hence, during the first twenty years or so after the Meiji Restoration it was Christianity which helped the Meiji intellectuals and writers to shape their philosophy and outlook suitable to the changing conditions of the society.

#### **Influence of Western Literature**

Another field which was tremendously influenced by the West was literature, although introduction of Western literature and philosophy was begun much later than the introduction and adoption of Western material culture into the Japanese society. It was through translations and summaries of Western literature that the enlightened and educated classes of mid-Meiji period acquired some knowledge about the

literary and intellectual background of European culture. Japanese literature especially the fiction at the time of Meiji Restoration was lifeless and reached its lowest point, as the Tokugawa authority treated fiction as a useless form of literature which may be enjoyed by less educated women folk or children. Moreover, novels were considered as a medium for inculcating Confucian ethics into the minds of the public, as they always deal with the theme of 'Kanzen Choaku' (Reward virtue and punish vice).

Tsubouchi Shoyo (1859-1934) was the first Japanese who emphasized the need for literary reform through his book *Shosetsu Shinzui* (The Essence of the Novel) written in 1885. Tsubouchi deploring the poor quality of the literature of his time, sought to analyze what was wrong with it, and how it might be rectified. In fact, he was one of the first Japanese to have had a good understanding of European literature. "Novel must be regarded as art to be appreciated solely for its own sake"<sup>41</sup> he argued and pointed out that the *Gesaku* fiction of Tokugwa period and the contemporary political novels usually dealt only with stereotypical characters who were motivated by the desire to "reward virtue and punish vice". Therefore, he called writers of new fiction to

---

41 Tsubouchi Shoyo, *Shosetsu Shinsui* (1885).

penetrate the "well springs of individual behaviours"<sup>42</sup> and reveal it can do, in all its manifestations. Before going to the first original novels by Japanese writers based on Western concept of modern literature as introduced by Shoyo it would be appropriate to give a list of European literatures which were made available to the Japanese readers in translations.

Initially, the Japanese readers were interested in Western books which might provide them with information about life in foreign countries and explain them the life style and character of Western peoples and reveal their secrets of success. Robinson Crusoe was translated into Japanese in 1859. Samuel Smiles' 'Self Help' was translated in 1870 by Sudo Nansui and was enthusiastically welcomed by a public that was eager to get on in the world. Soon after the translation and introduction of 'Self Help' and 'Robinson Crusoe', complete or abridged translations of biographies of great men such as Homer, Bacon, Shakespeare, Voltaire and Napoleon were appeared in Japanese. Children's stories from the 'Aesop's Fables' and 'Bible' were also translated into Japanese. Part of New Testament was translated in 1876 and Rousseau's 'Contract Social' in 1877. Oda Junichiro had translated Bulwer Lytton's 'Ernest Maltravers' in 1879 under the Japanese title "Karyu Shinwa" (A Spring Tale of Flowers and Willows)

---

42 Ibid, p.186 (Chikuma Shobo edition, 1971).



and it had a large readership in Japan. 'Ernest Maltravers' was the story of a talented and ambitious youth who had risen to high position after overcoming various hurdles in life. His love affairs, separation, disappointments, and the political background which he had to pass through, and his final success in life were interesting subjects for the enlightened youth of the Meiji. Oda Junichiro also translated other works by Lytten, namely, "The Last Days of Pompei", and "Paul Clifford". Lytten's "Kenelm Chillingly" was translated in 1885 and was popular among the Meiji youth because it seemed to have some bearing on political issues of the moment. Adventurous stories like, "Round the World in Eighty Days" and a "Journey to the Moon" (translated by Kawashima Chinosuke) by Jules Verne were also popular among the Meiji Youth.

"Life of Epaminondas of Thebes" was translated and published in 1883 by Yano Fumio under the title of "Keikoku Bidan" (A Noble Tale of Statesmanship) and it became a model for aspiring youth in Japan. "It was one of several successful works describing heroic struggles for independence and the deeds of Patriots who strove against oppressors, and it shows very clearly that the rising generation of Japan was already filled with hopes for national greatness and a certain hostility towards the great powers of the West".<sup>43</sup> "Julius

---

13 G.B.Sansom, op.cit., p.400.

"Caesar" by Shakespeare was translated under the name of the Last Blow of the Sword of Freedom in 1884 by Tsubouchi Shoyo. Apart from these, Works by Russian writers like Pushkin, Turgenyev, Dostoyevsky, and Tolstoy were also translated and became well known in Japan later on and these works also exerted a considerable influence in literary world. All these translations were made from English originals as the Japanese were already aware of the importance of English as foreign language. English language had also influenced the style of writing in Japanese. The classical style of Japanese writing (Bungotai) was very difficult for the common people to understand. Therefore, a new style, known as 'genbun-itchi' or a compound of colloquial and literary style, was brought to perfection by Japanese novelists who were immensely influenced by English and Western literature. This new style was started for the first time by Futabatei Shimei, one of the first novelists of Meiji period, who translated 'Rendezvous' one of Turgenyev's 'Sportsman's Sketches' into Japanese in genbun-itchi style in 1889. It was a turning point in the history of Japanese literature, as this quasi-colloquial style turned to be accepted as the literary medium ever since and served as a model for younger writers who later on founded the naturalistic school of novelists.

Another revolutionary movement in Japanese brought by the influence of Western literature was the introduction of 'new

verse forms', since English poetry could not be suitably rendered in conventional Japanese poetical modes. This new style is known in Japanese as 'Shintaishi' and a book entitled Shitaishi-sho (A Selection of Verse in New Forms) was published in 1882. It contained translations from Shakespeare, Gray, Campbell, Longfellow and Tennyson and some original poems written by Japanese poets in the new verse form.

Influenced by the translated Western literature, many young and prolific writers of mid-Meiji period began to write original works. Yano Fumio in 1885 wrote 'Kajin no Kigu' (Strange Encounters of Elegant Females) and Suehiro Tetchō wrote Setchubai (Plum Blossoms in the Snow) in the same year. These were the two political novels that made a great impression in the years of political strife before the opening of the Diet in 1890. Besides these works, Sudo Nausui wrote 'Ryokusa Dan', a political novel written under the influence of English books on self-government. Baba Tatsui's Essays on Natural Rights, written in 1882, was a hallmark in the National Rights Movement in Japan. Futabatei Shimei wrote 'Ukigumo' (the drifting clouds) in 1889, which was considered as the first novel written in the Western style, based on the principles of Tsubouchi Shoyo's "Shosetsu Shinzui". Japanese writers were familiar with the Western literary movements such as Romanticism, realism etc by the middle of Meiji period. In

short, the nature of Japanese literature completely got changed ever since it came under the influence of Western literature as new Western concepts of individual freedom, liberty, love, social equality etc. became the subject of Japanese literature. Apart from literature, Japanese press and journalism were also developed under the influence of West.

In this chapter an attempt has been made to outline major Western influence on early Meiji Japan, especially, on Shimazaki Toson and other writers, in order to support and substantiate arguments made in the subsequent chapters. Only the major historical events have been taken up here which will have a direct bearing on the coming chapters.

## CHAPTER II

## CHAPTER II

### THE EMERGENCE OF NEW MEIJI WOMEN

In the previous chapter the major Western influence on Meiji Japan and its subsequent effect on the social, political, educational and economical spheres of the country was briefly discussed. Analytical study of any of the literary works of Meiji era demands such an exercise as it is not possible to evaluate a work written in this period, without referring to the influence of Western civilization. Specially, it is true in the case of Toson, because he himself had been immensely influenced by the Western thought and civilization during his stay in Tokyo as a student of Meiji gaku-in.<sup>1</sup> Toson had written a number of poems, short stories and novels keeping women as the central characters in which he had shown his concern for women in the society. However, it was *Kyushujin* and *Rojo* in which he dealt seriously with the changing attitude of urban born and educated modern women, who challenged the existing male dominated society. As we shall see later on, *Aya* of *Kyushujin* and *Uryu Natsuko* and *Sawa Sekiko* of *Rojo* are highly educated women, and, in order to, understand their attitude and behaviour, it is essential to

---

1 Ito Kazuo, *Shimazaki Toson Jiten*, p.439. Also see, *Shincho Nihon Bungaku Album 'Shimazaki Toson'*, p.10; Fukuda Kiyoto and Sasaki Toru, *Shimazaki Toson, Hito to Sakuhin*, p.23.

look into the historical background of emergence of modern women in the Meiji period. Traditionally Japanese women had a low status in the society as they were considered as only subordinates to males and were treated only as an object for men's pleasure and procreation.<sup>2</sup> However, modernization of Japanese society and spread of universal education during the Meiji period had made the Japanese women to awaken and fight against this social discrimination which was imposed upon them by the society oriented by Confucian philosophy.<sup>3</sup> Aya, and Uryu Natsuko are the typical representatives of this genre of enlightened modern women. Both of them challenged the traditional family system based on marriage, where a husband has every right and freedom to indulge in any kind of pleasure or sexual fantasy despite his status as a husband, but restricted the wife into the four walls of the house, demanding her to serve her husband obediently and look after her children till the end of her life. Before going into the details of enlightenment of Meiji women, I would like to give a brief account of the status of Japanese woman during the Tokugawa and Pre-Tokugawa periods.

---

2 I. Takamura, *Josei no Rekishi-2*, p.528; Inoue Kiyoshi, *Nihon no Josei*, pp.37-38; Eiichi Kiyooka, *Fukuzawa Yukichi on Japanese Women* (Introduction by Keiko Fujiwara), p.vii; Gail Lee Bernstein, *Recreating Japanese Women, 1600-1945*, pp.3-4.

3 Eiichi Kiyooka, *op.cit.*, p.39.

## Status of Women in the Tokugawa and Pre-Tokugawa Societies

The status of Heian women was not as low as the status of women in the Tokugawa period. Heian women, especially the court ladies, were the champions of literature and letters. But even these high-born court ladies dressed in heavy colourful gowns of many layers, long streaming glossy, black hair, shaved eyebrows, blackened teeth and languid manners, seldom come out of their mansions, but spent much of their time writing poetry and having love adventures with their admirers.<sup>4</sup> As against it, the wife of a warrior had various responsibilities and duties. She took care of the household, educated the children and conducted the administration of the property. When her husband was absent or sick, she lead the soldiers in the defense of her house and property. Certainly life of a warrior woman of Heian or Kamakura period<sup>5</sup> was entirely different from the court ladies, but as she had been bestowed with responsibilities and duties, she had power and enjoyed various rights which the warrior women of Tokugawa period were deprived of. Even the wife of a farmer had higher status and position in the society compared to her counterpart

---

4 For a detailed discussion on this subject, please refer Janette Tandin Chabot, *Women in Japanese Literature - A View on Tokugawa Women and Literature*; and Dorothy Robins Mowry, *The Hidden Sun: Women of Modern Japan*.

5 Inoue Yasushi, *Nihon Josei-shi*, pp.61-105.



in the Tokugawa period. This does not mean that women were considered as equal members of the society during this period. Certainly they were never accorded equal respect and power as their male counterparts, but they enjoyed a kind of freedom although they were regarded as convenient instruments. They were not kept from associating with people, nor were they prohibited from going outdoors. They were not very educated or cultured but were active and at the same time, they had the opportunity for much enjoyment. Particularly in marriage, they were very free, never restricted by the confining doctrines of later years.

However, the Japanese society gradually changed into a feudal society based on a rigid Confucian philosophy. By the thirteenth century, a hierarchical society on the guidelines of Confucian ideologies of submissiveness, duty, loyalty, and obedience was taking shape and the five basic social relationships, between father and child, ruler and subject, elder brothers and younger brothers, husband and wife, and between friends, governed the society.<sup>6</sup> The feudal lords found it necessary to restrict the movements of women and confined them within the four walls of their castles. Women were deprived of their social status and rights and reduced

---

6 W.G.Beasley, *The Rise of Modern Japan*, p.16; George Sansom, *A History of Japan 1615-1867*, pp. 73, 76; Also see Herschel Webb, *The Imperial Institution in the Tokugawa Period*; H.Paul Varley, *Japanese Culture*, p.152.

into a mere instrument for satisfying the sensual pleasures of their husbands and giving birth to their offsprings. They were branded as 'covetous and sinful' and were accorded a lowly status in the social strata, without any right to property or inheritance. Shinran, the thirteenth century priest who founded the most important 'pure land' sect of Buddhism, even went on to the extent of saying that since women are covetous and sinful by nature, they must always think of this fact and exert themselves to cleanse themselves of their sinful nature. Without that they cannot enter into the world of Buddha. Buddhism even stressed the need for the common women to undergo manual hardships, like working in the field etc., even when their husbands are sitting idle, if they are really interested in getting salvation. Suppression of women was an inevitable necessity for the perpetuation of feudal system and those who dare to oppose the government policy were punished and branded as social outcasts.

Neo-Confucianism, which became the official philosophy of Tokugawa period, propagated the theory of 'preponderance of power' in all kinds of human relationships. According to it, heaven is above and earth is below. Similarly, there is an order of high and low in everything, including the husband-wife relationship. It characterizes men as yang (positive)

and women as yin (negative),<sup>7</sup> that is, men are like the heavens and the sun and women are like the earth and the moon. In other words, the former is high and the latter is low and humble, and therefore, it is natural for the latter to subordinate to the former. In matrimonial relationship it is the wife's responsibility to preserve harmony in the house. Hence, however much Japanese husbands might neglect or ill-treat their wives, they were never blamed. But if ever the wife should disturb the harmony of the matrimonial relation by any word of complaint, however justified, she was censured for jealousy, ill temper, wilfulness or disobedience. Women, in the feudal age had no right on the property as the saying goes: "Joshi wa Sangai ni ie nashi" a woman has no house in all the three worlds, because the house she lived in was never her own, but the property of her father, husband or son.<sup>8</sup>

'Onna Daigaku' (The Greater Learning for Women) a book written by Kaibara Ekken in the eighteenth century (1790), on the basis of Confucian principles and teachings laid down a list of injunction, women should strictly follow in their daily life. According to it, a woman should get up early and go to bed late, should never lie down during the day, should busy herself about the house, not neglecting her spinning, weaving

---

7 Eiichi Kiyooka, op.cit., pp.39-40.

8 Ibid, p.10.

and serving. She should avoid drinking much of beverages, such as tea or sake, and should never see or hear Kabuki plays, kouta, joruri and other such wanton entertainments. She should avoid going to shrines, temples, and other crowded places before she is forty years old.<sup>9</sup> She need not have any extra-familial social life and any contact with men outside the family, as such activities will disrupt the harmony in the family life. She should serve her husband with utmost sincerity and respect and refrain from making any complaint against him even if she is aware of his illicit affairs and sexual indulgence. She should always obey him and follow his instructions in complete subordination and suppress her emotions for the sake of harmony in the family. One of the synonym for wife even now in Japanese is 'Kanai', literally meaning 'inside or within the house'. One's wife was supposed to be always within the four walls of the house, taking care of the whole family, especially her husband and children. She was prohibited from any kind of social contact outside the family circle. Even when she knows that her husband keeps a concubine, she is not supposed to question him or seek for a divorce. This was the condition during the feudal period. Even today, this practice of keeping concubines is very much

---

9 Ibid, p.4; Also see, Carmen Blacker, The Japanese Enlightenment: A Study of the Writing of Fukuzawa Yukichi (Quoted from Onna Daigaku).

prevalent among males in Japanese society, and in majority of cases, their wives often pretend ignorance of the fact or behave in such a manner that, that will not invite any disharmony in the family life.

The only qualities that befit a woman are "gentle obedience, charity, mercy and quietness" according to the Confucian principles. She must observe the rules of decorum about maintaining physical distance between men and women, including her husband and brothers. She must form no friendship and no intimacy except when ordered to do so by her parents. She must not find any fault with her husband. She must look to her husband as her lord, and must serve him with all worship and reverence not despising or thinking lightly of him. In the *Onna Daigaku*, seven reasons are given for divorce if she should fail in her husband's house: (1) disobedience, (2) sterility, (3) lewdness, (4) jealousy (5) leprosy or foul disease, (6) talking overmuch or prattling disrespectfully and (7) stealing.<sup>10</sup> Without her husband's permission she must go nowhere. She must guard against the five worst infirmities that afflict the female; indocility, discontent, slander, jealousy and silliness.<sup>11</sup>

---

10 Ibid, p.179. Also see, Dorothy Robins, *The Hidden Sun - Women of Modern Japan*.

11 Ibid, p.40.

Marriage was purely a family affair during the Tokugwa period and the individuals did not have any say in the choice of their life partners. Especially, in the case of female children, it was the parents who decided whom should their daughter marry and when and how should the marriage ceremony be conducted. Even after marriage it is rare that the woman knows anything about her husband's reputation in society or his accomplishments or his friends and colleagues, because Confucian teachings even restricted the intimate association of husband and wife as a measure to preserve and perpetuate the hierarchical structure of the feudal society. Thus, the husband and wife always maintained a distance between them and often behaved like strangers.<sup>12</sup> However, a wife was required to give due respect to her husband even if she has little love for him, and bow in front of him as he was her master. Onna Daigaku's (The Greater Learning for Women) attack on woman is so severe that it may be branded as a spiteful work of literature full of curses and abuses heaped on women. The author, Kaibara Ekken, pronounces that most women, seven or eight out of ten, have the five faults of women - indocility and disobedience, discontent and spitefulness, slander, jealousy and shallow intellect - and, therefore, women are inferior to men. In short, The Greater Learning for Women had

---

12 Ibid (On the association of men and women), pp.110, 120.

formulated a doctrine placing men above women and this doctrine prevailed in the feudal society throughout the Tokugawa period.

As discussed above, women in the Tokugawa period neither possessed any right on property, nor had any civil right to seek a divorce even when their life was at risk. Whereas, the husband was allowed to practice polygamy and keep concubines. He was also allowed to divorce his legal wife, without any solid reason, whenever he wanted. In fact, the Tokugawa society dubbed the poor, oppressed but uncomplaining women as wise wives and faithful women. Only such faithful and obedient wives could survive in the feudal system. Women's education was totally ignored during this period, because women's education was considered a waste as their role was restricted within the four walls of the house. This pathetic situation continued till the Meiji restoration in 1896, when the country was opened to foreign trade and the social structure based on hierarchical feudal system was overthrown.

#### **Post-Meiji Enlightenment of Women**

The Tokugawa ideology, which upheld the preservation of a male dominated society in the lines of Neo-Confucianism, was the guiding spirit which perfected the early Meiji society also. Although the new Meiji government introduced various progressive policies to modernise the society by abolishing the age old feudal system based on class and hierarchy, it

gave little importance to the uplift and emancipation of women in the early years of Meiji. Same as Tokugawa rulers, Meiji rulers also upheld the Confucian view that, women were destined to serve and obey men, to be gentle and meek, pure and clean, and accomplished in housework. The mastery of these virtues was the ultimate aim of womanhood. However, the enlightened mass and intellectuals of the Meiji era could not compromise with this policy of the government. People's contact with Western learning and philosophy made them aware of concepts such as human rights, independence and individual freedom. Social equality, irrespective of sex, age, or social status became the war cry of the common people. Even the emperor himself had become aware of the necessity for women's education and emancipation although its motive was purely utilitarian. "Since our country has not yet established any institution for female education, our women are often not too sensible. As the upbringing of the children depends on the mother's guidance and is truly an urgent matter, it is certainly proper for those who now go abroad that they should take along with them wives or sisters, so that they may grasp the principles of female education there and also learn methods of child rearing."<sup>13</sup> This view of the emperor shows

---

13 ~ Imperial Edict delivered to the family heads of nobles on October 22, 1871; *Meiji Japan Through Contemporary Sources*, vol.3, 1869-1894.



the changing attitude of the new regime and finally, the charter Oath<sup>14</sup> taken by the emperor in 1868, broke open the way for social equality, equal opportunity, purging of old and obsolete social customs, and seeking of knowledge throughout the world. The fifth article of the Charter Oath was particularly pertinent to the future of Japanese women, for it fostered education and encounters with western women and customs.

Various organizations, such as 'Keimo Undo'<sup>15</sup> (Enlightenment movement), 'Jiyu Minken Undo'<sup>16</sup> (Freedom and People's Rights movement) and individuals like Fukuzawa Yukichi, Ueki Emori etc. pioneered the women's liberation movement during the Meiji period. Fukuzawa Yukichi, who was the leader of Keimo Undo, argued for equal right and opportunity for women. He was highly critical of the custom of polygamy prevalent in his society. He propagated a doctrine in which family of one husband and one wife formed the basic unit of human society and the basis for moral human relationship. He criticised the feudal custom of placing men above women and argued that a wife should not serve her

---

14 G.B.Sansom, op.cit., p.318.

15 H.Paul Varley, op.cit., p.211; Nakamura Mitso, Meiji Bungaku-shi (Keimo Shiso), pp.42-57.

16 Inoue Kiyoshi, Nihon Joseishi, pp.212-13; G.B.Sansom, op.cit., pp.311-12, 342-43; also see, H.Paul Varley, op.cit., p.213; I.Takamura, Josei no Rekishi-2, pp.536-41.

husband as if he were a lord and she a servant. He emphasized that the independence of a community could be achieved only if its citizens are independent and free of social oppression. "Society should afford women the same rank as men, the same rights, and concerning property, the same rights of ownership as men", he wrote in "Nihon Fujinron" (On Japanese women).<sup>17</sup> Fukuzawa also called for equal rights for women in marriage and divorce. He was a strong proponent of women's education. He argued that there should not be any distinction between boys and girls as far as their education is concerned. He believed equality of both sexes in education, with no superiority or inferiority of either, which will ultimately make each individual, whether man or woman, aware of his rights. Fukuzawa wrote a series of articles on women, stressing mainly four points (1) equality of men and women and the independence and self-respect of women; (2) encouragement of practical education for women which would guide them to take up any field useful in actual life; (3) a realistic outlook that would lead to a gradual improvement in the position of women rather than a rapid transformation (4) the necessity for men to change their attitudes for any improvement of the position of women to take place. He

---

17 Eiichi Kiyooka, op.cit., pp.6-36.

criticized the 'Onna Daigaku'<sup>18</sup> (Greater learning for women) severely, saying that a nation aiming to modernization cannot afford to stick on to an obsolete social set-up. The new society of Meiji has a different morality and therefore, it requires a new set of rules and regulations, modern and progressive, so that the nation would become rich and strong and its citizens would become independent. Although his philosophy was utilitarian in character, it exerted tremendous influence on the women's liberation and enlightenment movement of the Meiji period.

Another important organ which campaigned for women's liberation and equal rights between 1874-75 was 'Meiroke Zasshi',<sup>19</sup> a journal published by 'Meiroke-sha', an association of scholars and intellectuals who supported the complete westernization of the country. It published several essays on women; to name a few; "On wives and concubines" by Mori Arinori; "Creating good mothers", by Nakamura Masanao; and "On destroying prostitution" by Tsuda Hamichi. By the middle of 1870s, the campaign for women's liberation and equality became a popular movement not only in the cities and urban areas but through out the country, under the powerful leadership of leaders of 'Jiyuminken Undo' (Freedom and People's rights

---

18 Ibid, pp.170-219.

19 Nakamura Mitsuo, Meiji Bungaku-shi, pp.44-45; H.Paul Varley, op.cit., p.211.

movement) and many women activists. Activists of women's liberation under the influence of Herbert Spencer's "social statistics", which was translated and introduced into the Japanese society by this time, demanded complete freedom, liberty, and human rights for the individual irrespective of sex or social status. According to Spencer, an individual must be free to do everything which is directly or indirectly requisite for the due satisfaction of every mental and bodily want. The right to liberty and the corresponding right and duty to take it is not the right of a few privileged people but of all. Spencer asserted that granting equal freedom to all citizens in the society is a prerequisite to normal life in the society. Upholding this philosophy, the activists of women's liberation demanded the government to open equal opportunity for education for women and abolish all the laws and restrictions stipulated by the previous regime as a measure to oppress the women.

Ueki Emori, one of the pioneers of 'Jiyuminken Undo', campaigned for equal rights for man and women and stressed the importance for women's freedom and right to choose suitable life partner for marriage. "The problem of 19th century society is the problem of women. The history of 19th century civilization is the history of expansion of women's rights",<sup>20</sup>

---

20 Quoted in, Ai to Sei no Jiyu:- "IE" Kara no Kaiho, by Esashi Akiko.

he wrote in the preface of 'Toyono fujo' a magazine brought out by Sasaki Toyuju, a women activist, in 1889. He argued that in order to acquire their rights, women should not depend on the male society, but they themselves should fight for it. As a result, many women activists, like Kishida Toshiko, Fukuda Hideko, Shimizu Shikin etc. started a movement which challenged the male domination in the society. These women were highly educated and were the leaders of women's liberation. They demanded equality for women and attacked the traditional marriage system in which a woman is traded like a commercial product for the convenience of the family, giving least consideration to the emotion, or feeling of the girl concerned. They also vigorously attacked the evil custom of polygamy prevailed in the society and campaigned for a family set up based on one husband and one wife and equal right for divorce. Similarly, the publication of "Jogaku Zasshi",<sup>21</sup> Japan's first women's magazine, in 1885 by Iwamoto Yoshiharu, principal of Meiji Joyakko of that time, was the occasion for yet another campaign for women. Iwamoto was a Christian and believed in love and equality before god. His was a commoners' movement that shared the ideas of Fukuzawa and Mori Arinori and believed in monogamy, abolition of prostitution,

---

21 Ibid.; Honda Masuko, Saishiki Sareru Meiji, Jogakusei no keifu; Ito Haruo, Shimazaki Toson Jiten, p.211; Inoue Kiyoshi, Nihon Josei-shi, p.214.

education for women and equality of men and women in the home. Consequently, in 1886, a group of Christian women founded the Tokyo Fujin Kyofukukai<sup>22</sup> (Tokyo Women's Temperance Society) and advocated monogamy as well as supervision of Japanese prostitutes abroad and other related issues.

The government was finally partially acceded to the demands of these women's liberation activists and opened the door for compulsory education for all irrespective of gender in 1880.<sup>23</sup> Many girls' schools were established in various parts of the country even before the promulgation of universal education. Some of them are Tokyo Jogakko (1873), Tokyo Joshi Shihan gakko (1876), Atomi Jojiku, Ferris Seminary etc.<sup>24</sup> Execution of the "Koto Jogakko Rei"<sup>25</sup> (Girls High School Ordinance) in 1900 had finally accorded full recognition to the education of women and high schools and training schools were founded in all parts of the country. There were only 26 public schools for girls at the time of promulgation of this Ordinance, but this number was increased to more than 66 (girls high school) after its execution,

---

22 Inoue Kiyoshi, Nihon Josei-shi, p.218.

23 G.B.Sansom, op.cit., p.457; H.Paul Varley, op.cit., p.215.

24 Oida Yoshiaki, Ryokuyoshu no Josei, p.18. See also, Soma Kuromitsu, Moku - Meiji Taisho Bungakushi Kaiso; Inoue Kiyoshi, Nihon Joseishi, p.214.

25 Honda Masuko, Saishiki-Sareru Meiji - Jogakusei no Keifu.

although there were reactionary forces within the government who strongly protested against higher education of women. This group of people argued strongly that women's higher education is useless, and therefore, the fund for girls higher education must be diverted to the education of boys. After the Sino-Japanese war of 1895, even the Meiji government realized the need for orienting the society on the lines of imperialism by inculcating the spirit of nationalism in its citizens. For that, women must be educated in such a way that they will become "good wives and wise mothers"<sup>26</sup> (Ryosai Kenbo). Hence, moral education of women on the lines of Confucian ideology started again in school although a majority of women resented it and revolted against the government policy. However, introduction of universal and compulsory education and various women's liberation movements had given rise to a new generation of women who changed the face of Meiji society. Education had enlightened them and made them aware of their rights and freedom. They no more wanted to be oppressed by the society.

The old practice of "Chignon" hair-do (or mage) and women's kimono were the first two things which were to be discarded by the enlightened women and high school students of

---

26 Takamura Itsue, *Josei no Rekishi-II*, pp.544-52; Gail Lee Bernstein, *Recreating Japanese Women, 1600-1945*, pp.7, 158.

early Meiji period. "Chignon" hairdo was considered a symbol of man's oppression of woman. In 1886, a group of women in Tokyo formed an association, "Fujin Sokubatsu kai",<sup>27</sup> to get rid of the traditional hairdo. It was a direct attack on article 39th of "Ishiki Kaiti Jorei",<sup>28</sup> a set of regulations promulgated by the Meiji government in 1871, which prohibited the hair-cut of women without permission. "Fujin Sokubatsukai"<sup>29</sup> pressurised the government and ultimately they succeeded in getting the law withdrawn and women were free to make any kind of hairdo thereafter. The next major achievement was their success in do away with the traditional women's kimono which again was inconvenient and restricted the free movement of women. However, as far as the adoption of Western dress was concerned, the Meiji government itself was in agreement for it, as an imperial ordinance in 1872<sup>30</sup> prescribed foreign dress for court and other official ceremonies, because foreign (western) dress was considered as a symbol of modernization. Girl students of early Meiji period for some time used to wear big obi, men's hakama, and geta, and walked around the school campus and streets, with

---

27 See, Honda Masuko, Saishiki Sareru Meiji, Jogakusei no Keifu.

28 Ibid.

29 Ibid. See also, Takamura Itsue, Josei no Rekishi-II, p.540.

30 G.B.Sansom, op.cit., p.382.



their sleeves rolled up like boys and carrying Western books. Such a scene was never seen during the Tokugawa period. Traditional dress was gradually replaced by the more simple and convenient Western dress and by 1880s Western dress was common among the general public. Escape from the traditional hair-do and heavy kimono naturally assured the Meiji women physical freedom, which enabled them to move around easily and freely.

As the literary rate increased, women started asserting themselves more and more. Those who have come into contact with Western culture and civilization attracted to the western music and dance, and the girl students of 1884-1887 completely got involved in the activities of 'Rokumei-kan',<sup>31</sup> which was opened in November 1884 to entertain the Western (European) residents in Japan in Western style. During the Rokumeikan period, Western dance was even made a part of the school curriculum and young and enlightened girl students considered it as a part of their struggle to win complete freedom and liberty. Girl students, wearing western dress, decorating their hair with colourful ribbons, and riding on bicycles, were the objects of talk in the cities and villages and were the symbol of the period. They were engaged in playing tennis and created a typical conversational language of their own in

---

31 Takamura Itsue, op.cit., pp.531-41.

which English vocabularies were often mingled with Japanese. They had succeeded in creating a typical culture under the influence of Western civilization and their own enlightened world view. 'Love', hitherto had been considered as a forbidden fruit for women, had become one of the most popular words among the girl students. The Christian ideal of mutual love (ai) and the love (renai) between man and woman as preached by the romantic poet Kitamura Tokoku, who declared 'love'<sup>32</sup> as the foundation for human existence, became the guiding spirit of girl students. They had questioned the traditional system of marriage and family where men had all kinds rights and power, and asserted their right to determine their own future. They strongly resented to the traditional custom of choosing marriage partners by their parents and family. 'We shall never marry'<sup>33</sup> was the slogan among the enlightened educated women in the middle and end of Meiji period. They wanted to work instead of getting married and sacrificing their life for the sake of husband and his family. However, unfortunately, there were only few avenues which provided job opportunities to women. Therefore most of them either ended up as school teachers<sup>34</sup> or got employment in low

---

32 Kitamura Tokoku, *Ensei Shika to Josei*, (Gendai Nihon Bungaku Taikei-6), pp.63-66.

33 Honda Masuko, *op.cit.*

34 Oida Yoshiaki, "Ryokuyoshu" no Josei, p.18.

paid and low status jobs or got involved in women's liberation movements. Meiji government did not permit women in its military or government offices, because of the reactionary philosophy of "Ryosaikenbo" (good wives and wise mothers) which asserted that woman should take up only the household works including proper, disciplined upbringing of their offsprings, and therefore, their education must be aimed at achieving proper motherhood only.

#### **Prominent Women Leaders of Women's Liberation Movement**

It is worth mentioning here brief accounts of activities by few prominent women leaders of women's enlightenment movement of Meiji period. These women were typical representatives of the enlightened new woman of that period. Kishida Toshiko (1861-1901)<sup>35</sup> joined the Jiyu Minken Undo (Freedom and People's Rights Movement) in a young age of seventeen. She became a staunch supporter of women's rights and liberation ever since she delivered her first speech on the subject in Osaka in 1882. She became a teacher in Ferris girl's school in Yokohama in 1887 and contributed many articles regarding women's rights and equality to "Jogaku Zasshi", published from Meiji Jogakko under the patronage of Iwamoto Yoshiharu. 'Jogaku Zashi' played a major role in

---

35 Inoue Kiyoshi, op.cit., pp.220-22. Also in Esashi Akiko, Ai to Sei no Jiyu: "Ie" Kara no Kaiho; Tokamure Itsue, op.cit., pp.679-80.

spreading the new concept of 'love' between man and woman and the importance of freedom to choose one's spouse by oneself through love marriage. Kishida Toshiko very strongly criticized the traditional custom of marriage in her representative work, "Konin no Fukanzen". She argued that woman (girl) should be given the right and freedom to choose her own spouse and marriage should not be an act of convenience. She also criticized the existing rule on remarriage and divorce. "A woman cannot serve two husbands", the old social custom prohibited a widow to remarry even if her husband died when she was very young. Abstaining from a second marriage was considered by the society as a virtue of the widow. Whereas, a man could have divorced his wife whenever he wanted and gone for a second marriage with any woman he would prefer. Kishida Toshiko, through her writings and speeches protested against this social discrimination against women and strongly defended women's rights.

Shimizu Shikin (1868-1933)<sup>36</sup> was another prominent member of Jiyu Minken Undo and Joken Kakucho Undo (Women's Rights Expansion Movement) who strongly advocated one husband-one wife (monogamy) family set up. She got married in an early age of eighteen but divorced at twenty-first. She joined as a columnist in "Jogaku zasshi" in 1890 and published a short

---

36 Ibid.

novel "Koware Yubiwa", a novel based on her own real marriage which broke down, in 1891, in which she attacked severely the system of polygamy practiced by Japanese males. She, through her novel, instructed her readers, especially young girls, not to dream about married life, as the life in the inlaw's house is not as enjoyable or easy as they think, especially, if the husband is not honest and faithful to his wife. She attacked the existing criminal law which permitted married males to practice polygamy and illicit affairs, but punished married women for prostitution and immoral activities. Fukuda Hideko<sup>37</sup> (1852-1927) was also a strong, representative and supporter of Jiyu Miuken Undo and Joken Kakucho Undo. She emphasised the political rights and awareness of Japanese woman. In her representative work "Danjo Michi O Koto ni su", she lamented that in Japan women are looked down by men because they (women) do not show any interest in politics. She argued for bestowing political powers to Japanese women as they too are as patriot as their male counterparts. She also demanded the authority to grant equal right to women for divorce, and exhausted her energy to the subject of women's education. She founded two educational institutions for the benefit of women, namely, the Joshi Kogei Gakko (Girl's arts

---

37 Esashi Akiko, op.cit.; Inoue Kiyoshi, op.cit., pp.221-24; Takamura Itsue, op.cit., p.680.

school) and the Joshi Gigei Gakko<sup>38</sup> (Girls arts and crafts school). She protested against the Criminal law of 1883 which upheld the Confucian ideology of 'inequality' of men and women. Unless there is equality of sexes, she asserted, that it is not possible to realise a "smooth love marriage"<sup>39</sup> and therefore removal of this inequality from the constitution is the first and foremost objective of women. The existing social structure and set up are not suitable for free love between men and women, hence, it is inevitable to have a revolutionary reorganization of the society, she argued. All these women were leaders of their generation, who were highly educated and were immensely influenced by western and Christian ideals of love, brotherhood, individual freedom and equality. Their relentless activities guided their fellow women to the path of modern civilization based on freedom, love, self-respect, equality and awareness of individual self.

We can roughly classify the newly emerged Meiji women into mainly two categories; the 'modern girls' of girls' schools and the women leaders of women's enlightenment and liberation. Many popular novels of later part of Meiji period depicted the newly emerged modern women as the central characters. Hagiwara Hatsuno of 'Makaze Koikaze' by Kosugi

---

38 Ibid, p.680.

39 Esashi Akiko, op.cit.

Tengai, published in 1904, Ono Shigeru of 'Seishun' by Oguri Fuyo, written in 1906, Omiya of Konjikiyasha (1899) by Osaki Koyo, Aya of Kyushujin (1902), and Uryu Natsuko and Sawa Sekiko of 'Rojo' (1903) by Shimazaki Toson are typical examples of heroines of this genre. Especially, Aya and Uryu Natsuko are the symbol of emancipated Meiji women. Aya and Natsuko are representing the group of enlightened women who indulged in free love and questioned the customs of practice of marriage and family life, whereas, Sawa Sekiko of Rojo is representing the group of educated and enlightened women who although aware of their emancipated self, followed the traditional practice of society. Confrontation between this two groups of women was very common during that period in the society. Toson's heroines are not products of mere imagination but typical examples of a new generation of women in modern Japan, and there underlies the actual reason why I have chosen these two short stories as the object of my study.

Besides introducing the compulsory elementary education law in 1880, and Koto Jogakko Rei in 1900, the Meiji government had acceded to the demands and pressure of 'Jiyu Minken Undo' and 'Joken Kakucho Undo' and introduced several other laws for the benefit of Meiji women. In 1871, a law for abolishing sale of girls as prostitutes and geisha was

promulgated<sup>40</sup> and in 1872, people (mainly men) were directed to discontinue the old fashion of hair dressing,<sup>41</sup> and this law was gradually made applicable to women too as a result of their relentless protest against the discriminatory regulations of the government. The new Meiji constitution also permitted women to be a household head or an owner of land or of public bonds, thus allowing her to possess moveable and immovable property. Since 1871, the government even started sending girls abroad for higher education, which was an unimaginable act during the pre Meiji periods. Moreover, the "right to personal liberty" and the "wife's right to seek divorce"<sup>42</sup> were made legal in May 1873. Women were granted the right to go to court after consulting with their parents and brothers if their demand for divorce was rejected by their husbands. However, the real problem was lying in the execution of these laws and regulations as the majority of people in the male chauvinist society was not in agreement with the government's policy of granting such liberty and rights to the women folk.

By 1890s, the country was divided into two main camps - progressive who stood for freedom and the rights of the

---

40 G.B.Sansom, op.cit., p.386.

41 Ibid, p.330.

42 Inoue Kiyoshi, op.cit., p.180.



subjects irrespective of sex or social status, and the conservatives who believed in absolute rule by the emperor and resisted any kind of democratization of the country. These conservatives argued for a government and social set-up based upon the old Confucian ideology and morality, and protested strongly against granting women's rights or giving them equal education along with men. Especially after the Sino-Japanese war of 1895, the conservatives power increased, and ultimately, they succeeded in getting implemented the new education policy for women based on the revived Confucian approach on women, 'Ryosai Kenbo' (good wives and wise mothers). They argued that women's role in the society is different from men and therefore, they should be given education to nurture virtues for good "motherhood" and "faithful wives". Women's curriculum for education after the introduction of 'Imperial Rescript on Education'<sup>43</sup> in 1890, contained mainly the study of Confucian 'morals', how to serve one's husband, how to bring up children, how to behave in front of others etc. Girls were instructed to wear kimono in place of the western style uniform. This was a setback in the women's liberation movement in Japan during the Meiji period. However, this setback did not discourage the Meiji women, who gained more strength day by day, and acquired most of the

---

43 H.Paul Varley, op.cit., p.215.

civil rights one after another although they were still had a social status lower than the men and were denied of political rights such as voting right etc., and equal opportunity to work along with men. At least in the case of education, dress, hair-do, marriage and divorce, possession and inheritance of property, the Meiji women acquired equality. Their emancipated position assured them a certain amount of self-respect, self-reliance, and individual freedom compared to their predecessors of the feudal era.

### CHAPTER III

### CHAPTER III

#### SHIMAZAKI TOSON - HIS LIFE AND WORKS

The Meiji period (1868-1912) in Japanese history was a period when tradition gave way to modernism, feudalism to militarism, democracy and capitalism under the influence of Western culture, science and philosophy. Especially, introduction of Western science and education system into Japanese society influenced the outlook and concept of Japanese people towards their society, and enhanced the social status of the citizens who were in the bottom strata of the society. Gradual advancement in science and technology, and evolution of a modern society based on industrial growth<sup>1</sup> and trade made the Meiji Japanese aware of the importance of self-expression, individual freedom, etc. Besides, scientific and economic influence, a third sphere of Western influence was literature. In the early days of Meiji period, many of the classical as well as popular works, specially novels and poems of West were introduced into Japan through translation.<sup>2</sup> As a result, people in Japan come into contact with the existing modern trend in Western literature such as romanticism, realism, naturalism etc. Many Japanese literary figures,

---

1 G.C.Allen, An Economic History of Modern Japan, pp.30-46.

2 Nakamura Mitsuo, Meiji Bungaku-shi, pp.70-90.

engaged in writing modern poetry, novels and stories based on the above said concepts started appearing in the literary world from the second half of the Meiji period. Shimazaki Toson was one of the stalwarts of modern Japanese literature, who outlived all his contemporaries, and whose literary career continued for more than fifty years without any break. He started his career as a romantic poet during the second half of the Meiji era, and ended as a powerful writer of autobiographical novels based on naturalism.

Shimazaki Toson (Haruki) was born on 17th February 1872, in Magome,<sup>3</sup> Misaka village, Nishi Chikuma-gun, Nagano as the last son of his father Shimazaki Masaki and mother Shimasaki Nui. Shimazaki family was an ancient and famous family, because it held the traditional post of Honjin (officially designated inn for using as a daimyo's lodge), tonya (wholesale store) and Shoya<sup>4</sup> (village headman). However, after the Meiji restoration, Shimazaki family lost its traditional position as a result of abolition of the political system and social set up of the Edo period.<sup>5</sup> Toson's father was an ardent follower of Kokugaku (National learning) of

---

3 Shincho Nihon Bungaku Album "Shimazaki Toson", p.6; Ito Kazuo, Shimazaki Toson Jiten, p.410.

4 Ibid, p.195.

5 Fukuda Kiyoto, Shimazaki Toson, Hito to Sakuhin, p.13.

Hirata school<sup>6</sup> and he was a good composer of Waka poems. Toson's father wanted his son to follow his foot steps and in fact, he often used to say that Haruki (Toson) is his real son because only he has got his taste and talents.

As a child Toson used to roam around the neighbourhood of his house and enjoyed the scenic beauty of hilly surroundings. The eternal and evergreen beauty of the countryside impressed Toson's young mind very deeply that most of his literary works contain the taste and flavour of the countryside. It had in fact, made him a romantic at an early age of eight when he had experienced a kind of love and affection towards an older girl, namely, Owaki Yu, who was his neighbour.<sup>7</sup> Toson narrated his first love affair in a poem called 'Hatsukoi' in 'Wakanashu', the first ontology of poems by him.

At the age of seven, Toson was put into Misaka primary school.<sup>8</sup> Meanwhile, his father taught him 'Senjibun', 'Sanjikyō', 'Kokyo' and 'rongo' (The analects of Confucius).<sup>9</sup> However, at the age of ten he was sent to Tokyo along with his elder brother Tomoya. In Tokyo, for some time he stayed with his elder sister's family, the Takase family,<sup>10</sup> and got

---

6 Ito Kazuo, Shimazaki Toson Jiten, p.196.

7 Ibid, p.410.

8 Fukuda Kiyoto, Shimazaki Toson: Hito to Sakuhin, p.17.

9 Ibid, p.17.

10 Ibid, p.19.

enrolled in Taimei primary school<sup>11</sup> which was situated in the former Sukiya-Cho. Thereafter Toson did not visit his native place for long time, until the death of his mother. His life in Tokyo, especially during the initial years, was not comfortable as he had to shift his residence several times. Still, he was an outstanding student who was even given an award for the best result in 4th grade in the Kyoritsu Gakko (Kyoritsu school).

Although Toson as a child was trained by his father in the Kokugaku philosophy, his interest was in learning English literature which was a fashion among youngsters of his time. Ignoring his father's opposition, Toson started learning English and that was a major turning point in his life. At the age of 15, he graduated from Taimei school and thereafter he started intensive study of English under the English scholar, Shimada Keigi, and entered Meiji Gakuin,<sup>12</sup> a mission school, in 1887 when he was sixteen years old. May be, his limitless quest for knowing the current of new age was one of the main motive forces behind his serious intention of learning English. In Meiji Gakuin, he also came into contact with modern (western) philosophy and literary trend. Realising that Christianity is an integral part of Western

---

11 Ibid, p.19.

12 Ibid, p.22; Shincho Nihon Bungaku Album, "Shimazaki Toson", p.10.

culture and civilization and owing to his quest and ambition for knowing the Western philosophy and culture thoroughly, and not because of his interest in Christian faith, Toson converted into a Protestant Christian in Meiji 21.<sup>13</sup> He was baptized in Takanawa Dai Cho Church, by Kimura Kumaji, his teacher and benefactor at Kyoritsu Gakko.

During the first two years of his study in Meiji, Gakuin, Toson lead a very carefree, and jolly life, like any youth of seventeen or eighteen years old would have done. He used to wear very fanciful western dress and colourful socks. He used to roam around meeting places and other spots where young and beautiful girls used to gather. Toson himself narrates us his life in Meiji Gakun in the following way. "For about (one to) two years after entering into the school (Meiji Gakuin), Sutekichi (Toson) spent his time buoyantly, enjoying life fully.... Wearing light cap and half pants made as per his taste, and putting on long woollen socks for show, he upon invitation, along with his cheerful and bright looking friends used to participate in literary forums where many young girls get together. Once the announcement for the start of programme made, he would sit properly on the seat patiently, and listen to English recitation and chorus by girl students, with full concentration, to such an extent that he would

---

13 Ibid, p.10.



forget everything else around him. Happiness is waiting for him wherever he goes, he felt so. He went around the places where young girls and boys used to get together, or to the houses of elders of church in search of a pretty, lovely partner who would make him happy...."<sup>14</sup> Toson, because of his carefree and jolly life during the initial years of his study in the Meiji Gakuin was known among his friends by the nickname of "Ikakeya no tenbinbo" (carrying pole of a tinker). However, during the second half of his study, his character changed altogether, and most of his time was spent in reading. His nick-name suddenly changed into "Sennin" (mountain hermit) and virtually he spent all his time by reading books in the library. He finished reading the works of Shakespeare, Dante, Goethe, Byron, Wordsworth, Futabatei Shimei, Tsubouchi Shoyo, Mori Ogai, Koda Rohan, Matsuo Basho etc. during this period.<sup>15</sup>

Toson graduated from Meiji Gakuin in 1891, at the age of twenty. Soon, with the help of Kimura Kumaji, his benefactor, he was assigned to the sub-editor's job for a magazine called "Jogaku Zasshi", which was edited and managed by Iwamoto Yoshiharu. Through a literary criticism titled "Ensei Shika to Josei"<sup>16</sup> in Jogaku Zashi, Toson, for the first time, came

---

14 Sakura no mi no juku suru toki, Shimazaki Toson Zenshu, vol.12, pp.9-10.

15 Shincho Nihon Bungaku Album, "Shimazaki Toson", p.10.

16 Kitamura Tokoku-shu, Gendai Nihon Bungaku Taikei, pp.63-66.

into contact with Kitamwa Tokoku, who was his mentor ever since. In this essay, Tokoku emphasized the liberation of self though the liberation of love (renai) between man and woman. According to him, renai (love) is the secret medicine of humanity. Love existed first and then only this world came into existence. Human life loses its charm when there is no renai (love). Tokoku's philosophy on 'love' influenced the youth of his time extremely, and Toson was also no exception to this. Toson resigned from this job and took up a teaching assignment to teach English in Meiji Jogakko which was then controlled by Iwamoto Yoshiharu. There he fell in love with one of his students, Sato Sukeko,<sup>17</sup> who was older to him by one year. However, this affair could not be continued for long as Sato Sukeko was already engaged to another man called Shishiuchi Toyotaro, and got married to him soon after Toson met her. This was a very sad event in Toson's life. Unable to withstand this crisis, Toson after resigning from his job and leaving the church started wondering through the Kansai region of Japan like the famous Haiku poet Matsuo Basho, meanwhile reading the works of Byron carefully. After returning from his tour, he rejoined Meiji Gakuin but resigned

---

17 Ito Kazuo, Shimazaki Toson, pp.76-87; Fukuda Kiyoto, Shimazaki Toson, Hito to Saku hin, pp.35-36.

again and joined Tohoku Gakuin in Sendai as a language teacher in September 1896, when he was 25 years old.<sup>18</sup>

Toson's failure of love affair with Sato Sukeko was perhaps the most crucial turning point in his life. Soon after returning from his wandering in Kosai region he even thought of committing suicide by drowning. However, overcoming the despair and feeling of nothingness, Toson determined to live as a poet. At Sendai, he started writing romantic poems in the "Shintai-Shi style" and published them in "Bungakkai"<sup>19</sup> a literary journal founded by Kitamura Tokoku and other naturalists of Meiji period, including Toson. It is very difficult to express one's feelings fully through the traditional 31-syllable Waka (Tanka) style poetry. In order to overcome this difficulty, the enlightened poets, including Toson, of Meiji period adopted the Western style of poetry writing as their model, which is called Shintai-shi Style. Yatabe Ryokichi, Toyama Masakaza, and Inone Tetsujiro, all scholars of Tokyo University, were the pioneers of this reform movement of poetry. They published an anthology of poems in this style, under the title 'Shintai Shi-Sho' in 1883. The Toson we know today would not have been there, had he not experienced a broken love affair with Sato Sukeko. Toson who

---

18 Ibid, p.45.

19 Ito Kazuo, Shimazaki Toson Jiten, pp.392-94; Shiucho Nihon Bungaku Album, "Shimazaki Toson", p.14.

started his life as a poet during the Sendai period, continued to be active in literary life till his death in 1942. His accomplishment in this fifty years is consisted of four volumes of poems, five volumes of short stories, seven volumes of novels, five volumes of children's stories, seven volumes of impressions and thoughts, four volumes of travelogue and many other works. Compared to other writers of naturalism, volume of his works is not much, but most of his works, unlike others, are considered to be of high value and importance.

In fact, Toson was the only writer in Japan who firmly got deep into the social life of common Japanese people in the modern society and built up his literary career from there. Therefore, he deserved to be called as the real pioneer of people's literature in Japan. He was a "people's poet" who represented the thoughts and emotions of common Japanese (in the society) living in the midst of love, sorrow, troubles and difficulties. Even after several years of their original publications, various works of Toson are read now widely by people from all strata of the society, because his works are consisted of a fusion of various aspects of social life of modern humanity, especially, highlighting its characteristics such as individualism, romanticism, realism and naturalism.<sup>20</sup>

---

20 Edwin McClellan, "The Novels of Shimazaki Toson," Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies, vol.24, p.89; William F.Sibley, "Naturalism in Japanese Literature", Harvard (continued...)

The style and pattern of his writing were not only an embodiment of influence by western culture and civilization on Japanese literature, but also contains the essence of typical Japanese literature of the modern era.

The total span of Toson's literary career can be roughly divided into mainly five periods. The first stage of his literary career is the "age of romantic poems" or more precisely the period of poetry and romanticism. Toson's career as a poet was very short. Actually, he remained as a poet only for about five years, between the age of 25 and 29 years. He published the first collection of poems, "Wakana-shu" in 1897. Toson started writing the poems of Wakanashu when he was teaching in Tohoku Gakuin in Sendai. For him, poetry was an experiment as he was not confident about his ability to write poems. Both in reality and perception, Tason was a wayfarer, and his lyrics are essentially monologues of a wanderer who lived in a secluded place like Sendai. However, Toson loved poetry and it was his great ambition to become a pioneer of Shintai-shi. After writing poems at Sendai, he for the first time felt that a "sun is rising in him too".<sup>21</sup> However, poems of Wakana-shu are not the poems of

---

20 (...continued)

Journal of Asiatic Studies, vol.28, pp.157, 161, 163, 167; Kato Shuichi, Nihon Bungaku-shi Josetsu - Part I, pp.378-385.

21 Taiyo no Kotoba, Shimozaki Toson Zenshu-18, p.251.

a person in love, but they are in fact, the poems of a person who abandoned love. Toson, perhaps, would not have taken up the task of a poet if he had not had a broken love affair with Sato Sukeko.

After one year in Tohoku Gakuin, Toson resigned from the teaching post and returned to Tokyo by the middle of 1897 and he published his second collection of poems "HITOHABUNE" in June 1898, at the age of 27. In the same year, during summer he stayed with his elder sister (Takase family) in Kiso Fukushima and, meanwhile observing and studying the nature around there he completed his third collection of poems, "NATSU-KUSA", and published it in December of the same year. By this time, Toson started realising his limitations to remain as a poems and before publishing Natsu-Kusa he made an attempt to write prose. The result was a novel called "Utatane". Although he got it published in a journal called "Shin-Shosetsu", in 1898 this attempt was a total failure and he had to again return to poetry. He published his fourth collection of poems, "Rakubai-Shu" in August 1901. Later on all these four collections of poems were compiled into a single volume, "Toson Shishu" and published in September 1904.

The romantic poems (or the poetry in new style) by Toson are in fact, true manifestation of inner most feelings of emancipated Meiji youth. Toson had the vision and thorough knowledge of the human mind. And he thrust deep into the

human mind, dissected it, analysed it and expressed his findings in abstract but easily comprehensible terminology. He was a poet with human touch, a poet who viewed the human relations, specially the relationship between man and woman, in accordance with nature and the environment where people live. For him, love was not a mere means to satisfy one's passion, but he considered it as the best medium to liberate one's self from the tradition-bound unnatural social restrictions and discrimination. Specially, many of his poems in Wakanashu are centred around female characters who are traditionally considered to be weak and exploited by the society. For example, the titles of first six poems in Wakanashu are, Oefu, Okinu, Osayo, Okume, Otsuta, and Okiku, which are all female names. Through these poems, he established himself as a pioneer of romanticism in Japanese literature. These are the manifestation of the concept of "renai", (love between man and woman) upheld by Kitamura Tokoku. He was the first persons in the world of Japanese poetry to project love as the nucleus of human relationship and, that is precisely why his poems are still read and appreciated by large number of people in Japan.

However, Toson was not a born genius but a self-made person who after bringing out his fourth volume of poetry realised that it was impossible for him to continue as a poet as he lacked the ability to express his ideas and feelings in

verse properly. Toson did not write any poem after the publication of Rakubai-shu. Regarding this change in his career, he later on explained in the following way: "I write novels because they are the best medium for what I want to say. There seem to be quite a few people in Japan today who have turned from poetry to prose."<sup>22</sup> However, writing in prose was again not an easy task for him initially. As mentioned earlier, his first attempt in prose writing (Utatane) was a complete failure, and he did not want to repeat the same failure again. Therefore, he spent several years in silence observing nature and the society around him, before he started attempting his experiment in writing prose for the second time. Toson's shift from a romantic poet to a prose writer of naturalism was the second great turning point in his career.

The second stage in his career as a writer is the period of "Ryokuyoshu", a group of short stories written between 1902 and 1906. This period in Toson's life is considered to be the formative period, when the poet Toson turned into a matured self respecting, and fearless prose writer. Factors such as growth in age, multitude of changes in life and job, and above all, the rapid change and transformation of Japan as a nation during the period between Sino-Japanese war (1895) and Russo-

---

22 Asakusa Dayori (Shinkatamachi Yori), Rokuin Zatsuwa, Shimazaki Toson-Zenshu-6, p.297.



Japanese war (1905) have inserted great influence on Toson, and he started gradually shifting his career to live the future life as a writer of prose (novels) according to the principle of naturalism. Many of Toson's colleagues and friends had joined the army during the Russo-Japanese war of 1905. Toson too wanted to join it as a war correspondent, but he could not get through it. Therefore, he decided to stay back and enrich literature with his pen, saying that; "life is a huge battle field. A writer is nothing but its war correspondent".<sup>23</sup> With this ambition, and to fulfill his aim of becoming a prose writer he conducted several experiments and studies of the nature and devised various plans and sketches. His study of nature was later on compiled into a book called "Chikuma gawa no suketchi" (The sketches of Chikuma River) in 1912.

Toson went to Komoro school (Komoro Gijuku),<sup>24</sup> a small secondary institution founded and directed by his spiritual mentor Kimura Kumaji, to teach English and Japanese, in April 1899, with his wife Hata Fuyuko whom he got married in the same month at the age of 27. He taught in Komoro Gijuku for seven years and during this period he earnestly read Turgenev and scientific writings of Darwin. These books taught him how

---

23 Preface to Ryokuyoshu, Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-3, p.240.

24 Ito Kazuo, Shimazaki Toson Jiten, pp.147-49; Namiki Miharu, Shimzaki Toson to Komoro, pp.97, 201.

to conduct scientific and objective observation of man and nature. For Toson, observation of common man's daily life, his job and profession was one of the most important concerns during his stay at Komoro.<sup>25</sup> Komoro region of that time was mostly inhabited by traditional peasants whose life and profession he used to observe carefully from various angles. He observed the change in clouds and climate, transformation of mountain sceneries and change in the flow of rivers. Regarding this he wrote the following in the preface of Haru, "I went to northern Shinshu in the spring of 1899. That time onwards, I started experiencing the real country life. I decided to depict whatever I found or felt around me realistically. I started my work by sketching the rough and simple life of the farmers on the countryside."<sup>26</sup> Again in the preface of Chikumagawa no Suketchi, Toson further revealed his decision to leave poetry and take up prose, "I spent a long period of seven years in those mountains of Komoro. My mind became ready to leave poetry and take up the novel as a medium for expressing my feeling."<sup>27</sup> As this indicates, Toson's decision to leave poetry, and then take up the novel

---

25 Ibid, pp.22, 62, 245.

26 Postscript to Haru, Shimazaki Toson-Zenshu-5, p.231.

27 Postscript to Chikumagawa no Suketchi, Shimazaki Toson-Zenshu-2, p.98.

was not an accidental occurrence but was a well-planned and prepared action.

The first successful novel Toson wrote was *Kyushujin*. He published it in *Shinshosetsu* in November 1902. However, branding it as a 'slander' exposing the private life of Kimura Kumaji, the founder of Komoro Gijuku, and his wife, *Kyushujin* was soon to be banned from publishing and selling. Therefore, this work did not appear in *Ryokuyoshu* initially. Other important works of this period are, *Warazori* (November 1902), *Oyaji* (January 1903), *Suisai gaka* (January 1904), *Yashino hakage* (March 1904), *Tsugaru Kaikyo* (December 1904), *Asa meshi* (January 1906) and *Kachiku* (October 1906).<sup>28</sup> However, out of this only *Kachiku* was written after *Hakai* and therefore we may replace it with *Kyushujin*. Thus, these eight works can be considered as the initial prose works tried out by Toson as a step to become a full pledged prose writer. Many critics consider these works as trial works by Toson before the advent of novels based on the concept of naturalism. Therefore, hitherto such powerful works like *Kyushujin*, *Warazori*, *Rojo* and *Suisai Gaka* were even ignored and left behind by scholars of Japanese literature as worthless works.

Another characteristic of these short stories or novelettes is that Toson had written them in the colloquial

---

28 Shimazaki Toson *Shu-II* (Nenbu); *Nihon Kindai Bungaku Taikei-14*, pp.496-97.

language of contemporary Japan. In fact, concept of genbun itchi<sup>29</sup> (unified written and spoken language) style was initially tried out in prose writing by Futabatei Shimei in his novel Ukigumo. The first part of 'Ukigumo' (The Drifting Cloud) was published in 1888 and the complete novel was published in 1892. Its excellent psychological description and narration in 'genbun itchi' style was totally a new experience to the enlightened youth of Meiji. This had set a new trend in prose writing among young and energetic Meiji writers like Toson etc. It not only had simplified the prose writing, but also increased the number of readership among common people.

Ozaki Koyo, one of the pioneers who emphasized the need for introducing genbun-itchi style stressed the need to write things which appear natural even if they are not real and he opposed the philosophy of expressing straight everything only because they are real. According to him some cases may be real but they may not appear natural. As against his assertion, Tayama Katai, a pioneer in Japanese naturalism, emphasised the need to write whatever actually happened or really existed even if that seems to be unnatural, and do not write whatever really not existed or actually not happened

---

29 Nakamura Mitsuo, Meiji Bungakushi, pp.102-105.

even if that is found as if quite natural.<sup>30</sup> Western writers of realism like Zola and Flaubert emphasized the need to observe nature and then, analyse and criticise it appropriately, and thereafter reconstruct a plot fitting to the reality. Whereas Japanese realists and naturalists deviating from the original western concept of naturalism, turned to their own real personal experiences and eventually, the Japanese naturalism evolved into a kind of autobiographical narration of personal experiences.<sup>31</sup>

Influenced by Genpun itchi style and the newly acquired knowledge of literature based on realism and naturalism, Toson decided to express his ideas more clearly and emphatically. Like the period of romantic poems, during this period also, Toson was very concerned about the historical movement for the liberation and emancipation woman. Therefore, all his short stories and novelettes, except Asameshi, Tsugaru Kaikyo and Yashi no Hakage, of the Ryokuyoshu period are centered around female characters. Especially, it is more evident in Kyushujin and Rojo, the two stories which are taken up for special study and analysis as the subject of this thesis.

The third stage in Toson's literary career is the period between Hakai and Shinsei, during when Toson established his

---

30 Ibid, p.200.

31 William F. Sibley, "Naturalism in Japanese Literature", Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies, 28 (1968), pp.157-69.

position as a powerful novelist towards the end of Meiji era. Three of his major works during this period are Hakai, Haru and Ie. After seven years stay in Komoro, he resigned from Komoro Gijuku and left Komoro in April 1905.<sup>32</sup> After settling down in Tokyo, he engaged full time in writing Hakai which he completed and published in March 1906 taking all the expenses by himself. In Hakai, Toson narrates the miserable life of an educated and intelligent youth from Eta community, an out-cast in the Japanese society. At the time of its publication, Hakai invited countless number of criticism both in favour and against its theme and it is considered to be the first novel dealing with social problems in Japanese society.<sup>33</sup>

Toson started writing Haru for publishing in Tokyo Asahi Shinpun as a serial from January 1908. It was his first novel to be published through a newspaper. Unlike Hakai which is considered to be a novel dealing with social problem and written in a realistic manner, Haru is a fictionalised narration of the real life of the author, his family and his friends and colleagues of Bungakkai during the periods between Toson's stay in Meiji Gakuin as a student and his debut as a romantic poet. Haru gives us a clear picture of enlightened Meiji youth, mainly the members and activists of Bungakkai,

---

32 Shinchosha Nihon Bungaku Album, "Shimazaki Toson", p.33.

33 Fukuda Kiyoto, Shimazaki Toson: Hito to Sakuhin, p.152.

who were impressed by the modern thought of middle Meiji period. Toson continued to write his novels hereafter in the pattern of Haru style and it was the first, true autobiographical novel written as per the principle of naturalism.<sup>34</sup>

The next year of Haru's publication, that is in 1909, Toson published his second collection of short stories, "Toson-Shu", and his first collection of impressions "Shin Katamachi Yori". Serialized version of part-1 of his third novel "Ie" was published in Yomiuri Shinpun newspaper in 1910. The part-2 of the same novel was published in "Chuo Koron", a literary journal in the following year. In Ie, Toson narrates the ups and downs, the trials and sorrows of his family (Shimazaki family) and his sister's husband's family (Takase family) for a period of about twelve years. Toson's Ie is considered to be a master piece written during the peak of naturalism in Japan and it is often sighted as the best example of Japanese naturalism.

The fourth stage in Toson's literary life is the period of Shinsei and many other works which followed that. After the death of Toson's wife Fuyuko in August 1910, Toson led a lonely life for some time. After a while, his second elder brother's daughters Hisako and Komako started staying with

---

34 Ibid, p.159.

him. After Hisako got married Komako continued to stay with Toson and their relationship turned out to be that of lovers and Hisako finally got pregnant. Knowing this truth, Toson, in order to save his name and conceal this scandal, went to Paris in 1913 and stayed there for four years during World War I. He returned to Japan in April 1916.<sup>35</sup> While in Paris, Toson got published "Sakura no mi no juku suru toki" in "Bunsho Sekai" in 1914. Toson started publishing the serialised version of Shinsei in Asahi Shimpun from 1st May 1918, when he was 47 years old. In Shinsei Toson narrates the story of 'incest', his illegal relationship with his niece Komako after his wife's death. He exposed his sex scandal to the outside world through this novel and got himself liberated from the psychological pain and trauma he had been undergoing. Besides Shinsei and Sakura no mi no juku suru toki, Toson wrote many other stories, novels and travelogues during this period (Arashi, Furansu dayori etc.).

The last stage in Toson's literary career is the period during when he wrote Yoake Mae. Yoake Mae was published (part-1 and part-2) from Shincho-sha in 1935. (The first part of this novel was completed in 1931 and the second part was completed in 1935). Yoake Mae is a historical novel, in which his father Shimazaki Masaki is the central character. Besides

---

35 Shincho Nihon Bungaku Album, "Shimazaki Toson", p.65.



these major novels, Toson had written several other short novels, like Arashi, Aru onna no shogai, Nobi shitaku, Bunpai etc. which are worth mentioning. Toson died at the age of 72 in August 1943, before completing his last long novel "Toho no mon" which he started writing in January 1943. Had he lived few more years, Japanese literature would have definitely been enriched further by his valuable contribution.

CHAPTER VI

## CHAPTER IV

### THE TWO STORIES

Toson was always a keen observer of the world around him, and this close observation of people, nature and social surroundings enabled him to understand various truths regarding human relations and the society. However, instead of following the conventional form of observing the world on the basis of conventional ideology and philosophy, he preferred to study and understand it through direct observation with his own naked eyes. As Miyoshi Yukio pointed out, "Toson never tried to anticipate reality on the basis of set ideas or concepts. Though he had the quality of an outstanding thinker, he never tried to understand a reality only on the basis of mere conventional thought."<sup>1</sup> Especially after the death of Kitamura Tokoku, whom Toson respected as his mentor and guide ever since they got acquainted, he realised the powerlessness of a particular thought or concept. Tokoku was a pioneer of romanticism in Japan, who preached that 'love' between man and woman is the foundation for everything in human life. He even said that there would be no life if

---

1 Miyoshi Yukio, "Shimazaki Toson Hikei" ("Toson, Hito to Bungaku"), p.11.

there is no "love".<sup>2</sup> Tokoku, convinced by his own philosophy, went for love marriage, but he soon discovered that his philosophy had several contradictory aspects and finally his marriage ended in utter failure. Ultimately, Tokoku committed suicide<sup>3</sup> in order to liberate himself from his own ideology. This incident was a real shock to Toson, and therefore he followed a more practical method of confronting nature and reality not on the basis of any conventional ideology but through his own observation and study. For him the happenings of everyday life in the world around him were sufficient enough for making himself busy with his literary work. It can be even said that he never thought of becoming a philosopher or a writer with a set cluster of thought or ideas for renovating, reforming or liberating the contemporary society of which he was also a member. On the contrary, his purpose was to depict things of interest around him realistically as they are, so that the people in the outer world would also come to know the real aspects of the society in which they lived.

Among other things, the problem of women was a matter of constant concern to Toson sometimes as a sympathiser or

---

2 Ensei Shika to Josei, Kitamura Tokoku-shu (Gendai Nihon Bungaku Taikei-6), p.63; Hiraoka Toshio Kitamura Tokoku, (Kokubungaku Kaishaku to Kansho-46-5), pp.47-56.

3 Shincho Nihon Bungaku Album, "Shimazaki Toson", p.19; Shimazaki Toson, Kitamura Tokoku no Mijikaki Isho, Kitamura Tokoku-shu, pp.371-75.

severe critic or sometimes as a mere observer. Toson tried to assert and manifest various aspects of woman as a human being, mother, wife and lover<sup>4</sup> especially through his short stories which he wrote during the Ryokuyo-shu period. Through these works, Toson was in fact trying to expose the real condition of Meiji women who were on the path to liberation from the male dominated society based on Confucian and Buddhist philosophy. In this study, two of Toson's initial period works, namely *Kyushujin*, 1902, and *Rojo*, 1903, will be subjected to special study and investigation, in order to define the female characters in them on the basis of social, economical, educational and historical perspectives.

Toson had carried out considerable amount of ground work, in the form of observation and investigation of the countryside before he initiated his career as a fiction writer.<sup>5</sup> He lived in Northern Shinshu for seven years, as a teacher of English and Japanese in Komoro Gijuku. "Woman" occupies a major part in his long observation. The emancipated status of women in the post-Meiji society had given rise to various problems. In some cases, their emancipation, liberation and acquisition of equal rights even brought the society into the

---

4 Urata Junko, *Toson Bungaku no Joseizo* (Kokubungaku-1988-3), pp.54-62.

5 Chikumagawa no Suketchi, *Shimazaki Toson-Zenshu-2*, pp.97-249.

brink of collapse. Toson could not ignore this situation and all his major short stories written between 1902 and 1904 depict this dilemma of the society. In short, tragedy of emancipated woman of post-Meiji Japanese society was one of the topics Toson was most concerned about, and precisely, that is what he tried to project through two of his major short stories, *Kyushujin*, and *Rojo*. Before entering into the critical study of each of these two short stories, first of all, it would be appropriate to give an outline of the respective story.

#### **Kyushujin (The Former Master)**

"*Kyushujin*" is a story narrated by a first person narrator, Osada, who herself is one of the main characters of the story. She narrates to an unknown listener the tragic end of married life of her master Arai and mistress Aya (ko), in whose house she worked as a servant when she was young, due to the illegal affair of the mistress.

Following is an outline of the story:

Osada, a poor peasant girl from the Saku hills has come to the Arais to work as a maid servant. Her master Arai is a middle aged, bank manager who is a very prominent personality in Komoro region. His young and beautiful wife Aya (ko) is a Tokyo born and brought up lady with urban, modern background who is frustrated by the life in the countryside and dissatisfied with her married life with her middle aged

husband Arai. Osada maintains good relationship with her mistress, Aya, in the beginning to such an extent that Aya does not even hesitate to reveal her secrets to her. Aya, who is dissatisfied with her husband, maintains an affair with Sakurai, a dentist, whom she knew even before her marriage. Osada is aware of this illegal affair of her mistress, but out of sympathy and fellow feeling, she hides it from her master Arai and helps Aya to continue her affair. In return Aya gives her (Osada) many valuable presents. Even Sakurai brings her gifts every time he visited Aya so that she would hide their secret from Arai.

Osada's love and respect towards her mistress increases day by day. She, who was a dirty, uncultured and rustic countryside girl before coming to the Arais, gradually turns into a modern woman under the influence of her mistress. However, her happy days do not continue for long. Out of anxiety and fear, of being discovered her illegal affair with Sakurai by her husband, Aya wants to terminate Osada from her job and send her away to her village. Thus, Aya hatched up a slander against Osada. Aya tells her husband that Osada is a insincere, disobedient, unreliable country girl, a vicious girl who steals her precious goods and spreads slanderous rumours about her in the neighbourhood. Unfortunately, Osada overhears their conversation and gets disappointed thoroughly and all her respect and concern for the mistress vanishes away

in a moment. She turns into a beast who determined to take revenge. She does not want to be just overthrown by her mistress for no fault of hers. She reveals Aya's illegal affair to Arai on the next day. Arai witnesses the scene where his wife and Sakurai in a compromising position, kissing and embracing each other. The story comes to a tragic end here.

"Kyushujin" (The Former Master) is a multifaceted valuable and (meaningful) short story (it is better to call it a novelette) which precisely deals with the tragic and negative effect of a modern theory of equality of sex and freedom of self which emphasized the realization of a society where man and woman with liberated self live together in equality. It depicts the tragedy of an urban raised amorous lady who got the right to express her indignation and discontent towards her husband, as a result of political and social reforms during the post-Meiji period. It also depicts the courage and vitality of a poor, innocent girl from the country side, who not only rebelled against her master (mistress) hitherto unheard in the history of master-servant relationship, but also proved her innocence by revealing the secret and conspiracy of her vicious mistress. Further, Kyushujin also depicts the pathetic fall of a rich man, a man of high status who is respected by everybody in the society around him, because of his inefficiency in fulfilling his



marital responsibilities. Hence, *Kyushujin* is a very complex story which must be studied and analysed thoroughly keeping in mind the changing attitude of society in the post-Meiji period.

A close analysis of "*Kyushujin*" will certainly enable one to understand two parallel activities by women from two different strata of the society who declared war against tradition and the feudalistic and Confucian set-up<sup>6</sup> of the Japanese society before and after the Meiji Restoration. Urban born and educated Aya is attacking the ethical aspect of human relationship, more precisely the relationship between man and women or husband and wife based on Confucian and Buddhist ideology, traditionalized and perpetuated since the starting of the feudal era in Japan.<sup>7</sup> For the people of the outside world, the life of Aya and her husband seemed to be a perfect and happy one, and they even felt envy towards her. But was her life happy and satisfying? Of course her husband Arai was a rich and influential banker of Komoro, a town which prospered during Meiji period with modern facilities like bank, school etc. "I am not boasting, but it is true that business of Komoro today moves under my control. Although the businessmen here always complain about depression in business,

---

6 Takamura Itsue, *Josei no Rekishi-II*, pp.532-541.

7 *Onna Daigaku Hyoron*, Fukuzawa Yukichi Zenshu, vol.6, pp.467-503.

they do not face any financial problem because of the efforts I am making to run the bank. Even the business and planning of Town assembly are carried out on the basis of my opinion. The prosperity or decline of Komoro entirely depends on the measures I execute...."<sup>8</sup> Arai was a great, highly respected businessman. But only material wealth and abundance alone do not make Aya happy. As a young woman, who is aware of her right and freedom, Aya sought for greater spiritual satisfaction which her husband failed to provide her because he was "an old actor dressed in a young and colourful costume".<sup>9</sup> Therefore, Aya, who "makes up in the morning" and "polishes in the night"<sup>10</sup> and whose "life is dogged by dreams"<sup>11</sup> turns to Sakurai. Thus, Aya has broken the traditional concept of marriage and husband-wife relationship.

Traditionally, a man can have any number of wives or concubines but a wife should remain loyal to the husband and his family.<sup>12</sup> Cemented on Confucian and Buddhist philosophies, this traditional concept of marriage and family life remained the corner stone of family system in Japan

---

8 Kyushujin, Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-3, p.24.

9 Ibid, p.9.

10 Ibid, p.10.

11 Ibid, p.43.

12 Eiichi Kiyooka, Fukuzawa Yukichi on Japanese Women, p.19.

throughout the Tokugawa period and early Meiji period. Whether she is spiritually satisfied or not, a wife is supposed to remain as a subordinate to the husband and act as per his directions. However, by keeping an illegal affair with Sakurai, Aya has challenged the existing social set-up, although she has taken an undesirable means to accomplish her objective. In fact, Arai loved his wife sincerely and he tried to make her happy always in the beginning, although he did not have the fascination and attraction of a young man. "When you have come to my house to work as a servant, for the first time, I have been busy in my job and working restlessly with only one intention in my mind, that is to make my wife happy. But, these days I am completely getting involved in my work in order to forget her."<sup>13</sup> These words of Arai shows how sincere he was in his intention but his wife not only not acknowledged it but even betrayed him. If she is not satisfied with her married life with Arai, Aya should have sought for a divorce and then continue her affair with Sakurai. Actually by the middle of the Meiji period wife's right to divorce was legally allowed in Japan. But Toson did not allow his heroine to go into that direction, because one of his motives of writing this short story was to expose the

---

13 Kyushujin, Shimazaki Toson Zenshu, p.49.

"true nature of woman".<sup>14</sup> As Masubuchi Toshio had pointed out, "Toson's eyes are keenly observing the process how a woman, who though lives in (all kinds of) material luxury but leads an empty, monotonous and boredom mental life, gradually falls (starts) into an illicit affair."<sup>15</sup> But at the same time, it also indicates that how even the educated class of people have understood wrongly the modern concepts of equality, right and freedom and self expression.

So far only one of the faces of Aya has been discussed.

She has one more face, that is reflected in her relationship with the maid servant Osada. Aya was very kind and affectionate towards Osada, at least externally, ever since Osada joined the Arai family as a servant. She, in fact, treated Osada like a friend (not as a servant of lowly birth), and did not hesitate to reveal even her personal secrets to her in the beginning. However, it was a trick, a womanly tactic, to keep Osada friendly, so that Osada does not expose her love affair with the dentist. At the same time, Aya was afraid of Osada, so she wanted to get rid of her. She hatched baseless slander and false allegations against Osada behind the curtain, while showing extreme kindness and affection

---

14 Kobayashi Akiko, "Kyushujin" Oyobi "Warazori" ni Kansuru ikkosatsu, (Kokubun Shirayuri 1987-3), pp.32-34.

6 Masubuchi Toshio, Kyushujin, Warazori, ron - Toson in okeru futatsu no shosetsu gainen no hoga (Nihon bugaku ronyo, 1980-1), p.56.

towards her externally, and persuaded her husband to send Osada back to her village. Her fear of being exposed compelled Aya to make such a move. In spite of her urban background and modern thinking, such a move had converted Aya into a mean woman of low birth. Her "true nature" had got exposed and from that moment onwards Aya's tragedy started. Aya could not carry out her conspiracy successfully, because of the clever and revengeful actions of Osada. "There is nothing as short as the happiness of woman".<sup>16</sup> Aya herself fell in the ditch she dug for trapping Osada, as she had been caught red-handed by her husband with the help of Osada, while she was making love with Sakurai, the dentist.

As against the urban background of Aya, Osada, who is both the narrator and a central character in the story, has rural background. She had neither received any formal education nor had any knowledge about the modern concepts of equality, freedom or liberation of self when she came to the Arais as a servant. For her coming to the Arai family in Komoro was a god-sent fortune, because she had never dreamt of such a luxurious life in her whole life. Women in the country-side around the Kashiwagi area and Saku hills, including Osada and her mother have to do manual work in the field everyday in order to survive. Osada narrates the

---

16 Kyushujin, Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-3, p.14.

hardships of Kashiwagi and Saku women including herself in the following way: "The woman of Kashiwagi area, like the Saku hills should work hard against very rough weather, in order to maintain their livelihood by helping their male-folk. I started to work in the field under the guidance of my mother when I was only thirteen years old. When other girls of my age, with running noses, used to enjoy their life like any children are expected to do, by playing rope skipping etc. I had already started to taste the pleasures and agonies of this world."<sup>17</sup> Coming from such a background, Osada has been observing the activities of urban born Aya constantly and trying to be sincere and helpful to her mistress always.

Toson has given Osada the role of first person narrator in this story, may be because of his intention to depict the real life of an urban couple through the observing eyes of a rural, uneducated girl, so that truths and facts would not be tampered. Osada is observing her master, mistress, Sakurai and even the people around the neighbourhood. However, it is difficult to say whether Osada's observations are true or her judgement are correct always, because being the narrator she has the advantage of twisting the story into a direction best suitable for her own survival. One interesting point is that Osada does not give us a clear picture of her own "true

---

17 Ibid, p.5.

nature" except in one occasion when she overhears Aya's conspiracy against her. "...I had soon changed into my "true beast-like nature" of rough Saku woman...."<sup>18</sup> Osada decides to take revenge on her mistress whom she hitherto worshipped as an embodiment of all virtues.

However, in this study focus is not to emphasize Osada's role as a narrator, but instead, her role as a servant, one of the central characters of the story, which is more important. As mentioned earlier, in *Kyushujin* we can see two parallel uprisings by women - wife versus husband and mistress/master versus servant. We can also put it in the following way: woman versus man (Aya versus Arai) and urban woman versus rural woman (Aya versus Osada).

Aya of *Kyushujin* has violated all those restrictions placed on women in "Onna Daigaku" (The Greater Learning for Women), written by Kaibaru Ekken.<sup>19</sup> By disobeying her husband in many occasions, she violated the concept of complete submission to husband (or man) by wife (or woman). In other words, she violated the concept of "docility". Young and beautiful Aya expected very warm and affectionate love from her husband but her husband failed to provide her that although he is a rich and influential business man. However,

---

18 Ibid, p.44.

19 See chapter-2, p.

unlike the traditional Japanese woman, she did not hesitate to express her dissatisfaction openly and instead of being submissive to her husband, she turned to the dentist, Sakurai, who was young, vigorous and was known to her even before her marriage to Arai. Aya whose "life is dogged by dreams" turned to this dentist for fulfilling her dreams and, by doing that, she strongly expressed her "discontent" towards her husband. However, she did not know till the end that, that was the beginning of tragedy in her life.

Aya did not hesitate to make false allegation against the servant, Osada who respected her, defended her and followed her like a sincere, obedient and faithful disciple. This act of Aya is again indicating her "true nature" hidden behind the polished, urbanized and modern mind of an awakened woman. In fact, as a fellow woman, Aya's attitude towards Osada was very rude and unpardonable. She betrayed Osada's faith and confidence in her. It clearly indicates that higher education or urban background does not change basic human nature much.

Next, the role played by Osada in *Kyushujin* is as significant as the role played by Aya. Whereas Aya attacked, although in a negative manner, the age-old social custom of male domination, restriction on female's sexual life and suppression of women based on Buddhist and Confucian ideologies, Osada attacked the centuries old custom of the suppression of servants by their masters. During the feudal



era, disobedience by a servant or planning a conspiracy to expose a scandal involving his master was considered to be something unimaginable. However, Osada in Kyushujin boldly violated this feudal custom by exposing selfish Aya's (Osada's mistress) illicit affair with Sakurai. Originally, Osada was an obedient, sincere and trustworthy servant but upon hearing her mistress's conspiracy to trap her, she turned into a beast like Saku woman, who due to her contact with the urbanized life of Aya became aware of her own personal freedom, liberty and emancipation of self. Osada decided to revenge herself on Aya by exposing Aya's secret love affair with Sakurai to Arai. "For a moment the thought of condemning the mistress (Aya) boiled up in my mind. I wanted to condemn everything she possessed including her proud features which I considered beautiful so far and her elegant manners which I used to envy always. My mind, full of goodwill towards her so far was completely shaken off by wrath and indignation...." "I too do not want to be kicked out from here just because of my mistress's conspiracy. I decided to prove my innocence first and then leave that house."<sup>20</sup> Osada knows that she is innocent and she will certainly win in the end. Her awakened 'self' protected her from utter ruin as planned by her own mistress Aya. And finally, Osada succeeded in exposing the

---

20 Kyushujin, Shimasaki Toson Zenshu-3, pp.44, 48.

evil minded Aya's scandal and illicit affair and thereby saved her "self". Certainly the act of Osada is a pure violation of the feudalistic and Confucian ethic of "obedience and submissiveness" to one's lord.

#### Rojo (Old Miss)

In Rojo (Old Miss) too, Toson is dealing with the "tragedy of awakened woman".<sup>21</sup> Toson had written Rojo in June, 1903 and published in Taiyo. Compared to Kyushujin, Rojo is short in length in which the author dealt with the pathetic fall of a highly educated, brilliant modern lady who questioned the conventional social custom of marriage and family set-up. Like in Kyushujin, Rojo also has two female characters both are highly educated but one going against the social conventions and the other following in silence the established customs of the society. Following is an outline of the story.

Uryu Natsuko and Sawa Sekiko are friends since their school days. Both are around thirty, unmarried, intelligent and highly educated. They meet in an inn called Masuya at a hot spring called Tazawa Onsen first time in ten years after they graduated from the same school. Sekiko has come there with a group of girl students on an excursion. On the day

---

21 Yamada Yusaku, "Ryokuyoshu" no Sekai-Sono ichi ("Warazori" Kara "Rojo" made) (Tokyo Joshi Daigaku Kiyo Ronshu-1975-11), p.95.

before her departure, Sekiko and Natsuko talk each other their future plans.

During their talks, Natsuko reveals Sekiko her intention of not to return to her home. Natsuko wants to be free from all bonds and she prefers to travel around, and work like men. She also tells Setsuko that she does not want to get married. She knows that Setsuko would be getting married in the near future. Natsuko challenges Sekiko, saying that "Let us see who will be happy, you who gets married or I who remains unmarried". The tragedy of Natsuko begins from here. The next day Sekiko departs. Natsuko, determined and strong-willed, neither returns to her home nor intends to get married. She hates men, but she cannot live a single day without a man besides her. Natsuko abandons her present boyfriend Mikami also.

After five years, Sekiko visits Natsuko's house. From her mother, Sekiko comes to know that Natsuko has not returned home since long. On her way back Sekiko meets a man whom she knows before. He tells Sekiko that Natsuko is staying with her wet-nurse. Sekiko visits the house of Natsuko's wet-nurse, but Natsuko refuses to meet her. On the next day Sekiko comes to know that she (Natsuko) has given birth to a illegitimate girl child. However, Natsuko's child dies after some time. After few days, Natsuko, forlone and insane, comes back to her home town. Roaming around here and there, she

asks every male passer-by on the street whether he is ready to marry her. Here comes the tragic end of this short story.

Uryu Natsuko and Sawa Sekiko in Rojo are two different representatives of post-Meiji women, who were allowed to come out of the dark rooms of their house and avail equal opportunity for education along with men. Both Natsuko and Sekiko are highly educated unlike other heroines of Toson's short stories in Ryokuyo-shu. Even, Aya of Kyushujin, although has urban background, was not such a highly educated person, compared to these two characters in Rojo.

Uryu Natsuko, like Aya in Kyushujin (is a modern educated, urban lady who) has wrongly understood the western concepts of equality of sex and emancipation of women etc. For her, education means independence from society and family. She wants to work like males and travel around the world freely like any man will do.<sup>22</sup> Because of her educational background and consciousness of freedom, equality and liberation of soul and self, she attacked even the ethical aspect of subordination of women to men. She challenged the concept of marriage which according to her opinion is a burden forced on women by the male dominated society so that women will always remain their subordinates. Natsuko has strongly resisted this social system and determined not to obey the

---

22 "Rojo", Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-3, pp.108, 110, 120.

conventional rules. "...Ah, I should not have obtained education - had I not known the taste of new wisdom I would have accepted any male as my husband as per my mother's decision and I would have been satisfied with that throughout my whole life. It would have been better, had I not obtained any education at all. Had I not come into contact with the concept of freedom of self and soul, I would not have tried to fly out of the cage like this. You see, is it not good to be independent of any help or service even from your mother or elder sister? Why is that our life does not become as we wish? Why is an unmarried, single woman considered crippled? Why are we despised like this? ....Just giving birth to a child is not the only business of woman."<sup>23</sup> Natsuko attacked the existing social custom based on Confucian principles.

The ideal image of women held by Meiji society was primarily (was) an image borne out of feudalism and its underlying thesis was the preservation of a male-dominated society in which men were likened to heaven and women to earth. Women were destined to serve and obey men, to be gentle and meek, pure and clean, and accomplished in housework. The mastery of these virtues was the ultimate aim of womanhood. During Tokugawa period the most important responsibility of a wife was to give birth to a male child so

---

23 Rojo, Shimasaki Toson Zenshu-3, p.109.

that family lineage would continue. If she failed to give birth to a male child, her husband can marry again or keep any number of concubines and his first wife has no right to resist it. After the Meiji Restoration, although the new government declared equal opportunity and rights for both males and females and abolished the system of polygamy, by 1880s the political atmosphere in Japan was gradually changing to militarism. The government realized the necessity for bringing up patriotic citizens and therefore, it moved towards creating a society and family set up again based on pre-Meiji Confucian principles. Consequently, the concept of "Ryosaikenbo" (Good wives and wise mothers) was introduced and new restrictions were put on women. However, a group of educated women of the society protested this movement and challenged the concept of marriage and child rearing.

In this background, Uryu Natsuko wanted freedom so she refused to get married. Not only that, she even challenged her friend Sawa Sekiko who was planning to get married in the near future. "Let us see who will be happy, you who are married or I who remain unmarried."<sup>24</sup> Natsuko with confidence told her friend that she would prove that Sekiko is doing a foolish thing. Sekiko decided to follow the social convention, although highly educated like Ntsuko and got

---

24 Ibid, p.112.

married. She leads a normal life although she had to sacrifice her interest in learning and music.<sup>25</sup> Natsuko on the other hand with her zeal and enthusiasm, tries to live an independent life, free from social bondage and responsibility. However, being a woman she is unable to find happiness without the support and affection of man, in spite of her education and strong determination. Thus, she who refused to marry and had bitter hatredness towards men could not spend a single day without the presence of a male. "During the last ten years after graduating from the city school, there had been hardly any day she spent without a lover. A man can live if he has job and honour. But a woman cannot live without loving and being loved."<sup>26</sup> Natsuko knew that in the present society she cannot survive physically without the help and support of a man, but her emancipated self did not allow her to accept that truth openly. She sought the love of man but she never trusted them or loved them. Her intention was to "throw away the flowers after enjoying their fragrance".<sup>27</sup> Moreover Natsuko's desire to get rid of the pain of being a spinster has all the more forced her to indulge in fervent love affairs. She, a downhearted woman today, "depressed and withered in grief like a

---

25 Ibid, p.127.

26 Ibid, p.115.

27 Ibid.

withered grass",<sup>28</sup> sought comfort from men. In fact, her decision to remain as an unmarried woman was the beginning of her tragedy. Finally, she gave birth to an illegitimate child and became insane. Certainly her spinster life has given her a certain amount of mental strength but destroyed her physically. She did not sacrifice her scholarship or learning for the sake of marriage. Whereas, marriage has strengthened the physical life of Sekiko but it destroyed her mental life. In other words she returned to the midst of ordinary, illiterate women after her marriage. But with her newly acquired knowledge, Sekiko brilliantly conduct a successful family life. Toson is taking a neutral position here, because his main intension is to depict the "true nature of woman" through this story. In Kyushujin, Aya's urban background did not help her to refine her character or get rid of her "true nature". Same way, in Rojo too, Natsuko could not get rid of her "true nature" in spite of her education and advanced thinking.

Natsuko's life is a continuous chain of conflicts between flesh and spirit. Being an educated woman, who wants to be independent of others, Natsuko held great expectation when she decided to remain unmarried. But her expectations were betrayed by her own "true nature". In the conflict between

---

28 Ibid.



withered grass",<sup>28</sup> sought comfort from men. In fact, her decision to remain as an unmarried woman was the beginning of her tragedy. Finally, she gave birth to an illegitimate child and became insane. Certainly her spinster life has given her a certain amount of mental strength but destroyed her physically. She did not sacrifice her scholarship or learning for the sake of marriage. Whereas, marriage has strengthened the physical life of Sekiko but it destroyed her mental life. In other words she returned to the midst of ordinary, illiterate women after her marriage. But with her newly acquired knowledge, Sekiko brilliantly conduct a successful family life. Toson is taking a neutral position here, because his main intension is to depict the "true nature of woman" through this story. In *Kyushujin*, Aya's urban background did not help her to refine her character or get rid of her "true nature". Same way, in *Rojo* too, Natsuko could not get rid of her "true nature" in spite of her education and advanced thinking.

Natsuko's life is a continuous chain of conflicts between flesh and spirit. Being an educated woman, who wants to be independent of others, Natsuko held great expectation when she decided to remain unmarried. But her expectations were betrayed by her own "true nature". In the conflict between

---

28 . Ibid.

stay unmarried. She knows that all her friends are living a happy and harmonious married life. She too wished for such a life but now she is very late. She is around 30 years old, prime time of her youth has passed and the society see her as a Rojo (old miss) as it was the custom of Meiji and pre-Meiji society to call unmarried women of above 25-26 years as "Rojo".

Finally, Natsuko of Rojo can be compared with Aya in Kyushujin in several respects. Both of them are urban born and educated and have challenged the traditional customs of the society, though in different ways, and finally ended their life in tragedy. Aya's forbidden love affair destroyed her life and Natsuko's indiscriminate amorous adventures with countless number of men whom she never loved destroyed her life. In both of their cases the flesh has taken an upper hand over spirit and in the process they forgot the conventional social customs, which ultimately led them to destruction. Similarly, Osada and Sekiko have also many similarities. Both have better future compared to Aya and Natusko. Both of them represent the traditional Japanese women who have understood the modern concepts of equality correctly and put them into practice in the right way.

painter, she became very excited and restless just by hearing that he is coming to Tazawa on that day to meet her. "She had suddenly remembered about her place of concealment.... Verdant shades have great magical power to console a lonely mind. This place is blessed with such natural surroundings.... This was the place she used to weep sometimes in pain (of love) lying on the grassy ground. "Mikami", "Mikami", she called out his name aimlessly. But, it was quite everywhere and nobody responded her."<sup>31</sup> She was really in need of Mikami but her emancipated ego (self) did not allow her to accept it openly. She waits for Mikami impatiently, but the moment she saw him coming, her attitude changes again because she does not want to express her true feeling to him openly. When Mikami wooed her courtship she refused it promptly, but after returning to her room she wept. "As if in dreams, Natsuko walked away quietly without even turning back.... She had rushed to the first floor of Msuya. As soon as she entered her room, she fell on the bed and burst into tears. "Mikami, please pardon me."<sup>32</sup> The pain of separation from Mikami was unbearable for her, but at the same time, Natsuko was conscious about her deeds. First of all she did not want to betray her own commitment, her decision to

---

31 Rojo, Shimasaki Toson Zenshu-3, p.114.

32 Ibid, p.123.

CHAPTER V

## CHAPTER V

### TOSON'S PROJECTION OF WOMEN AND HIS BIAS

In chapters one and two I have discussed in length various Western influences on Post Meiji Japan and the change in status of women and their emancipation in the society. This will help us to make a right interpretation and assessment of the heroines and other female characters in the two short stories subjected to this study. As Shimazaki Toson lived through an era which saw tremendous changes in the social status of women in Japan both due to internal reforms and external influences, it is pertinent here to refer the above mentioned previous chapters for the discussion of this chapter.

A majority of his initial works, including both poetry and prose, have female heroines in them, depicting various aspects of women, their plight for equality and survival, their tragedy and their mis-conception of the modern concept of freedom and liberty for all irrespective of gender. In 'Warazori'<sup>1</sup> he depicted the heroin, Okuma, as a helpless woman who had been molested by an old railway-guard before her marriage, and her husband, upon knowing the fact, beats her in such a way that her legs got broken. But, very unfortunate

---

1 Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-3 (Chikuma Shobo), pp.59-88.

she was, she could not save her life as she died by falling from a horse while she was taken to the hospital for treatment. Whereas in 'Oyaji',<sup>2</sup> he depicted Oshima, the heroin as a woman attracted by all and every one in the village. As a result, nobody could own the fatherhood of her son, Misao, as Oshima herself was not able to identify him. Whereas in 'Suisai gaka',<sup>3</sup> he depicted the simultaneous illegitimate affairs of both the husband and wife. However it was in Kyushujin and Rojo, the two short-stories taken for this study, that Toson tried to depict various aspects of modern woman, with a critical eye, carefully watching the conflicts between new and old in an era of great transformation.

#### **Toson's Contact with Women in the Real Life**

##### **(1) His Girl Friend**

Before entering into a detailed discussion of projection and characterization of female characters in Toson's literary works, first of all, I would like to look into his contact with women in his real life. His approach and understanding of woman, especially the characterization of the female characters in his works, had been influenced mainly by two

---

2 Ibid, pp.91-103.

3 Ibid, pp.135-193.

women in the real life, i.e., his girl friend and lover Sato Sukeko,<sup>4</sup> and his wife, Hata Fuyuko. Toson's contact with women can be classified into two categories, namely, contact based on pure love and affection and contact based on mere passion. His love affair with Sato Sukeko was based on true love at least until he came to know that Sukeko had been already engaged. Of course, failure of this relationship had a lasting effect on his literary career, both as a poet and a novelist. As I have already mentioned in chapter three Toson after graduating from Meiji Gakuin, joined the Meiji Jogakko in 1893, to teach English. There he became intimate with Sato Sukeko, his student who was one year older to him. He was serious in his affair until he realized that Sato Sukeko had already been engaged to one Shishiuchi and her parents were determined to realize that marriage. It was a great shock to him, as the depth of his love towards her was very deep at least emotionally, if not spiritually. Toson narrates his feeling towards Sukeko through Sutekichi in "Sakura no mi no juku suru toki" in the following way. "In place of the almighty Jehovah, the picture of his own pupil appeared in front of his closed eyes. Her fresh, reddish and youthful cheeks; her shining pupils; her fair and tender girlish

---

4 Shincho Nihon Bungaku Album, "Shimazaki Toson", p.16; Ito Kazuo, Shimazaki Toson Jiten, pp.161-62; Ito Kazuo, Shimazaki Toson, (Kokubungaku Kaishaku to Kansho-1971-5), pp.762-83.

hands." Sutekichi's love towards Katsuko further deepened after he talked this matter to his friend Okuni. "Sutekichi's mind and body were filled with the figure of Katsuko. Some time, it had warm and affectionate expression like an elder sister, and sometime it had very girlish look of a younger sister."<sup>5</sup> Young and easy going Toson of just 21 years old was fascinated by the physical beauty of his pupil, and on the moment he came to know that she had been engaged to another man, he decided to withdraw from the scene. It is very difficult to interpret this attitude of Toson here as it is very misleading and confusing. Here we should not forget the influence of Christianity on young Toson, who found it very complicated to distinguish the Christian ideal of love and human relationship with the inherent carnal desires of the mortal body. He wanted to lead a perfect life on the guidelines of Christian principles but soon discovered that his young and vibrant mind cannot concentrate on such sort of ideal love as preached by Christianity.

This confusion had created a void in his mind which ultimately gave rise to a kind of distrust towards women. In fact, Sato Sukeko was ready to reject the marriage proposal

---

5 Sakura no mino Juku Suru Toki, Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-12, pp.137, 143. (Translated by myself) Toson completed the first part of this novel in 1915 and second part in 1918. It gives a detailed account of Toson's life and activities during his studies in Meiji Gakuin, his association with Bungakkai and his teaching job in Meiji Jo Gakko.



with Shishiuchi, had Toson been ready to boldly come forward and assured her a safe and stable married life. However, Toson just ignored her feeling, saying that he has no resources to look after her, as he was a poor school teacher only.<sup>6</sup> He, in fact, misunderstood his girl friend although Sukeko was sincere in her attitude. He thought that Sukeko was cheating him by keeping her engagement with Shishiuchi a secret. As soon as he came to know it, he resigned from his teaching job and wandered around the country after the footsteps of the great Haiku poet Matsuo Basho. It is quite interesting to note that soon after his departure for the wandering journey, his concern for Sato Sukeko had reduced considerably, although he could not forget her completely.<sup>7</sup> This is understood from his intimate relationship with Hirose Tsuneko, whom he visited during his wandering around Kansai. Hirose Tsuneko was actually the girl friend of Hoshino Tenchi, one of Toson's close friend. Upon knowing this new development, Hoshino Tenchi rushed to Kansai, and met Toson. They had a severe verbal fight and ultimately they said to have severed their friendship. All these happened within few months after Toson's separation from Sato Sukeko. Toson has

---

6 Ito Kazuo, Shimazaki Toson (Kokubungaku Kaishaku to Kansho 1971-5), p.79.

7 Ibid, p.84.

narrated these incidents in his novel "Haru" also.<sup>8</sup> Whereas, Sato Sukeko, unable to forget him, agreed to marry Shishiuchi with great mental pain and agony. According to Soma Kuromitsu, a student of Meiji Jogakko who happened to attend Toson's lectures there, this was a period when the society was still not ready to accept or accommodate pre-marital love affair between opposite sexes or love marriage.<sup>9</sup> May be, this was one of the reasons why Toson abruptly disappeared from the scene. However, whatever, may be the real reason, Toson immediately after this incident left the church and bid goodbye to Christianity. In the conflict between Christian ideal of love and the physical love based on carnal desires, the latter turned out to be victorious in his case. However, this long physical and mental torment he experienced, ultimately shaped him into a man who never trusted women completely, a man who always watched women with suspicious eyes.

Was Sato Sukeko really intending to cheat Toson? Later studies have revealed the truth that she did not have any intension to cheat him, but Toson did not have the patience to understand her properly. As Kanzaki Kiyoshi pointed out in

---

8 "Haru", Shimazaki Toson Zehshū-5, pp.27, 31.

9 Soma Kuromitsu, 'Mokui' - Meiji Taisho Bungakushi Kaiso.

his work 'Nihon no Meisaku',<sup>10</sup> Sato Sukeko was very serious about her affair with Toson and she was even ready to disobey her parents and reject the marriage proposal by Shishiuchi, even after their formal engagement. However, Toson did not agree to that, first of all, due to the reason that he did not have the confidence to look after Sukeko who belongs from a good family, and secondly, he did not want to hurt the feeling of the other party, that is, Shishiuchi. At last Sukeko lost her hold and had to heed to the pressure of her parents. However, unable to withstand the pain and sorrow, she died shortly after her marriage as she said to have lost her appetite due to morning sickness. Since death due to morning sickness is a very rare occurrence, there is all possibility that she must have committed suicide. Later on, realising his mistake Toson decided to study and observe various aspects of women, although his distrust and suspicion of women still existed. Sukeko's untimely sudden death gave him the impetus to review his own attitude towards women. Young Toson who used to roam around the Campus and places where young and beautiful girls gather, became melancholic and frustrated ever since this incident. This was the dark age of his life.

There are different interpretations and versions of facts relating to this episode, but one thing is clear here that,

---

10 Quoted in "Shimazaki Toson" by Ito Kazuo (Kokubungaku Kaishaku to Kansho 1975-5), p.79.

Toson had already lost his faith in 'renai' (love between man and women) which according to Kitamura Tokoku, is the only element in this world capable of protecting the human society from collapse. As I have mentioned in chapter three, Toson was one of the active members of Bugakkai, a group of writers formed under the leadership of Tokoku, the first writer in Japanese history to explore seriously the nature and potentialities of self and to propagate the power of love in evolving the individual's strength and character in a society which has been under the rigid control of Confucian principles. Tokoku's philosophy of inner self and love, was the motive force behind the young Toson, although he happened to had the opportunity to know this great philosopher for a short period of just four years only. Tokoku's wife Minako was an unusual woman of great discernment, experience, and thought, and Tokoku often used to praise her love of beauty, her high ideals, and her determination to serve society, qualities for which his philosophy always stood for. That is precisely the reason why he got married to her although she was three years older than him. However, Tokoku himself could not live up to the philosophy he preached, as the 'real world' (Jissekai) and the 'world of thought' (Sosekai) were distinctively different. Taking responsibility for the failure of his own philosophy, Tokoku finally committed suicide.

During the formative years, Toson was an ardent admirer and true follower of Tokoku in various respects, whether in the case of ideology, faith or day to day life. Both Tokoku and Toson were attracted to the philosophy and ideals of Christianity, not exactly because of the attracting or redeeming features of the Christian religion, but as a means to win over the heart of their lovers, Minako in the case of Tokoku and Sato Sukeko in the case of Toson, as both these women were true believers of Christianity. Failure of his married life with Minako, led Tokoku to commit suicide, and similarly, failure of Toson's affair with Sukeko had led him to the verge of committing suicide.<sup>11</sup> However, Toson was more ambitious, and determined to reborn as a new man with different vision and ideology. Although, after his wanderings in Kansai area, Toson had taken up a teaching job in Tohoku Gakuin in Sendai in 1896, he was no more the old Toson of Meiji Gakuin period. Here he conducted a secluded life like a hermit and wrote romantic poems. However, his romantic poems are not the poems of a person in love but the poems of a person who discarded love. Had there not been any encounter with Sato Sukeko, most probably, the romantic poet Toson would not have been born. Hence, Sato Sukeko's influence on Toson,

---

11 Shinchosha Nihon Bungaku Album, "Shimazaki Toson", p.24.

specially in the evolution of his ideas and philosophy and views on women, was immensely great.

## (2) His Wife

Another woman who had betrayed Toson's faith and trust in women was none but his own wife, Hata Fuyuko.<sup>12</sup> Born and brought up in a rich family in Hakodate in Hokkaido, Fuyuko was one of the few privileged women of early Meiji period who could get good education at a time when majority of Japanese women were still striving hard for their liberation and emancipation from the male chauvinist society. In 1896, Fuyuko had graduated from Meiji Jogakko, the school where Toson taught for one year and where he met his lover Sato Sukeko. By this time Toson was already in Tohoku Gakuin in Sendai, where he kept on writing romantic poems which were published in his first anthology of poetry "Wakanashu". Toson's name and fame spread through out the country as an aspiring young poet of modern world view and vision, who sung the 'song of love' which was much in need among the newly emerging, invigorated youth of Meiji Japan. Fuyuko, an admirer of Waka poems, yearned for the poet Toson, although she had already an affair with another man at that time. Through the mediation of Iwamoto Yoshiharu, principal of Meiji Jogakko of that time, Fuyuko was introduced to Toson and their

---

12 Ito Kazuo, Shimazaki Toson Jiten, p.195.

marriage was held in 1899, just before Toson's appointment as a teacher in Komoro Gijuku, in Komoro.

Toson's marriage with Fuyuko was yet another turning point in his life. For him, marriage did not mean just having a wife, a medium for procreation, or mother for one's children. He credited marriage as a sincere contract with two individuals of the opposite sex, based on pure mutual love, trust, respect and understanding. However, his experience with Sato Sukeko made him skeptical about the sincerity of woman, as "there is nothing like human being who cannot be judged by appearance only".<sup>13</sup> In fact Toson had very conservative view on marriage and the nature and attitude of a woman after her marriage in the fastly changing society of Meiji Japan. He had been noticing the deteriorating trend of marriage and family life in post-Meiji Japan due to excess impact of Westernization and high level of women's education. According to Toson's view, a wife must be modest, obedient to her husband, and prepared to look after her children and husband irrespective of her educational status. She should be loyal and faithful to her husband once got married, whatever may be her background before the marriage. In 'Joshi to Shuyo', Toson strongly advocated the following view point on woman. "After their marriage, women should cultivate their

---

13 Kyushujin, Shimazaki Toson Zenshun-3, p.10.

self and character, assist their husbands, and should have full of self-inspiration in them. they must be prepared to undertake the responsibility of nurturing their children and encourage others".<sup>14</sup> Hence, Toson was dreaming of a wife fully and whole heartedly dedicated to the service of her husband. He held this view from his childhood itself, may be because when he was a child he knew about the disharmony existed between his parents, which in fact played a major role in destroying the future of Shimazaki family.

Hata Fuyuko was an educated woman who during her study in Meiji Jogakko came under the influence of Western concept of individual freedom and liberation of self. Meiji Jogakko was one of the centres of Meiji Japan which emphasized the need for equality for man and woman in all levels of the society through its magazine Jogaku Zasshi, and under the dynamic leadership of Iwamoto Yoshiharu, it played a major role in imparting higher education to women. Fuyuko was only twenty two when she was married to Toson, and was totally inexperienced in household works and rearing of children. As I mentioned early, immediately after his marriage Toson with his new wife left to Komoro to teach in the Komoro Gijuku school and it was an unbearable experience for Fuyuko. She had never lived in a remote area like Komoro in her life,

---

14 Shinkata-cho Yori 'Joshi to Shuyo', Shumazaki Toson Zenshu-6, p.81.



although it was a town fast growing economically and culturally, and her loneliness and difficulties said to have lured her mind to her previous boy friend. She continued to exchange letters with him even after her marriage, and Toson suddenly discovered her secret one day. Toson clearly described this matter in his novel 'Ie', which in fact, centred around the family life of Toson from his marriage till the death of Fuyuko. "Letters from Tsutomu used to come to Oyuki (Fuyuko in real life) occasionally. Oyuki has received a letter again. She found it very difficult to find a place to hide the letter from Tsutomu safely.... He (Sakichi=Toson) could imagine the contents and meaning of such letters but least surprised by it as he was not an immatured man. "As I had various affairs before, my wife too might have had various affairs before the marriage", he thought so. Very soon Oyuki would be twenty two years old. Sankichi does not consider the letters coming to the new house as something strange. Instead, "if my wife abstains from committing any mistake again and if she works honestly, that is enough", he thought.<sup>15</sup> Toson dreamed of a small, happy family consisted of himself, his wife and their children. However, after discovering his wife's secret, he became a totally disappointed man who seriously thought about divorcing his

---

15 'Ie' (Part 1), Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-8, p.75.

wife even before completing hundred days of married life, but finally he forgiven her and decided to watch the future outcome of their relationship. However, Fuyuko was actually a woman of integrity and she was indeed faithful to her husband. She wrote a letter to her ex-boy-friend after her marriage not with the intention to continue her affair with him, but with the intention to bid goodbye to him for ever. In 'Suisai gaka', Toson is giving us a clear picture of the content of this letter, although there is a division of opinion among experts regarding the models of hero and heroin of this short story. Denkichi, the hero (Toson) happened to read a letter written by Ohatsu (heroin-Fuyuko) to Naoe (her boy friend) in which besides mentioning about her busy daily life, she has also appologized her action and requested him to forgive and forget her for ever. "Whenever I think about our slender love, my pillow gets wet". "Now you please think that I am dead and only my heart which yearns for you is alive". "From desperate Hatsuko to beloved Naoe".<sup>16</sup> Hatsuko has taken an ultimate resolution to keep her boy friend away at least physically because she wants to be faithful to her husband. Fuyuko apologized to her husband several times and requested him to not to misunderstand her. She wanted to proof her innocence and the depth of love and dedication she has toward

---

16 'Suisai Gaka', Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-3, p.151.

him, but it was difficult for her to express them in words. So she wrote them on a paper and gave to her husband to read. "I beg your pardon for giving you lot of worries due to various unavoidable circumstances. I have decided to come to you as your wife on my own discretion as I felt it most appropriate and suitable. I left my parents house with certain hopes and aspirations which are solely of mine.... Now that I have sent the last letter to Tsutomu to bid goodbye. Please pardon me."<sup>17</sup> Oyuki's parents and Tsutomu's parents were friends and they mutually had agreed to get their children married when they are eligible for that. However, due to some rumours and allegations, their marriage could not be materialised. It is true that their yearning for each other still existed as fresh as when they were in good terms as lovers; but once she took the decision to get married to Sankichi (Toson), Oyuki (Fuyuko) determined to terminate her relationship with Tsutomu. In order to preserve the sanctity of marriage and to serve her husband with sincerity and full dedication, Oyuki decided to sacrifice her self interest, her love for Tsutomu which was once the most precious thing for her. What we see here is the clear image of a traditional Japanese woman who deny her existence for the well being of her husband and family. However, like in the case of Sato

---

17 'Ie", Shimazaki Toson-Zenshu-8, p.83.

Sukeko, Toson did not believe his wife until her death and his, bias, suspicion, and prejudice against women increased further after his marriage.

As have been seen earlier, failure of his love affair with Sato Sukeko had made Toson a romantic poet and, similarly on the other hand, his marriage to Hata Fuyuko had forced Toson to leave poetry and take up prose writing. Unexpected events, such as discovery of Fuyuko's ex-affair, in his married life had led him into a situation where he found it difficult to continue as a romantic poet as he had dearth of ideas suitable to put in verses. Moreover, Toson was not a born genius to excel in poetry. He became a poet only because of his hard work and ambition, and his early contact with famous Western literatures of the time.<sup>18</sup> As he did not have the inborn talent to be a poet, after being in the field of poetry for about five years, he quit it for ever. Toson observed complete silence for three years after his marriage to Hata Fuyuko. This was the period of contemplation, during which he sharpened his views, and ideas through constant observation and study of the countryside.

Besides these two women, his mother and elder sister were also influenced him in sharpening his outlook on women. It seems that as a young child Toson did know about the story of

---

18 Shinchosha Nihon Bungaku Album, "Shimazaki Toson", p.10; Fukuda Kiyoshi, Shimazaki Toson - Hito to Sakuhin, p.30.

his mother's extra-marital affair and the secret of his elder brother Tomoya's birth. Toson's mother, Shimazaki Nui,<sup>19</sup> was an illiterate woman of rural background; who did not have any opportunity to have any contact with the external world during her youth. Although, one is not sure about the extent of truth in her illicit affair, Toson lost confidence in women in general ever since he came to know about this episode, and viewed them with disgust and disdain. May be, that is the reason why he never trusted Sato Sukeko and his wife Hata Fuyuko even after their repeated request. The only woman Toson really trusted and loved with compassion was his elder sister Takase Sono.<sup>20</sup> Sono was the eldest child of Toson's parents and was older to him by sixteen years. She was fairly educated, and a modest woman who upheld the divine ideals of marriage as something which cannot be violated. On the contrary, her husband was a man of "loose character", who dared to desert his wife and children as a result of his indulgence in extra-marital affairs. Sono, in fact, had to experience a pathetic life in an age when most of the educated and awakened women of Meiji Japan stood against the atrocities of male chauvinism prevailed in the society since the middle ages. Toson had narrated the pathetic life of this good-

---

19 Ito Kazuo, Shimazaki Toson Jiten, pp.192-93.

20 Ibid, pp.262-63.

hearted woman, especially the second half of her life after her husband deserted her, in a novelette called "Aru Onna no Shogai" (Life of a woman). For Toson, Sono was not only a sister but he considered her as a person to be respected and revered like a mother.

Sono's husband, Takase Kaoru<sup>21</sup> was basically an intelligent and able man who excelled in studies and various other social activities. His family was traditionally engaged in manufacturing and selling medicines, and pharmaceutical, which were very popular among the daimyo who pass through the Naka Sendo highway. However, due to his weakness for the fair sex and his over indulgence in the quarters of entertainment gradually destroyed his traditional business as well as his career as a prospective school teacher of the Tsumagome primary school. At the time of Sono's marriage (1875) to Kaoru, the Takase family was, in fact, in the zenith of the prosperity and it was a matter of pride for the Shimazakis to have a matrimonial alliance with it. But soon the fall came, and Toson was a constant observer of these changes which synchronized with the vigorous social changes that followed after the Meiji Restoration. Sono, a woman of complete dedication and service to her husband, faced all the ups and downs in her life with courage which made her an 'ideal woman'

---

21 Ibid, pp.261-2.

according to Toson's view. She never complained against her husband, she never thought of seeking a divorce or victimizing him for his act of unfaithfulness. She suffered, everything in silence and pardoned him whenever he apologized his misdeeds. "That was the time (before the birth of Sono's daughter, Tazu) when her husband had maintained relationship with several geishas (entertainers). One of them had given birth to his child. A worried Ogen (Sono) wanted to dispose of the matter herself.... Although she had been ignored and discarded by him so much, Ogen often used to pardon her husband who stand in front of her with folded hands begging her pardon, or just when he talks to her in sweet words...."<sup>22</sup> Sono, being such a nice lady, was praised by Toson for her patience and prudence and had influenced him immensely during the formative years of his view on woman, especially his view on married women.

These are the women in real life who had influenced Toson greatly in the evolution of his view and approach on women from his childhood. Consequently, we can see various forms and faces of women in his works. there are mothers, wives, sisters, and women in love in his works, depicted on the basis of different motives and views. Toson had spent many years in studying and understanding the different faces, different

---

22 Aru Onna no Shogai, Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-20, p.65.

moods and attitudes of women in general and the result of his intensive study and observation was culminated into the forms of Aya, Osada, Uryu Natsuko, Sawa Sekiko etc. of the short stories which I discuss here.

#### **Toson's Observation of Woman**

Though Toson was sent away to the city of Tokyo at the age of 10, he reared an yearning for the beautiful life in the countryside. This nostalgia and yearning for the country life seemed to have worked as the motive force behind him to accept the teaching job in Komoro school immediately after his marriage. During his stay in Komoro, Toson had travelled around the Saku hills and banks of Chikuma river to get a direct view and understanding of the life of people in the rural, country side. His sharp and critical eyes did not fail to observe the changing atmosphere in the country side as a result of rapid economic change and modernization of the country. However, this rapid urbanization and economic development did not change the status of working women in the country side. Followed by the Meiji restoration, many of the men folk of the rural Japan, whether it be farmer, artisan, trader or Samurai, lost their traditional jobs and source of their income, making their daily life more hard and difficult. Consequently, families in rural Japan found it very difficult to survive unless their women folk work in the field or go to



urban areas in search of work as industrial labourers<sup>23</sup> or house maids. Although, the new government of Meiji Japan made the education of both boys and girls mandatory in 1880; it did not make any substantial change in the status of rural woman, although it tremendously influenced living conditions of the urban woman. Toson was constantly observing this division between the rural and urban women. He was sympathetic, on the one hand, with the poor working women of the country side and highly critical of the urbanized, modern girls of the society on the other hand. His depiction of female characters clearly indicates this fact.

He visited farmers houses several times, talked to them various matters related to farming and the calamities often they face. Their routine work, food, dress, festivals and celebrations, and customs were subjected to his close observation and later on he narrated them in his literary works. For example, the following paragraph in 'Chikumagawa no Suketchi' (Sketches of Chikuma River) is a best example.

"...there was continuous stretch of paddy fields around me, some had already had harvest and some were waiting to be harvested. Two families were still busily engaged in cropping. The way they work would give us the impression that they hurriedly doing it because they want to finish it before

---

23 Takamure Itsue Zenshu, Josei no Rekishi-II, pp.794-906.

the onset of snowing season. Just in front of my eyes, a father with grey-white hair and his fourteen or fifteen years old son were engaged in hulling the paddy with long mallet. Its pounding sound reverberated on the earth and lot of white dust rose up. The mother of the boy with a hand towel in her hand and a covering for the back of her hand, put the hackled ears (paddy) into the winnow. By her side, there was another woman with sun-burnt face, who was in a stooping posture putting the rice hulled by the father and son into the sieve. Another woman who tucked up her sleeves with a red sash and wearing a dark blue tabi socks (Japanese socks) engaged in chasing away the smoke, formed by the mingling of empty paddy husk and dust while shaking off the unhulled husk in the winnow facing to the wind and holding the winnow above the head...."<sup>24</sup> As clearly understood from this passage, Toson was very particular in investigating and observing various aspects of women in the country side. This and similar incidents which he observed and recorded in "Chikumagawa no Suketchi" give us a realistic picture of the countryside. As I mentioned earlier, this was the time when Toson decided to change his career from a romantic poet to a writer of prose based on naturalism. As a first step to that, he sketched the surroundings where he lived and depicted them realistically in

---

24 Chikumagawa no Suketchi, 'Shukaku', Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-2, p.171.

his short stories and Hakai, his first full pledged novel. His depiction of Keinoshin's wife in Hakai<sup>25</sup> is a direct example of his observation of working woman in the countryside. Keinoshin is a poor school teacher who due to his illness and bad habit of consuming excess quantity of alcohol fails to keep up his responsibility as a school teacher and plunges into a condition where he is no more able to look after his wife and children. In such a condition, his wife with all her weakness and difficulties as a woman, determines to support the family by taking up the responsibility of cultivating the land and paddy field by herself. Her plight and sorrows are depicted in Hakai very realistically by Toson.

Side by side his observation of women in the countryside, Toson was also observing and studying the changing attitude of educated and emancipated women in the urban areas like Komoro town etc. Komoro, during the second half of Meiji period, was fast growing into a town with all modern facilities, like school, bank, hospital etc.<sup>26</sup> Highly educated, rich women of urban background, began to challenge the existing norms and codes of the society by the end the

---

25 Hakai, Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-4.

26 Nakayama Hiroaki, "Komoro" to iu basho (Shimazaki Toson ni Okeru Kinsen to gensetsu), (Nihon Bungaku 1993-7), pp.54-67.

nineteenth century. Women were granted equal opportunity for education and job and were allowed to possess property by 1873. Toson, who had studied in Tokyo and had the opportunity to witness the changing attitude of women directly as he was teaching in Meiji Jogakko for one year immediately after his graduation from Meiji Gakuin, viewed this attitude of modern woman with contempt. "We shall not marry" was the slogan of these modern girls who roamed around the cities and towns. Clad in western dress and actively participating in Western cultural activities like music and dance, these girls were forgetting the social and family set up of traditional Japan. Toson could not remain as a mere spectator. He lashed out at women, saying that 'gakumon wa mi o ayamaru' (learning will misguide one's self) and went up to the extent of ridiculing the modern women saying that they cannot survive without the moral and physical support of men. Toson was neither a proponent of Confucianism nor a supporter of feudalistic set up of the society. What he was actually criticising was the wrong and imperfect understanding of western concepts such as freedom, equality and right to self determination by the Japanese women.

Toson's ever attentive and critical eyes were observing the changing attitude of village women, their curiosity and inquisitiveness to know more about the modernization process that brought about fundamental changes in the behaviour of

city dwelling women. The education policy of the government in the first half of Meiji period had benefitted only a minority of Japanese women who lived in the towns and cities, as only 30 percent of the eligible girls were in school by 1890.<sup>27</sup> On one side, he found women like Aya who "makes up in the morning" and "polishes in the night" and who "does not lack any luxury" in life. When such highly urbanized women walk on the roads, it was the habit of the poor village folk to look at them with curiosity and admiration. "There are none as curious as women in the countryside",<sup>28</sup> Toson realised this fact during his observations. These village women were just not only curious, but also ready to change according to the time, provided that they are given proper guidance and education. The Meiji government had indeed provided better educational facilities to the rural women by the end of the nineteenth century and as we had already seen in Chapter 1, a law mandating the establishment of at least one higher school for girls in each prefecture was enacted in 1899. This law had the simultaneous effect of increasing the number of public schools providing post elementary education for women and narrowing the scope of education offered to the women. Although the Meiji government's true intention was to develop

---

27 Gail Lee Berustein, Recreating Japanese Women, 1600-1945, p.157.

28 Kyuhujin, Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-3, p.11.

young women of refined taste and gentle and modest character to fulfill their duties within the home, introduction of compulsory and universal education had changed the status of women in rural Japan considerably by the turn of nineteenth century. In Komoro too, high school for girls was already established by the turn of the 19th century. For example 'Ueda Girls High School'<sup>29</sup> where Sawa Sekiko of 'Rojo' was teaching, was opened in 1901, just two years before writing this novel by Toson. In the same year, girls' high schools were also opened in Matsumoto and Shimoina in Nagano Prefecture where Komoro is also situated, and the number of rural girls attending these schools rapidly increased. there was a rapid increase in the number of female teachers also, as the number increased to thirty nine in 1902 from a mere sixteen one year before.<sup>30</sup> Toson who was teaching in Komor Gijuku at that time was definitely sensitive to such changes in the social status of women. Both Uryu Natsuko and Sawa Sekiko of Rojo and Aya of Kyushujin are belonging to this category of women, who had been created purposely by the author to give a true picture of women during that period.

Like his contemporary Tayama Katai, Toson too believed in writing whatever actually happened or really existed after

---

29 Nakayama Hiroaki, Komoro to iu Basho, pp.58-59.

30 Oida Yoshiaki, Ryokuyoshu no Josei - "Rojo" Kara "Suisai Gaka e" (From Rojo to Suisai Gaka), p.18.

thorough study and observation. Tayama Katai (1872-1930) was one of the pioneers of Naturalist movement in Japan and its most admired writer. His first novel "Futon" (The Quilt, 1907) is considered as one of the best examples of Japanese naturalism in literature - influenced by the philosophies of Maupassant, and Nietzsche - he emphasized the need to express one's individuality, and natural impulses of individual in literature. He stressed the need to observe matters correctly and write only the things really happened or existed even if they look unnatural. Regarding this, Toson himself says the following: "Most of us usually see things on the basis of certain conventional 'views' and 'norms' set by our predecessors. If we abandon these preconceptions and view things independently of them, we will be certainly able to discover something which nobody has noticed so far.... For writing about things, we should view, observe and memorize them properly."<sup>31</sup> True to his philosophy, Toson viewed and observed both rural and urban women and discovered the following facts about women; (a) "There is none as curious as women in the country side". (b) "There is nothing as short as the happiness of women". (c) "There is none as lonely and forlorn as women". (d) "Women is cheerless and boring". (e) "Woman has no interest in the business of man" and (f) "Woman

---

31 "Miru Koto to Kaku Koto", Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-6, pp.155-56.

cannot live without loving and without being loved".<sup>32</sup> His observation of women and his personal encounter and experiences with them in the real life had exerted great influence on the characterization of female characters in his initial prose works.

There is ample evidence to prove that Toson's observations of people and nature in and around Komoro and Saku region was systematic and real.<sup>33</sup> His consciousness as a man from the province and his nostalgia for knowing more about the farming villages in the countryside, had made his attempt all the more meaningful. His association with Miyake Katsumi who had gone to Komoro in 1899 to teach and paint landscapes of the area, had helped him in sketching his observations in a more realistic manner. Miyake Katsumi (1875-1954) was a water colourist and a graduate of Meiji Gakuin like Toson, and settled in Komoro after his return from

- 
- 32 (a) to (e) are found in Toson's short story "Kyushujin" and (f) is found in his short story "Rojo".  
(a) Inaka no onna hodo monomidakai mono wa arimasen, Kyushujin, chapter-1.  
(b) Onna no tanoshimi hodo mijikai mono wa arimasen, Kyushujin, chapter-2.  
(c) Onna hodo kokorobosoi mono wa arimasen, Kyushujin, chapter-2.  
(d) Onna to iu mono wa tsumaranai mono da, Kyushujin, Chapter-2.  
(e) So, Onna to iu, mono wa otoko no shigoto ni reitanna monoka naa. Kyushujin, Chapter-3.  
(f) Onna wa ai shitari, ai seraretari sezu ni wa ikite irareru mono dewa arimasen, Rojo, chapter-2.
- 33 - Chikuma gawa no Suketehi, Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-2, pp.97-250.



Europe. Miyake Katsumi and Toson became intimate friends at Komoro and Toson recommended him to the post of drawing master in Komoro Gijuku. Miyake was an admirer of European painters such as Millet Jean Francois (1814-1875), Corot Jean Baptiste Camitte (1796-1875) etc. He often carried an easel and sketchbook with him. Similarly Toson also carried an easel, which he used as desk for writing down his observations. Toson incorporated the sketches he accumulated here, into various short stories and novels. Except two or three, all works included in Ryokuyo-shu<sup>34</sup> are written mainly on the basis of his observation and sketches he collected from Komoro and Saku region, and Toson in his preface to Ryokuyo-shu called them as the "Stories of the banks of Chikuma river".<sup>35</sup> His self-taught ability to observe things enabled him to reproduce reality in his works. Hence, a study of his female characters in his initial works, will enable us to grasp the true condition of women's attitude towards modernization and

---

34 Suisai gaka, Asa Meshi, Rojo, Warazori, Oyaji, Tsugaru Kaikyo, Yashi no hakage, and Kachiku are the eight stories published under the title Ryokuyo-shu in 1907 by the publishing house Shunyo do. Out of these, Suisai gaka, Rojo, Warazori, Asa Meshi, Oyaji and Kyushujin (which could not be published along with these stories due to model problem), are considered as the direct fruits of Toson's observation and study of nature in and around Komoro and the banks of Chikuma river.

35 Preface (Ryokuyoshu), Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-2, pp.239-41.

their understanding of individual freedom and equality in the society.

**Characterization of Women in Toson's Works  
With Special Emphasis to Female Characters  
in 'Kyushujin' and 'Rojo'**

Toson's style of writing fiction is considered as unique, as he had his own way of narrating stories with plot and characters taken from the real life. Unlike other great writers of Meiji Japan he lacked in imagination and creativity in the displacement of characters in his works. His characters, irrespective of male or female are simple, straight forward, and actual replica of different types of people in the society. His constant study and observation of the nature and society during the period of great social transformation had given rise to various characters reminiscent of people of that era. Toson took up his pen as prose writer during the most turbulent period in modern Japanese history when a vertically conceived social order had been replaced by a horizontally cast egalitarian society. Enhancement of women's status in the society gave rise to certain social problems such as destabilization of family set up, increased number of divorces, and an increase in the number of females who challenged the existing social and family set up and marriage. In such a background, it was quite natural for a naturalist writer like Toson to show special interest in the behaviour and attitude of women in and

around his family and society. Characters in his works, especially his female characters had a direct bearing on his personal life as they were the real copies of people known to him directly or indirectly. Among his female characters, we can trace the true images of his lover, wife, sister, mother and other women whom he knew closely. During his study and observation, Toson had analysed various aspects of women and had tried to express them in a very realistic manner through his works starting from Ryokuyo-shu, his first collection of short stories. In fact, Toson did not hold any one particular view on woman, but his approach and views were complex in nature and inquisitive and critical in reality. What he found in his observations or what he experienced in his family life was sufficient enough to evolve a typical outlook on woman. He sometimes sympathizes with women, sometimes views them with contempt and sometimes looks down on them with distrust and anger. He had different motives when he had depicted different female characters in his various works. His motive for writing "Warazori"<sup>36</sup> was entirely different from his motive for writing Kyushujin, although both of them were written together. In Warazori, he depicts the 'tragedy of

---

36 Both 'Warazori' and Kyushujin were written in Meiji-35 (1902). Toson said to have taken hints from 'Venus and Adonis' (1593) of Shakespear for writing 'Warazori'. As 'Kyushujin' could not be published in 'Ryokuyo-shu' (1907) due to model problem, Warazori is the first story Toson wrote among all stories in Ryokuyo-shu.

women' through its heroine Okuma, who is a typical example of an illiterate and powerless woman of rural background. She is a victim of male dominated traditional society where a woman had always been looked down as a subordinate to man.

Okuma's husband, Gen, was an ambitious man who was ready to sacrifice everything for 'fame' and 'glory' and was a strong contender of championship in a horse race. Unfortunately he failed to get the top prize and the sense of loss and humiliation due to that infuriated him. Upon his return to his house, he manhandled his wife Okuma, until she broke her legs. Meanwhile, Gen also came to know about Okuma's rape by an old railway guard when she was still an unmarried girl. The hapless woman was taken to a hospital by her husband at the insistence of his parents but she died on the way. When Gen was beating his wife, his parents try to stop him, scolding him for his senseless brutal act of manhandling Okuma. However, Gen did not have any intention to heed to their request or advice. Instead, he justified his action by saying that, "...well, it is I who have beaten her. Wife's life is husband's life, wife's body is husband's body. I have beaten up my own body, and what is unusual in that?"<sup>37</sup> Gen's attitude here is a typical example of thinking by men during the Pre-Meiji period of Japan. A wife has no right on

---

37 Warazori, Shimazaki Tason Zenshu-3, p.81.

her own body and the husband who torture her was not answerable to anybody. This kind of suppression of woman by man was an essential requirement for the perpetuation of feudal ideology of the period. This situation had not changed much even after a quarter of century after the Meiji restoration. Toson was always disturbed by this discrimination of women by the dominant section of the society although he was not a supporter of excess emancipation of women. He expected women to be modest, humble and submissive to the extent that harmony will permanently exist in family life and he expected men to be lenient and rational in their attitude and behaviour towards women. Husband should treat his wife as equal and respect her sentiments and feelings as long as she does not betray his faith in her. In Warazori, an innocent and helpless Okuma for none of her fault was subjected to endless pain and torture and finally met her end silently, blaming everything to her fate. Toson's motive here was to depict the 'sorrow of woman', the helpless victim of the society.

In contrast to this, we see, in *Suisai Gaka*<sup>38</sup> both husband and wife are engaged in love affair which ultimately drags their married life to the brink of collapse. Ohatsu,

---

38 'Suisai-gaka', Toson Zenshu-3, Chikuma Shobo, 1966, Toson wrote this novel in 1904 and published in 'Shinshosetsu'. Toson seem to have written this novel under the influence of works by Maupassant, Ibsen, etc.

the heroine of 'Suisai Gaka' maintains an illegal affair with Naoe, her lover. Her husband Takano Denkichi, a water colourist, discovers their relationship and resolves to solve the problem by writing a letter to Naoe, indirectly granting him his approval to continue their affair.<sup>39</sup> "Soul (heart) of Ohatsu is your's and body of Ohatsu is mine", Denkichi writes to Naoe. However, quick and sensible act of Naoe brings an end to the troubled situation as he showed his willingness to discontinue the illegal affair. Meanwhile, Denkichi also decided to start a new life again and severed his relationship with Yanagizawa Kiyono a musician, which became intimate after Denkichi discovered his wife's affair. However, finally they settle down to a new life. In Warazori we find the husband with all might and power, who has the ultimate right on her wife to do anything on her and not answerable to anybody, a typical example of husband wife relationship in a tradition-bound family set up. Unlike Warazori, in 'Suisai gaka' both the wife and husband are treated equally. It shows the changing attitude and outlook of society on women and Toson's critical eyes were very sharp to take note of this change. Very soon he came to the conclusion that, irrespective of relationship or status, every individual of the society must be accorded equal respect and freedom to do anything which he

---

39 Ibid, pp.156-58.

or she prefers to do as long as it does not disturb the well being of the society. The moment Denkichi started thinking about human relationship rationally, his attitude and outlook suddenly changed and he determined to restart a new life which he himself termed as the "beginning of a third married life" with the same wife.<sup>40</sup> Toson's own married life reached at the brink of collapse in the beginning due to Fuyuko's affair with her lover, and it has compelled him to make the conclusion that 'marriage is a lifelong trap'. However, as Denkichi in *Suisai Gaka*, Toson too overcame the crisis and decided to live on with Fuyuko, a new life although he never forgave her fully even after her repeated request. Hence, Toson's motive of writing *Suisai Gaka* was entirely different from that of *Warazori*. Through *Suisai Gaka's* Ohatsu, Toson wanted to show us the picture of a matured woman who although desired for a life free from the iron fists of her husband, restrained herself in order to save her and her family from total destruction. Ohatsu was a woman with considerable level of education like Sawa Sekiko of *Rojo* and, like Sekiko she too preferred to returned to normal married family life. In short, we can see slightly exaggerated form of Fuyuko through Ohatsu in *Suisai Gaka* and Toson's real motive in writing this novel was to show his "distrust towards women."

---

40 Ibid, p.192.

## Characterisation of Women in 'Kyushujin'

Toson's motives for writing *Kyushujin* were different from the previously discussed two stories, as it was the first fruit of his observation and study of countryside. In *Kyushujin*, we can see conflicts between new and old, urban culture and rural culture and educated women and illiterate woman. Toson through this novellette wanted to highlight the changing attitude of women in their outlook to family and social life. He wrote this novel in 1902, and that was the period when both government and general public in Japan jointly strived hard to achieve the goals of 'Rich nation and strong army' and 'good wives and wise mothers' by giving appropriate education to the citizens. However, majority of educated women of the period did not agree with the government policy of 'Good wives and wise mothers', which again put restrictions on the freedom and private life of women. According to 'good wives and wise mothers' policy of the government, a woman must be educated and trained sufficiently to manage the household works skillfully side by side taking care of her husband and children. It prohibited women from free indulgence in pleasure life and warned them that the defaulters will be punished severely. However, the policy of 'good wives and wise mothers' did not yield the expected result as many young and educated women resisted against the government move and they registered their protest by



excessively indulging in various physical pleasures and uncontrolled sexual activities. Toson was a keen observer of the situation and through *Kyushujin* he tried to depict the real face of a woman who revolted against her husband and another woman who revolted against her mistress.

In '*Kyushujin*', Toson is depicting two equally important female characters, Aya and Osada. Highly educated, urban born and brought up young Aya finds the lonely life in the countryside boring and meaningless. Toson's depiction of Aya reminds us the life of two women in real life, Sato Sukeko and Hata Fuyuko, the former Toson's lover and the latter his wife. Aya is a combination of these two people. Aya loves Sakurai, the dentist, even before her marriage to Arai. This reminds us Fuyuko's affair with her boy-friend before and after her marriage with Toson. Like Sato Sukeko who yearned for Toson, Aya wanted to marry her lover Sakurai but fate had separated them and she had to content with her marriage with Arai. Despite being a rich banker, Arai was an old man who dedicated his life for the betterment of the bank and welfare of people in Komoro. Aya who used to the comforts of upper class life in the city could not withstand the life in a cheerless and remote country town. The town where she lives in can hardly offer her the kind of social life she craves. As a result of her boredom and loneliness, she begins to meet Sakurai

secretly as Oyuki (Fuyuko in real life) sent secret love letters to Tsutomu in Toson's novel 'Ie'.

Aya's husband fully aware of his short-comings had tried to appease her by making available any luxury or comfort she required. He was a broad minded person who was earnestly trying to live according to the changing social conditions and was ready to sacrifice anything for the happiness of his wife. A very hard working and diligent man, Arai led a very disciplined life unlike the hero, Gen, of Warazori. "Master either would go for a stroll early in the morning, or would go through some documents sitting on the first floor and drink a glass of cow milk. At nine O'Clock he would go to the bank bearing a cap and 'maetaregake'. On holidays, he would entertain guests and chat with them in the visitors room in the ground floor. His friends were all respectable members of the society including town councillors, rich landlords, businessmen, and newspaper tycoons. After dinner he would chat with his wife sitting face to face and it was the happiest moment in his daily routine."<sup>41</sup> Watchful Osada is viewing her master with great admiration and respect and gives a perfect picture of his routine. he is one of the best examples of successful businessmen of the era. But his wife is ignoring him completely. She does not bother about his

---

41 Kyushujin, Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-3, p.8.

achievement and business because she does not love him. Her mind is attracted to the young handsome dentist and she gets some relief from her boredom only when she meets him. Rest of the time she stayed in the house like a "bush warbler in a cage".<sup>42</sup> Aya, though educated, is a person who does not want to face the challenges of life. She is a feeble minded woman who neither wants to take up any job nor wants to appreciate her husband who diligently work to make her happy. In order to hide her weakness, she often use rash and abusive language whenever she talked to her husband. In short, in *Kyushujin* we see a woman "intrinsically untrustworthy, licentious, and unable to properly fulfill the duties of a house wife".<sup>43</sup> Aya is a symbol of modern women who wrongly conceived the concept of emancipation and liberation. For her liberation means, only the physical liberation, to indulge in activities which ensure pleasures, not the mental liberation which would have made her independent of her husband and empowered her with the courage to face challenges independently. Although she was incapable of doing anything independently, she often used to be boastful of her own ability and talent. This again is a proof for her weakness.

---

42 *Kyushujin*, Shimazaki Toson, *Zenshu-3*, pp.16, 21.

43 Senuma Shigeki, *Forward to Shimazaki Toson-shu-I*, *Nihon Kindai bungaku Taikei*, vol.13, Kadokawa Shoten, Tokyo, 1971.

Aya had studied the mind and behaviour of man thoroughly and she knew how to make use of them for her own pleasure and benefit. Her opinion and view on men are very interesting and analytic in content. "Even if a man is handsome and owns lot of property etc., and possess the nature of praising other's talent and ability, he cannot be trusted if he is a grumbler always with a perplexed mind. On the other hand, an intelligent and very attractive man is more awful because he will be able to make fool of a woman, and will see through even her short comings. Some are generous but excessively lavish in spending money. Some are finicky but excessively enlightened, some are kind but highly reserved. If a man seems to be good, he will be feeble looking. So it is difficult to find out a man without a fault."<sup>44</sup> Hence, Aya did know about the character of Arai properly. She knew that, he is a diligent and hard working man and also knew that her affair will be discovered one day. But still, she could not stop her affair with Sakurai because she loves him, not her husband. She wanted to live a free life like a woman in the pilgrimage but the social stigmas and bonds restricted a married woman to do that. Hence, it was essential for her to keep her affair hidden from her husband not because of her fear for her husband but because of her fear for social

---

44 Kyushujin, Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-3, p.18.

ostracism and isolation. Therefore, she was compelled to get rid of Osada, her servant and one time confidant. In order to attain this goal she hatched slanders against her. This again shows her intrinsic weakness as a woman. True nature of a person cannot be changed merely by education or by simply coming into contact with the concepts of modernity. Toson, whose married life was marred by the infidelity of his wife, was trying to depict the 'true nature of woman' and her 'faithlessness' through Aya. Toson was disillusioned by the high ideals of love as propagated by his friend and mentor Kitamura Tokoku ever since the discovery of Fuyuko's infidelity immediately after his marriage.

Like Ohatsu and Naoe in *Suisai Gaka* and Oyuki and Tsutomu in 'Ie', Aya also continued to have correspondence with her lover Sakurai even after her marriage and transfer of residence to Komoro. She even kept a photograph of Sakurai with her always. She stored all the love letters in a box safely and occasionally read them in the absence of her husband. Her attachment to these letters indicates how deep was her love towards Sakurai. "Mistress took out love letters from the letter box. She rubbed her soft cheek with those letters fondly and started reading one by one. Some letters had inside them pressed flower petals and leaves with their original colour. Mistress smelled the remaining fragrance of the flower and her whole body burned in passion. She wanted

to destroy those love letters by tearing them into pieces, so that master would not see them. However, she could not do that because of her attachment to them."<sup>45</sup> What we find in Aya here is the image of Fuyuko, Toson's wife, who continued to write her lover letters even after her marriage. Hence, Toson's purpose, his motive was to depict through Aya the infidelity of a wife, her betrayal of husband's faith in her. In other words, Aya is a representative of a group of women who revolted against the traditional ethics of family life and society, who considered the 'liberation of sexual life' as the true liberation and emancipation of women.

In contrast to Aya, Osada is a simple village woman, illiterate but prudent enough to distinguish good and evil. She gets a glimpse of modernization of the society through her association with Arai family and enthralled by the comfortable, luxurious life in the town. But her true nature does not change. She acts very sensibly whenever her existence was in question. She faces the challenges in her life courageously and diligently and has the power to withstand any odd situation in life. Unlike Aya, Osada enjoys the life in Komoro town because life in her village is much harsher than the life in the town. Certainly, the rhythm of daily life and the proliferation of tasks, roles, and other

---

45 Ibid, pp.41-42.

demands upon people obviously differ considerably for life in city and for life in the village. Therefore, Osada's life style and thinking ought to be different from that of Aya. She had been sincere in her attitude and obedient and loyal to her employer as long as her ego was not hurt by the slanderous behaviour of her mistress.

In the story, Osada is entrusted with three distinctively different roles, namely, her role as a maid-servant, her role as a first person narrator and her role as an observer, who watches the activities of her employers with careful and ever attentive eyes. During the later half of nineteenth century it became a common practice among poor rural woman to go to towns and cities to work as factory workers or maid-servants<sup>46</sup> to support their families. Hence Osada, who was in her early twenties, had happily undertaken the job of a maid-servant in Arai's family. As a maid-servant, she executes her job sincerely and obediently, like any poor, innocent person with a rural background would have done. She wins the hearts of her master and mistress from the very beginning and she too considers herself as a member of her employers family. She is not just a maid-servant only to her mistress, but a confident and a companion to her in her lonely life full of boredom, and here we see the simplicity and sincerity of a village girl.

---

46 Inoue Kiyoshi, *Nihon Joseishi*, pp.189-98.

She admires her mistress's charm, fashion and advanced living standards, and tries herself to imitate those good qualities, so that she can serve, her mistress better. However, her innocence and simplicity, and her faith in the employers had been betrayed by the wicked, selfish action of Aya, her mistress. Suddenly, Osada returns to her 'true nature' of a Saku woman and decides to prove her innocence. Here, we see an Osada, strong, fearless and fighting for justice. She gained this strength from her innocence, her intrinsic nature as a simple, uneducated poor village woman. She just could not believe at the first moment that a civilized, fashionable, educated Aya of urban background would hatch up baseless slander against her. She never thought that such malicious words would come out from the beautiful lips of her mistress and was amazed and also frightened at this cunning world of so called enlightened people. <sup>47</sup> Hence, she decides to challenge her mistress and in their fight - a fight between urban woman and rural woman, a fight between modern and tradition and sincerity and insincerity - Osada ultimately wins. Here, Toson's motive is to highlight truth's triumph over falsehood, predominance of sincerity of rural woman over the wickedness of so called enlightened urban woman and exposure of 'women's true nature'.

---

47 Kyushujin, Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-3, p.45.



Next, as an observer, Osada is playing an important role. She with her rural background knew nothing about the urbanized modern life in the town and cities until she joined the Arais as a maid-servant. Once on the job, she regularly observes the activities of her master and mistress with a critical eye. She is not sparing anything in her observation as she critically studies the nature and character of her master, mistress, the dentist and even the structure of the new house of Arais.

"Although this house had Komoro style gate, it was a quiet and two-storied house with new latticed work.... The new house was built in Tokyo style",<sup>48</sup> Osada observes and she substantiates her opinion with the narration of her master's attitude. "My master, a broad-minded person, lived like as if he had transplanted Tokyo to Komoro.... In this world there are some people with very peculiar appearance. Even when they are crying they look as if they are laughing. My master was one of them.... He loved to work diligently and never wasted any time in idle. Whenever, anybody in Komoro wants to start a new business or work, it was Arai whom he consults with first. In other words, my master was the most important personality in Komoro."<sup>49</sup> Osada's observation of her master

---

48 Ibid, p.7.

49 Ibid, p.8.

gives us a clear picture of successful post-Meiji businessmen. Compared to her father who is a lazy drunkard who wastes his time in idle, ignoring his responsibility as a rural farmer, men such as Arai in the town are hard working and ambitious. This was a new and startling revelation to Osada. On the other hand, Osada finds that her mistress, Aya, is always spending her time in idle, reading novels or just sleeping. She had extremely beautiful features and even Osada herself was fascinated by her beauty and elegant life style, who "makes up in the morning" and "polishes in the night" and wears only "costly and colourful dress". Osada understands the contrast in the life of urban and rural women's status. Women including her mother in the countryside have to work in the field even when their male counterparts sit idle, and Osada soon understands the difference in quality of life of urban and rural women. Her mother's hands are large, stoutly built and sun-burnt and looked like the hands of a man, whereas her mistress has fair and tender hands. Her mistress has all luxuries and comfort, but her mother in the village and other women in the countryside lack even the minimum provisions for a mere existence.

Osada's observation does not stop at the external aspects of life in the urban and rural societies. She peeps into the private life of her master and mistress and discovers for the first time the disharmony existing between them. Initially,

she was under the impression that her master and mistress were the best example for an extremely affectionate, intimate and harmonious couple one can take as a model. She even envied them. But her impression soon turned upside down as she realized the truth that "human being cannot be judged by his appearance only". She realized the truth that, however educated a person may be, or however advanced his living standards may be, the basic human instinct in him will not change. She was stunned to see Aya's faithlessness to her husband, which she never expected from a cultured "modern woman." "Enraptured by the story of love - love like a dream in a spring night - I peeped into their room through the gaps in the sliding door. Mistress's face, in that night, reflected in the bright lamp light was extremely beautiful. I have never seen her so beautiful before or after that, I could see her drinking wine while narrowing her glossy eyes. Also, I could see the dentist laughing very happily waving her slender, fair hands. As their romance progressed, my mistress completely forgot her worries of the past and anxieties for the future...."<sup>50</sup> Osada as a village girl was eager to know what was happening in between her mistress and her boy friend. That dragged her to Aya's room. For her, even Aya's infidelity was a novel thing, unheard in the remote country-

---

50 Ibid, p.32.

side. Still, she consoled herself, thinking even this as a part of urban life.

Osada's eyes dropping, and peeping at last helped herself from the trap laid down by Aya. If Osada was not vigilant and careful, she would not have got the opportunity to prove her innocence, and would have been thrown out of the house as a disobedient and dishonest ugly countryside maid-servant who spreads rumours about her employers. "I stood silently there with bated breathe, listening to their conversation. Mistress was telling my master something like as following. She was complaining to the master that many articles have been missing from the house including even a violet silk scarf kept in the drawer of the needle box. Thinking it strange, she opened and searched my furoshiki zutsumi and found every missing articles in that, including the scarf, obiage, ring etc. Also she told him that, I talk about my master behind his back when I go to the well to fetch water and spread baseless rumours about him. Further she also told him that I have become very selfish and disobedient, and one day somebody had seen the young milkman embracing me from my back, holding his hands around the nape of my back...."<sup>51</sup> What is seen here is that Aya is trying to make Osada a criminal by depicting her as an abode of all kinds of evils, peculiar to the nature of woman. Actually it

---

51 Ibid, p.43.

is Aya who possesses all these evils, but her being educated, and urban and the status of her being the mistress of Osada, gave her an advantage over Osada. That is why she tried to make Osada a scapegoat for her own misdeeds. However, ever vigilant Osada did not allow Aya to victimise her, and in the end, it was Osada who emerged as victorious. The observing Osada' is a very matured person as she views everything critically and takes decision only after proper analysis. What we see in 'observing Osada' is the image of the author himself. In other words, Toson through Osada's eyes views the attitude and nature of urban and rural women and make timely comparison to highlight the simplicity of rural mind and wickedness of urban mind. He views Aya with scornful eyes as he placed fuyuko in her and it was a necessity for Toson to punish Aya for her misconduct. That is why, Osada is given an upperhand in the end in exposing Aya's infidelity.

Another important role Osada got in this story is her role as the narrator of the story. The 'narrating Osada' whose sensibilities in turn define a subject through whom we see the events. She is the one who sprinkles the account with epigrammatic comments, who resorts to the conventions of popular Edo culture in relating her tale, and who has reason

of her own to colour the narrative.<sup>52</sup> Moreover, as the time and space of the 'events which are narrated' and the 'actual narration' vary, it is difficult to assert how far her narration is authentic and true. Being the narrator, she has certain privileges and she can twist the events in such a way that it will turn favourable to her. But for Osada, the narrator, hard physical labour, poor working women in the countryside and their poverty ridden life, were a matter of constant concern as she belongs to the countryside. That is why she becomes very sentimental when she narrates the plight of her diligent mother and other folks of Saku region. She narrates their life in comparison with the luxurious, comfortable life of city bred woman, Aya. Of course, she later on discovers that, the life in the city and countryside are fundamentally different as the proliferation of tasks, roles, and other demands upon people obviously differ considerably in both the places. Through out her narration we find this comparison of urban and rural life, and towards the end we see Osada lamenting for adapting herself to the splashy life of the town. Towards the end when Osada discovered that her mistress has vicious plan to trap her, she turned into the old Saku woman and determined to punish Aya. Thereafter, the

---

52 James A Fuji, *The subject in the Modern Japanese Prose Narratives*. "Narrating Resentment through Urban-Rural Tension, Shimazaki Toson's *Kyushujin*", pp.45-75.

narrator directs the story to progress in a direction completely controlled by herself and finally she succeeded in punishing her mistress by exposing her infidelity to her husband. In 'Observing Osada' we can clearly see the shadow of the author but in 'narrating Osada' we can have only a glimpse of an uneducated village woman who feels compelled to tell her experience as a maid-servant in a rich family in a provincial town years before, venting her anger and asserting the rightness of her position and the small victory of a powerless peasant woman over a rich and beautiful city woman. Hence, through Osada Toson not only depicts his own image as a sharp observer of the contrasting reality of the society, but also a young and diligent village woman, who although simple and rustic, does not want to be victimised for the sin she has never done. In other words, Osada is a symbol of innocence, simplicity, sincerity and strength. Through Aya and Osada, Toson, besides his real motive to write the 'tragedy of women' and his 'distrust towards them', probably wants to convey the message that 'woman's true nature' will not change only by education or with urban background, and everything modern is not superior.

#### **Characterization Women in Rojo**

Compared to the characterization of Kyushujin, in which Toson tried to express his 'distrust' towards woman through

Aya a replica of his wife Fuyuko, in rojo Toson chose the theme of 'tragedy and sorrow of enlightened woman' as the motive. Like Aya and Osada in *Kyushujin*, Rojo too has two contrasting female characters, Uryu Natsuko and Sawa Sekiko. Unlike women characters in his other short stories and novelettes, the heroines of Rojo are not only highly educated but also have the experience of teaching in schools. Natsuko had been the head teacher of a girls school in Ueda near Komoro for some time and Sekiko is still a teacher in ueda girls high school.<sup>53</sup> Hence, both Natsuko and Sekiko are different from Aya and Osada as far as education and employment are concerned. Written in 1903, when girls higher education for the first time in Japanese history was in its peak after the promulgation of 'Koto Jagakko Rei' (Girls High School Ordinance) in 1900, Rojo is one of the best pieces of literary works which precisely deal with the fall of the so called enlightened women who challenged the family set up and roamed around the cities and towns shouting the slogan, 'We shall never marry'.

Uryu Natsuko is not an ordinary woman. She is a strong-willed woman who wants to put her theoretical skill obtained through higher education into practice. She does not want to be locked up in a house after marriage. She wants to work

---

53 Rojo, Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-3, p.107.



like men and for that she is ready to forgo marriage, because marriage restricts woman's movements especially in a society where women are expected to be 'good wives and wise mothers'. Her confidence and ego provided her with the motive power necessary for living a rebel's life in a conservative society. Unlike Aya of *Kyushujin*, who although educated preferred to be lazy and idle and whose interest is only to enjoy the carnal pleasures even at the cost of her marriage, Uryu Natsuko is very energetic, active, and optimistic in her approach and attitude toward life in the first half of the story. She is very well aware of the existing social discrimination against women, but not ready to accept that with a submissive attitude. Instead, she is all ready to fight it out courageously. "I don't mind being a crippled person. Let the world around me say anything. I don't mind being a sinner. Actually we are different from other women around us - our thoughts, tastes, and even our morals are all different."<sup>54</sup> Natsuko is aware that an unmarried woman in the society will be branded as crippled and will be considered as a rojo (old miss). She is ready to accept it whole heartedly. According to her, a woman can easily manage to live in a society if she has a job, and therefore, she determined to stay unmarried. She has no faith in man and she never loved a man sincerely,

---

54 Rojo, Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-3, p.109.

and she does not want to live like an 'ingenuous girl', modest and submissive to man. Here what we see is a clear picture of highly educated young women during the turn of the century who stood for equality and freedom.

However, by the end of nineteenth century Japan was moving towards imperialism and, as a part of that, government had imposed severe restrictions on the role of women in the society. The government policy was to impart proper education to women, not for better job opportunities in companies or elsewhere, but for transforming them into 'good wives and wise mothers'. Hence, job opportunities for women outside the four walls of their house were very little and restricted. Through Natsuko, Toson is trying to show us the trend of the time and the tragedy and plight of such educated women. Natsuko had resigned from the school where she was the head-teacher to find out green avenues where she can demonstrate her talents more efficiently. But she is unable to get a good job and finally decides to go back to a village and take up a teacher's job in a school there. Gradually, she realizes that a woman cannot survive independently. She becomes a pessimistic woman and her agony and fear for the future increases in the moment she noticed the decaying of her youthfulness.

Natsuko, a fugitive from the society, who never loved or trusted men was in fact a slave of her passion, and her flesh

never let her to be independent of men. Even during her youthful days when she used to be confident and optimistic of building up her career independently, she could not restrain her passions, and could not spent even a day without a male companion, although she "threw away the flowers after enjoying their fragrance". Here, the view of Toson is very interesting and typical of a person lived in a society which still considered marriage as sacred institution for the well being of mankind. "A man can live only with his job and honour. But a woman cannot survive without loving and being loved. As the proverb goes, woman is like an ivy vine which would wither unless it clings to something. Natsuko is exactly one of them. Her enthusiasm and desire to get rid of the pain of being a spinster has all the more forced her to indulge in fervent love affairs.<sup>55</sup> Her tragedy starts from the time she realised that she cannot survive in the society independently and she soon turns into a downhearted and depressed woman who seeks comfort and consolation from men. All her class mates and old friends are married and well settled in their lives. But only she remains in this 'crippled' condition which cannot be rectified as it is very late now. Natsuko wants to retain her vigour and youthfulness and wants to engage in work actively. She thinks now that only through indulgence in love

---

55 Ibid, p.115.

that she can retain and safeguard her youthfulness and vitality. Therefore, she makes love with more and more men. Finally she gives birth to an illegitimate child whose father is unknown. Natsuko, who once boasted of her ability and talent and proudly discarded marriage and family life, turned into an insane woman, desperately looking for a husband.<sup>56</sup> She could not achieve anything which she determined to achieve, and on the contrary, she could not refrain from doing whatever she determined not to do initially. A best example of irony of woman's life. An irony which haunted the life of hundreds and thousands of enlightened women of the period, who by discarding their traditional duties and roles in the society tried to build up a masculine image forgetting their innate feminine disposition and qualities. In short, natsuko is a typical example of enlightened women, for whom enlightenment meant complete deviation from traditions set by the society, and their foolish actions always led them into their complete destruction.

In contrast to Natsuko, Sawa Sekiko is very moderate in her approach toward life. Equally, educated she utilises her wisdom to categorize good from bad, and without any hesitation she readily accepts the positive aspects of tradition which would be helpful for a successful social life. She recognizes

---

56 Ibid, p.132.

the importance of marriage and even advices Natsuko to reconsider her attitude and outlook on life and marriage. Sekiko is also employed and after her marriage she might have to leave her job. But she is not unhappy to do that because she thinks that a married family life will bring more happiness than an unmarried lonely life in solitude. Work alone will not bring happiness. Sawa Sekiko is a fine example of educated, virtuous woman, an image of Sonoko, toson's elder sister who always kept the sanctity of marriage and family life above personal interest. She represents the opinion of the author who always held the view that learning will misguide one's self. Toson is making here a comparison of life of a married woman with an unmarried woman. Who is happy, Natsuko or Sekiko, is the question here. The unmarried life of, Natsuko destroyed her completely like a 'withered grass', although she kept her decision to stay unmarried till she became an insane woman. Whereas, the married life of Sekiko assured her all kinds of luxuries and physical comforts although she had to discontinue her quest for learning after the marriage. Hence, in comparison, Sekiko's life is much happier than her friend's life.

As Aya's life in Kyushujin ended in tragedy, Natsuko's life too ended in tragedy. Similarly, as Osada in Kyushujin won her fight with her mistress - a fight between the urban and rural women, the former with a wicked mind and latter with

a simple and straight forward mind - Sekiko ultimately won the bet which her friend Natsuko over confidently made. Both Aya and Natsuko are typical examples of enlightened women of Meiji period who earnestly tried to come out of the clutches of male dominated society by freeing their souls, but failed to achieve their goals due to insurmountable pressure from the society and the country. Toson also wanted to see their destruction mainly due to three reasons. One is that, he was not a staunch supporter of women's liberation in the same way as had been understood by women like Aya and Natsuko. He certainly agreed fully to the point that they should be provided equal opportunities for education and employment, but he was totally against the mentality of enlightened women who tend to discard their traditional status and responsibilities blindly. He expected the women to cultivate their self and character after the marriage and dedicate themselves to the service of their husbands and children for the benefit of the whole family, meanwhile protecting their own interest in a moderate manner. This is what he expected from his wife Fuyuko, which the latter had failed to provide him because of her affair before the marriage. He had the opportunity during his observation to witness the fall of several well settled families due to the unconventional behaviour of women who themselves considered as educated, modern and enlightened. Therefore, he considered it as his duty to depict the tragedy

and destruction of such women with extreme behaviour and negative attitude. Secondly, he wanted to depict the infidelity of such modernized women who on one hand look down upon men and criticise various social institutions such as marriage etc., and maintain secret affairs with men on the other hand. Infidelity and faithlessness of women were two items which always disturbed Toson, and therefore, it was a necessity for him to depict them through his works. Thirdly, Toson wanted to highlight the significance and sanctity of marriage and other social institutions. In his real life, he was very much impressed by the life and attitude of his elder sister, Sonoko, who even after her desertion by her husband, clinged to the traditional values of marriage and family for preventing the family from complete destruction. What we see through Sawa Sekiko in Rojo is a typical example of such moderate women. Toson is clearly a supporter of such women.

CHAPTER IV



## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSION

I have already discussed the main motive which seemed to have driven Toson to depict various real aspects regarding the life and status of Meiji woman, through *Kyushujin*, *Rojo* and other short stories in *Ryokuyoshu*. Apart from the depiction of 'tragedy' of the new, enlightened Meiji women, Toson also wanted to express his distrust towards them with a strong warning, that learning and enlightenment do not mean independence from the society or over indulgence in sensual pleasures. Blind denial of traditions and social customs will definitely lead one to destruction as was the case of *Uryu Natsuko* of *Rojo*. The slogan, "we shall never marry", raised by the enlightened and educated Meiji women who actually intended to follow the footsteps of their 'fathers' instead of mothers, by taking up jobs outside the house and unwilling to take up the basic responsibilities of a woman like giving birth to children and supporting their family through household works, brought the society to the brink of collapse. The number of unmarried women increased proportionate to the increase in the number of educated women and both the government, society and the intellectuals were equally worried to see the new trend in the society. This is the reason why the Meiji government during the last half of the Meiji era,

introduced strict rules and norms for women's education, under the new Motto of 'Ryosai Kenbo' (Good wives and wise mothers). Toson, being a first hand observer of these changes in the society could not ignore them. When the modern style of poetry, 'new-style poetry', was introduced to the Japanese society Toson spared no time to react and ultimately he pioneered the movement. Same way, in this case too, it was Toson who took the pen first to depict the actual picture of enlightened Meiji women through a series of short stories. Was Toson against the emancipation of women? No, he was not. He was a staunch supporter of women's emancipation through education and equal rights. For the enlightenment and education of women, Toson later on even supervised the publication of "Shojochi" a magazine meant for women only. The first issue of 'Shojochi' was published in April 1923 and its publication was suspended after the tenth issue in January 1924. Toson also was one of the main contributors of articles to 'Jogaku Zasshi', published between July 1885 and February 1904, under the leadership of Iwamoto Yoshiharu, for the enlightenment of Meiji women. What he disliked or what he disagreed was the infidelity of women, their faithlessness to their husbands, which not only destroys the foundation of

---

1 Ito Kazuo, Shimazaki Toson Jiten, pp.214-16.

family set-up but also destabilizes the society and the country.

The relevance of these stories in the society is a matter of great dispute among scholars both within and outside Japan. Some of the Japanese scholars branded *Kyushujin* and other short stories in *Ryokuyoshu* as best examples of explicit expression of women's sensual life and man's jealousy towards them. Yukio Miyoshi views these works as "legacy of author's youth",<sup>2</sup> which were written at a time when "Toson become conscious about the end of his heydays." On the other hand, according to Senuma Shigeki, Toson's motive for writing these short stories, especially *Kyushujin*, was to "express his (author's) feeling of distrust towards the chastity of women and to highlight the disillusion and irony of (the term) love".<sup>3</sup> Yet another scholar, Hirano Ken, had the opinion that when Toson wrote *Kyushujin* "he was greatly disturbed mentally by topics such as women's chastity, adultery etc."<sup>4</sup> Wada Kingo has commented that the motive of writing *Kyushujin* was "man's doubt and jealousy toward his wife's chastity".<sup>5</sup> Hence, *Kyushujin*, *Rojo* and other works of *Ryokuyo-shu* with the

---

2 Miyoshi Yukio, 'Shimazaki Toson-ron', p.119.

3 Senuma Shigeki, 'Shimazaki Toson', p.15.

4 Hirano Ken, Commentary for 'Kyushujin and Mebae' (Shincho Bunko, Tokyo, 1969.)

5 Wada Kingo, "Shimazaki Toson" (Meiji Shoin, Tokyo, 1966.)

exception of Suisai gaka, hitherto were considered as works which deal only with women's sexual urge and indulgence and therefore, they were neglected virtually and never subjected to systematic and critical study. Neither the social background and history of the period in which these stories were written, nor the continuous and vigorous conflict between 'self' of its protagonists and the society were taken into consideration. Toson had written these stories with specific objective in mind, i.e., to highlight the changing attitude of women and its adverse effect on the existence and continuation of the society. In this process, certainly the bitter experiences in his marriage and personal life as Senuna Shigeki and Hirano Ken viewed, acted as catalyzers. His selection of the theme, story, plot and the course of progress of the story are relative and systematic. He had dealt with one after another almost all problems of Meiji women's problems either faced by them or caused by them, carefully and systematically with a vigilant mind.

New trend or movement in the world of literature had always fascinated Toson. It was he who pioneered the romantic movement in Japanese poetry immediately after the introduction of its concept into the Japanese society from the West. In 1904, when 'Toson Shishu' (collected poems of Shimazaki Toson) was published Toson wrote in its preface the following heart rendering revelation which gives us an insight to the attitude

and psychology of this versatile writer. "At last the time for a new poetry has come. A beautiful new dawn is upon us. Some cry aloud, like the prophets of the distant past; some sing like the poets of the West. All are intoxicated with the brilliant light, the new voices, the dreams.... The imagination of youth has awakened from its long sleep to revive poetry with the living language of our people. Legends are reborn, nature takes on new colours. Before our very eyes a powerful light has shone upon new emerging life, and upon death, the grandeur and decay of the past. Most of our new poets are simple, earnest men. Their art is childish, rudimentary; but there is nothing false, no more ornament, in their work. The life of youth spills over from their lips, tears of true feeling stream down their cheeks.... For many, the flood of new ideas draws all thought of food or sleep. The sorrow, the agony of our present age has driven many to madness.

Forgetful of my own unworthiness, I too have joined in their chorus. Poetry is "emotion recollected in tranquillity". This is true of my poetry, which is a confession of conflict. Grief and pain remain in my poems. It is good, I believe, to speak out. To speak out without faltering. I too have been saved, body and soul, by the little poetry that I have managed to achieve. Who can rest in the old life? To strive to open the door to new life - this

is the task, the duty of the young. Life expresses itself in energy; energy, in the speaking voice, the voice, in words. New words mean new life."<sup>6</sup> According to Toson, life is energy, energy is voice, voice is word and new words are the source of new life.<sup>7</sup> This philosophy has guided him throughout his career. The moment he realized that there is a dearth of "words for poetry" he quit it immediately and embraced prose writing. However, in the early days of his career, neither the style of modern prose nor the technique of novel writing had been established in Japan. Toson learned much from the translations of Russian Literature by Futabatei Shimei as well as his own readings of English, French and German literatures in English.

In prose writing too, Toson had taken the leadership to write novels based on naturalism although he never considered himself a naturalist neither publicly nor privately. His thorough reading of Zola, Flaubert, and Maupassant initiated him to the concept of naturalism, based on which he experimented his initial short stories and major novels like, *Hakai*, *Ie* etc. In fact, Naturalism was first introduced to Japan through Zola's novels in the 1890s. Zola's theories emphasized a scientific approach where the characters are to

---

6 'Introduction', in The Broken Commandment (Toson's *Hakai*), translated by Kenneth Strong.

7 Soshun Kinen, Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-1, p.301.

be analysed scientifically, but the Japanese writers drifted away from his theories and just initiated the salient features of his novels, by narrating the realities of the society truthfully. However, Toson at least in the beginning of his career as a prose writer had deviated greatly from the general trend of naturalism as propagated by his contemporaries. His works in Rykuyoshu and first novel, 'hakai', although considered as products of naturalism, are best examples of descriptive realism based on analysis developed largely through his encounters with man and observation of nature around him. He had developed his view of literature independently at least until he finished writing Hakai. However, from his second novel, Haru onwards, Toson too came under the influence of typical Japanese version of naturalism the so called "I"-novel or autobiographical novel where the protagonist of a novel is identical with the author himself.

Toson was certainly not a literary giant, if we compare him with Western writers like Shakespeare, Goethe, Flaubert, Tolstoy or even his contemporary Japanese writers as Natsume Soseki, Mori Ogai etc. His ability to create characters from imagination was nearly zero and, therefore, in his works we see only real copies of people 'living around us. His characters are common people whom we encounter in our daily life regularly and, interestingly, they are the people who gather attention from the society. In our modern society too,

we often find Ayas, Natsukos, Osadas, Arais and Sakurais. Such characters will be there in the society always and hence what Toson tried to convey through his works is relevant to us even today. These prose works of Toson, which he wrote during the most turbulent period in the modern Japanese history are the best sources to get first hand information and knowledge about the newly emerging women of late Meiji period. A novel (or a novelette or a short story even) is the best suitable literary medium to expose and reflect the truth and reality of the society we live. As Nakamura Shinichiro said, "Novel is a mirror of society. By reading it the reader will come to know the real side of the society where he lives and will be able to realise the pleasures of life. But for making the novel a mirror of the society, the writer of the novel must naturally view the society wide and deeper than its common readers."<sup>8</sup> Toson had very sincerely reflected the contemporary social aspect realistically in these stories. Hence, these should not be pushed to the back merely taking in account only the sexual behaviour and indulgence of its protagonists and ignoring the historical and social importance.

In this study, I have tried to highlight the importance of these stories in the changing pattern of the society in the modern world. Toson had certainly foresighted the social

---

8 Nakamura Shinichiro, "Kono Hyakunen no Shosetsu: Jinsei to Bungaku", p.8.



calamity which might occur if more and more educated women prefer to choose the path Aya or Natsuko have taken. Education and enlightenment should not misguide people but guide them to strengthen the social and family setup. Precisely, this is what Toson wanted to convey to the outer world. Certainly, his own married life made him to look upon women with doubt and his distrust in women continued till the end. But, such an attitude in women was created by their improved but misguiding education and wrong understanding of concepts such as equality, freedom etc. and on the one hand, it threatened the dignity and the divinity of marriage and family. Education must be utilised for enhancing oneself not to destroy it. This is what Toson meant when he said, "education will misguide one's self".

Finally, in *Kyushujin* and *Rojo*, the following points and problems are either criticised, discussed or highlighted. They are, (1) true nature of human being, especially of women; (2) heredity and basic human instinct; (3) conflict between flesh and spirit; (4) society and individual; (5) doubts on education and scholarship; (6) man's youth and its creative and destructive powers; (7) expectation of a new life; (8) realistic depiction of life based on descriptive realism and naturalism; (9) importance of mutual respect, trust and love between husband and wife for a strong family and social set up. Toson had successfully incorporated all the above said

points and problems into his stories, although he had to "face the dilemma of a writer who has no established guidelines for writing fiction."<sup>9</sup> His works may be lacking in artistic perfection but he achieved the distinction of a pioneer in exposing the social evils which might otherwise uproot the very existence of the society. They are the mirrors of the era in which he lived, and it is right time now to review his early works more critically and deeply, and give them appropriate place in the world of literature.

---

9 James A. Fuji, *Coupllicit Fictions: The Subject in the Modern Japanese Prose Narratives, Narrating Resentment Through Urban-Rural Tension; Shimazaki Toson's Kyushujin*, p.53.

APPNEDICES

## KYUSHUJIN

### (THE FORMER MASTER)

Those days I had been very slim and pint-sized woman, although I have become very fat like this now. Therefore, when I went to Komoro to work as a servant at the recommendation of our neighbour, a carpenter, people who saw me thought that I was only seventeen. I was born in Kashiwagi village, a place said to be about 4 kilometers away from Komoro. The women of Kashiwagi and Saku area have to work outside in the harsh conditions of the region, and work long and hard to help the men in whatever way they can. It may be partly because they have to work hard that my aunt and mother were robust, smart and so resourceful. I began working out in the fields with my mother when I was only thirteen. When other girls of my age with running noses were still enjoying their life by playing rope skipping etc. I already started to taste the pleasures and agonies of this world. As the number of children in my family increased, and our small business continued to be at loss, my father became an unreliable idler. However strong-minded my mother was, it was just not possible to survive only by her hands alone. Therefore, I was compelled to work as a domestic servant. Those days the maximum yearly wages of a maid servant was about eighteen yens provided that she brings her own cloth. But in my case, my

mistress agreed to give me her old dresses. Besides, she also promised to give me allowance for new and good dresses as per requirement. If we receive everything in cash, my father might swallow it. This was a major worry my mother persistently held.

"It may be regrettable to say so, but I must tell you that Danna-Sama (master) will do anything if mistress wishes so", and therefore "your success will depend upon your ability to please Oku-sama", anxious about my future, mother talked to me in bed on the night before the day I was to depart. It was the second day of the third month, a day traditionally fixed for joining new jobs in the mountains, I still remember, on which I left my home accompanied by mother. The air was full of dust as it was a windy day and we proceeded towards Komoro, walking through the dry, sandy brown coloured soil. My mother was covering her head with a new face cloth and bearing a pair of hemp-soled straw sandals. I was carrying a bundle wrapped in light green cotton cloth. For the first time in my life, I felt shame and sad on that day for unknown reasons, when I was going along with my mother. When we were passing through by the side of the light green budding barley fields, soil coloured farmers resting their bodies on hoes looked at us with surprise. Hokkoku highway is a wide and straight road to Komoro. Once a person reach this road, the journey from here is easy and comfortable. On my way, I saw groups of peddlers

resting in ancient post-town type tea houses. We on our way also saw large number of people engaged in cutting down popular Japanese larch trees. Sound of giant trees falling on the ground, the echo of splitting sound of their branches, the rushing sound of people's foot steps etc. heard from here and there gave an impression of a battle field. We passed through that path smelling the fragrance of pine leaves, some time behind, some time in front of a group of pilgrims consisted of parents and children.

When we descend, Akasaka from Aramachi in Komoro, there is a large dark grey colour building at the right side. That is the primary school. Extension work of one wing of this school building was being carried out at that time, and its tower could be seen in the midst of scaffolding. Outside this structure there is a stone wall and the other side of this wall is Fukuro-machi town. This town is situated on a downward slope and a shallow tributary of a river flowing from the side of Asama mountain is passing through the middle of this town. At the bank of this tributary there was a house surrounded by an earthen wall from where branches of a persimmon tree were overhanging. It was the house of Arai family, the house to where we were going. Although this house had Komoro style gate, it was a quiet and two-storied house with new latticed work. When we reached there, the master was not at home, therefore, mother could meet only the mistress.

Mistress was an young lady with a large round chignon hairdo with a pink hair ornament on it. She had a gentle, sweet look with straight body, black eyes, and a pretty face which seems to become more and more pretty if more make-up is done. The beautiful and elegant language she spoke suggested that she was not a native of that place. Compared to my mistress's fair tender hands, my mother's large bones, sun burnt hands looked like the hands of a man.

"Mistress, please accept it, although worthless. Just to show our gratitude only", mother placed the present on the fireside (robata).

"Oh no! Why do you take such troubles. Being so poor...."

"No, please don't mind. Only a little home made miso pickles though unfit for eating".

"That is the best thing one can get.... All right. Have a cup of tea".

"Please don't take so much trouble for us."

"Any way, you came early. Well, what is your name, I am forgetting."

"Yes, I am Osada. Totally inexperienced and ignorant. Please accommodate me somehow."

I was bearing a very short padded kimono and a dark blue tabi. It was really embarrassing for me to be seen by the mistress. For me, whatever I heard or saw was new to me, even

the pleasant fragrance of perfume that coming from the body of my mistress. After completing the formalities for service agreement, mother returned to Kashiwagi leaving me alone in the midst of luxurious life style and elegant language of mistress.

The main family house, occupied by elder brother of my master, was a wholesale dealer of salt and it had a curtain in its entrance with the inscription "Marumo" on it. The house where I came to work was called the new branch. Besides many family members, the main house employed over ten clerks and servants, while the new branch had only four members, master, mistress, an old servant and myself. New house was built in Tokyo style. This can be also understood from the difference in the structure of two houses. My master, a broad minded person, lived like as if he had transplanted Tokyo into Komoro, his appearance, his speech a repudiation of the old - a source of constant annoyance to the main family.

Listen. In this world there are some people with very peculiar appearance. Even when they are crying they look as if they are laughing. My Master was one of them. Shrinked muscles around his eyes and deep wrinkles between the mouth and cheek gave his face a glittering appearance always as if a smile is engraved on it permanently. Yes he had such a face. It was really strange that Master, who used to be always cautious and serious had such a face. In fact, that



was a proof to his being a good natured man, that made him different from ordinary people. Usually, masters of cold region are said to be tardy and lazy, but my master had no such problems. He loved to work diligently and never wasted any time in idle. Whenever somebody in Komoro wanted to start a new business or work, it was Arai whom he consulted with first. In other words, my master was the most important personality in Komoro.

When I came to work my master and mistress had a very affectionate, intimate and harmonious husband-wife relationship to the extent that even outsiders would have felt envy of them. Master either would go for a stroll early in the morning, or would go through some documents sitting on the first floor and would drink a glass of cow milk. At nine O'Clock he would go to the bank, bearing a cap and maetaregake. On holidays, he used to entertain guests and chat with them in the visitor's room in the ground floor. His friends were all respectable members of the society including town councillors, rich land lords, business men and newspaper tycoons. After dinner he would chat with his wife sitting face to face, and it seemed to be the happiest moment in his daily routine. Sound of their laughing could be heard even from the robata. I served them coffee or tea at that time.

In a way, their's was a life of unmixed blessings. Every night when I was knitting 'floor cloth' under the Lamp,

memories of my native place, Kashiwagi, would come afloat in my mind. It became a habit for me every night. When our despicable life in the countryside becomes busy with work, we have to get up early in the morning when still it is dark and finish our breakfast under the lamp light. The body of a woman, who starts working in the field right from the dawn is extremely tired like cotton. One day, I and my mother were lying on grass as we were tired after finishing a day's work. Suddenly a heavy rain started. We did not have the energy to get up, so we continued to lay down there letting our sweat smelting bodies to get wet in the shower. I had a severe attack of flue after that, and suffered for a long time. I know how hard and painful is the life of women in peasant houses - wheat harvesting, weeding of paddy fields - compared to that my work at Arais was extremely easy and simple to such an extent that I was almost spending everyday in idleness. I who used to roam around the valley with muddy legs like a beast could even doze while sitting on beautiful and expensive 'tatami' mat.

The life of my master and mistress was comfortably off as they did not lack anything, except for difference in their age. One day, some guests assembled in the guest room in the ground floor. All of them were very close to my master, frank and outspoken. My master was looking through a paper of small

type printing. "This is strange. I cannot read anything", master threw that paper down on the floor.

"You see, these are the things youngsters read. Not really meant for us. Just see this portion, it looks like as if some thin lines only". Saying this, one of the visitors took out a big silver framed spectacles from his Kimono pocket. After cleaning the lenses with wristband of junpan, and placing it on his nose pointed like a fishhook, he said, "With this I can manage to read, although not very clear".

"What? Could I borrow that spectacles for a moment", another guest, while laughing, took it from him. "I see, yes, with this I can also see everything clear", he said. Master also turned back while laughing. He winked and rubbed his eyes few times but did not show any intention to borrow the spectacles.

"Well, my plan is not to wear spectacles for two three years more, although using spectacles is said to be good for eyes".

"That is the reason why I wear it only when I read something", the visitor who brought the spectacles said meaningfully.

"I am surprised", the person next to him took the spectacles and put on his nose, "Is it possible to see so clearly. Ah, ah... I must get one, I think."

Finally, my master was also unable to suppress his curiosity.

"Could I see it", he stretched out his hand.

While laughing one guest handed the spectacles over to him. Master put that on his nose with great interest, and read the printed paper, sometimes keeping it near to his eyes and sometimes keeping it away from his eyes.

"How do you feel after putting the spectacles on", the person who gave the spectacles to my master enquired while looking on at his face.

"Ya, I can see very well. If I wear this, I can read everything perfectly."

"Ha, ha..., that is a terrible thing, don't you think so?"

"Ha, ha, ha...", Master clapping his hands laughed loudly.

One of the guests held his sides with laughter meanwhile tears streamed out from his eyes. Finally, the sound of their laughter sounded as if they were yelling and wailing, and at this point, the guest with pointed nose ran out from the guest room holding his head between his hands.

I never thought that my master was so old. There is nothing like human beings who cannot be judged only by appearance. As a result of my careful observation thereafter, I discovered that he used to dye his hair secretly, watch his

appearance in the mirror every morning and evening, wear very colourful dress and always disliked hearing words considered to be ill-omened and unlucky. Especially his face looked pale when he wakes up in the mornings, a clear indication of his old age. Some times, his intelligent eyes were found lacklustre, deep in fatigue, as if they have even lost the power to see things. I also saw him removing his white, beautifully lined dentures which I thought original until that day. My master was an old actor dressed in young and colourful costume. Once I got accustomed with this living environment, I did not consider even this as something strange. Their difference in age, in my opinion, made them matching all the more, and gradually it became a painful for me to hear others criticize them or make rumours on them.

My mistress had extremely beautiful features, probably the major reason for master to marry her from Tokyo. I cannot narrate how pretty she looked after bathe etc. Despite being a woman, even I was fascinated by her beauty. It seemed that my master used to forget everything else when he gaze intently at her face from the sides, just like a theatergoer look admiringly at his favourite actor. Master's previous wife lived with him for a long time but he divorced her after he met his present wife. This in fact caused the alienation of the main family from the new branch. Metaphorically speaking, the main family and its relatives are like a honey comb.

Master threw a stone on to that honey comb and, therefore, even I, despite being a servant, was pricked by painful rumours.

The old fashioned, awesome nature of people in the country-side would not spare any outsider who is different from their society. Poor mistress was absolutely unaware of this truth because she was born and brought up in the city. All women in her family or relatives were simple, modest and sober looking. My mistress was the only person who attracted so much attention from others. My mistress used to make-up in the mornings, and polish in the evenings. Her transparent face was seen pale sometimes due to her extremely fair complexion. She used to hide it by slightly applying lipstick to her cheeks. Her hair was black and longer than her body. She got her hair dressed by Osen of Aioi-cho, and trimmed by Okagen's mother. Her dresses were selected by the clerk of Dairi and tailored by Ryosuke of Baba Ura - she resorted to every measures to make her life flamboyant. There are none as curious as women in the countryside. Whenever my mistress passed through the street in her colourful, stylish dress and appearance, women folk in the village would look at her through the earthen wall, windows, and holes of sliding doors of their houses and exchange unpleasant smiles among them expressing their dislike for her. Unaware of these happenings, my mistress would pass through the streets feeling

pity on them. She wanted to show them her beauty. Even when she happened to meet any of the woman from her relations, she would greet in loud voice. According to my mistress, women in this area are like the water-mill in Matsui-gawa valley - rotating to the same direction every day. She quietly laughed at the circumstances at the countryside where women must resort to hard work even when their male folk enjoyed the long winter days in idle. In fact, my mistress was totally ignorant of Komoro women. According to the opinions of ladies in her relations, including the women in the main family, mistress, an outsider who came to this countryside, where even young ladies are forced to wear hand woven striped clothes, was trying to live a luxurious civilized life as she used to do in Tokyo. Therefore, mistress, the outsider, would be hated more than master, the insider. Attention of every women in the streets turned towards my mistress, some praising her and some abusing her.

On mid-spring days, master and mistress used to walk slowly and quietly on the street past, holding their hands, viewing the snow on far away mountains in Hida while standing under late bloomed cherry blossoms. Well, the old fashioned ladies in their relations had not even gone out for flower viewing with their husbands. Therefore they all got surprised when they saw first this couple walking on the street in Tokyo style, affectionately holding their hands, as they had never

seen such a scene even in their dreams. These jealous fellows, seizing the opportunity, would spread false rumours all around. I could do nothing but feel sorry every time I heard rumours about my mistress.

I was drawing water from a well, after a spring drizzle on a warm day when Otsugi - a native of Kashiwagi who had come to Komoro for working - passed through that way.

"Otsugi, where to?", I enquired.

"For this", Otsugi showed me a sake-bottle kept hidden under her sleeves, shaking her pint-sized body for a moment, meanwhile blowing a ground cherry.

"Domestic servant?"

"Yes"

"That is too much for you".

"Hey, Osada, is it true that your mistress.... Even that blind man talk about her...."

"Oh, what are you saying, Otsugi".

"Ha, ha, ha..., she is very popular. Few days back on an evening, you see, when old lady Tomi was standing in front of 'San no Mon' it seems, she saw your master and mistress coming from the direction of Kaiko-en Park, holding their hands. Oh, it is disgusting. Will anybody walk on the street holding hands unless he or she is a blind?"

"You are talking nonsense", I pretend to draw water.



"You are lucky to get a nice master", Otsugi while beating on her hips said this smiling and ran away, but she got stuck in the mud. It was really difficult for her to get away from it with her wooden clogs.

"See what happened", pointing out my fingers I laughed loudly.

"I really feel pity on you", I said purposely.

Four ducks which were resting in idle at the side of the well came to my side in a raw quacking "guaa, guaa". It was really annoying. I throw water on them from my ladle. Ducks ran away, tottering on the mud, like an old woman fond of spreading rumours.

2

The fragrance of white plum at the kitchen door side lasts only for a short period. The spring of the mountainous countryside is usually short. While people are still engaged in preparing sushi, dengaku (bean curd backed and coated with miso) and miso soup, groups of female street vendors of Wakame (a kind of seaweed) would soon start coming. "Wakame..., Wakame, how about Wakame" they would call out in Echigo dialect. And by this time, people would have already become busy in silkworm breeding in the spring.

As you know, Komoro is popular for sericulture. Even the temple priests are engaged in breeding silkworm besides their main profession of offering prayers in the temple. Well,

there is no house which is not engaged in this job. However, my mistress was new to this job and she disliked it. She told me she would feel sick only by getting the smell of silkworms. When other ladies of the main family were busy in plucking the sprouts of mulberry, hanging hemp sacks around their necks, my mistress would lean against a long hibachi (charcoal brazier) and talk about the interesting points of new Kyogen performed in Tokyo.

Master was always infatuated with mistress. Apart from his wish to live a happy life with his wife he had no other desires. Seeing her happy face and cheerful voice was his only source of happiness, so he always made efforts to make her happy and keep her in good mood. This is also understood from the way he would call his wife. He never called her out only by her name, but always called 'Aya-San' (Mrs.Aya) putting 'San' for showing his respect to her. Such being the nature of my master, mistress lived in the house luxuriously everyday doing whatever she wanted to do, as if one lives in a hot spring resort where one does not have to stick to any prescribed job either during the day or in the night.

"Osada, what is the date today", sometimes, she was not even aware of the date and day. Sometimes looking on the calender on the wall, she would express her surprise on fast passing of time. While in a short time, the iris under the caves withered and rain continued to pour throughout the

period between Hassen and Kinoene making the river water muddy, and the miso mouldy. The rain at the kitchen side also gave a lonely feeling. During Gion festival, people put reed screens on their windows and during the Obon festival, they pay the charge of eel they ate on the day of ushiin doyo (the hottest period of summer dog days). To get rid of their sins during Obon they prepare butsudhan (alter) but once the festival is over they throw away the flowers and other things used there. Moreover, when there is an epidemic of dysentery, there will not be any taiko-drum procession to publicise the staging of plays. My mistress wanted to enjoy outdoor pleasures but Komoro was a poor and sober place. The master of tea ceremony had shifted to Ueda and music teacher used to meet his livelihood by selling ame candies going around the villages. There are very few things in Komoro worth to be seen or hear, so my mistress was to be contented with the limited pleasures available within the house. Naturally, one ought to get bored. Ultimately, she expressed her dissatisfaction through her actions, like, throwing away silk handkerchief after cleaning nose, sprinkling perfume in bed room ungrudgingly, and getting the hair dressed two or three times if displeased with the previous style. She also started enjoying late-night snacks. After eating vegetables pickled in rice-bran paste and dressed with sliced bonito and Chazuke (boiled rice with tea poured on it), she would ask; "isn't

there something more delicious?" Even her favourite dishes, she would take only two or three bites and rest would be given to dogs. There is nothing as short as the pleasures of woman. My mistress even got tired of such limited pleasures.

"Same thing is repeated everyday", she muttered to herself, leaning on the pillar. All those fickle pleasures she tried to enjoy finally forced her to make this conclusion.

Gradually, my mistress turned into a short-tempered person. Master was a well disciplined person and was always cautious in his actions so that his wife would not lose her temperament. But on the contrary, mistress always showed an annoyed look. "It is my sickness. I cannot stop it", she was aware of her short coming. Especially, when she would lose her temper, she would, some time, go away from her husband, shouting in anger, "oh, there is nobody as gluey as you". Whenever she lost her temper one could easily understand it from her appearance. On such days, she would look like a sick person, with swollen, reddish nose and brownish colour around eyebrows. Nope of her neck would be seen pale. She would get the rooms cleaned and swept unnecessarily and her voice would not come out clearly as if it has dried up in the throat. On such days, she would not talk to her husband even when they take their meals from the same torizen tray.

"Master has 'Kane of goo' which will bring good fortune for the year, whereas mistress's fortune is closed from all

the sides and, therefore, there is nothing to do but to wait until the lucky star come out of darkness", Godo-Sensei next to the sweet shop predicted. In other words, that was an unfortunate year for my mistress, and she used to see only bad dreams, as a bad omen for something. There is none as lonely and forlorn as woman. It will even make them sick. My mistress became weak and tired both physically and mentally, catching cold easily and yawning continuously throughout the morning. "Woman's life is cheerless and boring", she would say while making deep sigh. She sniffed at a flower and threw that away. Even if she threw away the petty cash book, or failed to come out to receive him when he returned from outside, or even if she got up from the bed very late in the morning, Master would not scold her, because he always wanted to please her. She stayed in the house throughout day and night like a bush warbler in a cage. Some time even I feel pity on her, but she never showed any anger or discontent. Master, on some days after returning from the bank would view the summer scenery in the garden in a pensive mood with his hands crossed. And some days, he would go up to the second floor soon and would not come down except for meals. On days when mistress seemed to be not in pleasant mood, master would go to her room. Sitting near her nervously, he would ask: "Aya-San, are you not feeling well. It is not good to lie

down on the tatami always. You might catch cold. Instead of sitting like this why don't you go to a doctor".

"No. Please leave me alone", she would reply.

Some time, mistress would go to the veranda alone and gaze at the sky over Tokyo like a bird in a cage and some other times, she would sob while writing letters. Her mood kept on changing. Yet in some other occasions, she in her night dress would walk around the garden till late in the cold nights.

Mistress started suffering from severe tooth ache from the beginning of autumn. When the pain becomes extremely unbearable, she would not allow me to go away from her. She, with painful eyes, would press her head on my back and rest. Her face, from ear to the cheek would get swollen and become pale. Even the forehead would become slightly yellowish. An completely exhausted master would nurse her, while rubbing his forehead with his hands in despair.

A dentist with a black bag often visited the house to treat her. This dentist, Dr.Sakurai, was still young but was skilled and competent. Whenever, I washed pans and pots, squatting down on a stone in the river bank near the wooden door side of the kitchen, this man would be often seen coming through the uphill slope. As he was very familiar and free with me, he would come to me and peep into the water in the pots or watch the overhanging branches of persimmon trees on

the earthen wall, or view the autumn rays coming through the leaves of persimmon tree, and then, he would walk around my master, Arai's house with lot of interest. He was a native of Tokyo, and therefore, whenever he saw a house in new latticed architecture, the memories of Tokyo would come to his mind. This is what he told me. Generally, doctors coming from Tokyo are not good looking though they usually dress up in colourful cloths like heros. But only this dentist looked very handsome. Even I felt so.

He brought me presents every time he came. He gave a nickel coin each to the old care-taker also every time he returned.

One day, master had gone to Ueda on some bank business, staying overnight there. That night, we closed the doors of house early. With the intention of finishing the works in the kitchen fast, I hurriedly washed the pots and kept them upside down, washed and arranged the plates and small bowls, removed charcoal from lumber room, cleaned the foot-prints of the cat, removed the slippers from my feet and then went to mistress room. It was early in the evening. My mistress's was lying down on the bed and reading a novel, in a carefree mood, without fear or shy of others. Her white breasts were partially visible from her open chest, her left hand was dangling on the tatami mat, right leg was folded from the knee and her left leg was stretched out exposing her long backward

bending thumb. Her slovenly figure, under the bright lamp light in the night reflected much more beautiful than in day light.

"Mistress, shall I massage your legs", I drew close to her.

"Oh, have you finished", she sat up in the bed, while adjusting her bosom, "I feel better when you massage me. This morning I had pain around my shoulders. So, you please massage me for some time".

"Well, how can I massage your shoulders if you lie down".

"What! I will get up indeed."

I had the experience of massaging my mother's shoulders. Therefore, when I started massaging mistress's tender shoulders, standing behind her, I suddenly remembered my mother. Compared to my mother's hard working body, massaging mistress did not require any effort.

"Frankly speaking, your finger tips have good power, Osada. I am really pleased by the way you massage me. Master is also praising you always". Mistress praised my talent. Praising me by her was sound to me as a riddle - because she was a person boastful of her on ability and talent. When I praise her for her talent, she would become very pleased and show a proud face with full of joy.

"Hey, Osada, tell me who is, according to your opinion, most handsome among the guests who visit our house".



"I see.... But, mistress you please say it first".

"No, you say it first".

"But I don't know who is handsome".

"Look Osada, if you go on laughing only, it is a mere wastage of time".

"Alright then, let me say seriously. Well, Mr.Yoshido of the Bank?"

"Ah, no, such an old looking person? - Don't joke. Tell me who is really handsome".

Thereafter, I said the names of many other persons - the young master of Shima-ya, the eldest sone of Echigo-ya, the second son of Ura-ya, Mr.Kameso of Aramachi, Mr.Fujikan of Honmachi - all were equally good looking masters of the time. However, according to mistress's opinion, even if a man is handsome and owns lot of property etc., and possesses the nature of praising other's talent and ability, he cannot be trusted if he is a grumbler always with a perplexed mind. On the other hand, an intelligent and very attentive man is more awful because he will be able to make fool of a woman and will see through even her short comings. Some are generous but excessively lavish in spending money, some are finicky but excessively enlightened, some are kind but highly reserved. If a man seems to be good, he will be feeble-looking. So it is difficult to find out a man without any fault."

"In that case, mistress what about Mr.Sakurai".

"You are making me to say everything..., and you don't open your mouth. Really cunning. What is your opinion about him?"

"You mean Mr.Sakurai? It is regrettable that he remains as a dentist. People say so".

"Ha, ha... then what job should he have done, in their opinion".

"May be, a government officer...."

"Ha, ha...."

"Well, there is no woman who does not praise him. Mistress, you too are in favour of him, aren't you?"

Mistress looked at me fondly. She did not speak anything. As I was watching her face, I saw her beautiful lips getting twisted and finally sweet smile appeared on it.

Suddenly, the cat who was dozing off by the side of the lamp shaken its ears and went out of the room as if frightened by a noise. Myself and mistress also stopped our gossip about master and pricked up our ears for listening properly. But soon the cat came back to the room, stretched its body forward by stretching its forelegs, and got into the lap of mistress coquettishly. She hugged the cat with great affection as she didn't have any child, and rubbed its soft hairs with her white cheeks. Expression in her eyes at that time looked as if she was dreaming a beautiful dream. There was a needle

work box just at the side of my mistress. She drew that near to her and took out a strikingly beautiful scarf from it.

"I have been thinking to give it you since few days", she placed that into my hands. That violet silk crepe looked reddish brown in the night. I was astonished and was really in confusion whether to accept it or not. I declined it strongly.

"Look! If you say so what can I do. It is not a precious thing as you think. You work so hard and it is a symbol of my goodwill towards you.... It is alright. You keep it safely", she wanted to say something else but did not say. She made a deep sigh only. With an expression in her eyes which was resembling to that of a person who look the bottom of a ravine from a dangerous cliff, she looked around and trembled.

"I want to say something to you", she was dumb founded after saying this.

"You please promise me that you won't tell anybody what I am going to tell you tonight. Well, I need not ask you an assurance as you are neither careless nor imprudent. So I shouldn't worry about you", she repeatedly reminded me to keep the secret intact. Still it was difficult for her to reveal it. Finally, when she was about to speak it out her entire face till the base of the ears turned red. She, at last, lowered her voice and revealed her secret to me. That was the

first time I came to know about her relationship with the dentist until that day. She squeezed my hand. My face got flushed. For me, anything I can withstand, but I become helpless when somebody discloses his or her secrets to me. Tormented with the thought of the dentist, mistress was begging for my help. Finally, I too felt pity and compassion on her and made remarks which would comfort her. Hearing my remarks she started weeping like a child.

As there was no other way out, I promised her that I would bring the dentist to her. Suddenly, I felt that her hand, burning like fire, is getting detached from me. I agreed to arrange their meeting, on an impulse of that moment - a prudent act by an youngster. However, when I realised that she was not joking but whatever she told me was terrible truth, even I shivered in fear. After this questionable terrible alliance with the mistress, I behaved like a dog which detect rumours and barked at even the good natured Master. Sometimes, I consoled myself my own confused and guilty conscious mind. Because even though mistress's love affair was illicit, behind it had pathos beyond one's imagination. Nobody knows how much she wept in the night. And she did not have any trustworthy friend with whom she could talk about such things. Therefore, after thinking seriously about my role here, I consoled myself.

Any way, my mistress was like a flower planted in a warm country and bloomed in gentle breeze. She was not a weed which would grow thickly even if shifted to a rough land. She was completely new to the life in the country side. She must have found great difference in the village life supposed to be quite, as told to her by others while she was still in the capital, and the lonely bitter life as she actually experienced herself after started living in the countryside. Master used to see mistress as a bird in a cage, and never understood her unquenched desires. When will the keeper, who put the bird in the cage and get pleasure from it, would understand the feeling of the bird whose wings were cut off? How far mistress would be understood by master who married her? - this is the fate of a woman. Mistress, after got into the wed-lock, lead a lonely life like a traveller who left his home far behind, without a single person around considerate to her feeling. This is enough for woman to die. Unfortunate mistress. She was no more interested in tasting the real happiness of life. Mistress, being tired because of crying, withered like a dried grass. But in a way, she could have recovered easily, as there came a cool shower of love.

Just at that time of the year, the autumn grass was in full growth. The road through which the dentist was commuting was also turned beautiful.

There was a big ceremony on the 20th of October to celebrate the 15th anniversary of the bank. This was an unforgettable day in the life of my master, and his reputation spread out throughout the locality like the sound of bell in the Kogaku-ji temple. People everywhere were praising his effort and long hard work.

That day morning I got up early and prepared break-fast. Autumn rays coming through the open door of the kitchen illuminated the pail and bucket in the sink. Blue smoke leaked out of the wall through the sooty window. While slurping my nose I loaded the bonfire on a juno (tool used for carrying bonfire) and carried to the hearth. My mistress was still sleeping. She did not get up even after I completed cleaning the second floor with a floor cloth damped in boiled water. The pot on hearth started boiling and its steam started coming out through the gap of the lid. The robata was filled with the sweet, delicious smell of the soup.

Mistress was sleeping even at 8 O'Clock. Master smelling the delicious aroma of the soup, came to the hearth looking little dejected and lost in thinking. Soon, he started eating his breakfast alone. By the time, a messenger from the bank came. Hurriedly, he got ready and left the house. That day, he wore a "Kuronanako Haori" with a quintuple crest of "Kenbishi", and a hakama made of 'Cho'. I was busy in the

kitchen cooking various dishes. Soon it was past nine O'Clock, and mistress came to the kitchen with a tooth brush in her mouth - her face looked as if she saw a frightening dream. By that time the miso soup was already boiled down.

As a sign of celebration on that day, cleaned rice and money were given as charity to all beggars who came to the gate, as per master's wish.

Generally, master disliked beggars. "Better to die instead of begging", he used to reprimand them. Therefore, giving alms to them on that day was a very strange happening. Wretched voices of poor beggars were heard from the gate right from morning of that day. Upon hearing this news, many people gathered there, some with their children acting as blind shamisen players, some as crippled or handicapped, as it was a good opportunity to make easy money. Even the people living in slum came there without any shame or fear of loss of name, because of their greed for money. Even a crippled, old woman of around seventy put her share of cleaned rice into her front flap, and disappeared in crowd outside the gate. I was amazed at this scene.

Master returned in the afternoon for a while holding a packet in a violet silk wrapping cloth under his arms. After feeding the hens, when I went to the side of mistress's room where master and mistress were talking something. Unintentionally, I listened to their discussion while peeping

into their room through the side of the sliding door. Master took off his "haori" and wiped of the sweat from his forehead.

"See Aya, you should not show such a face at such a good occasion. You should be little more cheerful and pleasant, otherwise I will lose interest and enthusiasm. Moreover, today is a day of celebrations. So, even the servants should be given some free time today."

"That is why, I told them to enjoy any long they want".

"Look, if you say so nobody will be able to get any free time - eh, is it not so? Aya-san, these days you tend to blame the servants always. You must not do so. Whether it is Osada, or the old man, they are our servants".

"Nobody is blaming them".

"If you don't blame, why do you speak so?"

"I don't know, when I have spoken ill of them or blamed them".

"Your tone of speaking indicates that".

"Tone, that is my nature".

"The tone when you talk to your father sounds different from the tone you talk now".

"What do you mean?" Does anybody consider his parents and servants as equals? It is better not to drag my parents into it."

"You speak very strange thing, aren't you?"



"Yes, when you talk about the servants, why do you drag my parents into it?"

"You don't understand what I say. I mentioned your father here not with any such intention - what I meant was that, one should consider his servants in the same way he consider his parents. Otherwise it is difficult to keep them as servants. Anyway, forget about such things. Today I want you to be happy. Regaining his temper, master untied the violet silk wrapping cloth and opened the lid of a small box made of paulownia wood. After removing the white silk wrapping carefully, he took out a wonderful golden sake cup and placed it on the tatami mat. Thereafter, he opened the "Letter of Appreciation" and said:

"This was presented by the bank to me in today's celebrations. Well, to me, it is an honourable memento. See, my name is engraved in this sake cup and many greetings praising me are written on this letter of appreciation.

"I have seen it".

"You see it properly". Why are you giving me such cold-hearted and indifferent reply. This is a valuable honour bestowed upon me. I came to show you that. Please say something, otherwise...."

"That is why I told you that I have seen it". Master kept his lips tight. Both of them did not speak, as there existed a cold, unpleasant feeling between them. Slightly

shivering, when master stared at the face of mistress, she with a faint disdainful smile sat there as if she is thinking something else. Suddenly, lifting up the sake cup and gazing intently on it he sighed and said: "Yes, women are cold-hearted and uninterested in the business of men. Till now I have been thinking that you are some more thoughtful and sympathetic.

"Any how, people like me do not understand what you guys are doing."

"Of course. I am not saying that you must understand my business. What I mean is that you are not sympathetic and thoughtful. A person who understands the business of a man probably won't make such answers. Well, you listen to me carefully. I am not boasting, but it is true that the business of Komoro today moves under my control. Although the businessmen in Komoro always complain about depression in business, they do not face any financial problem because of the efforts I am making to run the bank. Even the business and planning of Town Assembly are carried out on the basis of my opinion. The prosperity or decline of Komoro is entirely depending on the measures I execute. I just want you to appreciate the honour bestowed upon me, but...", a hot tear dropped from my master's eyes and fell into the golden 'sake' cup.

Suddenly, my master got out of there and went to the guest room, carrying the sake cup and "haori". His appearance was, however, not normal, and I followed him to observe his actions. Unable to contain his sorrow and anger, he abruptly grabbed the award and tore it to shreds. Hot tears flowed through his manly face. This man who could sustain the economy of Komoro himself was powerless to control his wife's feelings. My master who was competent enough to make the small Komoro bank into the biggest bank in Shiushu, threw away the life time honour bestowed on him like dumping a rubbish as he failed to get his wife's appreciation. He was no more interested in hearing people praising him or envy him for his success. If it were any other person he would have seized and twisted her hair, tore her black silk crepe haori, and even beaten her in anger. But as my master was a good person, different from ordinary folk, he could never show his anger directly to anybody even when he was furiously angry. He grabbed and pulled at his hair and kicked the tatami floor in anguish before leaving the room. I too got frightened hearing the sudden banging sound of the door.

Returning to her room I tried to comfort my mistress, who threw herself down in tears, saying various things. But she would not make any response. Hesitatingly, I came to the kitchen, but I was anxious and worried about my master and mistress.

In the evening, I went to fetch water. When I came to the gate carrying a pail of water, I saw a woman in her forties standing in front of the lattice. Her appearance looked like that of a pilgrim. She carried an infant covered in a real hood on her back, and wore a dark grey puttees and straw sandals. Torn and worn out in travel, it had a wretched, pitiable look. My mistress, still her eyes swollen with crying, came out and gave that woman cleaned rice, money etc., left overs from the celebration today. She looked at the pilgrim with an eye full of grief and sorrow, which was indescribable.

"Sing that song once again for me", she requested the pilgrim very gently.

"Song? You mean that song", with a sad smile, the pilgrim woman reaffirmed it in a strange local dialect. Soon, she started singing the following verse while ringing a handball.

Chichihaha no megumimo fukaki Kokawa dera

Hotoke no chikaki tanomoshi no miya.

Her face was sun-burned and ugly but her voice was melodious. The verses she was singing were not only just beautiful and touching, but were really heart-rending and she sang it in a sad, nonchalant voice. Usually, beautiful voice comes from an ugly mouth. That is common in this world. At the same time, there are very few people who can be compared

with this woman I was about to cry after hearing her singing the first verse. My heart was choked with sorrow. Soon, she raised her pale and tired face and continued to sing:

Furu sato ya haru-baru kokni kini dera

Hana no miyako mo Chikaku naru naran.

She stressed the "Ya" of "Furusato ya". Her lips shivered in sorrow when she sang "harubaru kokoni" in a long pitch, taking a deep breath, and her nonchalant voice matching to the sound of a hand bell. By the time she finished singing "hana no miyako", hot tears suddenly started flowing through her cheeks and fell on her stale, old fashioned sleeves. Deeply moved by the song, my mistress stood there placing her hands on her face. What would have been the feeling of my mistress at that time, I didn't know it well, though I could guess it vaguely.

"What is the title of the song you have sung now", mistress asked the woman in a friendly tone after she has finished singing.

"Ah, title of this song? It is "Goeika". It is sung often at the time of staging a play etc. When Otsuru went for pilgrimage to Saikoku...."

"Where are you from?"

"From Ise".

"Oh, it is far from here".

"All of us wander around like this, singing "Goeika" in thirty three holy temples in Saikoku often visited by many pilgrims".

"Where are you coming from now".

"I came to Nagano from Echigo and from there I wandered around various places before reaching here. From here I am going to warmer places as it will soon become winter.

"What will you gain from listening to song by such a beggar?" the old servant laughed deliberately, although he looked innocent.

"Oh, thank you very much. It is a great help to me madame". The pilgrim women, swaying the crying child, walked away from there while gazing at the autumn sky in the dusk.

Though old servant laughed at my mistress scornfully, I did not feel like to do that. Instead, the way my mistress was moved by the beautiful voice of that pilgrim woman and her eagerness in knowing details about her wretched life, rather indicated how enviously she was interested in her. For her, living here with her husband under the same roof was as painful and wretched as the life of that wandering woman. In the eyes of that pilgrim woman, my mistress must have been appeared as a competent and intelligent woman of high status which she cannot even dreamed of. In the eyes of my mistress wretched life of that pilgrim woman must have been appeared as free and happy compared to her own life which is restricted by

social stigmas and bonds and dragged against one's own will - a life which is spent always in dreams only.

Master returned home that day late as there was a drinking party as a part of the celebrations. Even on such days when he had a happy and enjoyable life, getting respect and reverence from all around him outside the house, my master had very lonely and sorrowful life inside the house. Master after blowing a liquor smelling breathe on to the face of mistress, fell on to the tatami in the second floor and slept at once. That night onward they slept separately.

4

Few days the path to the well was found covered with fallen leaves of persimmon trees. Somedays, the path was wet due to thawing, and the straps of my geta used to get broken. And on the day of Ebisuko, I went to fetch water walking on the first snow of the season. Toe of my old tabi, which was given to me by my mistress, became ice-cold, and my breathe was white due to coldness. Cold was so severe that the snow in the shade in northern direction even got frozen.

On 20th December, a rickshaw, with an unusual guest, stopped in front of the gate. The guest was my mistress's father from Tokyo. His was an unexpected visit. Therefore, my mistress was so excited that she even stumbled against the threshold. Master also returned from the bank early that day. Both master and mistress were completely engaged in treating

the guest and discussing with him various things about Tokyo. Loud laughter could be heard from the inner room after a long time. How happy was my mistress on that day, I cannot explain it now. There was a special feast on that night. The guest seemed to have come there mainly to discuss about financial matters. Four days after he reached, the guest had gone to Nagano along with my master. My mistress decided to stay at home. On the day of their departure, after keeping ready their umbrellas and shoes, I went to the room, where the guest was dressing. He was an impatient, restless person. He waited in the room impatiently, looking at his pocket watch kept under his stiff sash of the kimono and walking here and there inside the room. I looked at him and mistress carefully comparing the expressions in their faces.

"Grandma is also eager to see the face of a grand child. She always talks about that only. What happened? Don't you have any such plan yet?" Passing his hands across his round chin, he asked.

My mistress, blushed by such a question, remained there looking down, without answering the question. Soon very affectionately she looked at her father and said;

"Father, please change your 'haori' before going".

"What? This is alright. This is of superior quality, you know".

"Still, it is very bad".



"This 'haori' is 15 years old, if I am right. Quality goods are strong and durable", he pressed the edge of his kimono sleeves with his fingers and unfolded it like a wing and showed her.

"Well, shall I then change my dress, although troublesome", suddenly he changed his mind. He opened his bundle and took out a 'haori' made of knotted silk. He quickly worn it and checked.

"Look. Why don't you wear this".

"This one? You know this 'haori' is meant for this kimono. Look here - this 'haori' is alright".

"But some how that looks very funny. In that case, it is better to wear the one which you were wearing before."

Our guest after tying the brown tape of the haori, sat in front of the hibachi (charcoal brazier) and inspected it. Suddenly he stood up and removed that 'haori'.

"Then, this is the one I am going to wear, the original one. Ha, ha, ha...."

My mistress folded those haori and put them into the bundle mentioned earlier. Our guest with a pipe in his mouth, stood there silently, watching what my mistress was doing.

"Ha, ha, ha..., grandma has even kept a blazoned kimono in that", he said it so, as if he had remembered it suddenly.

While they were having such innocent and affectionate conversation, my master after finishing his work, came down

from the first floor. In a moment, my master's lower lips burned in jealousy.

"Well, let us start. Train will leave in another 30 minutes".

Our guest said so in hurry. Soon they left the house, both of them wearing thick over-coats. Carrying their luggage, the old servant followed them till the station. After they left I started arranging the scattered items in the rooms. Rooms were filled with suffocating smell of cigarette smoke. Opening the sliding door, I dried the quilt, sleeved coverlet, night-wear, which had male's scent, by putting them on the verandah.

When she was alone at home, my mistress would take out her dresses from the all-paulownia chest and fold them properly and place them again into the drawers. Sometimes, she would take out her cloths and gaze at them intently for long time, as one is fascinated by seeing his or her own image reflected in a mirror. Because she really considered her clothes as a part of her own body I too stood near her and saw her dresses. All her clothes were extremely attractive. Especially, I liked her, long under garment most. Made of Hama silk crepe, this long undergarment had scattered plum pattern on its bottom. Its hem and sleeve edges were made by attaching a piece of scarlet crepe at the back side of red silk. She placed that on her laps and told me in a casual

tone that she wore it on the night of her wedding. But suddenly she became careful about her language and stopped speaking as all those things were of the past. Fixing her eyes on that, she sat there motionless. One dead silver coloured moth fell down from her sleeves. As she smelled the scent of mothball, her heart suddenly seemed to have filled with happy, pleasant memories of the past to such a level that she even forgotten my presence there completely.

"Ah, ah, I don't need kimono or anything else", she felt extremely anxious about her life and started crying while holding that long undergarment in her hands. Tears flowed through her beautiful face endlessly.

Strangely, that day was warm although the winter solstice was already nearing. This kind of phenomenon used to occur in the mountainous country side occasionally and such good weather is a warning for heavy snow. By the afternoon, low altitude grey clouds spread through out the sky. All of a sudden it became dim inside the house. Meanwhile, it started snowing. Day was short and already it was dark inside the house so I lighted the lamp. The old servant got into his room and fell asleep as he seemed to have over drunk that day. After finishing my works in the kitchen, I went to my mistress and stayed there as I was worried about her loneliness. Except for the lonely sound of carts, passing through in the midst of snow, the surrounding was extremely calm and quite

and I was almost anxious about the accumulation of snow outside the door. We sat together in front of the foot warmer, my mistress reading the same novel I mentioned earlier and I repairing my old tabi. We gossiped about various items one after another, starting from the latest rumours in Nagano, the dentist and then even about thieves. Suddenly, my mistress became lonely.

"What happened to the old servant", she asked me.

"He fell asleep long time back".

"Ah, really, it is too early, isn't it? Osada, confirm whether the doors are closed properly. People say, these days there are lot of thieves". We sat there in fear. Suddenly, somebody knocked at the door.

"Who is it, at this time of night let me see", I went and opened the door. It was dark every where. With only the dimly white snow in the night, I could not see anybody around. I stood still there for sometime. "Sky is clear", murmuring myself, I stepped out of the house two three steps and looked around. Suddenly, cold snow started pattering on my nape of the neck.

"Heavens, is it snowing?", I stepped backward to under the eaves and combed down my hair with hand unknowingly. Although dark, very thin snow was falling and it actually looked grey like low fog. The light from the small paper

lantern held by pedestrians on the other side of the road reflected on the snow. Its light was flamboyantly bright.

After closing the door when I waited in the garden for a while somebody again knocked the door from outside. The sound of removing snow from geta also was heard. I opened the door which I closed once and in loud voice I asked, "Who is that." I surprised to see the visitor. It was none but that handsome rogue.

"Mistress, Mr.Arai has come", I rushed to her room to inform her about the visitor. Surprised by the news, her face starting from the bottom of ears till the nape of the neck turned red. She hid herself somewhere and did not appear immediately. Dentist's overcoat was covered with snow which could not be brushed off easily. When took out his over-coat, bottom of his kimono was also found wet. As usual, after hiding his footwear, I took him to my mistress's room. He was shivering with cold.

My mistress made him to take off his wet clothes first, and then, gave him a long-hem kimono of her own to wear. That was a female kimono, made of silk cloth having alternative stripes with red-silk waist back. It had eight plackets and when he wore it properly, it was very much matching to the fair complexioned dentist. Mistress looked at him from his left and right in rapt admiration.

"Osada, look at him well. How matching is that kimono? Mr.Sakurai is perfectly looking like a woman in this dress", saying this she grasped my hand.

That day I got a beautiful bustle for my obi from the dentist. Following directions from my mistress, I brought wine and placed it at the side of foot-warmer. Instead of wine cups, I gave them 'kyoyaki-style' tea cups. The room was quiet and warm, a cheerful, deceiving atmosphere as if in a dream. Outside, the plum blossom was about to bloom and the bush warbler was about to start singing although it was still winter. Even the cat had gone out of the room as if it had gone into rut. I went to the next room. Enraptured by the story of love - love like a dream in a spring night - I peeped into their room through the gaps in the sliding door. Mistress's face reflected in the bright lamp light in the night was extremely beautiful. I have never seen her so beautiful before or after that. I could see her drinking wine while narrowing her glossy eyes.

Also, I could see the dentist laughing very happily, waving his slender, fair hands. As their romance progressed, my mistress completely forgot her worries of the past and anxieties for the future. Both of them continuously engaged in talking, one subject to another, as if they applied some perfumed oil on their lips.

"Oku-san" - rubbing his cherry coloured cheek on the foot warmer he called her.

"Oh, again. For God's sake please stop calling me 'Oku-san'". These words of my mistress - a symbol of her familiarity and close friendship with the dentist - seemed to have given the dentist indescribable amount of happiness. Dentist licked his lips, and started speaking;

"I am drunk. I am drunk. I don't know why I got so drunk".

"Naturally you must. Because you have drunk alcohol", mistress laughed.

"I had only little, but even my hands turned red. I don't know why", he showed his hands to her.

"But, you please see my face", she pressed her cheeks with hands.

"You haven't turned red at all. Instead of red, your face has become pale. That means you are strong at alcohol. - You are really strong at alcohol."

"Alright, speak anything you like", she spoke in a wheedling voice, "but, you know, Mr.Sakurai, even if I want to get drunk, I never become drunk whatever quantity of alcohol I take". Moved by her words, dentist sat there in silence gazing at her beautiful eyes. My mistress sat there for a while looking at the shadow of the dentist reflected on the paper sliding door. Suddenly, she turned back and as if

searching something she seized some air and looked at it. Her face was filled with fear. Soon, she drew closer to the man while trembling with fear.

"Can't we two live like this for ever? Ah, how nice it would be if we could live together", she became gloomy. The man just gave a sigh only. A depressed mistress continued her talk.

"Perhaps, I may not meet you again. The unpleasant dream I saw last night - I don't know why I have been so unfortunate. Possibly, I may die in the near future.... We may not be able to meet again...."

"Again, you are talking silly things. You cannot rely on dreams."

"You may say so, but you please see it from the view point of a woman. It is different. Any way, I am fed up with it. Let us avoid talking such things", mistress changed her mind.

"By the way, do you remember the day on which we met for the first time. It was in May last year, you know, at the hot spring of Isobe - I wasn't married yet and came to this place...."

"Yes, yes, I remember. It was the day on which a group of people of 'Gessanko' stayed there. When we walked under the plum trees we heard a nice sound from Usuigawa river, you remember. "Is that a 'Kajika' frog? Oh yes, it is. Its



voice sounds like the chirping of 'higurashi' cicada", upon hearing the sound yuo said like this".

"I remember it. After that we climbed on to the hill. The whole area was covered with azalea blossom. As a result of climbing the hill, I lost my breath and was in a confused situation. I did not know what to do. Then you snapped an azalea branch with red flowers, and gave that to me saying, "you please suck in this dew. You remember that?"

"We walked a lot that time you remember. Both of us were tired and when we were viewing the surroundings, we saw the evening sun setting and the colour of sky changing followed by that. There was lot of water vapour in the air that evening. I haven't seen again such a beautiful sight of sun-set ever since - I don't forget it even now".

"Oh, even I also...."

They looked each other. Their sweet, old dreams of the past seemed to have come alive once again. That was what their facial appearance indicated.

"Well, don't you have one more drink", my mistress lifted up the cup.

"I had enough".

"Is it so, then I will have one more".

"What, you drink again? - please stop now".

"Why shouldn't I get drunk?"

"Because, the way you drink is unnatural and excessive".

"That means, you haven't really understood my feeling yet. How nice if I could die after getting drunk. You know, that is my heart's desire."

She forced him to hold the wine bottle and keeping her hand on his hand, she tried to pour wine into the tea cup. Their hands were shivering and some wine spilt on the Kotatsu stand. Mistress closed her eyes and emptied the cup in one gulp. Then she placed her face on the foot-warmer and started weeping silently. I could hear her strained, sorrowful weeping sound. Standing near the sliding door, when I heard her weeping, even I felt sorry for her. The man suddenly embraced her, and tried to soothe her placing his face on her ears. Seeing his sympathy and compassion, mistress's weeping became louder, and seemed to have no plan to stop. My heart was wrung with grief. Gradually, her weeping voice became faint. Only sobs could be heard occasionally. The clock struck 10 O'Clock. I served them hot tea of good flavour. My mistress felt refreshed after wetting her dried throat with the tea.

"Excuse me please", suddenly, voice of a drunken man was heard from the front. As it was a quiet, snowing night, his thick, loud voice had echoed all around. All the three of us looked at each other in surprise.

"Who might be that", my mistress was frightened.

"Excuse me please, are you sleeping?"

The dentist soon turned pale and sobered up from the intoxication of alcohol. Trembling in fear he looked around restlessly as if he got dazzled by the voice. He wanted to hide somewhere, but his legs got wrapped in the long bottom of the kimono. Therefore, he stumbled over other articles and slipped. The bottle fell down and the remaining wine in that flowed through the tatami. I listen to the voice half in doubt, and when the men outside the gate called out a third time, to my surprise, I recognised the voice as it was my father.

"Mistress, it is my father", I went and opened the door.

"Father, why have you come..., at this time of the night" while opening the door I asked him.

"Well, I lost my way and reached here", he spoke in indistinctive words.

"It is really unbearable. Why are you coming to other's house late in the night, without permission?"

Although he was my father, I talked to him in an angry scolding tone as he had done a shameless act without any regard for the mistress. My mistress was already standing there, turning her face away from the lamp light.

"Is that Osada's father".

"No, I am not. I am from Tokyo", he hesitatingly said so with an innocent look. He was about to fall down when he

tried with tottering steps to keep the 'konjak', which he was carrying with him, at one corner of the garden.

"Oh look, don't sleep there, please go back fast".

"Well, let him sleep there for some time. It is alright."

"When you are very drunk, like this you always fall asleep. So, please go back."

"You rest for sometime there".

"Yes", father sat on the doorframe and said.

"I came here because I fell in love with Miss Osada".

"Please go back fast. Coming to somebody's house so late in the night, that too fully drunk...."

"Oh, don't say so. I haven't seen you for more than ten months. I was yearning to see you, you know".

My mistress opened the cupboard at hearth side and while looking for a glass she asked him;

"Do you want water?"

"See, mistress is so kind.... By the way, Osada, what is time now?"

"Twelve O'Clock", I said a lie.

"What? twelve...", he hacked back in stern voice.

"Eleven thirty (half past eleven)".

"Come on, have some water", mistress gave him a glass of water.

"Thank you. Well.... I hired a geisha tonight and gave her four five yens. From here I am going there again to.... Yes, yes. She wants me to drink again".

"You are already very drunk".

"I say, you return fast. See you are completely wet - you are without even an umbrella."

"I brought an umbrella, but I gave that to Miyosuke. Well... mistress, won't you give me a cigarette".

"You don't have to smoke now. You better return".

"Well, I will give you the cigarette tray", my mistress gave him cigarette. Father happily took a cigarette from that while looking at her face.

"Hello mistress, you are still young. Where is master.... I would like to see master's face before going."

"Master is not at home", I broke into the conversation.

"What is time now", he again enquired.

"Half past eleven. Here everybody sleeps at 10 O'Clock. Well now you go back quickly".

"Shall I give you one more glass of water".

"No, I had enough".

"Once you regain your composure, you may go back as early as possible tonight itself, as Osada is also worried so much. You understand? Please do so".

"Yes, yes. I will go to the geisha from here. Shall I go to Rokku".

"Well, that is right, you do so".

"Please excuse me for my unmannerly behaviour. When I am drunk I behave like this, but mistress, when I am not drunk I am a good chap. ah, ah...", he got up with tottering steps.

"Good night, good night", he said in a funny tone.

"What is this? Better you come to your senses", I told him in scolding manner and handed over the konjak to him.

"Oh it is snowing heavily. Take care while you go", I again told him in low voice when I went outside to see him off.

"G o o d N i g h t", saying this in the tone of a song he went away, walking drunkenly. For a while, I stood silently at the gate and gazed after him. Suddenly, he returned to his real half-drunk condition and had gone away, walking on the snow very quickly. His posture and feet were not seemed like a full fledged drunkard. My father soon disappeared in the darkness.

After giving a sigh of relief, when I returned to my mistress room, the dentist, who was hiding in the closet, was sitting there with a wry smile, while scratching his head repeatedly. I felt pity on him, and at the same time, I felt shy also.

"My father finds it difficult to come here in normal conditions. That is why he played innocent as if like a totally drunk person", I said moving close to my mistress.

"Because he wanted to see you."

"He wanted to accompany me when I was coming to this place. But who wants such a person to accompany. So, I strictly warned him not to come to master's house any time."

"But, it seems that he was yearning to see you".

"I haven't seen you for more than ten months. I was yearning to see you, you know, he said so, but that is nonsense. Who wants to see such a drunkard."

"Your mother might also be worried about you", hearing these words of my mistress, I suddenly started thinking about my pathetic mother who was more dear to me than my father who came to meet me. The dentist sat there lost in thought.

"Mr.Sakurai, what are you so deeply thinking about", mistress asked him looking at his face.

"Indeed - that is what a parent is".

"It seems, you admire him greatly".

"Human feelings are something great.... Is it not so?"

"What?"

"To be grateful".

"Ah, ah...."

"Yes, it is really so".

"Look! again".

"That is true. I haven't even sent a letter during last six months".

"To whom".

"I have been busy always, so I didn't get time to write letter".

"What are you talking about".

"Eh? Did I say something?"

"Yes, you did. - I haven't sent any letter during last six months, I haven't forgotten the benefit and favour received, I don't have time to write letter - certainly you are recollecting something". Mistress turned to my side and continued; "You know Osada, Mr.Sakurai seems to be lost in some sweet memories, that is why he talks like this...."

"Please stop. You are very suspicious. I don't like it." The man had become serious and continued.

"Please hear me. I explain it you. I have a teacher to whom I have got some obligations. He has opened his hospital in Shitaya recently. I don't know how much I am indebted to him for many helps and benefits I received from him. He considers me as his own son and always worry about me. Without his help and assistance, I would not have become what I am today. He used to scold me always in an encouraging tone. "Look at your friends. They all have achieved great success in their life. Are you not envious of them? Don't waste your time in fruitless effort", he would always advice me. Whatever my teacher said is true - but I am no more bothered about great success or achievement in life.~ Now, my mind is occupied by you - only you. Ah, compared to my old



days when I used to compete with my friends and colleagues, I have changed a lot now, you know." After saying this much, he looked at my mistress for a while, and suddenly stood up as if he thought of something. He soon took off the long bottomed kimono, which was given to him by mistress, and began to put on his own dress. Surprised by his sudden actions my mistress enquired: "Why can't you stay in that kimono (dress)."

"I don't know why, but suddenly I am not feeling well, so I will go back tonight".

"You are going back! In this snow? Your kimono hasn't dried yet, you know".

"What?"... Ah, doesn't matter. I will fold it."

"Well, are you really going back? If so, it is too much...."

A restless dentist was standing there for some time twisting his hat. Soon, he sat down there dejected and depressed.

"I don't stop you by force. But, please stay here some more time."

"But, if I get delayed further...."

"Isn't it alright even if you get delayed. Just, some more time please."

I don't know how it spread or by whom it was spread, the love affairs of my mistress had become the talk of the town.

The hairdresser, a reporter of all news around, had returned laughing after scattering everywhere the butts of cigarettes he smoked and hinting about the rumours. The whole area was filled with cigarette's smell. My mistress who had seen sitting there forgetting all about her, started thinking something and appeared to have become weird. Messengers from the bank came to the house everyday to find out whether master has returned from his trip. There was letter from Nagano also. The guest, mistress father, had gone to some other place with another companion and would be returning one or two days later than master. That was a small letter in a dark grey cover. In order to get rid of her loneliness, my mistress had read that letter repeatedly. "Even from this letter one can understand how tasteless and inelegant my husband is", she told me. The day before my master's return, mistress spent lot of time in searching and hiding something. She was worried on that day.

My mistress always carried a photograph with her. That was a card-size photograph without gloss, of a man. The man in the photograph had slightly serious look, but he possessed the features of an attractive, loving person. Moreover, he had a photogenic beautiful face, and therefore, I don't think any female would have disliked him, though I don't know what would be the reaction of male folks. He had a fleshy cheek and idle but charming eyes. His lips were such that they

could probably only whisper, and had a well shaped and beautiful upper-half body. Anyway it can't be a trick by a countryside photographer. Mistress had difficulty in finding out a place to hide that. She tried to keep it in various places such as drawer of the table, beneath the waste thread in the needle box, under the kimono kept in the chest. But she was not satisfied with any of these places, as she was very worried about it. Thereafter, she hid the photograph behind the frame of a fine calligraphy by a woman hanging on the wall. But still she was not satisfied. She walked under that frame several times to confirm its safety and finally removed it from there. In short, there was no suitable place to keep such a small photograph. At last, she put that photograph into her pocket and while confirming its position by passing her hands over the obi, she had walked around inside the room.

Mistress also took out love letters from the letter box. She rubbed her soft cheek with those letters fondly and started reading them one by one. Some letters had inside them pressed flower petals and leaves with their original colour. Mistress smelled the remaining fragrance of the flower and her whole body burned in passion. She wanted to destroy those love letters by tearing them into pieces, so that master would not see them. However, she couldn't do that because of her attachment to them. She again opened the letters, which were

once jostled and torn into pieces, and began reading them by joining together the torn pieces - she, in fact, rolled up and swallowed the portions which were dear to her.

"Here is the ragman. Don't you have wastepaper to be disposed off", fortunately a ragman came to the house. Mistress, raked up the torn pieces of the letters, stuffed them into the wastepaper already in the basket and sold them to the ragman. The ragman took out a big purse and while making the sound of coins he said, "thank you very much for selling waste papers to me every time. Well, I will buy it for three sens." He placed there three copper coins and left.

That day mistress was found in a depressed mood, feeling anxious about her future. She was slightly dizzy and as a result, blood came out from her nose. Although she slept early that day, saying that she was not feeling well, that was a horrible night for her as he couldn't sleep at all. She saw bad dreams in which she encountered dreadful faces which she had never seen before. She told me this in the next morning. From her pale look also one could have easily understood that she couldn't sleep well in the night. She told me the content of dream she had seen on that night. When master was walking quietly through a place which looked like an apple orchard, somebody came to him secretly like a shadow and whispered something to him. Suddenly master got very angry and chased mistress about vigorously to catch her. Mistress was about to

be caught two or three times. Finally, she took off her dress and ran desperately in naked to escape from his clutches. At last she was driven into a corner of the apple orchard. Her body got sandwiched between trees and there was absolutely no way to escape. Suddenly, she woke up from sleep - her body was full of sweat, pillow cover and her night dress were completely wet. My mistress's nights were not like ours. She would see dreams even during a doze, that was her nature. Especially, on long winter nights she would see lot of dreams throughout her sleep, and on the next day morning she often would narrate everything to me, without forgetting any of them.

"My life is dogged by dreams", she often used to say. She got worried whenever she saw a dream and always used to give unusual importance to that, whether that was a good one or a bad one. Whatever happened so far was alright. As she had this weakness, she became all the more worried after that night's dream. Two three times during the talk, she spoke in such a way that she was even suspicious of me. A mere dream of a short night had made my mistress to be suspicious of her long-time friend. Present mental condition of my mistress could be compared to the fear of a small bird - its dishelved breast down its trembling legs - which waits for the coming rainstorm.

Master returned home by the No.3 up train. While drinking tea, he talked about snow in Nagano. Unusually, that day mistress sat aside him, as if she was ready to have a friendly chat. On my way to the market - I was ordered to go for shopping - when I passed through the verandah, I could hear their conversation, coming out from the other side of the sliding door. Some how, they seemed to be talking about me.

I stood silently there with bated breath, listening to their conversation. Mistress was telling my master something like as following. She was complaining to the master, that many articles have been missing from the house, including even a violet silk scarf kept in the drawer of the needle box. Thinking it strange, she opened and searched my furoshiki zutsumi (bundle wrapped in cloth) and found everything in that including that scarf, bustle for the obi, ring etc. Also she told him that, I talk about my master behind his back when I go to the well to fetch water, and spread baseless rumours about him. Further, she also told him that I have become very selfish and disobedient, and one day somebody had seen the young milk man embracing me from my back holding his hands around the nape of my neck. She told him that she was shocked at seeing me more and more disobedient, and she does not want to keep an ill-natured woman like me as her servant.

I was all ears to hear it.

"What is this? Such loud voice - can't she hear it?" My master said.

"No, she has been sent to the market".

"Let us stop this talk here. I am a very busy person. I must go to the bank immediately. Any how, it is better to fire such persons from their work immediately"; saying this, master got up to leave the house.

I was amazed and also frightened at this cunning world. I never thought that such malicious words would come out from the beautiful lips of my mistress. Out of her fear for getting exposed her thoughtless, imprudent sin, she determined to drive me out branding me out as a nuisance. It was really too much. I thought about her dream she saw on the previous day. I jumped out to the front, and walked through the snow covered road quickly. I had even forgotten the items I should buy. Pressing the Furoshik zutsumi to my breast, I shivered in vexation and annoyance. For a moment the thought of condemning my mistress boiled up in my mind. I wanted to condemn everything she possessed including her proud features which I considered beautiful so far and her elegant manners which I used to envy always. My mind, full of good will towards her so far, was completely shaken off by wrath and indignation. I didn't have time to think about the favour or kindness I got from her. Myself of that time had changed to the old Osada of Kashiwagi, who used to roam around with black

muddy legs, wearing straw sandals. I had soon changed into true beast like nature of a rough Saku woman. I went up to the street in Aioi-cho, aimlessly calling my mother.

Standing at the foot of the bridge when I was watching the street, I noticed a large crowd under the flag, wet in snow, of 'Meibutsu Kisoba Undon'. People engaged in removing snow from the road stopped their shovels, a group of travellers wearing pure yellow cotton hats stopped their movement, and a horse rider on a carriage heading to Iwamura pulled up the reins of the horse and turned back from the side and looked at something. Meanwhile, a group of servants came there running and shouting. Soon they started walking around, spreading some news. When I asked them about the matter, they told me that a dead body of an young lady who threw herself into Chikuma gawa river has been fished out from the water and now being carried to the corner of noodle shop. "This dead young woman has been serving as a servant at the Kikuya", one of the servants told me. Another one said, "she is Otsugi from Kashiwagi". Anyway, various rumours were spread among the crowd in the street.

"This year water cast several evil spell on us. Earlier two woman labourers jumped into the river and died. In spite of that, again one more person...." "Namu amida butsu, namu amida butsu". "Hey, what is there? A double suicide?" "No, it is not a double suicide. Probably the result of some foul



play"; "No, it happened because the mistress of Kikuya is a cruel person. Earlier also one of their servant committed suicide by jumping into the well", people expressed different opinions. When the people carrying the dead body came towards my direction through the uphill slope, I could confirm that it was the dead body of Otsugi. This is the same Otsugi who teased me at the well-side on the other day, after a spring rain. Do you remember that day, when I just pretended to sprinkle water on her, she slapped on her back and laughed while saying, "you are lucky to have a good master".

Large lumps of snow from the thatched roofs of houses in Oiai-machi-cho street melted and fell down due to bright sunlight coming through the gap between grey clouds. Accumulated snow on the ground was glittering so brightly that I was dazzled. Therefore, I could not open my eyes completely and watch it properly. The white carpeted street road had a line of reddish mark on it as many people and horses walked on it. The frozen body of Otsugi placed on a straw mat was carried away silently through that road of full of snow and mud, accompanied by policemen and government officers. Face of the dead body could not be seen as it was covered with straw matting. Only her wet, dishevelled black hair could be seen from outside.

That was a touching scene. She was also a servant like me, so I could not just stand there unsympathetic. I have

already come out of my annoyance and vexation. My mind filled with lonely, sad feeling. Even Otsugi who was in the bloom of her youth, met with such a tragic, ill-fated end. There is nothing as unfortunate and pathetic as the life of a woman. Human life is a chain of continuous changes. See, how the life of Otsugi changed within a short period of one year. Not only just Otsugi changed. My master also changed. My mistress also changed. Probably my mother might also have changed. Even my younger sister and younger brother might also have changed. My case is also quite the same - even I too have changed completely.

On my way to home, I was analysing my own life and I realised a truth that, since coming to work as a servant here I had become a changed person. Imperceptibly, I had become accustomed to the flashy life of my mistress. In other words, I had become a modern woman of style and fashion. I who had accustomed only to 'hittsume-bin' (hair on the temples drawn back into a bun) hair style from my childhood, started to keep 'tabo' (the stretched out portion at the back side of Japanese style hair do) and wide fringe. I would steal glances in the mirror, secretly apply a razor blade to unwanted hair, and enjoy long baths, as my mistress never scolded me for that, carefully cleansing my body and removing the dirt from under my nails. I had been gradually becoming a cultured person this way. I used to wear an old but gaudy striped kimono with

a collar made of figured cloth, which was given to me by my mistress. I was worried about getting dirt on my livery coat so I would adjust the obi always. I would take a small wrapping cloth with me even when I go to buy tofu (bean curd), as I considered going without one would be indecent, and hide the vinegar bottle under my sleeves and walk in a charming, seductive way, blowing ground cherries. And by the time, I had even come to think of my friend from Kashiwagi as a bit rustic, and I was even inclined to give little thought to my mother. I was appalled at how I had changed. If I thoughtfully consider and analyse my work - the troubles and the hard work that I had to endure all these days - all that was left was the cold sweat of remorse only.

"What have you been doing? Taking one hour for going up to Honmachi", absorbed in such thought when I returned home, my mistress had snapped at me, without even having a slight intention to hear my side of the story. That time, we exchanged glances and an indescribable unpleasant feeling occurred in my mind. She did not want me to take notice of her being angry, but her voice had become dry, and phlegm was got entangled with her throat. Deliberately she had cleared her throat and sat there with a forced laugh, pretending innocence.

That night I could not get a wink of sleep. Although in the beginning of my service there I was busy in my work during

day time, in the night when I would go to the bed, I would certainly think about Kashiwagi. "Mother, mother," calling my mother I would sleep under a quilt. Gradually, I had forgotten the sky of Kashiwagi, and seen mother in dreams very rarely. However, on that day memories of Kashiwagi came to my mind again. No other night I had thought about my mother so dearly. My mattress of arabesque design on which I was lying down somehow appeared to me as the side of rice field in Kashiwagi. Dandelion around the field had yellow flowers. I imagined about the pleasant feeling I would get when I lie down there resting my head on the grassy embankment with full of Japanese quince flowers as my pillow, meanwhile watching the falcons flying over the sky of Asama mountain, and my hair getting fondled by the breeze coming from the green wheat field. I found it more and more difficult to sleep as the night advanced. I felt as if I am attacked by something. Even the sound of rat gnawing the bookshelf was frightening. My hair stood on end on hearing a sound from a far away place, may be a shouting by a man or a lonely sound of a water wheel. I couldn't distinguish it in the winter night. I lighted the midget lamp which I turned off earlier. I tossed about in bed several times. Still I couldn't sleep. Fresh memories flashed across my mind as if they all happened on the previous day. The stylish, luxurious life in this house is no more a subject I should envy. I kept on thinking only about

Kashiwagi. I remembered the incident when a peddler passed through my place praising the tune of yarn guide when I was weaving on a cotton loom while singing a popular song. I remembered about the yellow wild strawberries I had plucked together with my younger sister, on our way to the field on the hill. I remembered about our pleasant visit to the shrine of the Healing Buddha in Hishino. I remembered the chest, as red as a setting sun, of my father, a heavy drinker. I also remembered the terrible quarrel between my father and mother, when my mother shouted while crying, "well, kill me, if you want to kill me...." Finally, I even remembered faintly some of the incidents happened when I was only around seven or eight years old. By the time, hot tears started flowing from my eyes and I cried as I felt sympathy for myself. My hair had become wet. Even the pillow paper cover got wet. I got tired by thinking various things like this but I could not sleep at all till the morning. That day, I had got up early morning when only dimly white rays could be seen through the gaps, and sparrows had just woke up from their sleep. I tightened the sash on my sweat smelling body and kindled fire in the oven.

"I don't just want to be kicked out from here by the mistress. I must some how prove my innocence first and then leave this house", I decided. What she has done to me is very cruel and I cannot excuse her for that. "Well, first of all

I would inform master about her illicit love affair, and then get rid of my troubles here after foiling her plot against me". I decided to show my true nature as a woman. That morning I had nothing else in my mind except the thought of revenge against her.

Once the milk in the pipkin boiled, I had poured it in a glass and taken to the master in the second floor. As usual, he was going through various documents, leaning on the table. An old photograph of his previous wife was kept on the table. Master, these days, used to look at it with sweet memories of the past. I, at last, told him frankly all about mistress's illicit affair. Suddenly his colour changed and while keeping the milk which he started drinking on the table, he told me;

"Understood, I have understood. I have understood well what you are saying", with a lonely smile, he tried to hide the feeling of jealousy boiling up in his mind. Although he was smiling, he could not hide his deep sigh and shivering of his hand with milk glass. Soon, he drank one sip of milk and then muttered to himself;

"But, originally, it is my mistake. I have become weary of her even before completing one year after she had come here. That might be a reason. Moreover, her age is different, her way of thinking is different. Naturally, she would like to have children." In such condition, there is hardly any chance to come to a common consent through

discussion. Ah, I was thoughtless for my own age. It was a great mistake for me to think that I can change any number of wives whenever I want. When it comes to second, or third, one cannot call it a real marriage. A wife who has stayed continuously for long time with her husband since his youth would know her husband's personal history and his tastes. When you have come to my house to work as a servant I have been busy in my job and working restlessly with only one intention that is to make my wife happy. But, these days I am completely getting absorbed in my work in order to forget her.

I too had some idea about her unpardonable affair. In spite of that, I have endured it with patience.... But she never tried to understand my feeling.... Ah, ah.... I know that telling these things to you does not bring forth any change in the situation. Now that her father has come here, I have accompanied him up to Nagao because I wanted to tell him to take her along with him when he returns to Tokyo. However, her father is a nice person and I am unable to tell him this matter." He continued again reducing his voice further. "Well, let me stop talking such things here. Hey Osada, do you have some evidence to prove what you have said just before. Without proof, nothing can be done. Don't you think so? Probably, you don't have any proof. Therefore, I have a request to you. You have told me that, Sakurai visits my house often during my absence. In order to prove that, could

you help me to witness their meeting next time. Today, we have the general meeting of Kitasaku branch of the Red Cross Society. I will leave the house in the pretext of going to participate in it, but actually will wait at our neighbour Mr.Koyama's house. You understand me. You inform me the moment Sakurai reached. That is the only role you have to play. After that, you may go back to Kashiwagi. So far you have worked for us very sincerely. I am aware of that and I appreciate you for that. Moreover, I will write a letter to your mother to prove your innocence and to avoid any misunderstanding by her."

"Thank you very much".

Soon, the sound of somebody coming up through the staircase was heard. Master had quickly hid the photograph into the drawer of the table and drunk a sip of milk. While wiping his mouth with a white handkerchief he said the following in loud voice; "Well, I am busy today".

6

Just that day was the day of the winter solstice. It is customary to have fukimiso - butterbur sprout soup - and pumpkin on this day in houses in the countryside. Fortunately, there was some pumpkin left behind from autumn. When I was washing it in the sink, I could hear the cracking sound of fire-works. Very delighted, I had completed my work and gone out through the kitchen door and watched it. Smoke



in the colour of green willows was still remaining in the blue sky and the sounds of jeering children could also be heard from near and far.

Paper lanterns hanging from the eaves on a row, strips of fancy papers in gold and silver colours, and artificial red and white flowers gave an impression as if the spring has come untimely. The large ground of primary school just at the eastern side of the house was the site for the general meeting of Kitasaku branch of Red Cross. That day, Komoro was said to have crowded with people in an unprecedented manner. Groups of people in blazoned haori and straw sandals started coming there from the previous day itself. Members of music band from Nagano in red uniform and red caps had gone around the town, playing an orchestra of big drums, high drums, trumpets, flutes etc. Great number of people wearing round silver badges on red cloth on their chests had passed through. Police men with swords in their hands had moved around the place. Young master of Shimaya, Mr. Kameso of Aramachi, Mr. Fjukan of Honmachi, the eldest son of Echigo ya, the second son of Miuraya all well dressed in 'kimono' and 'haori', had passed through the road. The Dentist wearing a "Warizasa mitsu-mon" crest kimono and a dark brown soft hat on his head, had come there, with a reddish-brown gloves on his lean, tender hands, as usual. As he had come walking very fast, he stood at the side of the earthen wall for a while and drawn a

deep breath. Sides of his eyes were swollen red as if he has been crying and especially, his fair-complexioned face had a pathetic look. Whether it is of anger or weeping, such feelings are easily visible on the face of a handsome person. His eyes, burning in passion, were yearning to meet mistress. He was seemed unaware of anything else and, on the contrary, that gave him a pathetic look. He is a person who can never be hated. I quickly got him in the house through the kitchen and shut the wooden door before anybody noticed him.

"Osada-san, it is very crowded today, isn't it?"

"Well, isn't it because lot of people have come for the function".

"Listen Osada, what happened to you? Your face is pale".

"It is because of the cold".

"Will woman turn pale when it is cold? Till today, I was thinking that they would turn only red when it is cold. I am not joking, you know. One cannot survive in such severe cold. Hands and other body parts go numb with cold. Some time, well.... - Your boss...?"

"You mean my master. He had left the house long back. Mistress has been waiting for you impatiently for quite a while."

Upon hearing it he blushed, and got in through the kitchen. Behind him I too had got into the kitchen, opened the lid of the pot and checked the pumpkin in it. Pumpkin,

yellowish in colour, was cooked properly and became sticky. As this was mistress's favourite dish, I had immediately put it in a small plate and taken to her room along with butterbur miso as a replacement of snacks for tea. Mistress sat there face-to-face with the dentist in front of a silver folding screen with a painting of peony on it facing toward the south. Her slightly flushed face in faint pink colour was seen very charming and I cannot properly explain in words now the way they sat there and talked. She sat there with downcast eyes and inserting her slim, fair complexioned hands in the gap of sash. Her beautiful hair-do could be seen very well. The room was filled with an indescribable scent. Even my eyes, burning with anger and hatred, was fascinated by that. Suddenly with a determined mind, I got out of the room - Mistress's fate was already in my hands. But, standing in the kitchen, once again I thought about the act I was going to do.

What kind of rift would it bring if I inform the master about it, I thought. The anger which he has been suppressing patiently so far might break out at once with extremely great force like flood water. How dreadful would be the reaction of my master, who usually is a nice person, when he burnt out in anger after seeing his wife's illicit affair. These thoughts made my hair stand on end and my hands and legs started shivering in fear. I felt dizzy and was about to fall down

there. I had to think twice about it. Fearing unforeseen events which might occur in the future, I walked around in the wooden floor, with indoor sandals on my feet.

Rays of winter sun had come into the lonely kitchen through the skylight window and illuminated the kitchen utensils and tools. I looked at it reluctantly with a confused mind. The double cooking oven, bettsui, was shining in dark. Big water boiling pot, odoko, was kept at the corner. Hifuki-dake, a bamboo tube used for blowing fire, was lying on the ground in front of the Odoko. The fire shovel was kept vertical at its side. The hikeshitsubo (a lid like pot used for extinguishing the burning charcoal) was lying there as if to bid goodbye to me. Two pickle pales were kept in a row at one corner of the earthen wall completely covered with dark soot. On the cupboard, pans and pots were kept, some in straight position, and some in upside down position. I don't know, what was kept in the box near the suribachi (earthen ware mortar). Miso pot and shoyu barrel were kept at the bottom of the cupboard. Grater was hanging down on a nail. Ice in the sink was falling into the drain after melting. chopping board used for cutting pumpkin and a pail with broken hoop were also lying there. The bamboo basket contained unwanted pieces of pickled radish and used tea leaves of the previous day. Sasara (bamboo whisk) and tawashi (pot cleaner) were also lying along with them. As I was

walking around, thinking and watching things with a confused mind, the music of the band suddenly started. Sounds of big drums and trumpets were echoed in the winter sky and "Kimiga-yo", the national anthem, followed them. Wearing the kitchen geta (wooden clogs) I came out and watched the site of meeting crowded with thousands and thousands of people. The meeting site was covered with a violet curtain painted with a white cross on it. Therefore, I could not see the events happening inside. There were groups of farmers peeping through the back side of the curtain and children watching the events from the top of the fence. Once the clapping sound came to a end, somebody started speaking in a resounding, manly voice. I didn't understand the content of the speech very well, but as he spoke each word very vividly, I too listened to it with rapt attention.

Suddenly, somebody gave a pat on my back. I turned back with surprise. Running out of patience, master had come to see the situation at home. We did not speak anything in words, but communicated in sign language, using our finger tips, eyes, and body gestures. Once we understood each other properly, I felt as if I have succeeded in executing partially the revenge against mistress. I too had various opportunities to witness man's jealousy in all these years, but I would probably never see man's jealousy as deep as the one my master had at that time. It cannot be described even in a painting.

His mental condition could be easily understood by anybody even if he could not speak it out. His eyes were burning with fierce jealousy, and beneath his pale look there underlied the feelings of agony, distress, anger, shame and sorrow - his peculiar smile also indicated this mental condition. Blood in his whole body seemed to have thrust out into his head. He was no more able to endure it. In contempt, he grabbed and pulled at his hair. Because of uncontrollable amount of jealousy, even a nice person like my master showed the true nature of a man - he quivered like a beast. Like a fox aiming at a hen, master advanced toward the back room quietly, with bated breath. I followed him as I was eager to see the horrible scene. As I was more careful not to make any noise, even the tatani gave unnecessary rattle sound. Unfortunately I stumbled against the threshold. Because of my utmost caution and excitement, even my heart-beats turned vigorous. From the side of the staircase in the end of the corridor, I could see mistress's room, facing toward south as the sliding door of the middle room was lying opened. Leaning against the pillar, I peeped into the room with fear.

Sunlight coming in through the sliding door at the south side brightened the room and reflected more beautifully the standing posture of the dentist and mistress who were standing close to the silver folding screen. Both had beautiful body structure. As they were standing by the side of a colour

painting of peony flower, both the mistress and the dentist were looked as if they are a part of the painting on the folding screen. For setting everything in the pleasure of transient love, they stood there, intoxicated in love and longing for each other, unconcerned about the rest of things around them. I had been really seeing a day dream. Only a portion of pale cheek of the man was visible to me - that too in the shade. But, mistress's emaciated face, inward slanting eyebrows, her forgetful eyes, and even her head resting on the left shoulder of the dentist were visible to me properly. Their burning lips were just about to come together in a kiss. her breasts were crushed against his chest as she stood on tip toe in white tabi, her toes straining up against the floor, her arms hung limply, her fingers slightly curled up, her shoulders raised, while his hands were nestled under her arms. It seemed as though their bodies had come to a complete standstill, and all the blood in their veins had rushed to their lips like the turbulent waves of the summer sea. My master was immobilized by the spectacle and speechless he just stood there gazing at the two from behind, as if he had been nailed to the spot.

"Saikerei, Saikerei" - profound obeisance - came the cries that floated in from atop the knoll on the ceremonial grounds.

Suddenly the opening sound of the front lattice was heard. "I'm home" came the voice of the returning guest, "I've just returned". Shocked by the calls of the returning guest, the two turned around, only to discover master silently standing behind them. Having no time to push the man away, mistress could only look away, turning white as a sheet. The dentist, half in shock, tried to open her mouth with his left hand and positioned his right hand as if extracting a tooth. As nobody had gone to receive him into the house, the guest finally opened the sliding door himself and came to the room through the corridor. A fear flashed through my whole body like a flash of lightning. At that moment, the sound of blaring trumpets and the thunderous sound of big drums flooded into the room. The masses of celebrants outside shouted out in unison, "Long live the emperor, long live the emperor". It echoed like the sound of a thunder.



ROJO

(OLD MISS)

"No", leaning over the railing on the first floor of Masuya, Uryu Natsuko continued. "I am not as easy going or comfortable as you think". "Look, you always take it in that way, that is the problem" her friend Sawa Sekiko sidled up to her and continued, "nobody is thinking that you are comfortable or easy going."

"That is why I say, I want to stay back here in Tozawa, you know".

Tazawa, hot spring in Shinshu, is very calm and quiet at this time of the year. Number of visitors coming for taking bath in the hot spring here has also become thing since the beginning of August. Around fourteen or fifteen girl students are lying on the first floor of the Masuya which is kept opened, and are enjoying day dreams during their idle midday nap. Natsuko and Setsuko, fresh from the hot spring bath and standing in front of the room where the girls are indulged in pleasures, seemed to have forgotten the unpleasant experiences and problems of this world for a while. Natsuko had been the head teacher of a certain girls school in Ueda - a private school - till last year and Sekiko is an assistant teacher in Ueda girls high school now. She has come to this place accompanied by girl students. Both of them are natives of Ueda, and studied in the same school in the city almost ten

years back. Now both of them have become old miss - sunk in grief like green leaves in the sultry weather of August.

"I don't know how painful for me also to bid good-bye to you here now. But, at the same time, it is not possible for me to stay along with you", Natsuko looked at her friend's face and continued. "You say, you are leaving tomorrow. Isn't it very sudden?"

"Well, a person like me who is responsible for the well being of these girl students cannot have any other option. Anyway, you may forget about my case. What are you going to do, Uryu. Are you going to stay here for long time? Ah, ah.... I am fed up with your way of thinking."

"Fed up with my way of thinking?" Natsuko suddenly brightened her eyes. "I don't understand what you are talking".

"Well, how should I explain it. See Natsuko, your mother must be waiting for you in great anxiety, but you say that you don't go...."

"My mother waits in anxiety for my return?" Natsuko gave a deep sigh and continued, "Well, I don't know why I cannot get on with my mother. Miss Sawa I have taken a firm decision that I will never return to my home".

"Why do you say so?"

"My decision to not to go home has not been taken just now".

"Then, what will you do if you don't return to your home?"

"I will spend my life travelling."

"Travelling?"

"My intention is to die during travelling".

"Wait a moment. You speak strange things, aren't you?"

"Ah, ah..., what is strange? Everybody's life is a journey, don't you think so. Well, even your's is so, am I not right?"

"Well, if you say so, in a way, it is like that only but...".

"Ah", Natsuko heaved a sigh. "At home I never felt happy even for a single day. Always I spent days and nights there weeping, doubting and in agony".

"Even I can guess that, you know. It is same with all those who have acquired school education and knowledge. Specially, those who had a bachelor's life for long time".

"That is why, I cannot cry or laugh along with my mother. Things which will make my mother to cry will make me to laugh and things which will make me to cry will make mother to laugh".

"It may be so, but why do you say that you would not return to home? I am not able to understand your attitude. That too at this age...."

"Oh, why?"

"It is as I said only. One has to think twice before deserting his or her mother, you know." Said Setsuko. Hearing this, Natsuko tried to explain and defend herself but, suddenly kept her mouth shut. Girl students all woke up from their midday nap and hurried to the bathhouse scrambling for the first place. They were wearing only a Yukata tied with sash. They rushed to the bath house with alacrity to get into the bath tub as early as possible and to indulge in the pleasures of hot water bath like fish. Natsuko, while watching the activities of the girls, compared her own student life with theirs. Those happy, youthful days have already become mere memories of the past. "Ah, I should not have acquired education - had I not known the taste of new wisdom I would have accepted any male as my husband as per my mother's choice and I would have been satisfied with that throughout my whole life. It would have been better had I not obtained any education at all. Had I not come into contact with the concept of freedom of self and soul I would not have tried to fly out of the cage like this. You see, is it not good to be independent of any help or service even from your mother or elder sister? Why is an unmarried, single woman considered crippled? Why are we despised like this?"

"Despised? No, it is your prejudice".

"It is not my prejudice. It is the fact. It is a fact that we are despised".

"You are extremely over sensitive".

"In other words, we are sinners of the society in the eyes of merciless and cruel people".

"Sinners?", Sekiko opened her eyes in wonder.

"Just give birth to a child is not the only business of a woman", with a cold-hearted smile, Natsuko continued. "I don't mind being a crippled person, let the world around me say anything. I don't mind being a sinner. Actually, we are different from other women around us - our thought, taste, and even our morals are all different".

"Well, you don't have to be a cynic like that".

"No, no, I am not a cynic".

"Well, only a cynic would say that he would live or die travelling. I am not able to understand why you have taken a decision to not to return to your home".

"If you don't understand, it is alright," Natsuko continued in a scornful tone, "You leave it as though you haven't understood it".

"In that case you shouldn't have talked such things from the beginning itself", Setsuko replied annoyingly. "Even I feel anxious about you, when you say so".

"Ah, ah...." Natsuko laughed loudly.

"Then, let me ask you", Setsuko blaming Natsuko's attitude asked again, "What are you intending to do hereafter?"

"Of course, work. I cannot live without working. 'Work', 'work'. Only when I work I really feel that I am living."

"But, can you get fully satisfied only with work".

"You are different from me in that matter, aren't you?" Natsuko dodged her body in displeasure. "If you can't get satisfied by 'work', what is the thing from which you get satisfaction? Marriage? Is it compulsory for a woman to get married?"

"Well, I think so".

"Oh, I am sorry. I am sorry to say such things to a person who will soon start a new life after getting married", Natsuko with a nervous look, floated a sarcastic smile on her lips like any spinster would have done.

"Miss Uryu, are you grinning at your friend also", Sekiko frowned.

"Look, I am not a bad person as you think."

"But, it always sounds to me so always".

"Ah, ah....., what I said now is a joke".

"I don't know why you behave so. I am always serious, you know. You never speak frankly your real feelings, don't you think so? Why don't you share your real feelings with me, as I doubt whether we would be able to meet again like this."

"Well, it is strange. What shall I hide from you?"

"No, you are hiding. You are hiding something. Can you remain satisfied only by 'work' - that too, being a very passionate woman."

"Dreams of love are talks of the past", Natsuko continued with an indifferent breath. "Ah, ah.... because I cannot live like an ingenuous girl any more, you know".

"Please speak", Sekiko turned very enthusiastic. "You cannot hide anything, even if you want, from me as I have been your friend for ten years. I hate you, because you are such a person."

"Then, do you want to say that I have changed?"

"Certainly you have changed. That can be easily understood even from your voice, colour of your kimono, and your way of walking."

"Is it so", Natsuko pressed her cheeks with her both hands.

"Whose influence is there behind all these changes", Sekiko smiled.

"Eh, what do you mean by 'Whose influence'".

"You don't want to return to your home, but you want to spend your life in travelling - you say all these things due to the influence of that person. Is it not so?"

"I don't understand what you are saying".

"Then, let me put it in this way. You have changed like this after Mr.Mikami from Tokyo visited you".

"Mr.Mikami", Natsuko continued in a ridiculing tone.

"Ah, ah..., it is a pity. What shall I do with that painter. Isn't he a child still?"

Both of them kept silence for a while. They looked each other as if tapping for opinion. The sound of warm water was heard calmly. Even the echo of water flowing over the pebbles and stones was faintly heard.

"You don't understand me", Natsuko muttered to herself.

"But you who say so haven't understood me too", Sekiko laughed.

"We don't understand each other, but still we say that we are friends for last ten years. Ah, ah..., but, whatever may be the case, there is nothing as dear as an old friend. Oh suddenly I have recollected some old memories of the past - specially about our friends who graduated along with us. What must have happened to Omura? What must be Takizawa doing now?"

"There is no correspondence after they got married".

"Well, only you and I are the two who still remain unmarried", Natsuko could not control her deep emotion and pressed Sekiko's hand firmly and continued. "We have two options in front of us - to get married or to remain as a spinster".

"You may choose any of these which, you think, would make you happy".



"Happy?" Natsuko laughed. "Even this word 'Happy' is old. Look, isn't it the same 'happiness' which we used to speak about since the time of our graduation. If it was to come to us, it would have come to us long time back. We say the same thing even after ten years. We wait for that 'happiness' even at this age. Ah, ah..., look, aren't we both in the same boat. But, Miss Sawa, you will definitely be successful. You please lead a happy family life. I would spend my time alone on the cold bed, seeing dreams and weeping. Let us try who will be happy, you who are married or I who remain unmarried". Suddenly, the girl students returned from the bathhouse and they parted to left and right.

2

At last the day of their departure came. The girl students hurriedly packed their luggage, each one in her own way, singing, dancing and so on - what a different life compared to the two prudent old ladies. All looked young, with pink cheeks, glossy hair-dos, and lovely black eyes ready to enjoy the splendours of the world. Certainly, Natsuko had also passed through this age once. Suddenly, loud voice of some musical instrument was heard at the downstairs. Girls came down to the ground floor running. Eager to know what happening there, they scrambled each other clinging to other's back.

It was a group of low-class entertainers. Around four or five people consisted of both male and female, in strange dress and headgear came to the garden of Masuya. They play their instruments for entertaining guests at the bath and collect money from them. People from the spa also came out and watched their programme. The song they sung was a piece of love song in disorderly tone and dirty words, rubbish in content, which would please the minds of gropers only. These low class entertainers' zeal and enthusiasm due to their hunger, their miserable life for which they were compelled to sell their low grade performance and various other feelings were contained in their song which reverberated on the railings and heard in a flirtation way. Folk song has tremendous power to enthrall people. Natsuko, sunk in grief, was touched by the song and its resounding voice went straight into her heart. Suddenly she was seized with a desire to enjoy the pleasures of this world. Well, there are pleasures and sorrows. Unknowingly one gets old after living a melancholic and painful life of a spinster and when a woman notices the decaying of her youthfulness, she falls into an unbearable mental condition. Natsuko walked along with the girl students.

Soon, Sekiko had departed. Natsuko was soon fell into loneliness. By this time, Sekiko might have already reached Aokimura. Natsuko walked around the second floor corridor of

Masuya alone. Silk-tree flowers in full blossom gave the corridor very beautiful look. Fresh flowers with pleasant fragrance were touching on the pale face of Natsuko. She narrowed her eyes and smelled them. Suddenly, memories of that young painter came into her mind. Artists, whoever may be it is, strangely have a mesmeric fascination to get women attracted towards them. Natsuko had acquaintance with several men so far, but she never had such a feeling as in the case of this young artist. He is the person who showed her the places where sunlight directly fall on the grass, talked to her about silk tree flowers getting steamed by hot air, and explained to her with zeal and enthusiasm the works of the great painter, the creator. No other man with whom she had acquaintance possessed this kind of qualities. Natsuko had acquired the ability to understand the nature slightly under the guidance of Mikami. He told her many things. She recollected various memories of the past, and pleasant and interesting ideas have come to stay in her mind.

Plants and trees got steamed due to heat, and human beings burned for love and affection. In the letter she received from Mikami he has written that he would visit her at Tazawa on that day. Natsuko is in the prime time of her life and is chased by the unending agonies of the flesh but she lacks the power to endure it. Not to mention, how unbearable it is for her to wait for somebody in such a condition. She

suddenly remembered about her hiding place with Mikami. She ran down from the second floor and went to that place as if in a dream.

The sky of August is clear and bright sunlight is falling on the ground through the gaps of thick leaves of the trees. The grass on the ground, which was mentioned earlier - sitting on which the painter and Natsuko exchanged talks in the past - is fresh and new always. Verdant shades have great magical power to console a lonely mind. This place is blessed with such natural surroundings. This is Natsuko's hiding place. This is the place she has often come to forget the worries and agonies of this world, for the last one month after she has reached Tazawa. This is the place she used to be often lost in deep thought. This is the place she used to weep sometimes in pain of love lying on the grassy ground.

"Mikami, Mikami", she called out his name aimlessly. But it was quiet everywhere and nobody responded her.

Various pleasant and sad memories pass through Natsuko's mind now. During the last ten years after graduating from the city school, there had been hardly any day she spent without a lover. A man can live only with his job and honour. But a woman cannot survive without loving and being loved. As the proverb goes, woman is like an ivy vine which would wither unless it clings to something. Natsuko is exactly one of them. Natsuko's enthusiasm and desire to get rid of the pain

of being a spinster has all the more forced her to indulge in fervent love affairs. Is it strange? She, a downhearted woman depressed and withered in grief like a withered grass seeks comfort and consolation from men. Is it strange? All her old friends are leading a happy and harmonious life. Only she is an exception, as she has determined to have such a life from the beginning. Such a decision has given her indescribable amount of sorrow and she cries alone in her bed in the cold and lonely nights. Is it strange? Ah, ah, she doesn't want to grow old, she doesn't want to get rotten, she wants to remain active and lively for ever. That is why Natsuko now indulges in love.

However, her life as an old miss for last ten years has made Natsuko's character different from others. Natsuko now always has a distrust for man. She is pushed around by this distrust and in the process she grows wise as a result of experiencing sorrowful encounters. A woman like Natsuko, who has tasted various bitter and painful experiences, would all the more get consoled by seeking various men's scent. Natsuko has seen many handsome men without chastity. She has also seen very passionate men being transformed into very cruel husbands. Natsuko no more trusts men. She just wants to make love with them or make them to have love with her for her comfort and consolation. Throw away the flower after enjoying its fragrance. That is what her intention is.

Well, she is such a woman. Her passion is such that she cannot live even a single day without making love with males, but at the same time, she is cold-hearted toward them - constantly engaged in criticising and analysing them. She is an embodiment of this contradiction. That means this woman cannot love anybody without distress and anguish in her mind. Therefore, whenever she meets a man she would create a temptation in him and make him to be impatient, but at the same time, she would not allow him to speak out his feelings even though she would be aware of his pain and agony. She too would never speak out her secrets to anybody frankly - instead of that, she would prefer to wander around the verdant shades, pressing her breasts in agony.

Suddenly, sound of foot steps was heard. A young man in Masuya's Yukata and 'heko obi' appeared from behind the tree shade. He was least bothered about his personal appearance. He walked in irregular steps as if in a dream, viewing the scenarios around - from the first glance itself one gets the impression that he is a prisoner of love. If there can be an expression like "lively melancholy", it can be seen certainly in the observing eyes of this young man. It was Mikami. Both of them sat on the grass together and started talking about art. Whenever they talk about art, it is his habit to soon switch over the subject to painting. Today too, unknowingly their talk gradually shifted to painting and he explained

various things with his hands earnestly. Naturally, he has an artist's hand with wiry fingers and beautiful nails suitable for handling brush. Natsuko, while comparing her hands with his, sat there listening to his talk with a smile.

"Ah", Mikami heaved a sigh. "I am quite sick of painting portraits now".

"Why are you saying such things again", Natsuko sidled up to his side.

"Actually, I am doing a rubbish job - certainly for a livelihood. You know, I have started painting a portrait of a great landlord now. His mansion is in the midst of a thick woods and when watched from away, it looks like a painting like this. On my way to his mansion, I have imagined various things about the man and his quiet life in that mansion".

"How was it? Your imagination and reality".

"Well, there was great difference. I have got sick of it the moment I entered its gate. Many farmers, tired and looking pale, have been going in and out of the gate. Probably they are the servants. I have met the hero, the landlord - a menial person without my dignity in one word, he is a neo-rich".

"There are many like him in this vicinity".

"It is worthless to meet people like him. they consider painter as beggars. Therefore, they call painters as

"egakiya" instead of "gaka". Isn't it contemptuous to call an artist 'egakiya'?"

"Then, how should they be called?" Natsuko laughed.

"Instead of calling 'egakiya', use the word 'gaka' or something else", Kikami shook his shoulders and continued. "Any way, giving no importance to such things, when I started portraying him sincerely as he originally looks, he started making certain remarks, like "can't you portray me little more handsome, can't you make the colour more fair" etc, which I dislike". "Ah, ah..., how does he look like? Is that landlord very handsome?"

"Well, he has a face which is seldom seen. Actually it is difficult to portray a man noble looking if he has no nobility originally".

"If I were you, I would have portrayed him handsome".

"I cannot do such nonsense. My conscience will not allow me to do that".

"Ha, ha... you are excessively honest".

"Ah, ah, actually human temper is a dirty thing".

You should have placed a mirror in front of that man".

"Any way, present day artists cannot survive if they don't do that. For survival, we have to stand begging in front of people like this man and get satisfied by the pittance they give us. Tell me, whether anybody is getting



today enough money to live. Actually, i feel like to cry. Well, I shouldn't have become a painter."

"Mikami, you are talking things which do not fit to your nature."

"Actually, while always seeing beautiful dreams, we human beings live a humble life".

"You are grumbling".

"Grumbling? You too are very cruel".

"Then, you look at the photographers. Suppose a photographer has honestly taken the photo of a man's face and given that photo to him without any touch up work, saying that it is your face, what will be the reaction of that customer. Of course he will refuse to accept it saying that it is not his face. Therefore, a photographer carries out touch up works to make the face of the customer beautiful. what is "touch up work"? Isn't it a kind of flattery? Surely foolish people in this society will never think that, that is a (self) conceited photograph."

"I see...."

"Well, now your case. You are engaged in making a portrait of a rich landlord. The landlord has made certain conditions and because of that you are angry. But, why don't you make a self-conceited portrait of that man as he wished. Ah, ah... what else can you do?"

"I have done it. But now I feel that I am a fool".

"That is why you have won high opinion of the people".

"Ah, Nature is the best thing. It makes us to portray beautiful or ugly things silently. I don't know how happy I am if I portray the 'nature' instead of portraying man".

"Well, you told me that you are painting for earning money for your daily bread. But, do you think that you can earn your bread very easily in this world of falsehood. You portray a monkey as a man and a man as a god. Biographers, historians and all others find their means of life in that way only. You must achieve success in life by any means including even flattering. Ah, ah, . . . , although I say all these things, you are still young".

The suburban panorama seen through the trees have suddenly turned dark and lonely. Asama mountain ranges have completely turned greyish. The far end of black clouds may be having summer afternoon showers. Ah, it is the day of fox's marriage - that is why it is raining when the sun is shining. A group of clouds in the clear sky quickly moved toward the Hofukuji-peak. Natsuko, looking at the clouds, continued again.

"Any way, let it be so. Mikami, how is your work progressing on? Could you finish anything after that?"

"You mean my research", Mikami heaved a sigh. Soon, as if he remembered something, he looked at her face and said, "I couldn't".

"But you have painted something, I hope".

"No, not even a single piece".

"Not even a single piece?", Natsuko turned very eager and continued, "haven't you painted even a single one after that"?

"Yes"

"Then, what have you been doing?"

"Well, I have been thinking".

"Thinking? ah, ah...", Natsuko looked at the man. His eyes were burning in pain of fervent love.

"We have been discussing very serious matters so far", Natsuko changed her mind. "Don't we have some other interesting topic now".

"What do you mean by interesting topic".

"Why don't you tell me something about your love affairs", upon hearing it, he turned red.

"Well, first of all, Miss Uryu you tell me your story".

"Ah, ah.... If I had any such affairs I would not have lived a life like this".

Bright sunlight falling on the grass through the trees uptill now has disappeared suddenly and the clear sky seen through the leaves have completely turned grey. Abruptly, frogs started croaking as if inviting thunder shower. As it was about to rain, both of them got close to the trunk of a tree and stood there still, watching a flock of small birds

flying low in the sky. A cool breeze cooled their burning cheeks.

"I envy men", Natsuko, while looking his face from side, said. "Men can go any place they want to go and choose any work they like to do".

"But I still envy you women folk. Mainly, because I don't agree with the concept of man working all the time".

"See, even women will work. But, woman's physiology is different from man. therefore, she cannot execute everything as per her desire. If I were a man, you know, I would have done anything. Of course even now I am ready to do anything you people do, including travelling."

"I am different from you. You like to watch scenery of the sky which is very active at the time of afternoon summer showers. Aren't you? Whereas, I like calm and quite scenery, exposed to bright sun light like this place. Not only scenery, all other things are like that only. Certainly, you are planning to work like men. It is really great".

"But you know, I always think I would start working from tomorrow. Tomorrow, tomorrow, remains always tomorrow and I spend today as if in a dream."

"Why? Are you a person sitting idle? Actually, it is I who spend my time in idle".

"That is a proof of your being a genius".

"Genius? Am I?"

"Because, only a man of genius can spend his life in idle in this world."

"I see. Certainly it is so. there is no doubt. Actually, I have been enjoying watching the scenery here now. Well, you please think about it. Why should a painter observe the nature? Is it not disgusting and irritating to portray a scenery soon after its observation? That is why I cannot make even a single painting at present. Sit under the verdant shadow and relax like a little bird, that itself make me an outstanding painter even if I don't make any painting."

Suddenly thunder had started. Farm labourers, both males and females, who have been enjoying a mid-day nap in the outskirts in order to get rid of their fatigue and tiredness caused due to hard work on a summer day, suddenly have got up from here and there and rushed back to their homes in groups through the path in the middle of the field, raising their innocent voices. Sudden shower has cooled down the grasses. Willow leaves, peach leaves, Keyaki, and maple trees, all stood in the midst of spray. Japanese plums has been falling like stones in the rain. Fortunately, they did not get wet much. The painter, shivering with passion and love, drew closer to the woman. He felt the faint fragrance of her black hair mixed with the aroma of izutsu. Her look did not change at all - she was sitting there deep in thought, calm and quite, motionless and staring at the rain.

Soon, the sky has turned clear here and there and sound of thunder could be heard only from far away distance like the sound of waves. Dark grey clouds have got tattered and sky has become clear. Trees and grasses shined in luster due to bright sunlight falling on them. Water drops on the green leaves looked like gems.

"Well, I must also return to Tokyo in the near future", Mikami said to himself. Expression on his face indicated that he wants to disclose something to her. He tried to speak it out several times, but couldn't succeed in it. Every time, he heaved a deep sigh and sat there.

"Miss Uryu, you haven't talked to me anything about yourself".

"Ah, ah..., even after talking so many things, do you still say that I haven't talked to you anything".

"Well, why do you hide everything from me?"

"Hiding? Look, what should I hide from you?"

"No. You are seemed to be thinking something. You are actually a strange person. In short, I want to know what are you planning to do hereafter?"

"Well, if there is a chance, I would like to work as a school teacher in a village".

"A village school teacher? You have strong self-confidence, and still you want to become a school teacher only? That is why I say I don't understand you. That is why,

I say that you are hiding something from me. Miss Uryu, Miss Uryu, what are you actually thinking now, where will you go hereafter? What will you do hereafter? What type of a person are you? I don't understand you".

"Myself is myself, as you see me now. I possess neither a house nor a hometown. Ah, ah..., you may please consider me as a travelling woman."

Both of them kept silence for a while.

"Miss Uryu", he looked at her as if he worships her, and continued. "How long are you going to treat me as your younger brother? And how long should I consider you as my elder sister...."

"Elder sister? Is it so? Or your younger sister?"

"I want to tell you something once for my whole life".

"I see", Natsuko stretched out her chest; "I too have something to tell you once for my whole life, you know".

"Alright, let me hear it", he said eagerly.

"Well, start from the male's side. That is the order".

Burning in the passion and pain of love, his face from the base of the ear till the nape of the neck had turned red. Blood in his entire body had flown to his lips, urging him to disclose the secret in his mind. Ah! his lips which can usually chatter any futile matter continuously, like the chirping of a sparrow, failed to speak out a single word of love. What a pity it is. Why can't he speak out the truth in

his mind, a truth which is free of any fabrication or decoration, purely as per his wish. Hot tears had flown through his manly cheeks.

"Mr.Mikami, I understood well. I understood well what you want to tell me", Natsuko said. Her burning eyes had dimmed with tears. Suddenly, she turned little pale and continued; "In short, you want to tell me that you love me. Am I right?"

He was no more worried about the consequences. He stretched out his shivering hand and touched Natsuko's hand gently. Natsuko pushed his hand aside and said, "thank you for your interest in me, but I don't love you". She expressed her will in a dignified, solemn tone. It was like passing a death sentence. Mikami soon turned deadly pale.

"Ah, ah....", Natsuko floated a sad and lonely smile.

"There are some people in this world who have lot of free time. they imagine various things in their mind and think that others also do in the same way. You know, I am not as easy going as you think".

He couldn't lift up his head. Natsuko continued her talk." Mr.Mikami, what have I told you just before? I told you that I have something to tell you once for my whole life. Now you must have understood what I really wanted to tell you, haven't you?"

He remained silent again.



"Well, look at my face well. Hey, are you not looking at my face?" Upon hearing her words, he while shivering like a wounded beast looked at her face. Their eyes met together like a splash of lightening.

"Ah, ah..., I am a wanton woman, you know. Well, I don't believe any more what other women say. We are all liars. If it is possible to show the face of women's mind, I would like to show mine to you. Mr.Mikami please forget me. You shouldn't stray from the right path, but please try to become a fine and respectable person. I too pray for your success from behind. This would be our final separation in our life". Mikami sat there still looking down.

As if in dreams, Natsuko walked away quickly without even turning back. Her legs and zori (sandals) got wet in the dewdrops (of after noon shower). She soon had rushed to the first floor of Masuya. As soon as she entered her room, she fell on the bed and burst into tears.

"Mikami, please pardon me".

Tears, on the other hand, reduced her pain. that night Natsuko had written a letter to Sekiko and left Tazawa next day early morning when it was still dark.

3

Soon Sekiko had got married. Even after shifting to Takajomachi in Ueda, she hadn't forgotten her friend whom she met again during her tour to Tazawa. She saw Natsuko in her

dreams, thought about her every morning when she woke up, and worried about her health always and waited eagerly for her letter. For six months after their separation, Natsuko had written letters to Sekiko in the frequency of one letter per month. Her letters contained ridiculous and laughable news, sad news, various pathetic news and her bitterness for being a woman. Some time she wrote in grief and some other time she wrote in happiness. Gradually, the frequency of letters from Natsuko had decreased. Once in one month had changed to once in two months and, gradually, it changed to once in three months or four months. Even the volume and contents of her letter also got reduced. A new year's card Sekiko received in the spring of the third year was sent from an inn in Saikyo. Thereafter, letters from natsuko had stopped coming suddenly and no newyear's card had come for the fourth year.

Thereafter, nobody knew about the whereabouts of Natsuko. Somebody said to have seen her in Tokyo, somebody said to have seen her in Takasaki and somebody else had seen her in Komoro. Different people spread different rumours about her. House of the Uryu family is situated in a place called Tokida in the outskirts of Ueda town, which is little away from Takajomachi. Sekiko had also visited Tokida occasionally. Every time she visited Tokida, she heard rumours about Natsuko. Natsuko had been the subject for various disgusting and shameful criticism and she had been counted as the worst

example of an educated women. In such cases, society acts very cruelly. Sekiko found it difficult to believe the rumours about Natsuko. But after separating from that young painter, Natsuko had lived with several frivolous lovers and deserted many of them. Even Sekiko couldn't help bending her ears to this rumour.

In the autumn of the fifth year, Sekiko had visited the Uryu family when she had gone to participate in Omiya festival. Takada Shishi - lion, old customers, persimmon colour overcoats, silk thread jin-haori, akatengu on a big paper fan at the front of the procession, stirring sounds of taiko - drums, mixed sounds of songs, and the shining feathers worn by the dancers who dance in disorder, etc. were as same as last time when Sekiko watched this festival along with Natsuko. That time both of them had gone there with "Tabakobon style" hair-do, and wearing their best dress, "Uedajimagi". Natsuko's mother, weak and worried, was helped by Sekiko and watched the festival holding on to the front lattice. Four or five people in the rear side of the procession were wearing straw hat and sky-blue 'komon-hakama' over light green ceremonial dress 'kamishimo'. Their wainscot had Sanata crest, their short swords were in silk wrapping cloth. They held red tuft in their hands and wore white 'tabi' and 'fukuzori'. They passed through the front side of Natsuko's house playing their black coated flutes. The tone

of their music was mournful and sorrowful. Upon hearing the flute, music Natsuko's mother suddenly recollected the memories of her olden days and began to weep. That day, Sekiko heard about the whereabouts of Natsuko accidentally. She heard it from Tatsu, a farmer from Netsumura, who came to see this festival. An honest and frank man, he spoke everything about her in detail.

"Yes, yes, I live in a place just near by her. However, please keep it secret whatever I tell you now", Tatsu once again cautioned Sekiko.

According to his version, Natsuko, ailing from some illness, has been staying with her wet nurse. Sekiko's mind filled with various gusses and conjectures, which would cause her lot of pain. Her friend who has chosen a wanderer's life after abandoning her home town - and also being abandoned by the home-town - has been taken ill in the neighbourhood of this Kotsumura - it is really painful. In one of Natsuko's letters, which she sent from her wondering tour, she wrote; "this morning when I was dressing my hair, two three white hairs got struck on my comb. I became very sad. Therefore I stopped using mirror now". "Well, Uryu might die"; Sekiko lost her interest in watching the festival because of her worry about her friend's illness. Sekiko soon returned alone through the streets decorated with colourful paper lanterns, leaving behind the crowds of cheerful people gathered for the

festival and sounds of taiko drums and flutes. Next day, Sekiko left Ueda along with a man to visit her old friend. Distance from Tanaka bus stop till Kotsumura is more than four kilometers. The narrow road between these two places has lot of stones and rocks. While climbing Chiisagata slope, one can enjoy the beautiful view of Chikuma-gawa river at their back. Weeds in full bloom had decorated the stone wall at the side of the paddy field.

From the outskirts of Araya village, Hitomura of Kotsu, lying along the foot of Asama Mountain ranges, can be seen. When Sekiko has seen houses with white washed and earthen walls, shining under the autumn sun, her heart leaped up for joy.

"Miss Uryu hasn't returned to her home since last five years. Am I not right?"; the man who was accompanying Sekiko said while looking at the houses in the base of Asama mountain ranges.

"Yes, you are right", Sekiko wiped the sweat on her body and continued; "it is the fifth year".

"It is a foolish thing", he laughed in a disinterested tone and continued, "not to get married in spite of getting such a high education. Actually, her case is exceptional. Even her father had been a great defender of learning. Unfortunately, he became insane and died in the house prison pathetically".

"In short, Uryu wants to be alone always and she must have inherited this nature from her father. Look, those who would become insane would like to be alone always".

"Her father was a scholar in National learning and his daughter is a scholar of Western learning."

"Stop talking nonsense. It may be so, but Uryu's mother was also quite a capable person."

"She was a strong-minded woman".

"I don't remember well about Uryu's father, but I know that her mother had unusually high desire for fame, you know. I haven't come across any woman with so much aspiration after fame like her. When Uryu graduated from our school in first rank, her mother showed indescribable amount of pride. She wanted to get her daughter married to a man in high position, at least a person in the level of a minister or above. Therefore, most of the ordinary people who had come with proposals for marriage were treated with contempt. Such has been her nature, but now she is ready to get her daughter married to anybody as soon as possible. But, you see, now for the mother it is a difficult matter."

"Well, you are the only person who support her".

"Look, Uryu is not a bad person as people say, you know. However, I too don't know how long she could continue to live alone happily."

"Men will not allow her to live so. Ha, ha...", he laughed ridiculously. "Madamme, how old is she now?"

"Well, she was just... years old when we separated last time at Tazawa. Therefore, she must be now... five years old."

"...five years. You mean twenty five years?"

"Twenty five years? Are you joking? I meant thirty five".

"Eh, I am surprised. Is she so old?"

While talking such things, they climbed the sand and mud covered slope panting.

It was quite a long distance. Sekiko thought about the meaning of woman's life. She thought about Natsuko with pity and she thought about her on life. She remembered Natsuko's words which she said in a challenging tone before they separated at Tazawa; (Let us try who will be happy, you who are married or I who remain unmarried). Is Natsuko happy? In fact, spinister's life has given her the mental strength to live but it killed her physically. According to Tatsu's talk yesterday, Natsuko has become very weak physically. Ah, she must have suffered a lot. But, am I really happy? Marriage has given me the physical strength to live, but it killed me mentally. Well, I have put on so much weight after my marriage (after I started tieing my hair in 'Marumage') and become very healthy. But, for that I sacrificed my interest in language learning and music and came down to the level of

any illiterate woman in the society - worried only about eating and drinking.

As she was walking deep in thought, Tatsu, on his way back to home from work, reached there with a hoe on his shoulder. Sekiko, with great glee, told him the purpose of her visit. Slightly upset Tatsu rubbed his big peasant-like hands and soon pointed an earthen walled house reflected in the evening autumn sun. A persimmon tree with red fruits stand there covering the thatched roof of that house. that is the house of Natsuko's wet-nurse.

"By the way", Tatsu mumbled for a while, "I am sorry for something".

"Well, what is that?", Sekiko looked at his face, "you speak out strange things suddenly".

"I don't tell lie usually, but...."

"It is embarrassing. Then, Miss Uryu isn't sick?"

"Well, you will understand it once you meet her".

A woman in her fifties had been washing a pot stooping down in the stream in front of the house. She was Natsuko's wet nurse. Sekiko asked her about Natsuko. Suddenly her face turned pale. As she was in a confused state, she could not reply Sekiko's enquiries. Neither she said welcome to her nor asked her to come into the house. Even a black cat which has been clinging around the hem of her kimono, showed its



indignation to the unaccustomed female guest. A hen had spread its wings and gathered its chicks under it.

"Yes, yes, please wait a little", Natsuko's wet nurse rushed into the house, leaving Sekiko outside the house. After a short while, she came out, with a serious look. "Really, you have come from far away place", the wet nurse looked around restlessly and continued; after taking lot of troubles, but Natsuko is not in a position to meet you, as she is ill."

"That is why I have come to see her", Sekiko said annoyingly.

"Yes, yes, but unfortunately, doctor has asked her not to meet anybody in this condition."

The man accompanying her had pulled Sekiko's sleeves. He has promised to meet Sekiko later and soon gone to Tatsu's house as it was evening already. Sekiko stood there still for a while. Soon the surrounding was covered by evening haze and people as well as horses passing through that area were visible only dimly. Suddenly, Sekiko heard the following conversation from beyond the persimmon tree.

"What happened to the young lady?" It was a man's voice.

"Your voice is loud", it was a scolding voice. Certainly it was the voice of the wet-nurse. "She says that she has severe pain in the stomach".

"I see. She is going to deliver soon?"

"Nobody is here at present to go and call the midwife. It is good that you have come. Please go and call the midwife quickly."

"You are asking me? You better send the child".

"Child has been sent to the market".

"I hope, we will not be deceived again this time. She made a great fuss last time in the night - it was a nonsense".

"She will definitely deliver tonight".

"In that case I will run and call the midwife". Sekiko was taken aback by the sound of his foot steps. She quickly had gone to Tatsu's house.

Tatsu and family, sitting near the robata (hearth side), were chatting about Natsuko's delivery and laughing loudly.

After dinner, Tatsu's wife told Sekiko all details about her friend Natsuko. Natsuko, without doubt, had come to her wet nurse's house near Tatsu's house, when she was pregnant for about five months. Thereafter she has been always confined in a room, and engaged in reading. Whenever Tatsu's wife has gone to the backyard to collect vegetables, she heard faint sound of reading books by Natsuko, sitting at the back room. She was scared of meeting people and has never come out of the house except in nights. On moonlit nights, she used to go out for strolling, accompanied with a girl next to her house. There was no other unusual sign. Who knows how it happened. Nobody from outside visited her and, therefore,

nobody has come to know about it. To speak in extreme, even the wet-nurse seemed to have been unaware of it for a long time.

"But, giving birth to a child is also a duty of a woman in her life." Tatsu's wife laughed without opening her mouth.

Worried about her neighbour, Tatsu's wife has gone to enquire about Natsuko. Sekiko sat there till late in the night, talking to Tatsu and the other man who accompanied her. Actually, this place is a village. Both the men were talking about man's life in comparison with the life of beasts. After talking about rumours related to Natsuko, they began to talk about the delivery of female horse etc. Only Sekiko was anxious and worried. Tatsu's family offered her, Shibucha (bitter tea), pickled scallion, fried warp larva, etc. but she couldn't eat anything. Soon it was past 10 O'clock in the night. Tatsu's wife has come back to take something from house and on her way back, she told Sekiko and others the details of happenings in the next house. It was as follows: Natsuko has been lying down in the back room but the lamp has been kept in the next room, and therefore, back room gets only faint light. The place where the woman in child bed is lying down has been partitioned off by a folding screen. Ladies from neighbourhood are engaged in various activities. Some are eating, somebody is making ready Ubugi (the clothes for the new born baby) and Shimeshi, somebody is drawing

'Jitsubosan' and somebody is lifting fire in the oven (under the pot). A "makuri" (tucked-up) breast has been made by using little tsutsumi-men (wrapping cotton) on a piece of red silk. A glass of water with a talisman of Shogamasama floating on it would be good for the woman in the childbed. So, somebody is making that hastily. Around 9 O'Clock, the woman on the child bed suddenly started crying in agony and pain. Kamisan removed the folding screen to a corner, in order to make the bed-side brighter, and she broke a raw egg and gave to the woman in the child bed. Her emaciated figure gave a pathetic look in the faint lamp light. She has been lifted up from the bed by holding her back and shoulders, but it was difficult for her to sit on the bed steady. She drank the raw egg while breathing deeply. Her skinny hands were shivering in such a way that, some of the raw egg in the chawan (cup) spilled on the bed. Her black hair got dishevelled from sleeping. Sweat was flowing down from her forehead. Her bed got wet by tears. Finally her severe pain got lulled in deep breath just before and she might give birth soon. Finishing the narration of events, Tatsu's wife (Kamisan) walked towards her neighbour's house. Sekiko, while seeing her off from back, whipped her eyes gently.

Sekiko has no experience of delivering a child. Her heart filled with fear and compassion. She opened slightly the amado (shutters) of the south verandah. The night sky of

autumn had scattered stars on it. Westward wind blowing on the trees in the garden was giving rise to whistling sound. Leaves of persimmon tree and Japanese plum tree rustled in the wind. Leaves falling from the trees fell on the door with a pattering noise. Terrific screaming of a woman could be intermittently heard along with the noise of the wind. It was definitely the screaming of Natsuko - voice of her pain. Ah, separation of a child from its mother's womb requires unusual power and energy. Man is born to this earth after inflicting tremendous amount of pain to his mother. Sekiko (has) witnessed the birth of a child for the first time in her life. Vigorous natural force - an open secret of human life - Sekiko from the strained voice of her friend has realised for the first time how painful and horrible to give birth. Suddenly, the first cry of the newborn baby was heard. Sekiko got still more frightened.

"Baby is born, baby is born", Tatsu danced in joy and walked around in the house.

Next morning, Sekiko casually visited the wet nurse's house with the help of kami-san. Natsuko gave birth to a girl child. Her delivery was safe and easy. Upon hearing this news, Sekiko's desire to meet Natsuko increased all the more although this is not the time for that. But at least she wants to see the lovely child, Natsuko's true image.

Realising her desire, Kami-san brought the new born baby from inside.

"Here is the infant. Please see", Kami-san took off the red cap from the baby's head and rubbed the infant's dowing hair. The infant was sleeping peacefully and occasionally she twisted her face innocently. Some time, she moved her tiny lips (on which lipstick has been put) in want of breast milk. Sekiko looked at the baby's face eagerly to find out whether she has any features resembling to her mother, Natsuko. The infant's white nose is seemed to grow long. She seemed to have many other features resembling her mother, but as she is still an infant, it was different to compare her look with her mother. She looked like a gem but, at the same time, as she was a newborn baby, she looked ugly too.

After Sekiko had returned to Ueda, Natsuko must have been moved by hearing the news that Sekiko had visited her but left without meeting her. It is difficult to get a friend like Sekiko in this world. However, Natsuko's life has been dark and evil infected to such an extend that she could not tell her story even to that friend. In fact, she did have a mind to love people even when she had abandoned her parents and native place. But now that she has given up even that love. Love has also abandoned her. Like any ordinary, beautiful woman without virginity, Natsuko also gave birth to a girl child. But even this child was not born as a result of her

real love. Fearing the outside world, Natsuko did not come out, but brought up (nursed) her illegal child inside a dimly-lit room.

Natsuko's recovery after her confinement and delivery was not satisfactory. There was a feast on the seventh night, with brown rice and fish, and next day morning, Natsuko's girl child passed away while in her hands.

Tatsu had gone to Ueda to tell this news to Sekiko. However he could not speak it out to Sekiko properly because of sorrow and grief. According to Tatsu, Natsuko lost her normal mental condition and became mad due to great shock and grief after the death of her child.

\* \* \* \* \*

Five years after, Natsuko, a living corpse by the time, had came back to her home town on a kuruma (rickshaw). She was completely changed both physically and mentally. Certainly she must have undergone indescribable amount of agony and pain. Today's Natsuko is not the same Natsuko of the olden days. Cursing her ruin as an unmarried old lady, she wondered around from place to place like a mad person, with a chrisanthemum hairpin (kiku no kanzashi) on her hair, painting her face white and putting lipstick on her lips. She travelled from place to place - if yesterday at the Yakushi (Healing Buddha) of Yokado, today at the Omiya shrine - making company with farmers and merchants. Stopping travellers on the way she would ask them "Won't you make me your wife", and laugh shyly, placing her sleeves on her face.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### BOOKS

- Allen, G.C., *A Short Economic History of Modern Japan 1867-1937 (With a Supplementary Chapter on Economic Recovery and Expansion 1945-1970)*, London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1972.
- Anesaki Masaharu, *History of Japanese Religion*, London: Kegan Paul Trench, 1963.
- Arishima Takeo, "Aru Onna" I & II, Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1950.
- Aston, W.G., *A History of Japanese Literature*, Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1972.
- Beasley, W.G., *The Rise of Modern Japan*, Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1990.
- Bendict, Ruth, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword - Pattern of Japanese Culture*, Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle, 1954.
- Bernstein, Gail Lee (edited with Introduction), *Recreating Japanese Women, 1600-1945*, University of California Press, 1991.
- Blacker, Carmen, *The Japanese Enlightenment: A Study of the Writing of Fukuzawa Yukichi*, London: Cambridge University Press, 1969.
- Booth, Wayne, *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961.
- Chabot, Jeanette Tandin, *Women in Japanese Literature*, Netherlands Association for Japanese Studies, 1981.
- Dostoevsky, Feodor, *Crime and Punishment*, translated by Jessie Coulson, edited by George Gibian, New York, 1964.
- Duus, Peter, *The Rise of Modern Japan (Kindai Nihon)*, Boston: Standford University, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1976.
- Eiichi Kiyooka (ed.), *Fukuzawa Yukichi on Japanese Women (Selected Works)*, Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1988.

- Esashi Akiko, *Ai to Sei no Jiyu:- "Ie" Kara no Kaiho*, Tokyo: Shakai Hyoronsha, 1989.
- Forster, E.M., *Aspects of the Novel*, Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1962.
- Fuji, J.A., *Complicit Fictions: The Subject in the Modern Japanese Prose Narratives*, Berkeley: University of California, 1993.
- Fukuda Kiyoto, *Ishibashi Tokue, "Tayama Katai" - Hito to Sakuhin-38*, Tokyo: Shimuzu Shoin, 1968.
- Fukuda Kiyoto, Ogura Shuzo, *"Futabatei Shimei" - Hito to Sakuhin-18*, Tokyo: Shimizu Shoin, 1966.
- Fukuda Kiyoto, Sasaki Tooru, *"Shimazaki Toson", Hito to Sakuhin-8*, Tokyo: Shimizu Shoin, 1987.
- Fukuzawa Yukichi, *"Gakumon no Susume", Fukuzawa Yukichi Zenshu-3*, Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1960.
- , *Onna Daigaku Hyoron", Jiji Shimpo, April 1-July 23, 1899*, Fukuzawa Yukichi Zenshu-6, pp.467-503.
- , *"Danjo Kosai Ron", Jiji Shimpo, May 26-June 3, 1886*, Fukuzawa Yukichi Zenshu-5, pp.581-605.
- Futabatei Shimei, *"Ukigumo"*, Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1966.
- Havens, Thoma R.H., *Nishi Amane and Modern Japanese Thought*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970.
- Hayashi Isamu, *Komoro naru Kojo no hotori: Shimazaki Toson to Komoro*, Komoro: Shiritsu Toson Kinenkan, 1967.
- Hemmings, F.W.J., *Emile Zola*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966.
- Higuchi Ichiyo, *"Take Kurabe", Meiji Bungaku Zenshu-30, Higuchi Ichiyo-shu*, Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1972.
- , *"Nigori-e", Meiji Bungaku Zenshu-30, Higuchi Ichiyo-shu*, Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1972.
- Hirano Ken, *"Shimazak Toson"*, Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1946.
- , *Showa Bungaku-Shi*, Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1963.

- , *Commentary for "Kyushujin and Mebae"*, Tokyo: Shincho Bunko, 1969.
- Hiraoka Toshio, *Kitamura Tokoku Kenkyu*, Tokyo: Yuseido, 1967.
- Honda Masuko, *Saishiki Sareru Meiji: Jogakusei no Keifu*, Tokyo: Seitosha, 1990.
- Hudson, William Henry, *An Introduction to the Study of Literature*, London: George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., 1963.
- Ide Magoroku, *Gunsho Nihon no Sakka-4:- Shimazaki Toson*, Tokyo: Shogaku-kan, 1992.
- Inoue Kiyoshi, *Nihon Joseishi (Kaitei han)*, Kyoto, Japan: Sanichi Shobo, 1954.
- Irokawa, Daikichi, *The Culture of the Meiji Period*, translated and edited by Marius B. Jansen, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985.
- Ito Kazuo, *Shimazaki Toson Jiten*, Tokyo: Meiji Shoin, 1972.
- , *Shimazaki Toson Kenkyu*, Tokyo: Meiji Shoin, 1969.
- Jansen, M.B. (ed.), *Changing Japanese Attitudes Toward Modernization*, Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Co., 1982.
- Kamei Shoichiro, *Shimazaki Tosonron*, Tokyo: Shinchosha, 1953.
- Kataoka Ryoichi, *Kindai Nihon no Shosetsu*, Tokyo: Hosei Daigaku Shuppan-Kyoku, 1956.
- , *Kindai Nihon no Sakka to Sakuhin*, Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1954.
- , *Shizenshugi Kenkyu*, Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1957.
- Kato Shuichi, *Nihon Bungakushi Josetsu, Part I*, Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1975.
- , *Nihon Bungakushi Josetsu, Part 2*, Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1980.
- , *A History of Japanese Literature-3, The Modern Years* (Translated by Don Sanderson), Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1990.

- Keene, Donald, *Japanese Literature: An Introduction for Western Readers*, Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1977.
- , *Modern Japanese Literature*, New York: Grove Press, 1956.
- Kitagawa, Joseph M., *Religion in Japanese History*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1916.
- Kitamura Tokoku, "Ensei Shika to Josei", Kitamura Tokoku Zenshu, Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1970.
- , "Saigo no Shorisha wa darezo", Kitamura Tokoku Zenshu, Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1970.
- , "Kakujin Shinkyunai no Hikyu", Kitamura Tokoku Zenshu, Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1970.
- , "Jinsei in Aiwataru to wa nan no iizo", Kitamura Tokoku Zenshu, Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1970.
- , "Naibu Seimei-ron", Kitamura Tokoku Zenshu, Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1970.
- , "Emaruson", Tokoku Zenshu-3, Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1960.
- Kobayashi Hideo, "Shishosetsu Ron" Kobayashi Hideo Zenshu, vol.3, Tokyo: Shinchosha, 1968.
- Kosaka Masaaki, *Japanese Thought in the Meiji Era*, Tokyo: Toyo Bunko, 1969.
- Koschmann, J.V. (ed.), *Authority and the Individual in Japan - Citizen's Protest in Historical Perspective*, Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1978.
- Kosugi Tengai, "Hatsu Sugata", *Gendai Nihon Bungaku Zenshu-56*, Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1957.
- , "Hayari Uta", *Gendai Nihon Bungaku Zenshu-56*, Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1957.
- Lebra, Takie Sugiyama, *Japanese Patterns of Behaviour*, Honolulu, University Press of Hawaii, 1976.
- Lewell, John, *Modern Japanese Novelists - A Biographical Dictionary*, Kodansha America, Inc., 1993.

- Mason, R.H.P. and Caiger, J.G., *A History of Japan*, Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1973.
- McCellan, Edwin, *Two Japanese Novelists: Soseki and Toson*, Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle, 1971.
- Meiji Japan Through Contemporary Sources*, vol.1, 1854-1889, Tokyo: Compiled and Published by the Centre for East Asian Cultural Studies, 1970.
- Meiji Japan Through Contemporary Sources*, volume 2, 1844-1882, Tokyo: Compiled and Published by the Centre for East Asian Cultural Studies, 1970.
- Meiji Japan Through Contemporary Sources*, volume 3, 1869-1894, Tokyo: Compiled and Published by the Centre for East Asian Cultural Studies, 1972.
- Mitchell, Richard H., *Thought Control in Prewar Japan*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1966.
- Miyoshi Yukio, *Shimazaki Toson-ron*, Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1984.
- , *Shimazaki Toson-ron*, Tokyo: Shibundo, 1966.
- Moloney, J.C., *Understanding the Japanese Mind*, Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1954.
- Mori Ogai, "*Maihime*", Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, 1954.
- Muto Naoharu, *Toson no Sakuhin to Kansho*, Tokyo: Kobunsha, 1959.
- Nakamura Mitsuo, *Meiji Bungaku-shi*, Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1963.
- Nakamura, Shinichiro, *Kono Hyakunen no Shosetsu - Jinsei to Bungaku to -*, Tokyo: Shinchosha, 1974.
- Nakane Chie, *Japanese Society*, Harmondsworth, Middlesex, Penguin Books Ltd., 1970.
- Nakashima Kenzo, Ito Sei, Odagiri Hideo, Ara Hasahito (eds.), *Meiji no Sakkatachi-II*, Tokyo: Eihosha, 1955.
- Namiki Miharuru, *Shimazaki Toson to Komoro (Kotsu Takeshi no Yujo O Megutte)* Kabushiki-gaisha Ichii, Nagano, 1989 (Chikuma Bunko).

- Natsume Soseki, *"Kokoro"*, Tokyo: Shinchosha, 1987.
- , *"Sanshiro"*, Tokyo: Shinchosha, 1987.
- , *"Botchan"*, Tokyo: Shichosha, 1986.
- , *"Mon"*, Tokyo: Shinchosha, 1987.
- , *"Michi Kusa"*, Tokyo: Shinchosha, 1987.
- , *"Wagahai Wa neko de aru"*, Tokyo: Shinchosha, 1987.
- Pollack, David, *Reading Against Culture: Ideology and Narrative in the Japanese Novel*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Powell, Irena, *Writers and Society in Modern Japan*, London: The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1983.
- Pyle, Kenneth B., *The Making of Modern Japan*, Delhi: Surjeet Publications, 1981.
- Reishauer, Edwin O., *The Japanese Today - Change and Continuity*, Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1990.
- , *Japan: The Story of a Nation*, Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Co., 1981.
- Rimer, J.T., *Modern Japanese Fiction and Its Traditions - An Introduction*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1978.
- Robin, Dorothy/Mowry, *The Hidden Sun: Women of Modern Japan*, Westview Press, 1954.
- Ryan, Marleigh Grayer, *The Development of Realism in the Fiction of Tsubouchi Shoyo*, University of Washington Press, 1975.
- , *Japan's First Modern Novel: Ukigumo of Futabatei Shimei*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1967.
- Sanekata, Kiyoshi, *Toson Bungei-jiten*, Tokyo: Shimuzu Kobundo, Tokyo, 1980.
- Sansom, G.B., *The Western World and Japan*, London: The Cresset Press, 1950.
- Sansom, George, *A History of Japan vols. 1, 2, & 3*, Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1974.

- Sasabuchi Tomoichi, *"Bungakkai To Sono Jidai"*, 2 vols., Tokyo: Meiji Shoin, 1961.
- Seigle, Cecilia Segawa, *Translation with an Introduction of the Family (Ie) by Shimazaki Toson*, Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1976.
- Senuma Shigeki (ed.), *Shimazaki Toson* (Kindai Bungaku Kansho Koza, vol.6), Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, 1958.
- , *Kindai Nihon Bungaku no Kozo*, vol.1, Meiji no Bungaku, Tokyo: Shueisha, 1963.
- , *"Hyoden Shimazaki Toson"*, Jitsugyo no Nihonsha, Tokyo, 1959.
- Shimamura Hogetsu, *Shimamura Hogetsu Bungei Hyoron Shu*, Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1954.
- Shimazaki Toson, *Wakanashu* (Shinsen Meicho Fukkoku Zenshu, Kindai Bungakukan), Tokyo: Shunyodo, 1974.
- , *Narihisago*, Tokyo: Bugakkai, 1894.
- , *Shishu-I, Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-I*, Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1956.
- , *Shishu-II, Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-2*, Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1957.
- , *Chikumagawa no Suketchi, Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-2*, Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1957.
- , *Hakai, Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-4*, Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1956.
- , *Kyushujin, Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-3*, Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1956.
- , *Warazori, Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-3*, Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1956.
- , *"Oyaji", Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-3*, Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1956.
- , *"Rojo", Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-3*, Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1956.

- , "*Suisai Gaka*", Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-3, Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1956.
- , "*Yashi no hakage*", Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-3, Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1956.
- , "*Tsugaru Kaikyo*", Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-3, Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1956.
- , "*Asa Meshi*", Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-3, Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1956.
- , "*Kachiku*", Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-3, Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1956.
- , "*Haru*", Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-5, Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1956.
- , "*Asakusa Dayori*", Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-6, Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1956.
- , "*Shijo ni Arite*", Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-22, Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1956.
- , "*Junrei*", Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-28, Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1957.
- , "*Furusato*", Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-19, Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1957.
- , "*Osana Monogatari*", Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-19, Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1957.
- , "*Namiki*", Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-7, Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1956.
- , "*Mebae*", Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-7, Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1956.
- , "*IE*" (Part I & II), Shimazaki Toson Zenshu 8 & 9, Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1957.
- , "*Sakura no mi no juku-suru toki*", Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-12, Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1956.
- , "*Furaisu Dayori*", Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-13, Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1956.



- , *"Osanaki Mono ni"*, Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-14, Tokyo, 1956.
- , *"Aru Onna no Shogai"*, Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-20, Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1957.
- , *"Likura Dayori"*, Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-18, Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1956.
- , *"Haru O Machitsutsu"*, Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-18, Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1956.
- , *"Yoake Mae"*, (Part 1, 2, 3 & 4), Shimazaki Toson Zenshu- 23, 24, 25 & 26, Tokyo, 1956.
- , *"Shinsei" I & II*, Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-15&16, Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1956.
- , *"Arashi"*, Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-21, Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1956.
- , *"Bunpai"*, Shimazaki Toson Zenshu-21, Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1956.
- Shimoda Korenao, *Shimazaki Toson*, Tokyo: Chobunkaku, 1961.
- Shincho Nihon Bungaku Arubamu-4 Shimazaki Toson*, Tokyo: Shinchosha, 1984.
- Shin-Nihon Bungaku Arbamu, Bekkan-1, Meiji Bungaku Arubamu*, Tokyo: Shinchosha, 1986.
- Shively, Donald H. (ed.), *Studies in the Modernization of Japan: Tradition and Modernization in Japanese Culture*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971.
- Sokichi Tsuda, *An Inquiry into the Japanese Mind as Mirrored in Literature* (Translated by Fukumatsu Matsuda), Tokyo: Japan Society for UNESCO Promotion of Sciences, 1970.
- Soma Kuromitsu, *Mokui: Meiji taisho Bungakushi Kaiso*, Tokyo: Hosei Daigaku Shuppan-Kyoku, 1977.
- Story, Richard, *A History of Modern Japan*, Middlesex: Penguin Books Ltd., 1976.
- Strong, Kenneth, *The Broken Commandment* (Translation of Hakai by Shimazaki Toson), Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1974.

- Takamura Itsue, *Josei no Rekishi-2*, Tokyo: Rironsha, 1966.
- Takeshige Kaoru, *"Toson no Komoro Jidai"*, Shiushu Bunka Kyokai, 1947.
- Tatsuo Arima, *The Failure of Freedom: A Portrait of Modern Japanese Intellectuals*, Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1969.
- Tayama Katai, *"Futon"*, Tokyo: Shinchosha, 1952.
- Togawa Shinsuke, *Shimazaki Toson*, Chikuma Shobo, Tokyo, 1980.
- Totman, Conrad, *Japan Before Perry (A Short History)*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981.
- Tsubouchi Shoyo, *"Shosetsu Shinzui"*, Gendai Nihon Bungaku Taikei, Tsubouchi Shoyo Shu, Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1971.
- Tsujihashi Saburo, *Kindai Nihon Kirisuto-sha Bungaku-ron*, Tokyo: Sobunsha, 1978.
- Ueda Makoto, *Modern Japanese Writers and the Nature of Literature*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1976.
- Varley, H. Paul, *Japanese Culture*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1973.
- Wada Kingo, *"Shizen Shugi Bungaku"*, Tokyo: Shibundo, 1966.
- , *"Shimazaki Toson"*, Tokyo: Meiji Shoin, 1966.
- Walker, Janet A., *The Japanese Novel of the Meiji Period and the Ideal of Individualism*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979.
- Webb, Herschel *The Japanese Imperial Institution in the Tokugawa Period*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1968.
- Yoshida Seiichi, *Shizen-Shugi no Kenkyu (Jokan)*, Tokyo: Tokyodo, 1955.

## ARTICLES

- Aoyama Nao, "Kyushujin" to Kimura Fusai, *Fusetsu-1966-11*, 16-24.
- Enomoto Takashi, "Kyushujin, Kokubungaku", *Kaishaku to Kansho*, September 1966, 63-65.
- Eto Jun, "An Undercurrent in Modern Japanese Literature", *Journal of Asian Studies*, 23, May 1964, 433-5.
- Feldman, Horace Z., "The Meiji Political Novel: A Brief Survey", *Far Eastern Quarterly*, 9 (May 1950), 245-55.
- Hata Minoru, "Rokuyoshu" no Shosaku, *Nihon Kindai Bungaku*, October 1969, 113-24.
- Hibbett, Howard S., "The Portrait of the Artist in Japanese Fiction", *The Journal of Asian Studies*, vol.14, 1954-55, 347-54.
- Hiraoka Toshio, "Hakai" Shiron, *Daito Bunka Daigaku, Toyo Kenkyu*, no.23, 1970-76, 187-208.
- , "Kitamura Tokoku, Kokubungaku Kaishaku to Kansho, 1971-75 (Special), 47-65.
- Ito Kazuo, "Shimazaki Toson", *Kokubungaku Kaishaku to Kansho*, May 1971 (Special Edition), 76-87.
- , "Shimazaki Toson to Fudo", *Kokubungaku Kaishaku to Kansho*, 1990-94, 32-41.
- Iwami Teruyo, "Shimazaki Toson - 'Shinsei'", *Kokubungaku Kaishaku to Kansho*, 1993-94, 67-72.
- Kobayashi Akiko, "Josei ni okeru 'Jiyu' to Katei:- 'Haha', 'Shishu', 'Yamazato no gakusho' ni tsuite", *Shimazaki Toson Kenkyu*, no.22, October 1994, 35-41.
- Kobayashi akiko, "'Kyushujin' Oyobi 'Rokuyoshu' in Kan-suru ikkosatsu", *Kokubun Shirayuri*, March 1987, 31-36.
- Kobayashi Khiro, "Tayama Katai", *Kokubungaku Kaishaku to Kansho*, 1971-75 (Special), 88-97.
- Konaka Nobutaka, "'Suisai gaka' ron:- Shosetsu e no michi", *Koku Bungaku Kenkyu*, June 1960, 52-62.

- Kono Kensuke, "Shimazaki Toson 'Kyushujin' ron", *Gobun*, 1987-12, 77-86.
- Lane, Richard, "The Beginnings of the Modern Japanese Novel: Kanazoshi, 1600-1682", *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 20(1957): 644-701.
- Masanobu Oda, "Remarks on the Study of Meiji Literature", *Monumenta Nipponica*, vol.5, 1942, 203-207.
- Masubuchi Toshio, "'Kyushujin' 'Warazori' ron:- Toson ni Okeru Futatsu no Shosetsu gainen no hoga", *Hosei Daigaku, Nihon Bungaku-rouso*, January 1980, 52-59.
- Mathy, Francis, "Kitamura Tokoku: The Early Years", *Monumenta Nipponica*, vol.18, 1963, 1-44.
- , "Kitamura Tokoku: Essays on the Inner Life", *Monumenta Nipponica*, vol.19, 1964, 66-110.
- , "Kitamura Tokoku: Final Essays", *Monumenta Nipponica*, vol.20, 1965, 41-63.
- McClellan, Edwin, "The Novels of Shimazaki Toson", *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, vol.24, 1963, 82-174.
- Mizuno Toshio, "'Hakai' ni Tojo-suru Inoko Rentaro no Modern, Oe Isokichi", *Kokugakuin Zashi*, 1962-1948, 209-19.
- Moritia, James R., "Shimazaki Toson's Four Collections of Poems", *Monumenta Nipponica*, 25 (1970), 325-69.
- Nakajima Kunihiro, "'Okuyuki' no Keisei - Shimazaki Toson 'Suisai gaka' no sekai", *Kokubungaku*, October 1974, 60-71.
- Nakayama Hiroaki, "'Suisai gaka' no Kosai:- Local Colour", *Bungei to Hinyo*, April 1991, 36-47.
- Nakayama Hiroaki, "'Komoro' to iu basho - Shimazaki Toson ni Okeru kinsen to Shosetsu", *Nihon Bungaku*, vol.42, July 1993, 54-67.
- Ogasawara Masaru, "Shi Shosetsu (Watakushi Shosetsu) ni Okeru 'Watashi' - Mondai no Kiten Ito sei no hoho ni Karamete", *Kokubungaku Kaishaku to Kansho*, 36, 1971-9, 23-30.

- Oida Yoshiaki, "'Rokuyoshu' no Josei - 'Rojo' Kara 'Suisai gaka' e", *Gakugei Kokugo Bungaku*, no.18, March 1983, 14-25.
- Oida Yoshiaki, "Shimazaki Toson - 'Yoake Mae'", *Kokubungaku Kaishaku to Kansho*, 1993-4, 148-53.
- Oketani Shusho, "Kindaiteki Jiga to Kojinshugi", *Kokubungaku Kaishaku to Kansho*-36, 1971: 16-23.
- Roggendore, Joseph S.J., "Shimazaki Toson: A Maker of Modern Japanese Novel", *Monumenta Nipponica*, (1)-7, 1951, 40-66.
- Rubin, Jay, "Soseki on Individualism", 'Watakushi no Kojinshugi', *monumenta Nipponica*, vol.34, 1979, 21-48.
- Sasabuchi Tomoichi, "Shimzaki Toson - 'Rokuyoshu' ron", *Gakuen*, February 1989, 2-21.
- Sasaki Masanobu, "Suisai Gaka", *Bungaku Nenshi*, December 1974, 22-46.
- Sato Yasumasa, "'Aru Onna no Shogai' - 'Haru' to 'Yoake mae' no hazama ni", *Kokubungaku Kaishaku to Kansho*, 1990-4, 100-5.
- Schwantes, Robert S., "Religion and Modernization in the Far East: A Symposium 1. Christianity Versus Sciences, A Conflict of Ideas in Meiji Japan", *The Journal of Asian Studies (Far Eastern Quarterly)*, vol.12, 1953, 123-32.
- Sibley, William F., "Naturalism in Japanese Literature", *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, vol.28, 1968, 157-69.
- Takahashi Kuniko, "Toson to 'Kyushujin', 'Warazori'", *Kaishaku to Kansho*, 1956-3, 147-49.
- Tobikumo Sei, "Rojoron", *Jogaku Zashi*, no.505, February 1901, 34-35.
- Togawa Shinsuke, "Sanbun no Sekai Ryokyuoshu: Midoriha No Nageki, Katsudo No Ushio", *Koku Bungaku*, April 1971, 98-108.
- Torii Kunio, "Sakura no mi no Juku Suru Toki", *Kokubungaku Kaishaku to Kansho*, 1990-4, 88-92.
- Urata Junko, "Toson Bungaku no Joseizo - Koibito, tsuma, ane, mei o toshite", *Kokubungakuho*, 1988-3, 54-62.

Yamada Akira, "'Hakai' Ron Note", *Nihon Kindai Bungaku*,  
vol.11, 1969-10, 174-186.

-----, "Shimazaki Toson-ron - Shingo no Yukue", *Kokubungaku  
Kaishaku to Kansho (Tokushu)*, 1990-4, 15-23.

Yamada Yusaku, "Toson Kenkyu Noto-1: 'Ryokuyoshu' No Sekai  
Sono-1, 'Warazori' Kara 'Rojo' made", *Tokyo Joshi Daigaku  
Kiyoron-shu*, November 1975, 79-101.