

SHŌSETSU SHINZUI: THE ESSENCE OF THE NOVEL

BY TSUBOUCHI SHŌYŌ

Translated by Nanette Twine

[About the Electronic Edition](#)

[Editor's Note](#)

[Preface](#)

THE ESSENCE OF THE NOVEL

[Introduction](#)

[PART ONE](#)

[Chapter One](#) The Novel: An Outline

[Chapter Two](#) The Development of the Novel

[Chapter Three](#) The Aims of the Novel

[Chapter Four](#) Types of Novel

[Chapter Five](#) The Benefits of the Novel

[PART TWO](#)

[Chapter One](#) The Rules of the Novel: An Introduction

[Chapter Two](#) Style

[Chapter Three](#) Constructing a Plot

[Chapter Four](#) The Plot of the Historical Novel

[Chapter Five](#) The Hero

[Chapter Six](#) Narrative

[Notes](#)

ABOUT THE ELECTRONIC EDITION

This electronic edition is based on a scanned pdf image file that was created by Ted Mack of the University of Washington based on the original print publication. After consulting with the translator, Nanette Twine (now Nanette Gottlieb), Dawn Lawson developed this electronic edition. Optical character recognition was done on the pdf image file to make it searchable, and then it was converted to html, with links added for navigation purposes. The original Japanese script for quotations from Japanese works, which appeared only in romanization in the original, has also been added from digitized versions available freely online. Except for corrections of a few minor typographical errors, no other changes have been made to the translation as originally published. A digitized version of *Shōsetsu Shinzui* in the original Japanese is available at <http://csx.jp/~amizako/index.html>.

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Dr. Nanette Twine translated *Shōsetsu Shinzui* while holding an appointment as a research scholar at Queensland University in 1971/72. She worked under the supervision of Mrs. Makiko Bulmer of the Department of Japanese Language and Literature. Later, while holding her present university appointment she considerably revised it, to bring it into the form in which it is now presented.

I have pleasure in issuing the translation of this seminal essay in this series. The compressed Meiji period style and erudite vocabulary of the work present difficulties smoothly overcome in Dr. Twine's neat and easy sentences. And the accessibility in English of the full text of such an epochal critical document will materially assist both scholars and students of modern Japanese literature.

J. I. Ackroyd

Editor

PREFACE

Tsubouchi Shōyō (1859-1935) was a literary critic, translator of Western literature, and novelist who had a profound influence on the young writers of Meiji Japan, most notably Futabatei Shimei (1864-1909). He began to formulate his ideas for changing the face of Japanese fiction while a student of Western literature at Tokyo University. *Shōsetsu Shinzui* (The Essence of the Novel), published in nine parts between September 1885 and April 1886, was an attempt to present a then radical view of the true novel, drawn from study of Western novels, as an art-form in its own right, and, by so doing, to expose the deficiencies of the Japanese novel and open the way for its reform.

The novel in Japan had long been considered unworthy of the attention of the educated. Tsubouchi, while admitting that Japanese fiction till that time was for the most part either sensational or dull and moralizing, nevertheless contended that it could be transformed by looking upon the novel as a form of art the equal of poetry, music, or painting, and making realism rather than didacticism the aim of characterization and plot.

The first, largely theoretical section of *Shōsetsu Shinzui* seeks to trace the development of fiction and to define the nature of the true novel. The second offers a series of practical suggestions for writing a novel, dealing with plot, style, and characterization.

Tsubouchi himself proved unable to apply his theories successfully to novel writing. It was Futabatei Shimei, in *Ukigumo* (1887-1889), who most closely realized his ideal. *Shōsetsu Shinzui* itself was Tsubouchi's greatest contribution to the new wave of realistic fiction. It prepared the way for modern Japanese literature by raising the status of the novel to that of a respectable intellectual undertaking, and by indicating the ways in which that undertaking might most successfully be performed.

Shōsetsu Shinzui has never been translated in its entirety before, although the preface has been translated by Donald Keene in *Modern Japanese Literature*. A number of paragraphs also appear in Marleigh Grayer Ryan's *Japan's First Modern Novel: Ukigumo*. The text I have used is found in *Gendai Bungaku Taikei* Vol.

1, published in 1967 by Chikuma Shobō.

Nanette Twine

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March, 1981

THE ESSENCE OF THE NOVEL

INTRODUCTION

How splendid has been the history of the novel in Japan! Antiquity gave us *Genji Monogatari*, *Sagoromo Monogatari*, *Hamamatsu Chūnagon Monogatari*, and *Sumiyoshi Monogatari*¹, followed later by Ono no Otsū's² *Jōruri Monogatari* and the popular fiction of Ichijō Zenkō.³ Closer to our own times, the fame enjoyed by such writers as Saikaku, Kiseki, Jishō, Fūrai, and Kyōden contributed still further to the novel's ever-increasing popularity.⁴ The literary talents of the day competed in producing historical romances. Ikku and Samba wrote humorous stories, Tamenaga Shunsui love stories.⁵ Both Tanehiko's *Inaka Genji* and Bakin's *Hakkenden* are famous works of this period.⁶

Then the upheavals of the Restoration put a temporary stop to the work of popular writers, with the result that the novel lost ground. Recently, however, it has made a very considerable comeback, the times being now more propitious to the publication of fiction. Everywhere one sees in print all sorts of stories and historical romances, each trying to outdo the others in originality. Things have come to such a pass that even newspapers and magazines are publishing rehashings of threadbare old novels. As a result of this trend, there are innumerable novels of all varieties in circulation in Japan today--the sheer profusion defies description! One may well say that the present happy reign of Meiji is a period of unprecedented prosperity for the novel.

At the end of the Tokugawa period, the prolific output of Bakin, Tanehiko, and others brought fiction a wide readership. Young and old, men and women, country and city dweller alike, all pored eagerly over historical romances, extolling them to the skies. The popularity of the novel was still far from its present proportions, however, because readers in the early part of this century were to some extent connoisseurs who purchased and read only works of outstanding quality. Inferior novels rarely attracted attention, remaining in manuscript form, unable to enter circulation because they were naturally outclassed by superior works. Or, if they did get into print, they often ended up as food for bookworms, rarely seeing the light of day. The range and number of books in those days were, therefore, no doubt rather more limited than at present. Today, all that has changed. How extraordinary it is that every novel or romance should enjoy the same popularity regardless of its quality, no matter how poor the tale or how vulgar the love story, whether it is an adaptation, a translation, a reprint, or a new work! This is indeed a golden age for all types of fiction!

There is certainly no shortage of writers of popular fiction, but most of them write adaptations of other people's work. Not one can be called an author in his own right. Every recently published novel has been either a reworking of Bakin or Tanehiko, or an imitation of Ikku or Shunsui. Novelists of late have taken to heart the words of Li Yu⁷ --they regard didacticism as the main purpose of fiction, and construct a moral framework within whose bounds they strive to devise a plot, with the result that even if they have not

consciously set out to ape earlier writers, the restricted scope of their work nevertheless forces them along already well-worn paths. A deplorable state of affairs!

Poor writers are not solely to blame for things having come to this pass. On the contrary, a large share of the responsibility rests with indiscriminating readers throughout the country. In Japan the novel has traditionally been seen as an instrument of education. It has often been asserted that its primary object is to encourage virtue and condemn vice. In reality, however, the only really popular stories are those which are sadistic or pornographic. Very few people even so much as glance at more serious offerings. Novelists lack self-respect. They are slaves to public opinion and puppets of fashion, falling over themselves to pander to the tastes of the times with erotic love stories and bloodthirsty period pieces, always following the latest fashion. Yet even so, they find it difficult to abandon the outward appearance of moralizing. In their determined attempts to accommodate it, they present a distorted view of human nature, misrepresent social conditions, and devise illogical plots. So badly do they bungle things that no mature, educated person can bear to read their work; yet still they trifle idly with the novel, never discerning what its real object should be, but only clinging obstinately to their misguided ways. The situation is utterly ridiculous, or rather, utterly deplorable!

I myself have been fond of novels since my youth. For more than ten years, I frittered away valuable time on them whenever I had some to spare, but in doing so I learned a great deal about both early and modern fiction. It is because I also believe I have come to understand something of the true purpose of the novel that I now presume to offer my theories, such as they are, to the world. I hope that they will bring readers to their senses and at the same time enlighten authors, so that by henceforth planning the steady improvement of the Japanese novel we may finally bring it to the point where it outstrips its European counterpart and shines together with music, poetry, and painting on the altar of the arts. If scholarly and intelligent men everywhere will read and thoughtfully consider what I have to say, kindly passing over my shortcomings and looking with favour upon my words and the spirit in which they are meant, not only I myself but Japan's literary world will be fortunate indeed.

March 1885

Note: Tsubouchi added the inscription: "Written in the living room at Haru-no-ya, by Shōyō, the idler." Haru-no-ya Oboro was another pseudonym from the name of his house, Haru-no-ya.

PART ONE

Chapter One

The Novel: An Outline

To explain what makes the novel art, we must first define the nature of art itself; and to do that, we must determine its basic principles, casting off popular misconceptions on the subject, which has long been surrounded by controversy. Most of the arguments advanced have been erratic and fragmentary--only rarely has any one of them come to grips with the fundamental issues. An American scholar¹ recently gave several lectures in Tōkyō on the principles of art, in which he demolished a number of common fallacies. Rather than burden the reader by going over the same ground again, I have decided in the interests of brevity to give excerpts from his lectures and to follow them up with my own opinions on their content.

"Civilization is achieved entirely by the efforts of mankind. Human endeavour bears kinds of fruit--

functional, providing only the necessities of life, and non-functional, meant to give pleasure and ennoble the character. It is the non-functional variety that we call art. The main object of art is therefore to ornament life; but it must not be concluded that, as a consequence, it lacks purpose, for does not anything that gives pleasure and enriches character fulfil a great need in society? Both sorts of undertaking are essential. The difference is that utilitarian labour becomes beautiful because of its practicality, while art has a practical application because of its beauty. The beauty of this penknife, for example, lies in its usefulness, while that painting or book is useful because its beauty inspires us. Looked at in this light, it is clearly the beauty a thing possesses that makes it art."

Someone else, who may have heard this and then developed the theme in greater detail, said:² "Art is the mainspring of human development, because its objectives are to give pleasure and to ennoble character. Because it pleases, it creates a climate of friendship and warmth among men; because it has a refining effect on character, it subdues envy, greed, and cruelty. Given material expression, it takes the form of the exquisite elegance and artistry of painting, poetry, sculpture, and lacquerware; revealed through voice and posture, that of the serenity and passion of poetry, music, and dancing. No one encountering its manifestations can fail to become slowly aware of great concepts of nobility and purity. This is what I mean by saying that art is a mainspring--it is the true source of a nation's civilization. Surely it is of the utmost importance to society!"

As these two scholars say, art is indeed the catalyst in human development, but I think perhaps their logic is not entirely correct with regard to the principles which underlie it. I propose now to state my reservations in my own discussion of the point.

As art in itself has no practical use, one expects its "aims" to be only to give pleasure and to achieve a transcendent beauty. Its perfection may inspire the beholder to forget greed and cruelty, and rejoice instead in nobler thoughts, but this to me is a natural side-effect rather than an "aim" of art. It is, so to speak, a chance product rather than an end in itself. Were it not so, the artists of the world, painters and sculptors alike, would have to work with ideas restricted by the bounds of a preconceived matrix of "human development". Surely this would be a grave mistake! Anyone making an artisan's knife does so with the criterion that it must cut well, as its purpose is purely practical. Likewise an artist, if he decides that his work must contribute to human development, is bound to keep this aim always before him, whether painting mountain scenery or carving images of birds and animals--no easy task. It is very difficult to produce a masterpiece, no matter how hard one strives for perfection, and it is complicated even further when the artist's ideas are limited by a stipulation of this sort.

It follows that art, different by nature from practical crafts, should never be created with predetermined controls. To arouse in the beholder by its sublime beauty emotions so profound that his spirit seems involuntarily to soar--that is its proper objective, and that is what makes it art. To beget nobility by its elegance and integrity, by the excellence of its concepts, so that man's nature is bettered in the process, is an incidental effect and not its true aim.

Leaving the word "aim" aside, we may say that art is by its very nature something which gives man pleasure and improves his disposition, but it would be a mistake to make too much of these characteristics. The point may seem trivial, perhaps, but I state my case for thinking men to consider.

It will not do to group all forms of art together under one heading. They may be loosely divided into two categories--the visual arts of painting, sculpture, inlaid woodwork, weaving, copperwork, architecture, and landscaping, and the abstract arts of poetry, music, and *jōruri*.³ The appeal of theatre and dancing lies in their combination of the qualities of both groups--they bring poetry and *jōruri* to life, enriching them with the

charms of music. Small wonder that they have always been universally popular!

The forms taken by art are many and varied, as outlined in the preceding paragraph, but their aim is always the same--to please the beholder both visually and emotionally. The appeal of some is, by their nature, directed chiefly to the mind; of others, to the ear. The visual arts, for example, where form is paramount, set out to attract the eye; music and song--the ear; and novels, poetry, and drama--the mind. In the execution of the visual arts, therefore, attention is lavished on colour and shape, while in that of music and song, voice is the central concern. Because poetry and drama appeal to the mind, they focus not upon colour or sound but upon human emotions, which have neither shape nor voice. The ancients, in speaking of a poem as a verbal picture, were lauding the ability of poetry to open our eyes to the details of those things not easily seen or painted--and nothing in the world is harder to capture on canvas than man's passions. A superficial portrayal of joy, anger, love, malice, grief, fear, or greed presents no particular difficulty, but it is more than a painter can do to plumb their depths. Many things are beyond even an actor to portray. Is it not true that in Japanese theatre those obscure passages whose meaning is hard to convey through stage dialogue or mime are performed with an additional *chobo*⁴ accompaniment? Surely this alone is enough to illustrate the strengths of *jōruri*!

Our *tanka*⁵ and *chōka*⁶, by comparison with Western poetry, are very simple--they do no more than express a transient emotion, rather like Western emotional or elegiac poetry. Most Chinese verse is just as simple. Poems like "Chang Hen Ke" or "Pi Pa Xing"⁷ do bear some resemblance to Western poetry, but their narratives are flimsy and their overall characteristics dissimilar. Western poetry, of course, takes many forms. These include epic poetry, narrative poetry, didactic poetry concentrating on edification, and witty, ironic or satirical poetry, as well as lyrics for musical accompaniment, dramatic verse for stage performance, and many others too numerous to list. In short, Western poetry bears more resemblance to the novel than it does to Japanese verse, in that it strives to portray situations from life. *Tanka* and *chōka*, it must be said, belong to an earlier backward age, not to the civilized present. I do not mean to disparage our own product, but human nature does necessarily change and become more complex as a result of the expansion of knowledge brought about by cultural development. Where once a mere thirty-one syllables sufficed to reveal the thoughts of our unsophisticated ancestors, today those of modern man cannot possibly be encompassed by so few. Poetry of this kind, that cannot portray other situations because the limited number of words at its command enables it to deal fully only with the emotions, does not realize its full potential, and is thus not the artistic equal of Western poetry. What a waste!

Some time ago, the eminent scholars Toyama, Yatabe, and Inoue, dissatisfied with Japanese poetry, published *Shintaishishō*⁸. Any reader curious about Western poetry may form a reasonable idea of its outline by reading this, together with the new poetry published in *Tōyō Gakugei Zasshi*⁹ and Inoue Sonken's long poem "Kōjō Shiragiku"¹⁰.

The novel may be described as blank verse, and as verse not restricted to a certain length. It is a serious mistake to take the superficial view that rhyme is the goal of poetry. The most important constituent of poetry is the beauty of its spirit. If a poem succeeds in mirroring both calm tranquillity and peaks of excitement, it has fulfilled its proper function--why should it be necessary to contrive trivial rhymes? The great English poet Milton¹¹ long ago argued against the practice. He abandoned rhyme and began to devise long poems in blank verse. Prosody may have had considerable importance in the days when poetry was chanted, but not today, when we savour the excellence of a poem's content by reading it through silently. Like colour in painting, rhyme is non-essential. We may say, therefore, that it is both possible and also reasonable to class as poetry, as an art, a novel which exhibits a like richness of spirit.

The novel attempts to describe human nature and social conditions. It should reveal what is obscure, and give a realistic portrayal of the mysteries of destiny in man's life by spinning the thread of an original idea into a skilful web of emotions and cleverly devising innumerable dénouements from a myriad of mystery-shrouded beginnings. The perfect novel is therefore able to communicate subtleties which neither an artist's brush nor poetry nor theatre can properly convey. Because, unlike poetry, it is neither encumbered by prosody nor restricted in length, and because, unlike painting and drama, it is so constituted as to appeal directly to the mind, the novelist has ample scope to develop his ideas. It is this which gives the novel a place in art--ultimately, perhaps, it may even enable it to outstrip drama as the greatest of the arts.

I propose now to flesh out my text by quoting from what is considered the most thorough of literary criticisms, Kikuchi Dairoku's translation *Shūji oyobi Kabun*.[12](#)

"Many types of writing fall within the sphere of poetry, and the difficulty of determining a standard common to all has long been known. The many prose compositions evincing lofty poetic sentiments are proof that poetry is not merely a matter of prosody. And how much more often is the reverse true, that rhythmic verse does not deserve to be classed as poetry..."

"I say there is a single theme worthy of the name of poetry--one that has never been absent from either ancient or modern verse and prose; it is social phenomena, the progress and current state of human affairs, subjects with an extraordinary power to stimulate thought. The plight of man, struggling valiantly with the unpredictable forces of nature and the whole of society; his life's unbearable sorrows, its triumphs, loves, achievements, eminence; his eternal wish to leave a lasting mark behind him; the immensity, the mutability, the complexity and the wonder of life and nature; the supernatural deity recognized as controller of the universe; the vastness of the heavens, the tranquillity of the earth; the rotation of years, months, hours, seasons; human society; the lives, deeds, and changing fortunes of its kings, generals, and heroes; the battles which decide the fate of nations; the labours of powerful men who take upon themselves the betterment of civilization; the great upheavals in human affairs--all these are part of it. It embraces every human condition--selfishness, intimidation, nobility, reliability, charm and beauty, grief, vivacity, animation and colour, everything! Excepted are those mundane matters essential to daily existence that, though naturally claiming much of man's attention, cannot compete with the affairs of society in the degree to which they interest and inspire him, and therefore, of course, cannot be called poetry. Nor can such things as scientific precepts, academic matters, logarithm tables, budget calculations, molecular quantities--important though they are--be put under that heading"

"It is often said that a lofty theme deserves language with a measured rhythm, but is this really so? The language of prose is, to draw a comparison from life, akin to the peace-time running of society. It lends itself to the description of a leisurely, unhurried frame of mind. If prose is walking, then poetry is dancing. But ever since prose first became one of the components of literature and achieved polish, books without number have been put into circulation. Prose has reached a stage where its themes are fit for poetry, and the beauty of description reinforcing them equals that of the best rhythmic verse... Even the style of those prose works of the Tokugawa period showed the loftiest poetic sentiments, differing from that of poetry only in that it relied on harmony of language rather than strict metre, thereby permitting unchecked flow and variety."

On epic poetry: "Any epic poem, ancient or modern, Oriental or Western, basically tells a story. Stirring tales of adventure, perils narrowly escaped, encounters with calamitous floods and fires, breathless suspense, circumstances heart-rending in their pathos, love stories passing through troubled beginnings to happy endings--all transport the absorbed reader away from reality into a fantasy world. The material allows endless variety within the genre. The whole range of this type of literature, the development of its style from Homer

to Virgil,¹³ and the transition from the mediaeval romance to the modern realistic novel all warrant detailed discussion, but they are weighty themes which should be reserved for exhaustive treatment in a history of literature. I have not time enough to deal with them here. Works prized as modern specimens of epic poetry, however, are showing an increasing tendency to play down their tone and characterization, the more closely to resemble life as it really is, so that the vicissitudes of their worlds and the everyday ups and downs of their characters seem both intelligible and natural to the reader. The fidelity of their portrayal of the demeanour and activities of men and women creates in him the feeling that he is intimately involved in an actual situation. If, when the situation happens to be one he has personally experienced, he reacts with pleased surprise and draws his own parallels, and if the writing is both realistic and highly pleasing, then no matter what the genre of the work, it deserves a high place. Defoe made good use of the style of epic poetry in writing his social exposés; Scott and Bulwer-Lytton, among others, used it to impart a knowledge of history.¹⁴ When a novelist aims to instruct, however, he is usually bent on moral instruction, and both this and other objectives can actually be attained by developing the art of writing in the epic style. But writing of that sort, necessarily committed to pleasing an endlessly capricious public, is completely subject to changing current fashions, rational or not."

Chapter Two

The Development of the Novel

The novel is a form of fiction, a modification of the fantasy. Unlike the fantasy (or romance, as the English style it), which is a tissue of absurdities fabricated without regard to verisimilitude, the novel sets out to portray human nature and behaviour, basing its themes on realistic material. The extreme brevity of such a description leaves many questions unanswered, of course, but I propose for the moment to postpone elaboration of the principles which underlie it and begin by recounting the stages in the novel's development.

It may be said that fiction and unofficial histories began to circulate far back in antiquity. To understand why, we must consider how things were when society was in its infancy. It was in those days the universal practice among all peoples to make the venerated head of one particular family the leader of the whole clan. In a barbaric age of intense fighting, there were many who rose precipitately in the savage wilderness to become heads of families and, soon after, clan leaders. Once they had done so, such men naturally related for their grandchildren tales of the hardships they had endured, and of their own exploits in battle. The stories were true accounts of their own first-hand experiences and observations, but, in time, as they were passed on down the generations by word of mouth, faulty memories and exaggerations finally resulted in the loss of the original core of fact, and overdramatized versions, transmitted orally over long periods, eventually became the basis for mythology.

Normal and unremarkable though this practice was for the times, I am inclined to think that there were three factors in particular which contributed to this latter pass. Firstly, when a patriarch prospered and grew powerful, his people, with understandable pride, would cry up quite trivial feats in order to boast to other clans. They would deliberately misrepresent their ancestors' careers, inflating their actions into mighty deeds. Secondly, man's innate love of the fantastic led people to invent stories and misinterpret historical data even when there was no particular need to do so. Then, too, as a country gradually grew stronger and a civilized society emerged, it was not thought fitting that its first leaders should have had humble origins, and so farfetched stories were concocted to embellish the facts. People were much more pious in those days. Even if they did not deliberately invent stories, they naturally spoke of their ancestors as if they were gods, and thought of themselves as descendants of gods. These three things are the real bases for the improbable stories

of gods found in many countries.

It seems quite certain that the myths of antiquity were the beginnings of the romance, and that many had been added to or falsified in the telling. Yet the tales of the gods were originally serious stories, not light entertainment. Their function was totally different from that of the later romance, despite the similarities in their natures. Posterity, long accustomed to hearing the erroneous and distorted versions, did not doubt their authenticity but esteemed them. As the myths were never regarded as fiction, they were printed with great respect at the beginning of official histories, and came to be seen as reliable data throwing light on the early days of the nation.

It is a serious mistake to speak of myths, as some do, as the romances of ancient times. Nonsensical though they may be, they are intrinsically different from fiction in that while the stories they relate are not strictly factual, neither are they pure invention. They are semi-historical, semi-fictitious, facts dressed up with a combination of invention and misrepresentation to produce something in the style of a history. It is obvious that both authentic histories and the romance originated from the myths. The novel and the history have a common source, their present dissimilarity being merely the result of their subsequent development.

Through generations of pre-history, historical material was always passed on in song form, which in the dark ages before the advent of writing seemed the simplest and most convenient way of transmitting it with a minimum of error. The singers, wanting to be able to memorize and recite easily, naturally chose as smooth and fluid a diction as they could. Knowing that stylistic refinement and graceful circumlocution often catch the attention, they devoted much effort to clever phrasing. As the wording of those passages in songs which express emotion is usually full-bodied and elegant, the facts were often distorted for the sake of this effect. The chants thus became increasingly ostentatious and responsive to popular fancy, and in the process the veracity of their source material was much eroded, until little resemblance to the original remained. In this transformation of mythology from a historical mould to a form of entertainment, the novel had its beginning. (*The Iliad*, by the great Greek poet Homer, came originally from *The Sacred History of Troy*; but I have heard that there are many discrepancies in the events it describes.)

Chanted romances remained in vogue for a very long time, even after official histories appeared in the wake of cultural development and the dawn of literacy. By that time, however, they were seen as entertainment rather than as channels for passing on important historical information, and nothing more than novelty was asked of them. Minstrels, eager to make a name for themselves, often used their own invention to expand the original ideas into outlandish stories. The true romance dates from this time, but the early version, being generally confined to a rhymed poetic style, resembles its modern counterpart only in name and not in form.

In time, the romance diversified into several forms. Some were humorous, others matter of fact. In wartime, they told of military feats; in gentler times, of love or religion. Many Norman romances concerned deeds of valour, while early Saxon chronicles often had a religious bent. Japanese romances were different again--*Sumiyoshi Monogatari*, *Ise Monogatari*,¹ and Murasaki Shikibu's *Genji Monogatari* dealt with love affairs, perhaps in response to the prevailing contemporary spirit of carefree frivolity.

Such was the admiration for the fantastic in those days, then, that the instant a tall story written along such lines appeared, it was delightedly received with a total suspension of disbelief. Even patent contradictions of the facts were accepted and praised for their singularity; this led authors to strive actively for novelty, polishing up their writing and trying hard to devise outlandish plots. Yet because they wrote in order to satisfy public demand, they could know nothing of such things as the real purpose of art. Flights of fancy unrelated to the truth went beyond being merely acceptable to being a matter for pride. No doubt the readers

loved it.

As civilization developed further, however, people grew tired of fantasy, and the popularity of the romance declined. It was succeeded by the novel proper, the steps in the development of which I shall discuss later.

The heyday of the romance coincided with that of the apologue, an apologue being a work which enlightens and instructs women and children in the guise of a nonsensical story. The English call it a fable. Examples are *Aesop's Fables*² and *Zhuang Zi*.³ The fable came into being when wise and good men began casting about for a means of remedying the deplorable state into which mankind was sinking as morality declined. Society had become hedonistic and idle; people seldom read books, let alone academic treatises on morality. There was nothing which could be used to instruct. The solution they finally arrived at was to construct fictitious stories along the lines of the then popular romance with hidden overtones of reproof, intending thus to exhort by insinuation. The romance and the fable accordingly resemble each other in form, though not in substance--the former aims to entertain, the latter to admonish. A fable is an instrument of Buddha, so to speak. Its plot, not being the main issue, is simple; taken at face value alone, it is thin and insipid. When we read it closely, however, and appreciate its depth, we perceive in it a subtle epigrammatic point. *Saru Kani Kassen*, *Momotarō*, *Shitakiri Susume*, and *Kachikachi Yama*⁴ are all fables. On the face of it their stories seem trivial, but on a deeper level they have profound significance.

It was inevitable that, as cultural progress continued and society reached a state of civilization, the fable too would change and develop further. Next came a swing away from the fashions of the past towards extravagance and luxury in all things. As human knowledge expanded, the fable, too flimsy and insipid, could no longer be read with pleasure. Particular masterpieces like *Zhuang Zi* were kept in circulation by discerning men who valued them, but in others less outstanding the admonition which was the whole point of these works gradually lost its sting because scholars, already possessed of an understanding of moral philosophy from the writings of the sages, had no need of instruction. They simply enjoyed the cleverness of the construction or the skill of the writing. Inferior works were relegated to the status of nursery tales or female amusements, no more than playthings, and their intended exhortation was lost altogether, for children took notice only of the story and remained completely unaware of any hidden import. *Saru Kani Kassen* and *Shitakiri Susume*, for example, each contains something of a moral, yet ninety percent of the mothers and grandmothers who told the stories to children did not realize it. They thought of them as no more than ordinary fairy tales. And so, this being all in the nature of progress, the fable gradually lost ground and was replaced by the allegory.

An allegory is a type of fiction having a twofold plot--a surface story, and a veiled, subtler level of meaning. A typical example is the famous *Xi You Ji*.⁵ On the surface it seems no different from the ordinary run of romances, but closer inspection reveals its deeper implications. The reader becomes aware of a kind of secondary plot, profound and wonderful, in which recondite principles of Buddhism may be perceived. Other works such as Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*⁶ and Spenser's masterly *Faerie Queene*⁷ also have hidden import, sometimes instructing, sometimes castigating. *The Faerie Queene* has three levels. On one, it appears to be an ordinary romance. On another, unspoken, it deals with the mysteries of Christianity. Here and there one may also distinguish flashes of satire and admonition directed at contemporary society. It is without doubt an unparalleled masterpiece of allegory.

There are many other allegories; I have merely chosen the best to serve as convenient examples. The reader may discover for himself how a moral is concealed within a circumstantial plot by carefully studying the three I have mentioned. The allegory, surely, evolved from the simple fable. They are outwardly different, one very straightforward and the other very complex, but their common hidden purpose makes it difficult to

think of them as separate genres.

In time, as human knowledge expanded, fashions in clothing and furniture inevitably changed, and tastes in popular literature swung away from the unsophisticated to the fanciful and complex. In consequence, the public came to reject both the romance and the fable as too shallow and insipid. Writers of romances then began a frantic search for new ideas. They spun out their plots, made them more complex, and tried harder to give the public what it wanted. The popularity of the fable, meanwhile, continued to decrease until it was no more than an amusement for women and children. When even its original purpose was forgotten, it gradually lost ground until it disappeared entirely. Yet as the efficacy of veiled exhortation had not passed unnoticed, and there were grounds for not abandoning this expedient altogether, talented writers attempted to integrate it into the romance, thereby opening the way for the didactic novel. Priests with literary talent and virtuous scholars saw that not only were romances of this sort popular, they also had a powerful influence for good. Quietly realizing that counselling people and possibly putting an end to moral turpitude could prove difficult unless they began by taking advantage of this popularity, they lengthened the fable, gave it a more complex story with a hidden moral, and brought it out as a competitor of the romance.

Both the allegory and the didactic novel thus began with the fable, but the two were intrinsically very different. The main purpose of the allegory was moral instruction, and its story was a means to that end. The didactic novel, on the other hand, treated the story as paramount and moral instruction as an embellishment. Because of this, inconsistencies or absurdities in the plot of an allegory will pass unchallenged if it has a clever meaning, but even a clear moral cannot redeem a didactic novel with a bad plot. How strange it is that Oriental didactic writers, unaware of such refinements, consider the novel's main aim to be merely to impart a moral lesson, and pay scant attention to that description of human nature which should be their main concern! The root of the trouble is their failure to understand the difference between an allegory and a didactic novel. They are like a foolish merchant emulating a street vendor. The street vendor has hired a space under the merchant's eaves from which to sell the principle of moral instruction. The merchant, while dealing in human nature in his main shop, sets up a booth of his own under the eaves to handle moral instruction as a sideline. In the process, his desire to concentrate exclusively on selling moral instruction leads him to neglect his regular business, and he ends by closing down his shop.

Drama, too, began as an enactment of the legends, but with the growth of knowledge came to be regarded as a means of admonishing society, conveying a sermon under cover of a story as the allegory did. The *Bakabayashi* were performances of ancient events recorded in works like the *Kojiki*.⁸ They were regarded as ancient traditions, as yet devoid of any hidden meaning. England's miracle plays were much the same sort of thing, giving unqualified accounts of miracles and great achievements wrought by saints and holy men. Later, the morality plays were different--they were dramatizations of allegories.

There is of course much more to be said about the development of drama, but as it is irrelevant to the present discussion, I shall not include it here. I shall say only that the theatre at its inception was very similar to the romance in that its sole aim was novelty. With the development of a more advanced stage of civilization, however, it gradually turned from fantasy and absurdity to ordinary, simple subjects and then assumed a didactic intent. Thus clearly, it is human nature and behaviour that form the stuff of drama. Moral instruction is not its first consideration.

It was inevitable that the romance, in a natural progression, should also turn gradually away from outlandish plots towards realistic descriptions of society. In an era of semi-civilization, however, when man's nature was base and his taste limited in its aspirations, authors lacked pride and the courage of their convictions. Their work followed the dictates of convention, and they were far from comprehending the true essence of the

novel. They strove neither to portray human nature and social conditions nor to admonish society, but only to win momentary fame by conforming slavishly to the current fashion. The people and situations described in their works were thus not the primary consideration of the romance but merely the means of satisfying public demand. The hidden moral was an excuse, nothing more than a temporary expedient to stop intelligent men condemning the stories as worthless. As it was never the main aim, it was of course of little efficacy by comparison with genuine allegories. The novels popular in Japan since the early part of this century have been on the whole just this kind of didactic novel and not real novels. It is because of them that perceptive men criticize the novel as low class, destructive and unprofitable, and the novelist suffers as a result!

When, then, will the true novel appear? What will set it apart from the romance? It will probably emerge when drama loses its popularity. In the Dark Ages, people loved superficial novelty. Their outlook being limited, they were wont to take an interest in and lavish praise on anything singular enough to attract their attention. Moreover, human nature was not the same then as now. Our ancestors, whether angry or pleased, happy or sad, generally exercised no restraint in expressing their views--all their emotions were obvious from their bearing and expression. On the other hand, they made little use of the power of reason, being incapable of controlling the carnal desires of the moment. Even their innermost thoughts were visible in their faces or behaviour, with the result that they were prone to eccentricities of all kinds, laughable, reprehensible, pitiful, or detestable. There were impudent, vulgar types like Zenroku⁹ and Jōhachi,¹⁰ and silly fools like Arinari (the clown Ariwaraya Narihira in *Himekyō Futaba Ezōshi*).¹¹ Such emotional transparency made it simple for contemporary romances to portray human nature and behaviour, and in the main they did so, presenting them for the world's entertainment; but there must have been many facets of life which the authors, not very talented, found it beyond their abilities to describe realistically.

In such an era, it is usually drama which is the main vehicle for the detailed delineation of customs and emotions. Not only is its plot much simpler than that of the romance and its artistic effect greater, its stage settings and the deportment and dialogue of its actors also give it the power to bring staged emotions and situations to life. When a skilled actor performs an outstanding work by a great playwright, each movement, each smile, each scowl is true to life--under his spell, the audience lose themselves in the play, laughing or crying like lunatics. (Everyone knows how the masterpieces of Tsuruya Namboku¹² and great actors like Kōshirō and Hanshirō¹³ move the townspeople.) The romance of the same period, by comparison, is slipshod, absurd, and fantastic; it is shallow--steering clear of the subject of human nature--and lifeless, like the ashes of a fire. The tedium of its plot alone highlights the vast difference between the two. That is why all over the world drama prospered and the romance lost ground.

Even so, nothing stays the same forever. Civilization continues to develop, fashions inevitably change, everything moves forward. As the human intellect also broadened with cultural progress, people began to develop a taste for show which affected every detail of their lives. For the most part the adornment was external, and human nature itself remained unchanged; but outward behaviour altered considerably. The bizarre customs of earlier ages disappeared little by little as time passed and intellectual growth led men to try to restrain their passions and preserve an unruffled demeanour, allowing neither anger nor grief to show. Gradually, the way in which personalities and social situations were portrayed on the stage became incompatible with the trend towards less boisterous behaviour, so that drama was no longer realistic. Rather than preserving that authenticity that is a property of the theatre, it went a step further. In other words, instead of trying to reproduce something exactly as it was, it tried to be larger than life.

To illustrate: whether the subject of the performance is love or strife, rigid verisimilitude is as unappealing as total lack of realism. The people of a civilized society find the story of Hinadori and Koga¹⁴ or Oshichi and Kichisa¹⁵ uninteresting because their own custom of keeping up appearances prevents them from freely

expressing their feelings in front of a lover, however much adored. Nor does fighting amuse them. In the days of military government with the ever-present threat of civil war, even private citizens picked up some knowledge of the military arts or practised *jūjutsu*.¹⁶ Faced with a sudden dispute, no doubt they challenged and fought their opponents in every possible way allowed by the rules. Since a real fight would have been interesting to watch, a staged version must also have held an attraction. Today, however, people merely brandish their fists, not following any prescribed set of rules. Their fights are boring to watch. Not only would a realistic reproduction on stage serve no purpose, it would also prove extremely difficult. To persist in staging real situations with photographic accuracy would mean that no one would waste his money going to see a play. It is only when something goes a little beyond reality and seems interesting or funny that actors perform it and audiences go to see it. Thus, whereas the volatile people of former ages probably found everything in a play interesting because it was possible then to dramatize situations as they actually were, modern people find everything on the stage absurd, and as a result there has grown up a group critical of drama's artificiality. Yet rigid adherence to realism in acting is not only a dubious practice harmful to the rationale of natural theatre, it is also extremely difficult to achieve. Consequently, even though civilization is now in full flower, eight or nine out of ten plays inevitably deal with the past. Even dramas of contemporary life are performed with old-fashioned touches. An example: a maiden meets a handsome young man and falls in love at first sight. Enraptured, she drops the fan she is holding and gazes fixedly at his face. That sort of thing happened in the days when people were frank about their feelings; it would not happen today. Yet it is a device much favoured by writers of *kyōgen*¹⁷ and *kusazōshi*¹⁸ who frequently employ it to indicate love! That fact in itself proves how hard it is to reproduce present-day situations on stage.

As a result of the developments I have outlined, drama no longer merits admiration as a mirror of its times. Its audiences are growing inclined to quibble. Some say wigs are unrealistic, others that masks are unnecessary; some extremists even argue in favour of abandoning makeup.

(Apropos of audience comment: as a certain raconteur¹⁹ in Tōkyō once pointed out, the taste of theatre-goers has changed considerably with time. Realistic performances, no matter what their subject, are enthusiastically applauded. People praise the subdued colours of Ichikawa Danjūrō's²⁰ costumes for their restrained elegance. Stage dialogue resembles ordinary speech, and shouts of approval greet the substitution of *omoi-ire*²¹ for words to convey a meaning. In years to come, probably, Danjūrō and his contemporaries will play heroes confined to bed by illness, and nap through several acts in the dressing room! Who can tell, the humorist asked, whether public opinion might not swing in favour of cropped hair and unpainted faces on stage? He joked about how strange it is, and his words bear out my point.)

A further drawback of drama is that there are some things, particularly among human characteristics, which are impossible to dramatize, as well as some which no one would be interested in seeing performed. Playwrights have accordingly never employed them. Were such aspects of human nature to be closely examined and brought to life by the written word, however, they would make absorbing reading. Audiences have grown tired of seeing nothing but superficial, exaggerated personalities. How can subtler natures be savoured in the absence of fine detail? The theatre is disadvantaged in this respect.

Drama is simply mimicry. Normal characteristics are harder to imitate than idiosyncrasies--an ordinary voice, for example, is not as easy to mimic as the voice of an actor with distinctive speech traits. Long ago, the superficiality of human nature meant that all a man's feelings showed in his face, so that there were often unusual things to be seen, which was very convenient for the stage. Cultural development put an end to eccentricity, however, and many things can no longer be dealt with by *omoi-ire* alone. Perhaps this is another reason why the theatre has gradually lost ground to the novel.

The scope of the novel is on the whole wider than that of the theatre. It affords a comprehensive and satisfying portrayal of contemporary society. Whereas the depiction of personality in the theatre is limited by its dependence on visual and aural appeal, the novel, by communicating directly with the reader's mind and stimulating his imagination, has a much wider range. On stage, nature, scenery, houses, and furnishing are represented by paintings or props. Mechanical devices are enlisted to give evidence of rain, wind, and storm. All these things are described in elegant prose in the novel, captivating the reader's spiritual eyes. The degree of interest aroused in him thus depends on the strength of his own imagination. For some, the best part lies outside the text; for others, within the text itself.

(The works of the English novelist Sir Walter Scott are replete with elaborate description. When writing about a cave which was a brave rebel's hideout--in *Rob Roy*--he took the trouble to leave his house and go to a cave said to have been the man's old lair. There he scrutinized the area and made notes of the various flowering plants then coming into bloom, before returning home to write a graphic description of the place for his novel. Such detailed descriptions of scenery are not only riveting, they are also the forté of the novel--no theatrical props can equal them!)

There is a fourth drawback to the theatre in the unwieldiness of its plot. As the primary appeal of a play is to the eye, there must be some clear and logical connection between the events of earlier acts and those of later ones. It is particularly important that the final catastrophe of a tragedy be clearly traceable to an earlier cause. The nature of the final catastrophe is perhaps difficult to grasp without first understanding what tragic drama is. There are, of course, many tragic Japanese romances, but as they have only the substance of tragedy without the name, two or three examples are needed to make the meaning of the word clear. *Sanada no Harinukizutsu*,²² recently performed by Danjūrō's troupe at the Shintomiza,²³ is a tragedy, as are *Sanmon Gosan no Kiri*²⁴ and *Banzuiin Chōbei*.²⁵ Such plays centre around a sorrowful, heartrending plot in which the main character--the hero--meets an untimely end in the last act. His death may take various forms. There are suicides and murders, thieves who perish on the execution ground at dawn, and double suicides for love. It is the death of the hero that is known as the final catastrophe. Should his death be accidental, unrelated to any earlier events, the audience is bound to find it less interesting; they will feel as though something has been snatched from their grasp. In a novel, on the other hand, the incomprehensibility of accidental death works to heighten the sense of climax, perhaps because although many of life's vicissitudes can be traced to a cause, many others are the result of chance. (I shall discuss this further in the section on plot.) Schiller²⁶ was right when he remarked, in a discussion on plot in drama, that the dénouement of a play must be a consequence and not an accident.

Despite the novel's superiority to the theatre in the ways noted above, it cannot arouse people to the extent that drama can, because, of course, imagination does not have the same degree of impact as first-hand observation. But to disparage the novel for this reason is like classing a beautiful gem as rubble because of a small flaw. The idea is not even worth discussing!

Through the ongoing process of evolution I have outlined, the novel will inevitably have its day of popularity. The operation of natural selection, however, is not easy to defy. Macaulay²⁷ once said of art that it was fated to die out as civilization progressed. The argument he advanced was well-reasoned, certainly, but it applies only to art rooted in the past and not to the novel, which has developed as an art form during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In *On Milton*, he discussed in detail the reasons for the decline of poetry; yet those are the very reasons which make the novel certain to flourish henceforth! The romance had its origins in poetry, as I have already pointed out. The two are very much alike, which means there are bound to be common factors in their fall. If the true novel has qualities which allow it to replace the romance in the public's esteem, it ought also to have the capacity to supplant poetry among the arts.

Perhaps Macaulay was right in saying that the art of the past has gradually disappeared--it is unlikely that even the glories of modern English civilization will produce another Milton, or the elegance of Italy another Virgil. It is only the art form of the novel which has a bright future. It would not be so very difficult for an author bent on doing so to join the ranks of the many great modern writers like Scott, Lytton, Dumas, and Eliot.²⁸ Fellow countrymen--do not waste your time worshipping Bakin and Shunsui and Tanehiko, and trying to follow in their footsteps! Make up your minds to avoid stereotypes, reform the Japanese novel, and write masterpieces worthy of a place in art!

Chapter Three

The Aims of the Novel

The main business of the novel is human nature. Social conditions and behaviour rank second. By "human nature", I mean man's sensual passions, what Buddhism calls the one hundred and eight appetites of the flesh. All human beings, even those who are wise and good, are creatures of carnal lusts. Sages and fools alike harbour evil desires--what sets a man apart as good or wise is simply that he suppresses them, and uses the exercise of his reason or the strength of his conscience to drive away the hounds of passion.

Very intelligent, dignified men conceal their grosser instincts, never allowing them to become apparent. It may seem that they have escaped them altogether, but the fact that they are sentient beings makes that impossible. That they are temperate, taking neither grief nor pleasure to extremes, neither becoming angry when anger is merited nor bearing a grudge when one is due, is attributable to the strength of their rational powers rather than to any faintness in their passions. Surely, before they attain to that irreproachable behaviour which others see, they must face many a secret attack from impure impulses! Lust and reason war within them; good conduct is only possible when reason wins. Does the man exist--apart from holy beings--to whom virtue comes naturally? It is precisely because wise men subdue temptation through reason that we call them wise. Virtue would be nothing out of the ordinary if there were no temptation to begin with; were that the case, it would be foolish to call someone a sage.

In the human animal, then, there exists a dichotomy between outward behaviour and inner thoughts, with as many variations of both as there are faces. Histories and biographies usually deal with the former; a man's secret thoughts can seldom be described therein, because of their rambling nature. It falls to the novelist to plumb the depths of human nature, to reveal it in meticulous detail, omitting nothing in his portrayal of the inner workings of all types of minds, not merely those of the wise, regardless of age, sex and moral character. The true novel is not satisfied with a merely superficial account of human nature. It lays it bare. How sad it is that although famous writers in both Japan and China have always scorned superficial plots and tried to give as much depth as possible to their story lines, they have not hesitated to skimp on characterization, which should have been their main concern!

A novelist is like a psychologist. His characters must be psychologically convincing. Should he contrive to create by his own invention characters at odds with human nature, or worse, with the principles of psychology, those characters would be figments of his imagination rather than human beings, and not even a skilful plot or a curious story could turn what he wrote into a novel. Such characters are like marionettes. They seem at a quick glance just like a group of real people moving about, but the spell is instantly broken when closer inspection reveals both the operator and the mechanism. Similarly, a novel at once loses its charm if it becomes obvious that the author is behind each character pulling strings to direct his movements.

Let me give an example of what I mean. The eight heroes of Bakin's masterpiece *Hakkenden* are personifications of the eight Confucian virtues.¹ They cannot, surely, be described as human beings. Bakin's intention from the outset was to write a novel in which virtues would be represented in human form, and to convey his message by consistently portraying the conduct of his characters as perfect. As a didactic novel, *Hakkenden* is without equal, but as a description of human nature it leaves something to be desired, since not only the actions but even the innermost thoughts of the eight remain rational and pure from start to finish. Surely even during the golden reigns of Yao and Shun in China,² one could hardly have hoped to find eight such wise and saintly men in the world at the same time--men who have never experienced even momentarily the inner struggle between violent passions and reason. Bakin idealized his heroes. They were not true representations of contemporary man, hence the anomaly. Yet so cleverly did Bakin contrive to conceal his departure from reality that it passed unnoticed, and *Hakkenden* is wrongly acclaimed as a thorough examination of human nature.

I do not mean to say, even so, that *Hakkenden* is not a novel because of this. The fact that it is a great work, long universally known, simply makes it a convenient example. I have more to say about Bakin's work, of course, but I shall leave it until later.

The novelist, then, should concentrate on psychological realism. Once his characters make their appearance in the story, he should think of them as living people. In speaking of their feelings, he should stand by as an onlooker and describe things as they really are, rather than superimposing his own ideas of emotion, good or bad, upon them. Let us imagine that people are chess pieces. Many are *hisha*, moving in a straight line to their goal; many others are *kaku*, manoeuvring sideways. There are comical *kei*, aimless *kyō*, richly talented *gyoku* able to change direction as circumstances dictate, and many, many *fu* who know only how to move ahead and not how to escape sideways. Each person behaves in his own preferred manner as he traverses the board of life. But the straight-moving *hisha* may mature, unlike its counterpart of olden days. A *fu* who achieves worldly success may sometimes take the straight path. Sometimes *gyoku* may fall victim to *fu*, or a random *kyō* take *kin* and *gin*.³

The player is the creator of the universe; his pieces are mankind. His moves are mysterious and unpredictable. Sometimes, when it seems that a move in a certain direction by *kin* must lead to a checkmate, a *fu* suddenly bars the way and *kin*, unable to escape in time, falls victim to *kei*. Similarly, a man's success or lack of it in life does not necessarily reflect his character. Some clever people follow no profession. Some quite mediocre people achieve their ambitions. The cause and effect relationship, capable of innumerable variations, is impossible to predict.

If a novelist wants to explore the depths of human nature and paint society as it is, then he must write as if describing a chess game he is watching other people play. Should he, as an onlooker, offer even the smallest piece of advice, the game becomes his instead of the players'! It is only when he resists the temptation to change those things he thinks he could improve on and confines himself to the facts that his work can be called a novel.

There is, on the whole, no external difference at all between a novel and a true story, but the hero of the novel is entirely a product of the author's imagination. Even so, once a character has made his appearance in a novel, not even the author may move him about at will. He must think of him as another person, and ascribe to him only realistic behaviour. When an author interferes, as Japanese and Chinese writers bent on exhortation have done, by picking and choosing emotions, discarding some feelings as unsuitable for a particular character or sensual passions as likely to detract from another, doing his best to create splendid characters fit to be saints or sages--when he fits the creative process to an artificial mould of didacticism, then

the personalities and behaviour he describes are not natural but are his own cherished inventions, unique to his characters.

Since the hero is of course an imaginary character, a novelist cannot be prevented from idealizing him to whatever extent he chooses, if he so desires, but it is vital that he set predetermined limits for himself and do his best to stay within the bounds of human nature. Suppose a painter hard at work on a portrait of a beautiful woman, made reckless by his desire for perfection, were to paint eyes, eyebrows, and mouth unlike any ever seen on a mere mortal. No matter how lovely the face as a whole, no one could call his work a masterpiece--or at least, not a masterpiece representing a living paragon of beauty. Were he really set on painting a vision of feminine beauty, he would do better to model the eyebrows on those of a living woman renowned for hers, and the eyes on a pair whose loveliness has made their owner famous. As to hair, facial dimensions and of course nose and lips--taking each of those features from life would allow him to paint the most beautiful woman ever seen. Should he not do this, should he create eyebrows and mouth from his own whimsical imaginings, the result would be a portrait not of a living person but of something more, or less, than human.

An author, when he sets about creating characters for a novel, should do the same thing. Seeking out elements of the personalities of people around him and bringing them together in one perfect character is permissible, so long as it is done in a way that does not contradict the principles of psychology; but frivolously inventing peculiar, unnatural types should be avoided.

As I have said before, the novel is basically an art-form like poetry and drama, but there are naturally some differences. Imitation, for example, is not one of the aims of poetry, whereas it constitutes the basic tenet of the novel, which endeavours to reproduce human nature and social conditions in as realistic a manner as possible. Before the novel developed past the romance stage, its format was similar to that of poetry and its themes were outlandish. Since it has taken on its present form, however, it can no longer trifle with far-fetched plots and absurd stories, and this renders the modern novel a demanding craft indeed!

When a novelist sets out to describe the personality of a character he has created, he must first assume that that character already possesses sensual appetites. He must go into great detail. How will this character feel under the stimulus of a certain situation? What effect will the arousal of a certain emotion have on his many other emotions? What difference do his former education and the nature of his employment make to his emotional processes, not to mention his character? All the character's hidden thoughts must be exposed. In the case of a virtuous person (known in *kabuki* by the term *jitsugotoshi*), the author must do his best to portray only those emotions that such a person might be expected to feel. In the case of a scoundrel, he must concentrate on those that an evil heart might harbour. Yet even a good man has a dark side to his nature, and a scoundrel a conscience--if the novelist fails to show that each hesitates slightly before he acts, then he has only skimmed the surface without penetrating to the truth of the matter. Rumour has it that there is an earnest oil painter who visits execution grounds--among other places--to scrutinize the movement of the executioner's arm, the play of his muscles, and, of course, the features of the condemned man. Likewise, the novelist should not presume to abhor the ugly side of man's nature or the wickedness of his passions, but should be single-minded in describing them. How else can he come to grips with the reality of human nature?

I do not mean to imply, even so, that he should seek out and portray even those deep-buried appetites which embrace obscenity and coarseness. The novel is art. It must avoid lewdness, as music avoids bawdiness; painting, eroticism; and poetry and drama, vulgar language.

The English scholar, John Morley⁴, had this to say about the works of George Eliot: "An intelligent person once defined literature as existing solely to provide a critique of life. Why is it that the novel, which ought to

be celebrated as one of the great forms of literature, is instead often despised and downgraded? Probably because novels so seldom do offer a commentary on life. There are many who earn their living by the pen, but they have not all been endowed with the same degree of talent. Some lack discernment, others ideas. Broadly speaking, few books weave the thread of an original idea into a fabric of human emotions and vividly illuminate the hidden workings of causality in our lives by the way they fashion charming yet endlessly different, constantly changing dénouements from an infinite number of mystery-shrouded beginnings. Life offers many pleasures, none so keen as being able to penetrate the mysteries of man's nature and comprehend the principle of cause and effect. To arrive at a thorough understanding of how life is structured is a very difficult task, one to which shallow, incompetent writers are not equal. Only those with outstanding talent and unflagging energy are able to reach the goal.

"Most highly regarded forms of literature make it their principal aim--and all make it at least one of their objectives--to comprehend the workings of the human world. Religion, philosophy, poetry--the form changes with the name, but the substance is always the study of mankind. They account for all the tricks of nature which cause our characters and fates to function in certain ways, offer explanations for the things which puzzle us, banish the clouds of doubt, and satisfy our curiosity. Whether a reader fully understands their arguments or not, they remain of absorbing interest as treatises on the nature of life. They may not enlighten the ignorant, unlearned reader to the point of self-examination and self-determination, but even he will be able to discern, albeit vaguely, the justice of what is written within them . . .

"George Eliot's novels are short cuts whereby the reader may enter this world of ideas. However, she is loath to pass arbitrary judgment on the merits of her characters' actions. She simply shows very clearly the interrelationship of events in their lives and leaves judgment to the reader. Like a sower of other people's seed, she reaps no harvest of her own; untouched by envy, she leaves it for others."

Morley is right. Aspiring authors should always make the discussion of life the first consideration of their writing.

The novel reveals what is hidden, defines what is indistinct, and brings together all man's innumerable passions within the covers of a book, thereby naturally stimulating the reader to introspection. There is a parallel between God, who created all things on earth but put nothing of himself into them, and authors with my way of thinking, who create a variety of characters with complete impartiality and present every aspect of daily life in a realistic manner. But the boundlessness of God's creation, the immensity of its scale, makes it extremely difficult for ordinary, simple people to comprehend the inherent relationship of cause and effect. A novelist of my persuasion picks out the essentials, gathers them together in a book, and presents the information for general examination and evaluation. His is a very great responsibility. If he discharges it well, he has achieved something truly momentous.

Motoori Norinaga,⁵ discussing the central theme of *Genji Monogatari* in *Tama no Ogushi*, said: "None of the many theories about the theme of *Genji Monogatari* has ever taken into account that the work is a novel. It has been discussed as if it were nothing more than a Confucian or Buddhist tract: this was not at all its author's intention. True, it shows occasional resemblances to religious writings in spirit and substance, but not enough to place the whole book in this category. Its overall tenor is very different. A novel purports to tell a story, as I remarked earlier . . .

"In the Kochō chapter, the author writes: 'When she read stories about the past, she recognized the people and the situations . . .' As a rule, novels deal with various social situations and people's circumstances and thoughts, so that reading them leads to an understanding of such situations and of the way people act and feel.

This must be regarded as the real reason people read them.

"Thus the general yardstick against which the characters and actions of the persons in a story are measured is the degree to which they possess *mono no aware*⁶ and are compassionate and in harmony with their fellows. The presence or absence of these qualities is what commends or condemns them. Not so far removed from the concepts of good and evil in religion, we might think; but looked at more closely, what is or is not in harmony with man's nature is not always consistent with religious ideas of good and bad. The definition of morality is softened, instead of being rigidly propounded as in Confucian debates. Certainly there are many points in the plot of *Genji Monogatari* where *mono no aware* is emphasized to the detriment of religious teachings.

"Anything irrational among the many, both good and bad, that move men ought to be resisted, but there are times when emotions take over from the will, when we cannot help responding to feelings impossible to suppress. Prince Genji's attempts to see Utsusemi, Oborozukiyo, Fujitsubo⁷ and the others constitute the gravest immorality from the religious point of view; no matter how numerous his other virtues, he deserves to be condemned. The writer does not dwell on the fact that he is behaving badly. She merely states over and over again how exquisite is the sensibility displayed by Prince Genji in his affairs, making him the model and personification of virtue. That is the theme of *Genji Monogatari*--its concepts of good and evil are different from those of religious works.

"Even so, immorality of this sort is not condoned. That Prince Genji's conduct is wrong is made clear without words. Such misdemeanors are often discussed in books of this sort; we can hardly expect to find them not mentioned. *Genji Monogatari* does not lead its reader past doubt to enlightenment, like some solemn religious doctrine. It is a story of society, and as such does not concern itself with discussions of the morality of the events it narrates, but makes *mono no aware* its criterion of virtue. Its outlook is rather like that of someone who saves up muddy water, despite its dirtiness, because he wants to grow a lotus flower to enjoy its beauty. To write of illicit love is not to admire the turbid mud, the material from which springs the flower of *mono no aware*! Prince Genji's conduct is like that lotus bloom, grown up from the mud into a glorious blossom. No reference is made to the fact that the water is dirty--only his compassion and *mono no aware* are singled out as criteria of virtue."

Norinaga's remarks make plain indeed the aims and nature of the novel. Very few of our countrymen have approached the novel with the insight he displays. I understand that many classical scholars are deluded by the superficiality of their knowledge into triumphantly interpreting even *Genji Monogatari* as a didactic work. How very wrong they are!

Chapter Four

Types of Novel

When novels are classified according to their aim, they fall into two groups--didactic and artistic.

The characters and plot of the didactic novel are created with an eye to their usefulness in moral instruction, in an attempt to chide men for their wicked ways. Most writers since Bakin have produced this kind of work. Within the didactic classification a further subdivision is possible into commendatory and censorious. The characters of the former are embodiments of the eight Confucian virtues. Their conduct is depicted as meritorious, in the hope of invoking the reader's admiration and thereby guiding him imperceptibly towards

righteousness. This was Bakin's aim in writing *Hakkenden* and *Asaina Shima Meguri no Ki*; ¹ the characters of both are personifications of the virtues.

The censorious didactic novel, on the other hand, uses different tactics. It chronicles tyranny and cruelty, immorality and filial disobedience, showing stupidity to be ludicrous, and infamy shameful. It endeavours to set people on the right path by employing the technique of the horrible example. Into this category fall Bakin's *Musōbyōe*; ² Samba's *Ukiyodoko* and *Ukiyoburo*; ³ and the light fiction of Fukuchi Kigai; ⁴ In most of his works, however, particularly later ones like *Bishōnenroku*; ⁵ Bakin used a combination of both censure and commendation.

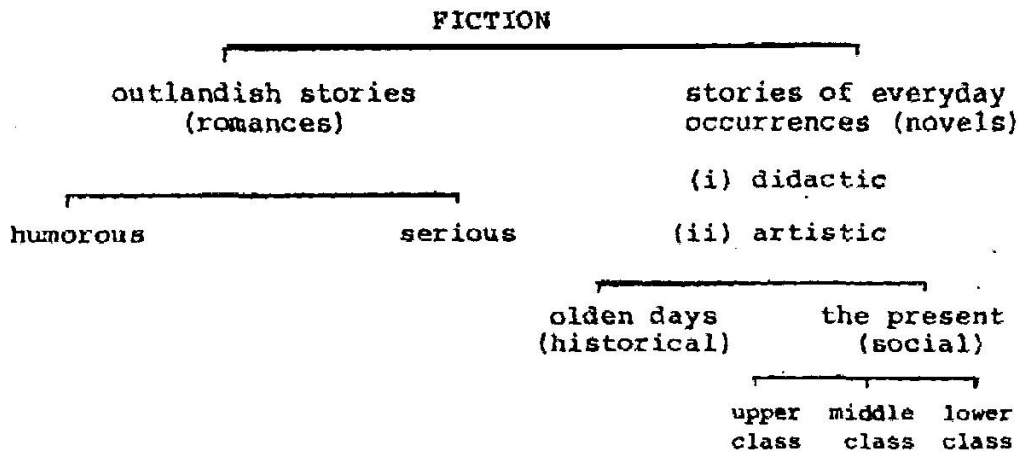
The method of censure takes two forms--strict, as in *Bishōnenroku*, or humorous and candid as in Kigai's light fiction, which provokes laughter.

The characteristics of the artistic novel are quite different from those of the didactic. As its sole aim is to describe social conditions, it attempts to handle its imaginary characters and their imaginary setting in as realistic a fashion as possible. In the manner of a poet who describes real scenery and expresses real emotion, an artist who paints the many aspects of nature by recourse to his palette, and a sculptor who carves out people and animals with his chisel, its author aims at realism in his plot, characterization, and description. A novel of this kind never has a hidden meaning or a deliberately distorted plot. Its author confines himself to describing plausible situations, hoping to make them lifelike. He strives to reproduce the bounty and beauty and freedom of nature, to transport his readers unawares to his make-believe world, and to enable them at last to divine the hidden and mysterious forces at work in their lives. There is thus in the artistic novel an unintentional means of exhortation by rebuke: it has an indirect civilizing influence. Above all, since it sets out to portray modern social situations, the story (even though its events and characters are fictitious) can be styled a living history which reveals contemporary social trends, informs of drifts in fashion, and makes clear the tenor of society. For an intelligent reader, its value is enormous. It offers an experience far removed from that of groping circuitously towards an understanding of life's causal relationships gained by researching biographies of real people or situations from other eras; and it is much more profitable even than arriving the hard way at an examination and perception of life through repeated experience.

Japanese novelists, however, do not seem to have understood this. Taking Li Yu's advice to seek out a moral from commonplace things, they have created a mould of admonition within whose bounds they try to confine their plot. What a strange practice!

Classified according to subject matter, the novel again falls into two categories--historical and social. The former is constructed around some historical event or personage, the latter around contemporary situations. Most Japanese novels--the works of Bakin, for example--are historical, as are the small rice-paper books written in a mixture of *kanji* and *kana* commonly known as *yomihon*; ⁶ but Murasaki Shikibu's *Genji Monogatari* and most of Tamenaga Shunsui's *ninjōbon*; ⁷ are social novels.

The following diagram outlines types of novel:



There are other kinds of novel, too many to enumerate, among them political, religious, military and maritime, but in the final analysis they are all either historical or social novels. Political novels describe the world of politics. Many are written by politicians as an indirect

platform for the party line--the Earl of Beaconsfield's *Coningsby*,⁸ for example. Religious novels are principally concerned with proselytism. There are no real examples of this genre as yet in Japanese literature. Perhaps the nearest we have are the miracle stories, or the later novels of Santō Kyōden. Military novels deal with either actual wartime events or wartime situations but involve fictitious characters. They are not the same as our Japanese *gunki monogatari*.⁹ Maritime novels describe imaginary sea voyages. They bear a slight resemblance to Japanese tales of such experiences, but while those are romances, maritime novels are usually just ordinary stories about life at sea.

As shown in the diagram, there are three kinds of social novel, built around upper, middle, and lower class situations respectively. There are not discrete classifications; the three are interrelated, differing only in the characteristics of their heroes. The paucity of social novels in Japan makes it hard to find examples. Generally speaking, though, the *ninjōbon* of Tamenaga Shunsui are set among the lower classes; sometimes they also deal with the upper. Santō Kyōzan's¹⁰ *kusazōshi*, although ostensibly historical, are really middle and lower class social novels.

The *ninjōbon* versions of *Kagamiyama*¹¹ (rewritten by Shōtei Kinzui¹²) and *Sendai Hagi*¹³ could perhaps be said to portray the upper levels of society; *Genji Monogatari* and Daini Sanmi's *Sagoromo* certainly do.

Chapter Five

The Benefits of the Novel

The novel is art. As it cannot be put to practical use, it would be a serious mistake to discuss its practical advantages. Yet just as there are indirect benefits in poetry and music, so perhaps a novel also contains some few not consciously planned by its author; incidental results of an artist's single-minded desire to give pleasure to his reader by stimulating his aesthetic sensibilities. A perfect, beautifully executed work of art, as I have already said, profoundly inspires a reader. Indirectly, it ennobles his character and rounds out his education. This, however, is a natural response to consummate artistry and is certainly not the aim of art; nor can it even be correctly termed a direct benefit.

Before we can discuss the benefits to be derived from the novel, we must first divide them into direct and indirect. The direct benefit is the pleasure the reader feels. In other words, the novel is meant to entertain people. Entertainment takes many forms: the novel strives for the gratification of man's aesthetic sensibilities-

-his finer feelings. Civilized man delights in poetic sentiments and in manifestations of elegance. Once possessed of finer feelings, he revels in richness and beauty, and loves grandeur. Awe rises unbidden in his heart in the face of greatness. Excitement and commotion involuntarily arouse him and inspire him with courage. He rejoices in both elegant circumlocution and candour. This is presumably the normal condition for a human being! The artist's duty, and the aim of the true novelist, is to give pleasure by falling in with these sentiments. If the novel plumbs the depths of human nature, searches out the details of all that is most obscure in society, and describes that which is beautiful, majestic, interesting, and humorous, it cannot fail to stimulate its reader's aesthetic sensibilities. Because its main concern is neither colour nor sound but human nature in a living world, it presents an aspect of constant movement. It is much more interesting than music and painting, without being in any way their inferior.

Even were this not so, John Morley has described the critical discussion of man's world as one of life's great pleasures. The novel is, so to speak, a guidebook to life. Within its covers is presented for the reader's appraisal a graphic description of the reasons why one person fails and another succeeds, or the ways power tends to corrupt moral sense, or examples of rational behaviour being abandoned under emotional stress. An intelligent reader finds this much more interesting than histories or Chinese classics--the explanation, no doubt, of the eagerness of adults and scholars in Western countries to read novels for pleasure.

In Japan, the novel has always been looked upon as a plaything. Novelists themselves have meekly acquiesced in this assessment; not one has contemplated remodelling the novel into an art-form to delight mature, educated people. Comparing the Japanese novel with its Western counterpart is thus like comparing the Utagawa *ukiyo*e woodblock prints¹ with the Kanō paintings.² The prints, though certainly not clumsily executed, lack the quality of refinement; having nothing to offer the viewer's aesthetic sensibilities, they serve merely to amuse women and children. Certainly the traditional Japanese view has been that the novel's only inherent benefit is to ward off drowsiness on a long, solitary spring day, or to soothe the pangs of loneliness in the drawn-out autumn nights. The blame for this error--a result of the fallacy that the novel is not an art-form but a nursery or boudoir amusement--can probably be laid at the door of authors who take no pride in their craft.

That concludes my remarks on the direct benefits of the novel. Let us now proceed to the indirect, of which there are several. It ennobles character, provides moral instruction, supplements history books, and furnishes a model for literature.

1. The ennoblement of character

I have already discussed this great advantage of art in a general way in Chapter One. Let me now reiterate the main points.

The novel is not something to be used in the service of man's carnal passions. It aspires to entertain him by appealing to his more refined tastes. A taste for elegance and an emotional sensitivity, however, are the most noble of attributes, to be found only in civilized, culturally advanced peoples. Ignorant savages give themselves over to the appetites of the flesh. As they know nothing of intellectual pleasures, their slightest action is motivated by lust. They are thus carried away by vulgarity, thoroughly selfish, extremely brutal, and absolutely insensitive to beauty. When a man is tormented by desire and dogged by passion, his conscience and faculty of reason grow ever weaker, and all that is discreditable in him is allowed to reign unchallenged. Even a civilized man, if he turns his talents to the pursuit of fame, riches, and notoriety in gambling halls, insatiably greedy, caring for nothing but temporal wealth and fame, will gravitate towards insensitivity and selfishness. However little he may desire to slide into meanness, he cannot very well avoid it, no doubt

because his lack of spiritual reserves makes him, in spite of himself, a slave to his appetites.

To achieve control, a man must use the power of reason; yet there are times when violent passion renders even reason useless. Our carnal impulses may be likened to a fever gripping a child. At its peak, he struggles against all who try to make him drink his medicine. Reason is his stern father. No matter how harshly he scolds, the child, in a fit of wilfulness, refuses to obey him, whereupon it becomes necessary to resort to a mother's methods. She cajoles the child into taking the medicine by tempting him first with sweetmeats. When he grows thirsty and asks for a drink, she gives him the infusion. After he has taken the medicine several times and realizes it is helping him, he will drink it voluntarily to be rid of his suffering, and as taking it often reduces his thirst to some extent, he will gradually stop asking for water alone.

Inadequate though this parallel may be, it does illustrate how our carnal desires may be controlled. Reason cannot be called into play to cure violent outbreaks. If the gentle medium of art is invoked to appeal to a man's aesthetic sensibilities, to arouse his finer feelings, gradually to drive out lust and lure his thoughts outside the everyday world, and to lead him to an awareness of the subtler kind of beauty, then he will be uplifted in spite of himself, and will soon escape from the seas of passion. It is this which makes art so important despite its lack of practical value. Thus an art-lover who indulges himself frequently will develop more and more of a taste for elegance and his character will become increasingly finer. As the novel is an art-form, it too, of course, offers this benefit. It is a very rare Japanese novel justifiably classified as art, however, though the reader may find such an assertion hard to accept. I was hard pressed to find a convincing explanation for this myself. As I remarked in an earlier chapter, the novels prized in Japan are crude; they lack the qualities of art. They occupy a position like that of *ukiyo-e*, which cannot be called genuine paintings. If we appreciate the significance of this example, we can comprehend something of the nature of the true novel.

2. Moral Instruction

Earlier writers have frequently asserted that the novel has a contribution to make to encouraging virtue and castigating vice, a view also widely held in society at large. Oriental authors in particular have one and all made exhortation their first consideration: they have held the belief that the aim of the novel should be to alleviate depression and to benefit its readers through moral instruction. One naturally expects that any book written with such an intention will have didactic value! Yet any beautifully written work, even one not specifically written as a parable, occasionally speaks indirectly to its reader, impelling him to look closely at himself. With this in mind, I have included moral counsel among the benefits to be derived from the novel.

I will not here reiterate the advantages of the very popular didactic novel. I would like, however, to spend a short time clearing away the false ideas of the didactic novelists and, at the same time, to explain something of the way in which exhortation is useful, in answer to those short-sighted critics who question its efficacy even in the didactic novel itself. Some even go so far as to censure the novel for teaching people to be lascivious and greedy.

Before anyone can pass comment on an object, he must first have analysed it and familiarized himself with its structure, in order to avoid such errors as, say, talking about a deer when he really means a horse. The structural similarity between the two animals could lead someone unfamiliar with horses to mistake them for each other, and to bring ridicule upon himself by describing a horse as having spots and living in remote mountain fastnesses.

The same can be said of the novel. Critics who rush in without first ascertaining its exact nature are liable to

make the mistake of including the novel in their comments on the romance that bears some resemblance to it. Perhaps the condemnation by some Chinese of the novel as a corrupting influence fits such novels as *Jin Ping Mei* and *Rou Pu Tuan*.³ Our traditional Japanese scorn for fiction as an agent corrosive of public morals may well apply to that kind of lascivious love story that relates the intimate details of amorous dalliance. This, however, is nothing but a spurious imitation of the true novel. Such works do not deserve to be called genuine novels, because they contain the very element of indecency art must most stringently avoid. Indeed there can be no doubt that risqué love stories are written with the sole intention of leading people astray. It would not be overstating the case to say that the blame for the regularity with which these counterfeit novels appear lies not with their authors but with their readers. Authors generally give the public what it wants. Why should they have turned out pornography on a regular basis unless the demand was there? There are certain prurient passages in *Genji Monogatari*, but for these the authoress is not solely responsible--they were an inevitable product of the effete society eventuating from the Fujiwara⁴ assumption of absolute power.

Those who disagree with me are bound to point out that novels invariably include a love story. Many run counter to moral teachings because they are written expressly to initiate a trend. Rumour reports that in recent times children in America and other countries have been influenced by novels to embark on illicit affairs. Does it not follow, they will clamour, that the novel counsels vice and encourages lust?

My reply is that because the novel builds its plot around man's emotions, love between the sexes is indispensable material, for love is more important than any of man's countless baser desires. Thus a genuine novel may have as its theme the mutual love of a man and a woman, but it does not set out to unearth secrets better left unspoken nor to portray debauchery as writers of the Tamenaga School⁵ do. It goes no further than a subtle, psychologically convincing exploration of the hidden depths of human nature. Should its reader experience adulterous or evil thoughts, the fault lies in his own mind and not in the novel.

Naturally, the novel's description of life will prove thought-provoking to a discerning reader. An intelligent person usually learns from someone else's example. Those disposed to envy Hisamatsu's elopement with Osome⁶ are envious by nature, whether they read novels or not. The kind of person who hears about a girl in the east running off with her lover and is immediately encouraged to lay similar plans with a girl in the west is not capable of using another's example to modify his own behaviour, and will experience many hardships before he achieves enlightenment. To criticize the novel on his account is unjust, irritatingly misleading, and a nuisance to the novelist. Zhang Zhu-po's statement in the preface to *Jin Ping Mei* that the blame for any attendant evil thoughts lies with the reader and not with the book is most unreasonable in that particular instance, but would be fair comment in the case of a genuine novel.

Let me interject a note of warning here! In both East and West, novels are considered of no importance and are customarily given to young children to read. This is a very dangerous habit. Children are extremely impressionable; they react to external stimuli much more sharply than adults. They should not be exposed to any source of intense mental stimulation, let alone to novels. Art is certainly a toy, but it is the toy of mature, educated people. While it is not something to be feared, neither should children be allowed to amuse themselves with it.

Another argument advanced by the novel's critics is that honourable men, by virtue of their upright natures, do not need to read novels for any moral instruction implicit therein. Therefore, they say, its deeper levels of meaning are intended to benefit either women and children or mediocre men who pass their days in idleness and debauchery: in fine, it can have no didactic benefit at all. Women and children are ignorant. They know nothing of the realities of life. They can enjoy an unusual plot in a novel, but they cannot appreciate its hidden import. The idle and the self-indulgent read novels only as a panacea for depression and anxiety, and

do not concern themselves with quality.

To this I say that while it is only to be expected that a child who has had the guidance from birth of right-minded parents will grow into a virtuous, principled adult needing no prompting to reject evil in favour of good, such a man will yet suffer occasional involuntary lapses of behaviour. They may not be sufficiently severe to be labelled immoral or wicked, but if they were to become common knowledge they would doubtless expose him to derision. A proper didactic novel spares not even such trivial slips, so that to read it sometimes produces a twinge of shame even in those who make much of morality. I have a friend in Tōkyō whose scholarship encompasses Japan, China, and the West, a man much admired for his upright and chivalrous nature. Yet he once told me that reading about the company of dog-knights in *Hakkenden* arouses in him an occasional private pang of self-recrimination. It is his very integrity that produces his reaction. Others like myself often feel the same way. Should readers prove impervious to such pricks, it means only that they read without insight, not that exhortation is valueless in a novel. Those who say that a moral in a novel is intended for the ignorant man alone have been reading the *kusazōshi* so popular of late. Their ridiculous comments are not worth the trouble of refuting, for they relate to the romance. The argument is frivolous in the extreme.

Women and children, being fundamentally ignorant and poorly educated, simply read the novel for its story and are unlikely to be able to grasp its significance. Yet it is not right to say that they are altogether unable to make moral and aesthetic distinctions. There can be no doubt that frequent perusal of a didactic novel will result in its moral being unwittingly taken to heart, to become in some degree a source of encouragement and an influence on behaviour. A perceptive reader, however, would feel its influence more keenly. That is why the novel is not written for women and children alone!

Some may say that as idlers really only read novels as a form of escapism, it is only to be expected that such aspects as their deeper implications will be lost on them. Be that as it may, it will be rare that a man's sense of shame, however faint, will allow him to enjoy being lampooned, even if he does not go so far as to grasp the moral, repent at once in mortification, and mend his ways. Should he do so, the admonition has had an even deeper effect on him. A moral may not immediately have an influence for good, but it will indirectly stir a man's conscience. Whether the road to repentance and reform will open up if frequent pricks of conscience lead him to overcome sensual desire we cannot know. In any case it is wrong to say that admonition in the novel has no effect. I may have unwittingly changed my views on this point--perhaps I am stretching the facts.

According to a certain Western scholar, "few people realize that the novel has another marvellous practical advantage in addition to its well known virtues as a tonic for depression. It is a treasure-house, a repository wherein is stored a wealth of potential sources of instruction. If a man once opens the door, he will benefit greatly. The word 'instruction' may suggest concentration on the principles of duty and morality with comment on the rights and wrongs of our conduct. I use the term here in a different sense. Certainly moral principles provide an essential discipline for life and set up valuable standards, but the instruction I speak of covers a much wider field. Even things outside the moral sphere have been generally misnamed 'instruction' if they have had the slightest power to chide people and to improve their inner and outer deportment. Instruction includes, for example, teaching manners, cultivating a ready wit, and revealing the quality of human nature and the vast array of human passions. If a reader has realized that such teaching is to be found in the novel and has been able to appreciate correctly its true significance, then we may indeed say that he has succeeded for the first time in grasping the novel's real benefits, as well as plucking the fruits of pleasure. Many of those who read novels are strangers to reason. They concentrate only on the plot in the mistaken belief that they have drawn from it the fruits of pleasure, when they have seen only the flower, and have

never tasted the fruit!"

His argument is most perspicacious. It deserves praise as a new theory elucidating the nature of the exhortation often concealed in the novel.

There remains much which should be said on the benefits of didacticism, but because of its length I shall omit it here and continue with it later if occasion requires.

3. Supplementing official histories

By "supplementing", I mean that the novel makes good the omissions of history books, creating a history of local manners and customs through a finely detailed, graphic portrayal, like a painting. It describes contemporary mores skimmed over by official histories. This advantage is therefore to be found only in historical novels; and yet, as even novels of modern life will become the historical novels of the future, it is indisputably true of them as well. (Murasaki Shikibu's story of Prince Genji, for example, is essentially a novel of contemporary life, but from it later generations, exploring the customs of her time, discover how many things began.) The novelist, while endeavouring to probe human nature, also scrutinizes customs and manners. He must keep abreast of his times--nonsensical archaisms are to be avoided!

There are many Western writers who have commented on this aspect of the novel. Instead of discussing it myself, I shall quote two or three excerpts as useful testimony.

First, the great English writer, Sir Walter Scott: "The historical novel benefits two kinds of reader. The first is the person whose interest in history is initially kindled by reading a fictitious historical novel, after which he abandons fiction for history books in order to find out more about the events on which the novel, of course, is based. The second reads only for pleasure. Conversant only with contemporary affairs, he knows nothing of the past, and first becomes aware of the outlines of history through reading historical novels. Even sketchy knowledge of this sort is better than total ignorance."

Hugh Miller:⁷ "An official history has a strict format. Its details of names, dates, and events are accurate, but it does not offer a true picture of the times because it merely skims over contemporary customs and human nature. The characters and events of historical romances are creations of their authors, just as in popular fiction, but the depth and complexity of their stories make them all the more useful in portraying human nature and behaviour, and many are really photographic reflections of their times. Someone intending to study history and wanting to know just how things were in his great-grandfather's day will gain more by reading the novels of Fielding and Richardson⁸ than by wasting his time perusing Dodsley's *Annual Registers*.⁹ Home¹⁰ was closely involved in the uprising of 1745, and in his history of the era set down hearsay reports as if he had been an eyewitness. Yet comparison with Scott's *Waverley Novels* shows that Home failed to mention many aspects of contemporary life."

Thackeray¹¹ (an English novelist): "I gain many things from reading a novel. I find out what the world was like in those times, what the spirit of the day was. I learn about customs, fashions in dress, and how the pleasures, pastimes and humour of those days were different from those of the present. People long dead return to life, a society long vanished reappears, and I feel as if I am in the England of bygone days. Ah, a novel is a finely-crafted history, with so much more to offer than an ordinary history!"

Many others have expatiated on the virtues of the historical novel, but as all concur in viewing it as a history of manners and customs, I have omitted them to avoid monotony. I may refer to them later, when I discuss

the historical novel further.

4. Providing a model for literature

I refer here to the way in which the novel is written. The great masterpieces of literature are of considerable benefit to those who set out to study them, not only because of the originality and skilful execution of their plots but also because they are superbly written, every phrase rich in beauty--witness *Genji Monogatari* and *Shui Hu Zhuan*.¹² Writing being first and foremost an instrument for expressing thought, it follows that violent thoughts demand a fiery style and delicate ideas an elegant one. Sometimes simplicity will be called for, sometimes detail. Skilful writing adapts the style to the content, whether simple or complex, robust or gentle, richly beautiful or unsophisticated.

If, on the other hand, the style remains invariably the same whether describing pain or joy, then of course it will reflect neither sentiment and the reader will probably remain unaware of their existence. In times of great anger or sorrow, for example, the words we use become succinct and highly descriptive. By descriptive, I mean metaphorical--the type of expression known in the West as "figures of speech", which are both ornamental and elliptical. To illustrate: when we describe an "ungrateful wretch" as a "beast" or a "brute in human form", we use a metaphor which compares his lack of shame with an animal's. Under normal circumstances, the full expression would be "that fellow is a stranger to honour!" We all know, however, that a man does not concern himself with semantics when emotions are at boiling point; he shortens his utterance to one or two words like "beast" or "brute", and underlines significant points with mime or gesture. But it takes a knowledge of human nature gained through long experience of life to understand this, and so there are many young writers who write an accomplished but elaborate style which lacks the power to move people. They waste their time on sterile writing that expresses barely a fraction of the underlying thought, a situation resulting from their failure to seek out a fitting relationship of style to circumstance and theme. Their subject matter and style are out of harmony.

Man's feelings and thoughts are infinitely varied, however, and to produce an appropriate style for each one is a difficult task indeed. Unless he is a rare genius, a writer cannot know without being taught what style will best express certain thoughts and feelings, or what words will give a certain tone. He must have an example to follow. The difficulty lies in finding one. To model his work solely on dissertations written by the old masters may only give him a tendency to theorize unduly and an overly straightforward style. Yet to limit his studies to descriptive compositions cannot but result in an excessively elaborate style devoid of the charm of animation. Strict emulation of the dialogue style hampers the development of descriptive skills; of the historical style, the ability to write critically. All these troubles arise from a one-sided approach.

According to Spenser, perfect writing uses an infinite number of styles to express an infinite number of themes. Someone who sticks to a single style, however well he handles it, cannot be described as a good writer in all fields. Those with any aspirations at all towards becoming literary greats should polish their style by patterning it on one which is both elegant and thoroughly versatile. A century or two ago, it was enough to be proficient in only one kind of writing, but the emergence of today's world, with the rapid advance of culture, has so greatly increased the range of needs to be said and written that on occasion a descriptive or historical style is called for even in political attacks and deliberations. It is well known how Burke, when he impeached Hastings in the House,¹³ impressed all those present with his impassioned oration.

As a versatile, beautifully executed style on which to pattern one's own writing, that of the novels written by the most eminent authors cannot be surpassed. The task of any novel worthy of the name is to portray the whole gamut of social conditions and emotions, omitting nothing. It will therefore contain passages of rich

beauty, of grandeur, of deep pathos, and of quiet elegance. Past events will be related in historical style, situations described in graphic style. There will be styles for dialogue, denunciation, humour, and severity. The thoughts of energetic people will be expressed in appropriately vigorous language, the emotions of mourners in the sombre phrases they deserve. In sum: because the primary aim is to co-ordinate style and feeling, the style will undergo an endless series of changes. This is what makes the novel a good model for a stylist.

I have not yet exhausted my subject, but to relieve the monotony I shall leave this topic for a while and take it up again in the section on style in Part Two.

(Let the reader clearly understand that the argument I have just put forward refers to the perfect novel, and not to the recently popular *kusazōshi*!)

If the novel really possesses such possibilities as these, then, would it not be seriously remiss of us not to overhaul and improve our crude Japanese novels, to make them flawless, better than those in the West, to produce a great art form fit to be called the flower of our nation? To do it, we must work out a plan for writing the perfect novel by first understanding the reasons for past successes and failures, taking care not to make the same mistakes again while seeking out and concentrating on the good points. Without a campaign of this nature, the Oriental novel will probably always remain at the level of the old romance, with no chance to develop.

Since it is only a short time ago that I left university, not only have I not yet written the books I want to write, I have very seldom even done any translation. My actual experience is thus very limited, but I have spent many years reading both early and modern novels, and feel I have acquired a fair amount of theoretical knowledge. I therefore wish to present as a guide in the second part of this work a discussion of the rules of the novel. If the reader will be so good as to peruse it carefully and give it some consideration without dismissing it out of hand, it will not only shed light on the difficult craft of that great art form, the novel, it will also open the way for the true novel to eclipse the *kusazōshi*.

PART TWO

Chapter One

The Rules of the Novel: An Introduction

All things in the universe are governed by natural laws. The seasons rotate in fixed order throughout the year, as darkness follows light in the course of a day. If even nature is subject to regulation, how much more so are the works of man! How can they exist without it? The humblest task depends for its completion upon a set of rules. There is an art to painting, and a rhythm to music. Poetry, dancing--each has its canons to guide later learners. It is because the same must surely be true of the novel that I now embark on this discussion.

No doubt there are some who have formed the mistaken opinion of the novel as a rambling tale hastily dashed off by the author as his fancy takes him, without rules or standards. They are victims of the superficial view, who have failed to comprehend the true nature of the novel. The characters and events of the novel, unlike those of an ordinary biography or history, are entirely figments of an author's imagination. They are pure invention. If, therefore, an author does not begin by establishing some kind of foundation on which to start building, the end result will be sequential confusion, monotony, and jerkiness. Even an unusual story,

though it may meet the objectives of the novel by its perceptive description of human nature and social conditions, will be boring if it is poorly arranged and has a tedious, irksome plot. The reader will weary of such a story halfway through, and lay it aside before he reaches the climax.

Writing a novel is similar to producing a long composition. Its plot and layout must be systematic, and there must be clearly discernible patterns in its flow of events. If its plot incorporates both high and low points, if the texture of its narrative avoids monotony, and if some discretion is shown with respect to the personalities and situations portrayed, then and only then will the novel make an impression on its reader, and win honour as an art which equals poetry and music.

Despite what I have just said, if an author adheres rigidly to a set of rules and attempts to construct his plot in a contrived manner like an artisan working to a preordained plan, the scope of his description of personalities and behaviour will perforce be limited. Even if by some happy chance he does manage a comprehensive treatment, the overall tenor of his work will be dreary and lifeless. It is no easy task to produce a graceful, elegant composition by relying on formulae to prescribe variations in tone. Novelists should bear this in mind as well.

Writing a novel is like cooking. A cook, simply because he is a cook, naturally chooses one of the conventional ways of preparing fish as soup, grilled fish, raw fish salad, or salt fish. So long as the flavour is good, however, he may successfully serve it raw even when his usual programme calls for it to be grilled. Or he may devise a new way of salting the fish he should have used for salad, or grill a fish instead of making it into soup. His meals are thus not merely palatable but positively interesting. The way to bring out the best in food is to subjugate preparation to taste. No one reckons on the order being reversed, and that is why a resourceful cook occasionally exerts all his culinary skills to prepare a dish in some unexpected way. The key to the novel lies in a similar approach. The most important thing is to make an impression on the reader. Rules are used in constructing the plot in order to prevent his becoming bored, and to elicit his admiration. They are therefore of secondary importance, a means to an end, and the means must be made to fit the circumstances. Some laws are immutable, but by no means all. A novelist who sees a chance to move his reader should adapt himself as a matter of course to the demands of the occasion. Quick-wittedness of this sort goes by the name of talent, and should be practised in all types of writing, not just the novel. Those who do not pay attention to it will fall short of the perfection they desire. Regrettably, they will kill that which they desire to bring to life.

Generally speaking, rules may be thought of as resembling advice--helpful if given before the event. To point out an error while the thing is in train may lead to its rectification, but there will be something clumsy about the handling of the project, and the end-product will be marred. Rules operate on the same basis, a fact which should be fully understood before work is begun on the plot of a novel. If an author fails to realize this, and sticks rigidly to a formula like someone measuring up dimensions with a ruler, he will end up with a novel cast in a rigid mould irritating to read. Experienced writers occasionally succeed by chance; beginners often expect to succeed and do not. A great deal of thought must be given to the matter.

The following chapters deal with various rules. My arguments are hastily put together, and are, of course, incomplete--much has been either left out or not treated in full. The quality of novels and historical romances, in particular, is chiefly determined by the degree and quality of their writers' inborn talent. No amount of memorizing guidelines will make someone not so gifted a match for a person with that instinctive flair which has nothing to do with rules. Bakin once went to Kyōden and asked to be taught how to write *gesaku*,¹ but Kyōden refused his request with the very proper reply that it was not something which could be learned from somebody else. The laws of the novel are intuitively understood--many are very hard to verbalize. That I

have here nevertheless taken several points and explicitly designated them as rules is because of my deep concern that our inexperienced Japanese novelists should know all there is to know about the objectives of the great art of the novel. It is certainly not my intention to expatiate the true rules, which are intuitive. I ask all you scholars, therefore, not to pounce arbitrarily upon the word "rules" and chide me for my ignorance! The points I make in the following chapters are for the most part my own personal opinions; it may be that many of them are wrong. It would give me very great pleasure indeed, and fulfil my original purpose, if you would correct my mistakes without deriding me.

Chapter Two

Style

Style serves both as a vehicle and an adornment for thought. It is of paramount importance in writing a novel. If it is clumsy, it robs even the cleverest plot of life; and if the wording does not flow naturally, neither does the description. In China and many Western countries where the written and spoken languages are almost identical, there is no particular need to choose one specific style, but here in Japan the existence of a variety of styles, each having advantages and disadvantages, according to the purpose in mind, means that we have to make a choice of which to use in the novel.

The three styles long used in the Japanese novel, albeit with much diversity, are the classical, the colloquial, and a mixture of the two. I propose, as a guide for the reader, to restrict this discussion to the relative merits of these three, without going into greater detail. I have much more to say about style in the novel, which I shall omit for fear of becoming overly tedious; but later I intend to write a supplement in which I shall deal with stylistic reform rather than variety.

Classical Style

The classical style is known as *wabun*.¹ Vague and refined, it is naturally suited to euphemistic, elegant prose, but it lacks a needed air of animation and grandeur. It is reminiscent of a weak, pliant willow tossed by the wind, or a court lady languishing behind a screen. In addition to its seductive charm, *wabun* possesses serene cadences and a natural classical grace, and is therefore not appropriate for descriptions of violent emotions, bizarre behaviour, or debauchery, let alone savagery.

As the duty of the novel, broadly speaking, is to present before the reader's eyes a graphic description of everything from the innumerable phenomena of the natural universe to the manifold passions of man, there are times when it must deal with elegance, grace, excitement, gaiety, sadness, loneliness, and laughter. Even the best plot will be ruined unless the writer is versatile, able to convey both elegance and grace with equal facility. Sublimity and humour, beauty and pathos are all attributes of fine writing. They are especially important to the novel--the lack of even one is sufficient to flaw its style, no matter how skilfully the other three may be used.

Here in Japan, of course, the age-old dichotomy between pen and sword has meant that literature was long ago left entirely in the hands of the effeminate court nobility, with the result that writing became very elegant and naturally lost a great deal of its frankness and animation in the process. Those books in particular which later ages have come to regard as landmarks of Japanese literature are merely the products of the leisure hours of a group of women in the licentious days of the mediaeval Fujiwara regency; small wonder that their style is languid. *Genji Monogatari*, written in *wabun*, won lasting fame for Murasaki Shikibu because its

style and content, both charming, complemented each other well, and also, I think, because the quality of her writing so well matched the spirit of the era. The style of the novel is not immutable, of course. When human nature and social customs advance further, style must be adjusted accordingly. It must make appropriate allowances for changes in language, and strike out in new directions, because the stuff of which the novel is made is the portrayal of contemporary human nature and behaviour. Even Murasaki's talent would be hard pressed to produce a description of our present society in the pure *wabun* of her day. The following extracts from *Genji Monogatari* give some idea why.

Genji visiting the child Murasaki (*Murasaki*): 「(紫詞) 小納言よなほし被たりつらんはいづら。宮の在するかとてよりおはしたる御こゑいと可愛し。」(源詞) 「宮にはあらねど又おもほしはなつべうもあらず。此処と宣たまふを羞かしかりし人とさすがに聞倣して悪しう言ひてけりとおぼして乳母にさしよりて。」(紫詞) 「いざかし寝ぶたきにと宣たまへば。」

(Murasaki): "Shōnagon yo naoshi kitari tsuran wa izura. Miya no owasuru ka tote yori owashitaru mikoe ito rautashi." (Genji): "Miya ni wa aranedo mata omohoshi hanatsu beu mo arazu. Kochi to notamafu o hazukashikarishi hito to sasuga ni kikinashite ashiu ihitekeri to oboshite menoto ni sashiyorite. (Murasaki): "Izakashi nebutaki ni to notameheba."

Genji visiting the Minister and lamenting the death of Aoi (*Aoi*): 「心ながき人だにあらば見はてたまひなん物を命こそはかなけれとて、火をうちながめたまへる眼のうち濡たまへるほどぞめでたき。取別けてらうたくしたまひし小さき小女の親どももなく、いと心ぼそげに思へる、道理と見たまひて、」(源詞) 「あてきは今は我をこそ思ふべき人なめれ、とのたまへば甚じく泣く。」

Kokoro nagaki hito dani araba mihate tamahi nan mono o inochi koso hakanakere tote, hi o uchinagametamaheru me no uchi nuretamaheru hodo zo medetaki. Toriwakete rautakushitamahishi chisaki warawa no oyadomo mo naku, ito kokoro bosoge ni omoheru, kotowari to mitamahite, (Genji): "' Ateki wa ima wa ware o koso omofu beki hito namere,' to notamaheba imijiku naku."

Fujitsubo visiting her son to announce her decision to become a nun (*Sasaki*): (藤詞) 「御らんぜで久しからん程に形容の異ざまにて、うたてげに変わりて侍らばいかゞ思さるべきと聞えたまへば御かほをうちまもりて。」(東宮詞) 式部かやうにや争でか然はなりたまはんと笑みて宣給ふ。言ふ甲斐なく哀れにて。」(藤詞) 「それは老いて侍れば醜きぞ然はあらで髪はそれよりも短くて、黒き衣などを被て、夜居の僧のやうになり侍らんとすれば、見たてまつらんこともいとゞ久しかるべきぞとて泣きたまへば、まめだちて。」(東宮詞) 「久しうおはせば恋しきものをとて、涙のおつれば恥かしとおぼして、さすがに背きたまへる御ぐしはゆら／＼と清らにて、眼のなつかしげに匂ひたまへるさま、おとなびたまふまゝに、たゞ彼の御かほをぬぎすべたまへり。」

(Fujitsubo): "Goranze de hisashikaran hodo ni katachi no koto zama ni te, utate ge ni kawarite haberaba ikaga obosaru beki to kikoetamaheba, onkaho o uchi mamorite." (Ryozen): "Shikibu kayōni ya ikadeka sa wa naritamawan to emite notamafu. Ifu kahinaku aware ni te." (Fujitsubo): "Sore wa oite habereba minikuki zo sa wa ara de kami wa sore yori mo mijikakute, kuroki koromo nado o kite, yoi no sō no yō ni nari haberan to sureba, mitate matsuran koto mo itodo hisashikaru beki zo, tote nakitamaheba, mamedaahite." (Ryozen):

"Hisashiu owaseba koishiki mono o tote, namida no otsureba hazukashi to oboshite, sasuga ni somukitamaheru migushi wa yurayura to kiyora ni te, mami no natsukashi ge ni niohitamaheru sama, otonabitamafu mama ni, tada kano onkaho o nugisubetamaheri."

Describing Genji's exile (*Suma*): 「月いと明うさし入て、はかなき旅のおまし所はおくまで隈なし。床の上に夜深き空も見ゆ。入がたの月すごく見ゆるに、たゞこれ西に行くなりと独ごちたまひて、〔ひとしく西へゆくといへども月の西へゆくは唯西へ行のみなり我は左遷され西へ行なりと歎じ給ふ。〕 (源詠) 「いづかたの雲路にわれもまよひなん月の見るらんこともはづかし。」

Tsuki ito akau sashi-irite, hakanaki tabi no omashi tokoro wa oku made kuma nashi. Tokonoue no yobukaki sora mo miyu. Irigata no tsuki sugoku miyuru ni, tada kore nishi ni yuku nari to hitori gochi tamahite, (hitoshiku nishi e yuku to iedomo tsuki no nishi e yuku wa tada nishi e yuku nomi nari ware wa sasen sare nishi e yuku nari to nagejitamafu.) (Genji): "Izukata no kumo ji ni ware mo mayohi nan tsuki no miruran koto mo hazukashi."

Describing a violent storm (*Suma*): 海のおもては袈を張りたらんやうに光みちて、神なりひらめく。〔雷電にて海面白くいかれるをいふ也。〕

Umi no omote wa fusuma o haritaran yō ni hikarimichite, kami nari hirameku. (Raiden ni te umi omoshiroku ikareru o iu nari.)

I have already outlined the characteristics of this style. Ishikawa Masamochi² used it in *Ōmiagata Monogatari* and *Tsukushi Bune Monogatari*, and Takebe no Ayatari³ in *Nishiyama Monogatari*. The reader may form his own opinion of its relative merits by perusing these three works.

In this connection let me mention *Miyako no Teburi* by Roku Juen,⁴ in which the classical style is used to describe the streets of Edo. The taverns of Bakurochō and the streetwalkers, in particular, are dealt with in graphic and searching detail, but the elegant style used for these mundane matters often seems incongruous, even laughable. The extreme deliberation of the language in which arguments are couched makes the speakers seem more like the inhabitants of Kyōto than like Edokko,⁵ proof that *wabun* is not a fit medium for animation and plain speaking.

Shikitei Samba and others occasionally used the classical style for humorous descriptions. Here is one example, from *Ukiyoburo*.

春はあけぼのやう／＼白くなりゆく。あらひ粉にふるとしの顔をあらふ、初湯のけぶりほそくたなびきたる女湯のありさま、いかで見ん物をとて、松の内早仕舞ちふ札かけたる格子のもとにたゞすみ、障子のひまよりかいまみるに、そのさまをかしくもあり、又おのが身のぶざめいたるはあさましくもありけり。白き物ははつ湯の三方とかいふめる、ものはづけとやらんもうべなり。御祝儀の十二銅、男衆への水引包は、二つの三方にうづ高うして、雪消えぬ富士と筑波あらそへり。そも／＼こゝには神代のありさまをやうつしたりけむ、注連縄ひきわたせる柘榴口の後には、榊葉ならぬ松真木もて風呂たく男の庭火燃すありて、湯汲場の天岩戸をさとひらきてより、常闇にまがへる朝湯の湯気はやゞはれわたり、人々の面白やといふところほひ、髪のかざしもすこしうすめの命めき

たる女の指の爪に糸道てふ物の残れるは、世にいふ舞子、白拍子のたぐひとおぼし。彼太政入道どの、世にめでたくおはさば、あそびの者の推参はよのつねの事にさふらふなどいふて見参まをすべきくせものにこそ。

Haru wa akebono yauyau shiroku nariyuku. Arahi kome ni furutoshi no kao o arafu. Hatsuyu no keburu hosoku tanabikitaru onnayu no arisama, ikade min mono o tote, matsu no uchi hayajimahi chiu fuda kakataru, kōshi no moto ni tatazumi, shōji no hima yori kaimamiru ni, sono sama okashiku mo ari, mata ono ga mi no buzameitaru wa asamashiku mo arikeri. Shiroki mono wa hatsuyu no sanbō to ka ifumeru, monowazuke to yaran mo ube nari. Goshugi no jūnidō, otokoshū e no mizuhikizutsumi wa, futatsu no sanbō ni uzutakau shite, yuki kienu Fuji to Tsukuba arasoheri. Somosomo koko ni wa kamiyo no arisama o ya utsushitarikemu, shimenawa hikiwataseru zakuroguchi no shirihe ni wa, sakakiba naranu matsu maki mote furo taku otoko no niwabi mosu arite, yukumiba no ama no iwato o satohirakite yori, tokoyami hi magaheru asayu no yuge wa yaya harewatari, hitobito no omoshiro ya to ifu tokorohohi, kami no kazashi mo sukoshi usume no mikoto mekitaru onna no yubi no tsume ni itomichi tefu mono no nokoreru wa, yo ni ifu maiko, shirabyōshi no taguhi to oboshi. Kano dashō nyūdō dono no yo ni medetaku owasaba, asobi no mono no suisan wa yo no tsune no koto ni safurafu nado ifute genzan ma o subeki kuse mono ni koso.

The above excerpt is not written in pure classical style, of course, but neither is it what I call a combination of classical and colloquial. No doubt Samba had good reasons for using the classical style in a descriptive passage. From a purely literary point of view, humour results when the level of the words used is inappropriate to the subject matter--in other words when obscenities are expressed in stately words, or a lofty theme in provincial language. Perhaps that was why Samba used the classical style in the passage quoted. The crux of the matter is that the classical style, archaic as it is, is not suitable for describing the present. Unfortunately, should an author persist in attempting a realistic portrayal of modern society in this style, using it without discretion, his work will just be classed as humour and provoke laughter where none was sought.

The classical style, therefore, when used in anything except humorous novels, has two disadvantages--it lacks frankness and animation, and it appears flippant.

Colloquial Style

The colloquial style uses the everyday language in its natural state. Being clear and easily understood as well as animated, it naturally possesses those qualities of simplicity and lucidity so essential to good writing, in addition to being extremely vigorous and passionate. Sometimes even the most intimate thoughts may be elegantly expressed by suiting the rhythm and tone of its words to the mood. Because of this, the colloquial style is used wherever possible, except in narrative passages, as a medium of expression in Chinese and, of course, Western novels.

Despite such advantages, however, there is unfortunately no written colloquial style in Japan. Our written and spoken languages are so markedly different that the vernacular in writing either sounds too choppy or has too common a tone. It gives a provincial air to even the most refined story, and attracts charges of uncouthness and vulgarity. Moreover, in addition to this sharp linguistic division, not found in the West, there also exist within our country at no great distance apart dialects bearing as little resemblance to each other as English bears to French. The use of colloquial Japanese in historical novels is therefore not only awkward but quite unjustifiable. It may be used most felicitously in novels of modern life, being appropriate to their tone, but even then a certain amount of thought and selectivity is necessary if success is to be attained. As readers of

the Tamenaga school of writers will be aware, even they, in passages where severity is called for, use theatrical-sounding dialogue to fill out those parts where the colloquial alone is not sufficient.

Bakin once said: "Both the standard language and dialects appear in books written in colloquial style in China. That is the way everything is done. Confucian, Taoist, and Buddhist works one expects to be written in standard language, yet *Nitei Zensho*⁶ and *Shushi Gorui*⁷ are partly colloquial, and *Kikō Shinji*, *Shōkan Joben*, *Kidōroku*, and *Kōmeizo*⁸ entirely so. Earlier writers kept the two separate, with the result that although their style is very elegant, it lacks fluidity because it does not draw strength from the marvellous power of the spoken language. How much greater are the divisions within our own written language, between its Chinese and Japanese, classical and colloquial, and modern and archaic elements! Anyone venturing into the literary world today must be well aware of them. How very difficult it is! The writers of such ancient tales as *Taketori Monogatari*⁹ and *Genji Monogatari* probably took no special care in choosing words for dialogue. They just recorded verbatim the normal speech--even dialect--of court nobles at the time. Naturally, though, that speech was not rough. Although both classical and colloquial expressions were common in the speech of court ladies, later ages consider these clever men and women authorities on *wabun* because of their very high rank and their literary talent. We may therefore regard the ancient *sōshi monogatari*¹⁰ as being written in the colloquial. The written languages of China and Japan, though different, resemble each other in that neither can do full justice to a description of human nature and social conditions without using colloquial vocabulary. Even so, the unintelligible, hybrid forms of colloquial speech in circulation today cannot be written down verbatim. In my own opinion, we should avoid adulterating our style with low-class gibberish.

The spoken language does indeed have many drawbacks, as Bakin points out. While I cannot argue with what he says, neither can I entirely agree, and so I propose now to explain something of my own views on the colloquial style.

The description of human nature and social conditions is fundamental to the novel. It follows that when it is lower-class society the author is attempting to describe, the language used by the characters must necessarily be plebeian in character! Used properly, roughness notwithstanding, it reflects the realities of the common man's life. It cannot therefore be claimed that there is no place for colloquial style in the modern Japanese novel. Dickens¹¹ and Fielding used any amount of slang in their works without attracting criticism. Fielding was often attacked for being coarse, but coarse in content rather than style. Not only, therefore, is there nothing to prevent the use in an appropriate context of even dialectal corruptions or elliptical patois; such, may even add, to the effect.

The Japanese vernacular, however is verbose to a fault. Strident and grammatically uncoordinated as well, it does not flow smoothly in passages of narration (relating the background to things) or description (portraying the appearance and nature of things). Its verbosity stems from the innate ambiguity of our language, while its interlarding of Chinese and Japanese words with corrupted, dialectal forms probably contributes to its lack of either euphony or grammatical coherence. Furthermore, the way in which the spoken language is used varies remarkably according to the relative status of the person being addressed, something which does not happen in Western languages. Some people make no tense distinctions when addressing others or their own level or below, so that what in narrative passages is written *sara ni koei no shirezari shikaba* may also be expressed as *sara ni koei ga shirenu kara*, or *tonto koei ga shirenakatta mono da kara* or *sara ni koei ga shirenu mon da kara*. The last two, used in conversation, are the most casual, so no doubt the first would be used for narration; but being in the present tense it cannot be termed suitable for recounting past events. English has a form called the historic present, but it is rarely used; it is, in fact, normally not suitable. Depending on the nature of the subject, to speak of the past as the present can be very interesting, but if a writer were to spin out a lengthy account of something in our prolix language without distinguishing between the two, they

would occasionally become confused and the sequence of events would be hard to follow, which is the one thing a reader finds most tiresome. It is my firm belief therefore, that, while there is no reason not to reproduce the colloquial language in the dialogue of a story, as long as it remains in its present unrefined state, it ought not to be used in narrative passages, as I fear the development of the story would suffer.

The following is an extract from one of the *ninjōbon* of Shōtei Kinzui, a member of the Tamenaga school. One reading will suffice to give an idea of its good and bad points.

孝道無二のますらをながら、なまじ情に引かれて、そがまゝ長者が許に戻り、義理ある父と忠太夫にせめて一筆書きのこさんと、硯ひきよせ摺りながす墨も泪ににじみがち、様子しらねば娘のお梅、唐紙あけて手をつかへ、梅「こんちはお寺参りからどちらへお行き遊ばしました。」源「おふくろの仏参から久しぶりで諸方あるいて来ました。」(中略)源「オ、でかす△それでこそ武士の妻、卑怯未練の源太左衛門何程の事があらう、本望とぐるはまたゝくうち、必ず吉左右待つてみやれ」といひつゝ雨戸を細目にあけ、外面をながめて、源「思ひの外に夜もふけた様子、今から出掛るから、父上と忠太夫に此書置をさしあげて、猶くはしくおまへから能うくおはなし申しておくれ。」梅「それではモウお出かけあそばしますか、随分お身を大切に。」源「お前もからだに気をつけて」ト〔すこし声をひくゝなし。〕源「お牧さんが被下物をうつかりと喰ないやうに、其外お牧さんから父上様にあげる物にも気を附て、身を大事に時節をまちな。」梅「ハイ」といらへて取いだす刀ならねど若し此まゝに切れもやせんかと柄糸の唯つかのまも忘られず、割筭のわかれてもいつか下緒の結ばるゝ時こそあれと両の眼に浮む泪をみせじとて。

Kōdō muni no masurao nagara, namaji nasake ni hikasurete, so ga mama chōja ga moto ni modori, giri aru chichi to chūtaifu ni semete hito fude kaki nokosan to, suzuri hikiyose suri nagasu sumi mo namida ni nijimigachi, yōsu shiraneba musume no O Mume, karakami akete te o tsukahe, Mume: 'Konchiwa o tera mairi kara, dochira e o ide asobashimashita.' Minamoto: 'Ofukuro no bussan kara hisashiburi de hōbō aruite kimashita' ... Minamoto: 'Ō de kasukasu sore de koso bushi no tsuma, hikyō miren no Gendzaemon nanihodo no koto ga arau, hommō toguru wa matataku uchi kanarazu kissō matte iyare.' to ihitsutsu amado o hosome ni ake soto o nagamete. Minamoto: 'Omohi no hoka ni yo mo fuketa yōsu, ima kara dekakeru kara, otossama to chūtaifu ni kono kakioki o sashiagete, nao kuwashiku wa omahe kara youku ohanashi mōshite okure.' Mume: 'Sore de wa mō odekake asobashimasu ka, zuibun omi o taisetsu ni.' Minamoto: 'Omahe mo karada ni ki o tsukete,' (to sukoshi koe o hikuku nashi.) Minamoto: 'Omaki san ga kudasaremono o ukkari to tabenai yau ni, sono hoka Omaki san kara otossama ni ageru mono ni mo ki o tsukete, mi o daiji ni jisetsu o machi na.' Mume: 'Hai,' to irahete tori idasu katana naranedo moshi kono mama ni kire mo yasen ka to tsukaito no tada tsuka no ma mo wasurerarezu, warikōgai no wakaretemo itsuka sageo no musubaruru toki koso are to ryō no me ni ukamu namida o miseji tote.

The passage is written in what is called colloquial style, but colloquial language accounts for only eighty per cent of the whole. Some classical diction has been blended into the narrative sections, perhaps to overcome the difficulties I mentioned earlier. Whilst a difference in wording between dialogue and narrative is only to be expected, there is surely nothing pleasing about destroying the internal coherence of one of them with anachronistic expressions. The words I have underlined in the above passage, for example, are theatrical; no one would employ them today. They are not in harmony with the words around them. The author does not necessarily deserve a reprimand for this--he used them because everyday speech is too awkward--but they do detract from that charm of movement which is the quintessence of the colloquial style. This naturally

undesirable state of affairs comes about because the incompatibility of style and content prevents the mood being given the full expression it deserves. As I remarked earlier, using the colloquial style in a historical novel may prove most unsatisfactory. What is needed is a combination of both the classical and colloquial styles.

I have also mentioned already that the incorporation of a certain amount of classical diction makes it much easier to write narrative passages in novels even of modern life. To combine colloquial dialogue with classical-colloquial description is not easy, however, and requires a great deal of care on the part of the author to succeed. If he were to follow a descriptive passage in Bakin's favourite style with such dialogue as *beranmei* or *oyashinasa ina*, often used by Shunsui, the two would be at odds and the colloquialisms would naturally strike a jarring note. On the other hand, slanting narrative passages too much towards the colloquial style in an attempt to eliminate the conflict is bound to detract from descriptions of magnificent spectacles. This is where the greatest difficulty lies. If the colloquial style is to be effective, a new method of using it must be devised. It will not do at all to try to use Bakin's style for description and Shunsui's for dialogue. That method is clumsy; it would have been better to write a *ninjōbon* style in its original form. The vernacular may appear to be erratic, but such is not at all the case. Aspiring authors should give a great deal of thought to these points.

My readers are very much mistaken if they think that I have been surreptitiously denigrating the spoken language by saying that it lacks euphony and is full of linguistic corruptions. Language is spirit; style is form. Emotions are expressed with complete frankness in speech, whereas in writing they are overlaid with a veneer which to a certain extent camouflages their reality. Dialogue written in the colloquial savours of a face-to-face conversation; in a classical-colloquial mixture, it puts one in mind of a letter, which of course is not nearly as entertaining! Dialogue is one area where a colloquial style does have advantages. Unfortunately, though, there is no getting around its defects. Perhaps one of my clever friends will discover a means of doing so. I shall wait impatiently for the day when a new version of the colloquial style appears.

Combination of the Classical and Colloquial Styles¹²

The classical-colloquial combination divides broadly into two types, namely *yomihon* style and *kusazōshi* style.

A. In the style used in *yomihon*, classical words account for seventy or eighty per cent of the whole in description, and fifty to sixty per cent in dialogue. It is therefore very simple to adjust descriptions of different ranks and breeding as occasion demands by using classical diction for an elegant tone and colloquial vocabulary for the reverse, without the danger of a clash between description and dialogue. Even Chinese words are occasionally employed to compensate for deficiencies in our own language, so that passages full of beauty and grace are delicately shaded in with *wabun* and gaps in descriptions of grand and fiery scenes are filled with Chinese expressions chosen for their vigour. Realistic representations of backwoods scenes may be achieved by increasing the vernacular content to sixty or seventy per cent. On the other hand, the proportion of classical content may be boosted to eighty or ninety per cent to reproduce the speech of the ancient courtiers. I do not think any other style is as eminently suited to the historical novel. It is not impractical even in the social novel; but there, perhaps, the *kusazōshi* variant of colloquial style is marginally better, because the rather idiosyncratic dialogue of *yomihon* style is often quite different from modern speech, and this makes it seem more natural not to use it in the social novel. When the blending of classical and colloquial elements is well handled, this is really the only style suitable for the historical novel. Getting the proportions right is not easy, however, and the crudeness of attempts made by amateur would-be authors can be horrible to behold. I propose now to essay an examination of one or two of the trouble spots.

One danger lies in leaning too heavily towards a classical tone, a mistake often made by writers well-versed in classical studies in their first attempt at *yomihon* style. Either they concentrate their attention on grammar, making no effort to distinguish between different ranks in speech and producing an uneven, unpleasing style; or they think only of rhythm, so that their work is reminiscent of *chōka* or *imayō*¹³ and often lacks animation. Of course, the presence of a proportion of classical vocabulary makes it natural to continue using classical Japanese grammar, but to make this grounds for dwelling on grammar to the exclusion of that portrayal of human nature and social conditions which is the novel's main concern is totally unproductive.

The second danger lies in favouring the colloquial too much. When a writer not very familiar with *wabun* rashly attempts to incorporate a large number of colloquialisms into his text, it often happens that he drifts into a style similar to that used in *jōruri* texts or *hauta*.¹⁴ The rhythm of the text may be smooth, but the tone is so common it hardly bears reading. Such works as Segawa Jokō's¹⁵ *Teishinroku* are open to this charge.

The combination style is best exemplified in such great novels as *Hakkenden* and *Bishōnenroku*. A few excerpts will suffice to convey a general idea of it.

「この眉上の黒子さへ一對なるは親子の徴、この児の顔と御身の容止、似ずや肖ざるや見給へといひつゝ鼻紙に附たりし懐中鏡を取り出して、照して見せつ推向て、珠よ爾 爹々公ぞや抱かれ給へと搔遣れば、まだいはけなき珠之助も争ひ難き血脈の恩愛、爹々様のうと呼かけて携るを臆て引よせて膝にのせたる瀬十郎、歎けばこそあれ目に脆き、涙歟露のひと滴。」（『美少年録』）

"Kono manauhe no hokuro sahe ittsumi naru wa oyako no shirushi, kono ko no kaho to onmi no kahobase, nizu ya nizaru ya mi tamahe to ihitsutsu, hanagami ni tsuketarishi kaichū kagami o toridashite, terashite misetsu oshimukete, tama yo sonata no tetego zo ya idakare tamahe to kaiyareba, mada iwakenaki tamanosuke mo arasohi gataki chisuji no onai, toto sama no uto yobi kakete sugaru o yagate hikiyosete hiza ni nosetaru sejurō, nakeba koso are me ni moroki, namida ka tsuyu no hito shizuku." (*Bishōnenroku*)

「さらば左いはん右いふて身の憂事をつげの櫛、鬢の後毛かきあげて、人待つ縁の夕化粧、鏡も刀自に借りものと打向へども影暗き、日は没果て燈火の、こゝへとゞかぬ片ごころ、かゝる為にと野の座席遺の蠟燭も、流れ渡りの身にしあれど、よろづよき日と曆手の、茶碗を覆す糸底に、立てゝ彩る唇燕脂の、笹色の香も知る人に、見せなんとての所為なりけり。」（同前）

"Saraba sa ihan kau ifute mi no ukikoto o tsuge no kushi, bin no okurege kakiagete, hito matsu en no yūgeshō, kagami mo toji ni kari mono to uchimukahedomo kage kuraki, hi wa iri hatete toboshihi no, koko e todokanu kata gokoro, kakaru tame ni to takuwahe no zashikinokori no rōsoku mo, nagare watari no mi ni shi aredo, yorozuyoki hi to koyomide no, chawan o kahesu itozoko ni, tatete irodoru kuchibeni no, sasairo no ka mo shiru hito ni, mise nan tote no waza narikeri." (*Ibid*)

「客もあるじも沙量ならねば、是より酒讌始まりて、献つ酬へつ果しなき、議論に興を催したる、朱之助ははや薄酔の、多弁に任して属日の鬱気を恁とうち唧ちて、媒妁の目の前にて斯ういへばをかしからぬ不走向に似たれども、岳母の旦ても暮ても苦虫を嚼潰して、四角四面の気韻高く、斧柄もまた烏と共に起て糸を繰り機を織る、これより外に所作はなし。今様早唄こそ事ふりにたれ、説

経弄斎椰節を学びたりやと問へば知らずと答ふ。況てきのふけふは田舎までも弄ぶ三絃なんどは、手で弾く物やら足でかきならず物なるや、夢にだも見たることはあらず。偶然に物いひかけても、泣出したげなる面色して返辞をするのみ余情もなく、寝る時だにも三つ指にて許させたまへといひながら、蒲団の端へ如恐怖に枕引よせて就寝なり。畢竟木彫の偶人と枕を並ぶるに異ならず。斯ても夫婦といふべきや、粉糠三合有ならば入婿になりそといひけん、昔の人の格言なるかな、察したまへと不楽しげに、意中をつくす酒興の述懐。箭五郎呵々とうち笑ひて、宣ふ趣き無理ならねど、世の常言に石の上にも三稔といふことあるならずや。さりとて貴所は入婿にしてまた世の入婿に同じからず。今にもあれ主用を果したまはゞ、袖打払ふて武蔵へ帰りたまはなん。しからばこゝもなほ旅なり。詰る所は趣きのなき銜妻を旅宿の当分月備にせしなりと思ひたまはゞ不足はあらず。且く堪忍したまへかし、といへば奥手も打笑ひて、斧柄さまの光忽子なる、そはその該の事に侍り、焦たる桐も製らねば良琴にはなり侍らず、煤けし竹も伐てこそめでたき笛になるとかいふ譬喩を女子の諸礼書にて見しことの侍りにき。斧柄さまも恁ぞかし。気長く教育たまひなば、遂には佳音を現はして暁毎に臥房の窓の隙よりしらむを共侶に、いとほしみつゝ離れかねぬる、楽しき中になりたまはん。それを教へずして備はらんことを求めたまふは疎にこそ。然はあらずやと慰むれば。」(同前)

"Kyaku mo aruji mo geko naraneba, kore yori sakamori hajimarite, sashitsu osahetsu hateshi naki, giron ni kyō o moyōshitaru, Akenosuke wa haya horoehi no, taben ni makashite kono goro no usa o shikajika to uchi kakochite, nakaudo no me no mae nite kau ieba okashikaranu fuhamuki ni nitaredomo, shiutome no aketemo kuretemo nigamushi o kamitsubushite, shikaku shimen no kigurai takaku, Onoe mo mata karasu to tomo ni okite ito o kuri hata o oru, koreyori hoka ni shosa wa nashi. Imayō hayauta koso koto furi ni tare, sekkyō rōsai nagibushi o manabitari ya to toheba shirazu to kotafu. Maite kinofu kefu wa inaka made mo moteasobu samisen nan wa te de hiku mono yara ashi de kaki narasu mono naru ya, yume ni damo mitaru koto wa arazu. Tamasaka ni mono ihikaketemo, nakidashita ge naru omomochi shite henji o suru nomi yozei mo naku, neru toki danimo mitsu yubi nite yurusasetamahe to ihinagara, futon no hashi e kowasōni makura hikiyosete nemaru nari. Hikkyō kibori no ningyō to makura o naraburu ni koto narazu. Kakutemo fūfu to ifubeki ya, koneka sangō motsu naraba, irimuko ni nawari so to ihiken, mukashi no hito no kakugen naru kana, sasshi tamahe to wabishige ni, ichū o tsukusu shukyō no jukkai. Yagorō kaka to uchi waraite, notamafu omomuki muri naranedo, yo no kotowaza ni ishi no ue ni mo sannen to iu koto aru narazu ya. Sari tote kisho wa irimuko ni shite mata yo no irimuko ni onaji karazu. Ima ni mo are shuyō o hatashi tamahaba, sode uchi harafute musashi e kaeri tamahanan. Shikaraba koko mo naho tabi nari. Tsumaru tokoro wa omomuki no naki gensai o tabine no tōbun tsukiyatohi ni seshi nari to omohi tamahaba fusoku wa araji. Shibaraku kannin shi tamahe kashi, to iheba okute mo uchiwarahite, Onoe sama no oboko naru, so wa sono hazu no koto ni haberi, kogetaru kiri mo tsukuraneba yokikoto ni hanari haberazu, susukeshi take mo kirite koso medetaki fue ni naru to ka ifu tatohe o onago no shitsukegata nite mishi koto no haberi ni ki. Onoe sama mo shika zo kashi. Kinagaku shikomi tamahinaba, tsui ni wa yokine o arahashite akatsuki goto ni fushido no mado no hima yori shiramu o morotomo ni, ito oshimitsutsu hanarekanenuru, tanoshiki naka ni naritamahan. So o oshiezu shite sonoharan koto o motome tamafu wa oroka ni koso. Sa wa arazu ya to nagusamureba." (Ibid)

「昨夜はなせし事により、吾儕は目今里長どのゝ宿所へゆかん、葛籠なる衣物出したまひね、といふに斧柄は心得て、取出しつゝ持て来ぬる手織小袖の染紬絹、太織は名のみ瘦穴に、帯の端さへあ

まりぬる、真と辛苦をやる瀬なき、表衣ばかりを脱更て、繕ひのなき白踏皮も、水入らずなる親子仲、脱し旧衣たゝむ間に、鼻紙折て懐へ、これもと渡す印章を、取て収むる袖頭巾、ひさげて朱どの頼むぞや。斧柄留守を、と言ひつゝも、背戸より出でてゆきにけり。」（中略）

"Yonbe wa naseshi koto ni yori, wanami wa tada ima sato osa dono no shukusho e yukan, tsuzura naru kirumono idashitamahine to ifu ni Onoe wa kokoroete, tori idashitsutsu motte kinuru teori kosode no sometsumugi, futori wa na nomi yasejishi ni, obi no haji sahe amari nuru, shin to shinku o yaru se naki, uhagi bakari o nugikahete, tsukurohi no naki shirotabi mo, mizu irazu naru oyako naka, nugishi furuginu tatamu ma ni, hanagami orite futokorohe koremoto watasu ingyō o, torite osamuru sode zukiin, hisagete ake dono tanomu zo ya. Onoe rusu o, to ihitsutsumo, sedo yori idete yuki ni keru. . . ."

「落葉は早くかへり来て、朱どの斧柄も歎びたまへ、那一種は手に入りなき。委細は後に辛度や、といふをさこそと朱之助、斧柄も共に慰めて、汲てすゝむる一柄杓、立茶の泡のあはれげに、恩義のために使うゝ、親さへ子さへ暇なき、心尽しを心ある、人に見せばや津の国に、ありといふなる武庫の山、壻に栄なき空花の、散りぞしぬべき入相の、山寺の鐘おとづれて、燈点比になりけり。」（同前）

"Ochiba wa hayaku kaheri kite, ake dono Onoe mo yorokobi tamahe, kanohitokusa wa te ni iri ni ki. Isai wa nochi ni shindo ya, to ifu o sa koso to Akenosuke, Onoe mo tomo ni nagusamete, kumite susumuru hito hisaku, tatecha no awa no awaregeni, ongi no tame ni tsukaharuru, oya sahe ko sahe itoma naki, kokorozukushi o kokoro aru, hito ni miseba ya tsu no kuni ni, ari to ifu naru muko no yama. Muko ni hae naki adabana no, chiri zo shinu beki iriahi no, yamadera no kane otzurete, hitomoshigoro ni nari ni keru." (Ibid)

「兼頭卿も賢房卿も共に名残を惜ませたまふ。愛顧は筆に現はれたる、そが中に兼頭卿の消息に、今より四稔さきつころ緑巽亭にあだまちさせしは紅葉見ならで、物いふ花を手折れといはぬばかりなりしわが愆こそ悔しけれ。今さらに恨みられやせん、鈍ましかりきと書せたまふを見れば、顔まづ赫うなりしを、さらぬさまにてさや／＼と、手早く巻て懐にうちをさめ、今にはじめぬ両卿のおんなさけこそ辱けれ。」（同前）

"Kaneaki kyō mo Katafusa kyō mo tomo ni nagori o oshimasetamafu. Aiko wa fude ni araharetaru, so ga naka ni Kaneaki kyō no shōsoku ni, ima yori yotose sakitsu koro Rikuson-tei ni adamachisaseshi wa momiji minarade, mono ifu hana o taore to ihanu bakari narishi waga ayamachi koso kuyashikere. Ima sara ni uramirareyasen, ozomashikariki to kakase tamafu o mireba, kaho mazu akau narishi o, saranu sama nite sayasaya to, tebayaku makite futokoro ni uchiosame, ima ni hajimenu ryōkyō no onnasake koso katajikere." (Ibid)

The extracts given above offer only an outline of this style. They are not sufficient to reveal it in its entirety, but I think they make clear the ways in which it differs from the other two styles. As I said earlier, classical words make up seventy to eighty per cent of the narrative, while their proportion in dialogue is fifty to sixty per cent, so that there is no marked contrast in tone between the two and the author may conveniently indicate differences in speech based on rank, age, or sex, merely by adjusting the ratio. It is this which makes it the best style for describing both scenes taken from the distant past and those from all levels of society.

A few points which must be mentioned in any discussion of the *yomihon* variant of the combination style are the devices of phonetic and semantic pivot-words, quotation from classical poetry, and the creation of fanciful titles.

Phonetically related pivot-words are a variation on the stereotyped epithets of *chōka*. The technique involves making the second half of a word which has already expressed one meaning into the first half of the following word. For example:

さては命は浪速江の、短き蘆の薄命〔ふし(節)あはせ〕、あはずなりしをうらめしの、近江〔あふ(逢)み〕とはたが名づけゝん、さして往方は磨針の、最〔いと(糸)〕もはかなや叔母夫さへ、なき名聞して後々に、物思へとやつれもなき。

Sate wa inochi wa Naniha e no, mijikaki ashi no *fushi*-awase, awazunarishi o urameshi no, Ōmi to hata ga nazukeken, sashite yukuhe wa surihari no, ito mo hakana ya ojigo sahe, nakina kikashite nochi nochi ni, mono omohe to ya tsure mo naki.

I have underlined several instances of phonetic pivoting in the passage above. They are probably more a way of limiting the length of the text than mere attempts at cleverness. Some novice writers, perhaps not realizing this, think their use is mandatory when in reality they are not so essential. Not using them at all may result in unpleasantly drawn-out, boring, lustreless prose, but fitting awkwardly correlated words into inappropriate spots, or triumphantly producing very clumsy specimens like *Toshi wa nijūhachi ka nijūku karanu*, *Yōsu wa nanika shirakami mo*, *Oku no hitoma iriai no*, *Nan to sen kata namida nomi*--common in *jōruri* texts and well-known to women and children--is most undesirable. It looks bad. Straightforward writing is much better.

Semantic pivot-words involve a slightly different approach. If a writer thinks a word of similar meaning can be used to reinforce a preceding or following word, he will contrive to employ it regardless of whether or not there is any phonetic similarity between the two. In the sentence *Kie ni shi hito wa mutsu no hana, nanatsu ka yattsu o ichigo to shiken*, for example, *mutsu no hana* derives from *kie ni shi*. Normally one would just use *yuki*; but here, desiring to apply the pivot technique, one uses *mutsu no hana* to make the following *nanatsu ka yattsu* more effective. Sometimes, depending on where it is used, semantic hingeing serves to keep the passage concise. More often, though, it is simply a stylistic ornament.

When these two techniques are employed, it should not be obvious that the author has deliberately twisted his words in order to achieve his effect. As a general rule, the most important thing in using interrelated words is to manage the transition smoothly and easily. In other words, they should be so handled that one reading is enough to show a reader of ordinary intelligence the reason for the conversion. More elaborate examples, even, should become clear after a second reading. Otherwise, no matter how clever the shift, the difficulty of working it out may destroy its effect, which may in turn obscure the meaning of the entire passage.

A friend remarked to me that while he agreed that the pivot technique was a brilliant literary device which imparted a savour to description as yet unknown in Western writing, he felt that its similarity to word-play made it out of place in dialogue. In the earlier example, *Mijikaki ashi no fushiawase, awazu narishi o urameshi no, Ōmi to hata ga nazukeken*, the characters for Ōmi are a play on words harking back to *au* which he believed inappropriate to such a sad conversation. I answered that in my opinion the use of such a device was not at all overdone, because the wistful thoughts of a pale, melancholy young girl confronted by even the names of inanimate objects might suggest just that sort of thing to her. It is touching. One comes across it often. An early English poet named Wither¹⁶ once wrote in a poem lamenting the declining fortunes of his

house, "The very name of Wither shows decay". In our own country, the last words of Minamoto Yorimasa¹⁷ as he sat on the lawn at the Byōdōin¹⁸, about to end his life, were *Umoregi no hana saku koto mo nakarishi ni, mi no naru hate zo kanashikarikeru*. The word-play here seems to me to express the poignancy of his emotion better than ordinary words could.

Let me say here that although these devices are meant to keep dialogue short, as I mentioned earlier, they occasionally have the opposite effect. In *Wakareshi nochi zōki koto o tsuge no ogushi no tsuguru ma mo naki yogatari ni naran to wa, omohigakena ya kurokami no kami naranu mi zo zehi mo naki, tsuge no ogushi* and *kurokami* are not necessary to the sense. There is no need to use them to lead in to *tsuguru* and *kami naranu*; all they do is add to the beauty of the text. If they were eliminated, however, some other way of providing the sparkle which style needs would have to be found, lest the text should lose its reality for the reader.

Quotations from classical poetry are most often found in mediaeval fiction, where parts of old poems were used to fill out and enhance descriptive passages.

月おぼろにさし出て池ひろく山こぶかきわたり心細げに見ゆるにも住はなれたらん岩ほのなかおぼしやらる。(『源語』須磨の巻)

Tsuki oboro ni sashi idete ike hiroku yama kobukaki watari kokoro bosoge ni miyuru ni mo sumihanaretaran iwaho no naka oboshi yararu. (*Genji Monogatari*, "Suma")

袖まきほさん人もなき身にうれしきこゝろざしにこそはと宣たまひて。(『同前』末摘花)

Sode maki hosan hito mo naki mi ni ureshiki kokorozashi ni koso wa to notamahite. (*Ibid*, "Suetsumuhana")

In the first of the above examples, the words *iwaho no naka* have been borrowed from the old poem *ikanaran iwaho no naka ni suma ba kawa, yo no ukikoto no kikoe gozaran*. As well as shortening a descriptive sentence, they carry extra-textual connotations. In the second example, the words *sode maki hosan*, taken from the poem *awayuki wa kefu wa na furi so shirotahe no sode maki hosan hito mo aranaku ni*, are used to curtail the length of the dialogue. Chinese poems, too, have often been used in quotations, but I am unable to think of an example just now. What usually happens is that a character is first described in as much detail as possible in prose, and then, if something is still felt to be lacking, the description is supplemented with a line from an appropriate poem. It is a device often used in Western novels. Some try for the same effect by inserting a Chinese poem of their own making after a description of scenery, with the words *masa ni kore*, but this lacks the elegance of classical poetry.

The choice of title, of course, is entirely up to the author--he need follow no prescribed rule. The little I have to say is meant only as a suggestion. To use two rows of characters like a couplet of poetry as a title, in the manner of Chinese novels, is dated; but to begin each chapter with a bare number and a résumé of its contents is too dull. In the West, quotations from old poems are occasionally substituted for titles, and some Japanese authors have been known to use *haiku*; both methods appeal to me. While any manner of caption will do, the rubric should be as eye-catching as possible, as it is that which attracts the reader's attention.

As all my examples of the *yomihon* style have been drawn from the works of Bakin, there may be some who misinterpret this to mean that I am advocating imitation of his style. Such is not at all my intention. I have merely used his style to illustrate the way in which the classical and colloquial styles can be blended, without at any time advising taking him as a model. He is indeed a master of this particular style, but his own special

brand of writing is peculiarly his. No one else can imitate it. The harder they try, the less they succeed. Writing should be flexible; its only constraint should be that its classical and colloquial elements be well blended. To concentrate on emulating Bakin's style will lead to the kind of circumscribed writing I spoke of earlier, stilted and mannered, as if someone blindfolded had tried to pour water into a cup. Adjusting the proportion of classical to colloquial is like mixing wine with water. It is difficult for a blindfolded person pouring wine to judge the exact amount because he pours it little by little for fear of overfilling the cup. If he hurries, the wine might overflow and stain the matting. Not to pour enough is gauche, of course; and stains on the matting are unsightly. When water is added to the wine, the quantities are the important thing--they should be adjusted so that the flavour of the wine is not lost. Wine offered to a non-drinker should be well watered; to a drinking man, much less so. The proportions, however, are entirely up to the author, who needs no instruction from anyone else. He should taste and test it himself, using his own discretion to decide what amounts make the best mix. The wine is classical vocabulary, the water colloquial. Blending them together in one style is exactly like mixing wine and water, an idea which should appeal to devotees of the combination style.

One of my friends once said to me: "A lot of novelists these days seem to be fascinated by Bakin. They devote all their efforts to imitating him, but their styles are starved, gaunt, and in extreme cases dead! How laughable! Bakin's own marvellous style was a synthesis of the styles of works like *Genji Monogatari*, *Heike Monogatari*,¹⁹ *Taiheiki*,²⁰ *Suikoden*²¹ and *Saiyūki*.²² It was the fruit of his own endeavours. There are times when it is slipshod or laboured, but because Bakin's facile pen produced those awkward patches in response to the demands of an occasion, they are sometimes--depending on the circumstances--more to be praised than condemned. Perhaps that is because his talent automatically kept them within bounds. But some of today's authors copy both the good and the bad in him. Perhaps they just do not think about it, or else they lack his skill. They rejoice in plucking out even the stilted expressions from his texts and forcing them in after phrases where they do not belong. Surely they are making a great mistake! What they ought to do, if they want to learn what style to use in a novel, is go back to Bakin's starting point, savour great works like *Genji Monogatari* and *Heike Monogatari* and *Taiheiki*, and then strike out on a new path of their own. The classics are masterpieces of elegant prose! If authors would only study them, and blend their styles into a composite, there would be other outstanding literary talents to praise besides Bakin, whose most successful imitator, even, could never become more than just a latter-day Bakin without immense effort. A style synthesized from those of the ancient novels, on the other hand, would belong to its creator rather than to somebody else--its user could compete with Bakin, perhaps even outstrip him. Would not that be a more enjoyable prospect?" I could not agree with him more.

B. The *kusazōshi* variant of the combination style differs from the *yomihon* version only in that it has a higher proportion of colloquial vocabulary than Chinese words. As a result, like the classical style, it sometimes seems unequal to dealing with sections of description requiring grandeur of tone. There is no law against using Chinese words, however, and future users of the style would be within their rights to increase the proportion as they see fit to overcome such difficulties. The reason they have been kept to a minimum is probably that the *kana* text might have made them difficult to understand. Also, as *kusazōshi* were meant as amusements for women and children, one could say it made sense to use as few as possible.

There are several varieties of *kusazōshi* style, some quite similar to *yomihon* style, others closer to colloquial style. Kyōzan and Tanehiko, for example, wrote their dialogue in the Kyōto-Ōsaka colloquial, while Ryūcatei Tanekazu²³ or Mantei Ōga²⁴ used a fairly high proportion of classical diction. The differences will be obvious if the following examples are read carefully:

それおそばへと突遣られ、深雪ははたどこけかゝり「マア兄さんの悪らしい、斯うくゝらずとも可
 ことを、嘸かしお手が痛みませう、ぶしつけながら」と結び目の、堅きに齒までてつだふて、漸々
 ほどけば権三もにつこり「まちがふて其後は、とんとお目にかゝりませぬ、健（たっしゃ）でお目
 でたい、又そのうちに」と立つのを引とめ。（種彦）

Sore osobahe to tsukiyarare, miyuki wa hata to kokekakari 'maa anisan no nikurashii, kau kukurazutomo yoi
 koto o, sazo kashi ote ga itamimaseu, bushitsukenagara' to musubime no, kataki ni ha made tetsudafute, yōyō
 hodokeba gonzō mo nitsukori 'Machigafute sono nochi wa, tonto ome ni kakarimasenu, osukoyaka de
 omedetai, mata sono uchi ni' to tatsu no o hikitome. (Tanehiko)

村荻あたりを見回して、料紙硯を取いだし、墨すりながす其処へ、何心なく来かゝる夏野「おあつ
 いのに何処へのおふみ、もう黄昏でお暗からう、お手燭あげませう」と声かけられてふりかへり
 「久しう居やる其方には、何もかくす事はない、君吉さまが此おふみを持ってござつて、母さまへあ
 げよう、いゝや取るまい、とあらそふてござるやうすを遠目に見たゆゑ、お兩人のおつしやる事は
 聞えねど、どうした訳かとおとどめまをし、取上げてつく／＼見れば、当名の処へちらしがき、風
 になびかぬ村荻のもとへとあるは、光氏さまより妾の処へ来たおふみ、年のゆかぬあの子が取違へ
 て、母さまへ持ておいでなされたれど、いゝや、それは娘ぢやと流石にあなたもおつしやりかね、
 ひよんな事でやりつかへしつ、妾が目にかゝらぬと毫末（とんと）はてはつかぬところ。」（同
 前）

Muraogi atari o mimawashite, ryōshi susuri o tori idashi, sumi suri nagasu sono tokoro e, nanigokoronaku
 kikakaru natsuno 'oatsui no ni dore e no ofumi, mō tasogare de okurakarau, oteshoku agemaseu' to koe
 kakerarete furikaheri 'hisashiu iyarū sonata ni wa, nanimo kakusu koto wa nai, kimiyoshi sama ga kono
 ofumi o motte gozatte, haha sama e ageyō, ii ya torumai, to arasofute gozaru yōsu o tōme ni mita yue, ofutari
 no ossharu koto wa kikoenedo, dōshita wake ka to otodome ma o shi, toriagete tsukuzuku mireba, atena no
 tokoro e chirashigaki, kaze ni nabikanu muraogi no moto e to aru wa, mitsuuji sama yori watashi no tokoro e
 kita ofumi, toshi no yukanu ano ko ga torichigahete, haha sama e motte oide nasaretaredo, ii ya, sore wa
 musume ja to sasugani anata mo osshari ka ne, hyonna koto de yaritsukaheshitsu, watashi ga me ni kakaranu
 to tonto wa te wa tsukanu tokoro. (Ibid)

Both these passages contain many colloquial words, words which resemble the old Kansai²⁵ speech more
 than that of Edo. As the language of that area is not very far removed from classical diction, it may be that the
 author's aim in using it was to minimize any clash between dialogue and narrative.

いな／＼それは偽言ならん、姿は賤くやつすとも阿女は正しく匹婦にあらず。あまつさへ女子にに
 げなく、心のうちに大望を、思ひたつ身とみたは僻目か。おのれは年比世の人を、相することを修
 行なし、其術妙を得たるゆゑ、最前おことが街道に、馬ひきながらたゝむを、一目みるより凡人
 ならぬ、者とは早くも見極めて、窃に問ふべき事あれば、すゝむる言葉をさいはひに、馬かりうけ
 しも人とだえし、此あたりへ来りし上、素性を問はん為ぞかし。（中略）と言葉を尽くしていふを
 きゝ、少女はしばし黙然たりしが、やゝあつて泰然と形をあらため、翁にむかひて、おん身が明察
 感じ入る、星をさしたる其ことば、今はつゝまん要あらねば、いかにも実を告ぐべきが、それより

先き妾もまた、おことに乞はんものこそあれ、きゝ入れてたまふべきや、と言葉もにはかにあらたまり。」（種員）

Inaina sore wa itsuwari naran, sugata wa iyashiku yatsusu tomo okoto wa tadashiku hippu ni arazu. Amatsusahe onago ni nigenaku, kokoro no uchi ni taibō o, omohitatsu mi to mita wa higame ka. Onore wa toshigoro yo no hito o, sō suru koto o shugyō nashi, sono jutsumyō o etaru yue, saizen okoto ga gaidō ni, uma hikinagara tatazumu o, hitome miru yori bonjin naranu, mono to wa hayaku mo mi kiwamete, hisokani tofu beki koto areba, susumuru kotoba o saiwahini, uma kariukeshi mo hito todaeshi, kono atari e kitarishi uhe, sujō o tohan tame zo kashi to kotoba o tsukushite ifu o kiki, otome wa shibashi mokuzentarishi ga, yaya atte taizen to katachi o aratame, okina ni mukahite, onmi ga meisatsu kanji-iru, hoshi o sashitaru sono kotoba, ima wa tsutsuman yōareneba, ikanimo makoto o tsugu beki ga, sore yori saki ni warawa mo mata, okoto ni kowan mono koso are, kiki iretetamafu beki ya, to kotoba mo nihakani aratamari. (Tanekazu)

「伊達五郎其儘たゝずみ、五人のものゝ潜びたるくさむらにきつと目をつけ、何事かいはんとせしが、思ひかへす由やありけん、傘うちひらきふりかたげ、声さへいとど高々と、「此ものどもを手の下にうつは如何なる鬼神か、人間業にはよもあらじ、とわづかに謡ふ熊坂に、ふりさけ見ればなぎなたの、形に似たる月影は、雨後の雲間に研ぎだされ、」こゝ青墓にあらなくて、旅のやどりはあなたぞと、あゆまんとして二足三足、よろめきながらふみとゞまり、呵々と高笑ひ、裕々としてあゆみゆく。（同前）

Date Gorō sono mama tatazumi, gonin no mono no shinobitaru kusamura ni kitto me o tsuke, nanigoto ka ihan to seshi ga, omohikaesu yoshi ya ariken, kasa uchihiraki furikatage, koe sahe itodo takadaka to, 'Kono monodomo o te no shita ni utsu wa ikanaru onigami ka, ningen waza ni wa yomo araji, to wazuka ni utafu kumasaka ni, furisake mireba naginata no, katachi ni nitaru tsukikage wa, ugo no kumoma ni togidasare,' koko aohaka ni aranakute, tabi no yadori wa anata zo to, ayumantoshite futaashi miashi yoromekinagara fumitodomari, karakara to takawarahi, yūyūtooshite ayumi yuku. (Ibid)

It is almost impossible to distinguish the two passages above from *yomihon* style. Both the dialogue and the narrative of *Inaka Genji*²⁶ are heavily laced with classical words, perhaps because although *kusazōshi* style incorporates a good deal of modern colloquial, to use the colloquial alone would be inappropriate for descriptions of life in a much earlier age.

To sum up: while *kusazōshi* style is the style best suited to novels of modern life, it still will not do for historical novels. There is something of a *gesaku* atmosphere about colloquial dialogue used to represent the speech of those who lived in the Ashikaga²⁷ or Hōgen²⁸ periods--it lacks both the ring of truth and any harmony of sentiment. Not only that, some parts of the dialogue may prove impossible to express in the modern idiom, because as human nature and customs have changed over the centuries, so also have the words in daily use. Even supposing an author were able to use his talent to camouflage that particular problem, others remain. I see no prospect of getting rid of them all: When *kusazōshi* authors write historical tales, for example, they usually incorporate into the dialogue of heroes or men of rank a liberal amount of classical vocabulary items, replacing *sonata* with *okoto*, *shikajika share* with *shikajika shitamae* and so on. In the dialogue of lower-class characters, however, one finds words such as *gozanse* and *nikurashii*. What this amounts to is that the gap between the by-and-large domestic tone of the lower-class scenes and the historical tone of the upper-class scenes is so wide that the observant reader might be forgiven for thinking that the two sets of characters come from different eras, if not from different countries. Were authors to try to get around

the difficulty by increasing the proportion of classical words in lower-class dialogue, their style would probably become *yomihon* style and the special advantages of *kusazōshi* style would be lost, and this would be a pity.

Still on the same subject, this sort of thing has been happening quite often in the theatre recently. The play at the Chitose Theatre is a case in point. In the dialogue of Shizuka Gozen, Yoshitsune's concubine²⁹ we find such expressions as *okotora*, *shikajika ahitsuru zo kashi*, the formal declarative *naninani saretari*, and the literary *shikajika seru zo ya*. Yet the divided lines spoken by a succession of actors and the dialogue of serving maids in the self-same *kyōgen*, needless to say in the scenes of lower-class life, are so vulgar as to bear no resemblance at all to the speech of Shizuka Gozen. A search would doubtless turn up all manner of other inconsistencies and irregularities, but because they are part of a play, they pass virtually unnoticed. Had they appeared in prose, where each could be subjected to careful perusal and appraisal, they would have diminished the reader's enjoyment and marred even the most interesting plot. As *kusazōshi* have, until now, been intended solely as entertainments for women and children, ambiguities within them need cause no particular concern; but any future author desiring to write a great novel in the *kusazōshi* style will first have to fashion it into a suitable medium for art by eradicating this problem.

The *kusazōshi* style, then, is certainly not suited to historical novels. It should be reserved for novels of modern manners. In its present form, however, it cannot properly express the grander aspects of human nature and social conditions, so that authors will naturally have to use it carefully and to a certain degree refine it. Actually, historical novels were the forté of the authors of the Bunka-Bunsei³⁰ period, when many outstanding examples of the genre appeared. A novelist writing today would find it very difficult to improve on Bakin's masterpieces. He would do better to abandon that idea and instead devote all his efforts to planning the best modern novel ever seen. First, of course, he would have to seek out the most suitable style for such a task and adapt it to meet the demands of the social novel. The obvious contender is the *kusazōshi* style. Perhaps Japanese novelists of the future will exert themselves to refine it and to create the perfect modern novel. If slow-witted would-be scholars mock the *kusazōshi* style as being too uncultivated, it is only because they have failed to understand what the novel really is. The aim of the novel is to make an impression on its reader by portraying man's nature and customs with total realism. The presence of colloquial elements in its style, provided that style itself is sublime, will not rob it of its place alongside painting, music, and poetry as a great art form.

I might point out here that although the style of most serials published in the miscellaneous sections of *furigana*³¹ newspapers recently has been *kusazōshi* style, it is a greatly improved version. The main improvement is the substitution of Tōkyō speech for the Kansai colloquial in dialogue, so that it now resembles colloquial style (Shunsui's style) more than Tanehiko's style. The change has come about naturally, ever since Tōkyō was made the capital. One contributing factor has been that newspaper serials, however ridiculous their stories may be, generally treat them as if they were fact; naturally, therefore, the characters' dialogue must be written in the contemporary Tōkyō colloquial. Meiji authors, however, are not the first to use the Tōkyō vernacular in *kusazōshi*. Beginning with the works of Nise Tanehiko³² we may find many examples of it in the *kusazōshi* of Nise Shunsui³³ and others. Social novels in those days, though, rather than being openly presented as novels of manners, were disguised in historical form, with the result that some classical diction and some Kansai dialect were mixed in with the Tōkyō idiom. It was by no means Edo speech in its pure form.

Lately, various clubs such as the Kana Club and the Rōmaji Club³⁴ have sprung up here and there. Some people are attempting to reform written Japanese. While their experiments are both proper and promising, I do not think that the supremacy of either the *kana* or the Roman script is really their ultimate aim. The long-

range goal of these kindred spirits is to unify all countries into one vast republic with as far as possible a common political system, language, and customs. Their ultimate aims in the event that this happens can therefore be only to improve the Japanese language and make it the same as Western languages, or to make Western languages the same as Japanese. As the civilization of the West is far in advance of ours, of course, to realize the second of these alternatives would be well nigh impossible, which is why learned men sympathetic to the idea established the Rōmaji Club as a stepping-stone to realizing the first. Now that this has been said, surely it is obvious that neither the Kana Club nor the Rōmaji Club is an end in itself, but a means to an end. The Rōmaji Club is closely attuned to that ultimate aim--it therefore seems very natural that scholars and experts should come together to research the subject. The Kana Club, on the other hand, resembles as it were a stepping-stone to a stepping-stone, a rehearsal for writing a Roman script. If that is in truth its purpose, why have its members not set out along an easier shortcut? Is it not overdoing things to do the same job twice? Surely it is more imperative to begin devising a new style which can be written in Roman script, in co-operation with the supporters of romanization. The *kusazōshi* style is the simplest and smoothest--polished up a little, who knows whether it might not become a fine, thoroughly versatile style? It is far superior in some ways to the indigestible combination style Kana Club supporters have lately persisted in using.

I myself am neither a member of the Rōmaji Club nor an opponent of the Kana Club. I have led the discussion on to them not by design but by chance. It may be that I have misunderstood the objectives of the Kana Club, and that they are not as I have represented them. If so, I trust that its members will not call me too harshly to account.

Chapter Three

Constructing a plot

A novel is the product of its author's imagination. It follows that unless he takes meticulous care in planning the construction of its plot, he will end up with a collection of ideas haphazardly thrown together in an attempt at realism, his story line disrupted by sequential confusion and his portrait of human nature obscured by lack of continuity. The cause and effect relationship may be masked by an over-abundance of incidents, and a satisfactory conclusion impeded by the presence of too many characters. All these factors naturally make it vital that he construct his plot in accordance with a predetermined set of rules.

It is essential when writing a novel to preserve a clear and logical sequence, so that all incidents, major and minor alike, are connected and not left dangling. In true stories, travel sketches, and the like, the events related are essentially not fictitious, and so the constant introduction of new topics and switches in the focus of the story give the reader the feeling of watching scenery pass by from a moving carriage. The events of the earlier part are forgotten halfway through, and with them the prospect of discovering their outcome as the story switches to completely unrelated matters. New characters are introduced without their predecessors' fate being fully explained. The sequence of the whole book is disconnected; only the most cursory attention is paid to continuity. A novel, on the other hand, must be consistent. No story in which there is no connection between beginning and end, no relationship between cause and effect, can be called a novel. It is no more than an absurd piece of fiction, similar to, but different from, a faithful factual account of social conditions.

Bakin had this to say about rules in the novel:¹ "There are of course structural rules to be seen in the work of Chinese novelists of the Yuan and Ming dynasties.² They use the techniques of role gradation, adumbration, pre-arrangement, parallelism, contrast, abbreviation, and allusion.

"Role gradation is akin to the *shite* and *waki* of recent Noh plays.³ In Chinese novels, the protagonist-deuteragonist relationship may remain constant throughout, or change with each chapter. Occasionally the roles may be reversed. Adumbration and pre-arrangement resemble each other, but are not the same. The former involves hinting at events several chapters before they occur, the latter laying foundations, something known these days as preparation arranging the beginnings of things in such a way as to yield a clever plot. Jin Rui⁴ used this technique in his commentary on *Shui Hu Zhuan*.

"Parallelism is also known as comparison. It means that, like parallelism in verse, two things are compared with each other and paired off in the plot. While it may seem redundant, it is not. Redundancy occurs when an author makes the mistake of repeating an event similar to an earlier one. Parallelism involves making both a deliberate parallel and a comparison with the earlier part of the story. Funamushi Obanai's death on the horns of a cow, for example, parallels the fighting bulls of Hokuetsu Nijūson. Inukai Genpachi's struggle on the boats moored in the Senjū River, on the other hand, is in contrast to the struggle on the roof of the Horyūkaku.⁵ Although this particular contrast and comparison resemble each other, they are different. The comparison compares ox to ox--two animals in different situations, whereas the contrast involves the same person in two different situations.

"Abbreviation is a device used to reduce the quantity of text to avoid tedium, by making someone overhear something he has to know, or having a character explain something in place of a description by the author. It is meant to shorten the story and prevent the reader's becoming bored. Allusion is the suggesting of a deeper meaning than the words spell out. Allusions require considerable hindsight to understand. *Shui Hu Zhuan* is full of them--nobody has ever been able to explain them satisfactorily, though many Chinese men of letters, including of course Li Zhi⁶ and Jin Rui, have toyed with them."

The first of Bakin's rules, the protagonist-deuteragonist relationship, I intend to discuss at length in a separate chapter. What I have to say here concerns the other six.

Adumbration and pre-arrangement are merely factors in preserving the logical sequence I mentioned earlier. Most Oriental scholars in the past, despite their erudition and retentive memories, were unable to sum up broad concepts in a name--they picked out and named individually the characteristics of certain sections. Both adumbration and pre-arrangement are meant to ensure a smooth, connected plot and do not merit separate classification.

Comparison and contrast are too contrived. To pursue this sort of long-winded novelty too enthusiastically might perhaps result in a distortion of that description of human nature and social conditions which is the novel's main concern. These two are techniques for Chinese writers, to whom style is all-important. Japanese writers need not employ them.

Abbreviation I shall discuss in a separate section on the principles of description.

Allusion can hardly be said to be essential. Any story which gives a faithful description of human nature and social conditions and moves the reader to admire its elegance constitutes a novel, regardless of whether it possesses any profound extra-textual significance. As failure to do so is in no way detrimental to the novel, to imply a second, not immediately obvious level of meaning in any work other than an allegory is no more than a conceit of the author, a labour of love. Its presence or absence is immaterial.

As I have already said in my introduction to this section, the sole purpose of rules in the novel is to keep the reader interested. Once this is clearly understood, no more detailed explanation is necessary, but I shall

nevertheless press on for the future benefit of our own authors, who as yet possess only a rudimentary knowledge of such matters.

The first thing to be dealt with in any discussion of plot is the difference between comedy and tragedy. (Tragedies and comedies may be called in Japanese *hiai shōsetsu* and *kaikatsu shōsetsu* respectively.) The tragic novel I have already touched on in the first section of this work. A comic novel restricts itself to light-hearted matters and abounds in jokes and witticisms. The comic novel of today is vastly different from that of the days when what then passed for comic novels attempted to hold society up to ridicule by depicting only laughable, ludicrous antics. Besides not always aspiring primarily to jokes and puns, it sometimes even incorporates into its plot a dash of pathos. *Hakkenden* and *Yumiharizuki*⁷ provide examples of modern comedies on the home front. The final scene in a comic novel finds the hero safe and prosperous. In a tragedy, however, he meets an untimely death as the end approaches. Modern novelists, to avoid monotony, occasionally spice even tragic novels with jokes or cheerful topics, so that there is no longer any clearcut distinction between tragedy and comedy--many so-called comedies, in particular, are not funny at all. That is why a certain English scholar not long ago styled novels like *Hakkenden* and *Yumiharizuki* tragi-comedies. The description is probably apt.

The one thing to be avoided above all else in a purely comic novel is a pornographic plot. Sometimes authors with little self-respect stoop to obscenity to raise a laugh when hard-pressed for humorous material--witness Ikku's *Hizakurige*⁸ and Kinga's *Shichi Henjin*.⁹ both of which are outstanding among pre-Restoration novels but fall far short of the standards of the true novel because of their high content of bawdy dialogue. Dickens's *Pickwick Papers*¹⁰ is pure comedy--it is full of witticisms, but contains no hint of indecency in either plot or language, because wit is not founded on bawdiness. The secret of humour lies in cleverly mixing solemnity, pride, and nobility with stupidity, meanness, and coarseness. One way to raise a laugh is to exaggerate the insignificant or to exalt the lowly. An old retainer's absent-mindedness, the downfall of a haughty person--this is the stuff of which comedy is made. In short, the seeds of laughter are often to be found in situations arising from unintentional mistakes. There is no need to make a joke of coarseness.

The novel of the future will not be like that of the past. It will set out to attract men of discrimination rather than to entertain women and children. This means, of course, that even humorous novels will have to avoid plots unworthy of an artist's standards. Just as an indecent painting unfit for the eyes of family groups cannot be classified as art, no matter how skilful its execution, so too a book which cannot be read aloud to parents and children is not a real novel. Someone once said that there would be no pornographic literature if public demand did not ensure a ready sale for it, and that it is thus the readers and not the authors who are to blame if novels are bawdy. Authors merely describe human nature and social conditions appropriate to the times. If their contemporaries are low-minded, if they delight in eroticism, then that will naturally be reflected in the novels of the day. It is inevitable, he said, because the novel is a mirror of its times!

His argument is reasonable in the main, but not altogether incontrovertible. What he says was true of pre-Meiji novelists, whose aim was to entertain women and children with their work, but it will not do as a justification for their modern counterparts. As a general rule, there is a line which should not be crossed in dealing with the seamy side of life. While some aspects of it must inevitably form part of any description of human nature and social conditions, others should never be mentioned. Those that are unavoidable should be handled with care. They should be dealt with as briefly as possible, and the rest left to the reader's imagination. In times when morals are lax, for example, many men and women carry on clandestine intrigues, but to lay bare the mysteries of the bedroom and reproduce the details of their conversation there in the name of realism is a task belonging not to the novelist but to the writer of love-stories.

What I have just said applies to comic novels as well. Surely it is not really necessary to take their subject matter from the lower classes of society when the people and affairs of the upper classes provide such rich material for humour! It is understandable that *gesaku* writers of the Ikku school, who of course were not very highly principled, should have drawn their material from middle and lower class life to amuse their lower class readers. What I find really amazing, however, is that today's comedy writers, rather than striking out in a new direction, continue to use the same old methods and still consider bawdy jokes the pinnacle of humour. None of them is interested in reshaping the Japanese novel into an art form!

As long as the novel is not considered to be art, it need do no more than provide contemporary readers in a given area with entertainment. Not even the most contemptible story, the most erotic tale, can be criticized. If, on the other hand, one looks upon the novel as a great art form, it will take more than the mere fact that a story has the power to interest people in a certain place and time to earn it that description. As I said in Part One, true art is beneficial--it moves a man deeply and ennobles his character without his being aware of it. Anything which lacks even the least part of this benefit is not art but merely a commonplace diversion. Can the coloured woodblock prints, in which the public delight, be classified as real painting? They are beautiful, certainly, but it would be wrong to label them indiscriminately as embodiments of the pure essence of art, when their eligibility for such a description must depend on whether or not they have the ability to enrich a man's nature.

As the artist must strive to paint not merely a pretty picture but one so beautifully executed that it ennobles the human character in some way, so too the novelist must strive to inspire his reader by the vividness of his portrayal of human nature and social conditions. No novel which fails to uplift its reader ranks as art, nor does its author deserve the proud title of novelist. If hesitant authors choose to deprecate themselves as being only Meiji authors, or Bunsei¹¹ *gesaku* writers, and try to repudiate the title, refusing to consider themselves artists, I do not blame them at all, no matter how much they pander to the interests of children or the lower classes. It is of no consequence. To amuse people in a given time or place is a simple matter; to create an impression on a larger scale is much more difficult. To take an instance from the world of *ukiyo*e; Hishikawa Moronobu¹² was a pioneer in their development, second only to Iwasa Matabei.¹³ Because of that, he was famed throughout the country in his day. Everyone acknowledged him a master. Yet the artists of the world would surely not acquiesce in praising the extremely bad *ukiyo*e produced by the followers of that same Hishikawa as masterpieces of elegance. To do so would be to confuse elegance with antiquity. Their example shows how easy it is to win localized, contemporary approval, and how difficult true art is!

What I have just said must not be construed as advice to the novelist to ignore contemporary human nature and social conditions and confine himself to writing instead about a nobler kind supplied by his imagination. Any historical novel must inevitably contain passages dealing with violence and cruelty. Even a social novel, if its author lived in a society as yet only semi-civilized, would be an idealized rather than true picture of life in its times. The best way to deal with them, I feel, is to include them, but to exercise restraint in their handling. If an author feels even the slightest twinge of personal interest in a brutal episode, he will be apt to dwell on the incident to an extent unpalatable to some other perceptive, detached person. The same applies to pornography--any eagerness on an author's part to divulge such details becomes obvious from the way he writes about them, causing discriminating readers to lay aside the book.

To sum up: while it is not necessary to banish all mention of cruelty or obscenity from the novel, such elements should be kept to a minimum. The intelligent reader should not be wearied with the sort of thoroughly squalid tale hitherto produced by Japanese authors. In the works of the French novelist Dumas, one encounters both barbarity and eroticism, but as he does not expose in full the secrets of the bedroom, unlike our own historical romances, his novels may safely be read aloud to whole families. Many of the

works of the English novelist Lytton--*Ernest Maltravers*,¹⁴ for example--also relate stories of love, but he too handles such matters differently from Japanese novelists. The bedroom itself, of course, and any details of such private matters are kept entirely out of the picture. Nothing is made explicit. Instead, Lytton turns his facile pen to exploring every detail of his lovers' ardent emotions. His love stories, from the nature of the story to the handling of the plot, resemble those of the Tamenaga school, but they escaped a scornful reception from the English public not only because of the superior nature of their characters and incidents but also because of the elegance of his method of description in dwelling not on specific behaviour but on abstract emotions. Future Japanese novelists would do well to make this distinction in their new works.

I might just mention here the subject of rape, which occasionally crops up either in passing in the plot of Japanese novels or as the main topic of a historical romance. Human nature and social conditions being what they are, its presence is attributable to them rather than to any fault on the author's part, but it does not enhance the plot in any way. If its omission would detract from the realism of the description, then it must be included, but there is surely no need to describe it frankly as an end in itself. There are many ways of skirting the subject--by making one character tell another that it happened, for example, thereby sidestepping the prurient details. This would be quite a novel method, one which would do justice to both points of view. There are many other such ways to improve a plot. When Japanese novelists want to shed light on the way men and women think, they invariably progress to bedroom matters. This above all else must be stopped. I refer to such phrases as "although they do not yet sleep together" and "at first they were afraid and shy, but later they became joyous bedfellows". Such things need not be put into words. Expressions like "slamming shut the door, what dreams they must have dreamed together" are always to be found in our novels. They may be worded in any one of a variety of ways, but their implication is always deliberately sexual. This is going too far. If an author wishes to make it tacitly understood that the characters in his story are engaging in illicit sex, he should be able to communicate it from the context without needing to mention doors being closed!

In this connection, it may be said that many recent *sewa-kyōgen*¹⁵ have had mediocre plots and little artistic appeal. This is because of the lack of ability of the basically unimaginative authors. They have abandoned brutal, erotic plots in response to the arguments of thinkers seeking to bring about the enlightenment of society, but have had no idea of the kind of pure, carefully crafted plots that should be substituted. All they have done is serve up dull offerings which are simply ordinary *kyōgen* from which the erotic elements have been removed. *Sewa-kyōgen* these days are neither accurate portrayals of modern social conditions nor representations of an ideal society. As the events they describe have obviously been contrived by the author, they contain such unlikely incidents as the miraculous recovery of a man who should have died, or the reform of an incorrigible villain. In short, modern *kyōgen* offer neither well-turned and accurate descriptions of contemporary life nor elegant climaxes wherein are expressed deeply felt emotions; lacking both, they naturally have nothing in them to interest us.

Let me now return to my original subject of the comic novel, from which I have digressed at some length. I have a little more to say about today's so-called comic novel, or tragi-comedy, as it really is.

In tragi-comedy, it is the blending of humour and pathos which demands the most careful attention. There is as a rule a limit to how much the sensibilities can be taxed, just as the muscles or the power of observation grow tired and weak and temporarily cease to function if used for too long without a break. After staring too long into the radiance of the sun, for example, we cannot see even the light of a candle; and even the strongest perfume seems to have as little impact as water to a nose grown accustomed to its fragrance after prolonged exposure. Likewise the sensibilities too can be blunted--too many tragic stories will result not only in a gradual weakening of the ability to empathize but also eventually in boredom. For this reason it has long been the custom among authors to season tragedy with laughter and comedy with dashes of hardship and

misery in order not to weary their readers. I do not have the space to explain it all over again, but there is one cautionary note I must sound on the subject. Humour and pathos in a tragi-comedy should not be alternated in a mechanical way with none of the charm of the unexpected or they will make little impression on the reader, no matter how well the proportion of each is regulated. They should be used judiciously.

The same applies to tragic novels. Should they encompass nothing but misery and sadness from beginning to end, on the grounds that such should be the primary concern of a tragedy, their readers will eventually become bored. The final catastrophe, in particular, should be described simply, with the lightest possible touch. Look at the famous love story *Musume Setsuyō*¹⁶--its dénouement is the more unbearably poignant for being so delicately handled. Murasaki Shikibu, in the "Kumogakure" chapter of *Genji Monogatari*, informs the reader in a roundabout way that Genji is dead. The care she takes to do so marks her as a great writer.

There is much more I ought to say about the plot of the tragic novel, but as I have already gone on too long I propose to turn now to other matters. I trust my readers will forgive me for not taking this section to its conclusion.

Here follows as a guide for authors a list--not exhaustive, of course--of the main faults to be avoided in the plot of a novel. They will from time to time discover others, which they should take their own measures to avoid.

1. Fantasy

I shall not go over this ground again, as I have already explained repeatedly that the true novel shuns absurd nonsense and fanciful extremes of mystery.

2. Monotony

By monotony, I mean constant repetition of the same sort of idea. Music and poetry are nothing without rhythm. Variety is even more important in the novel, which catalogues the infinite, ever-changing spectrum of human nature and social conditions.

3. Redundancy

Redundancy is the repetition of an idea similar to one expressed earlier. As it is a matter often debated with great heat by Japanese novelists, the reader is probably already familiar with the arguments without my joining the fray.

4. Eroticism

I have discussed this point several times already. Eroticism is to be avoided, but not to the extent of never mentioning liaisons between the sexes. I merely expect that an author should not seek personal gratification by writing of the secrets of the bedroom.

5. Favouritism

This really applies to characterization rather than plot, but I shall take the opportunity to mention it now. By favouritism, I mean the attitude of an author towards the characters he has created. It may seem rather odd to speak of taking sides in connection with characters who are wholly imaginary, but such being the way human nature works, it is not really strange at all. An author may grow unconsciously attached to a virtuous

character, for example, and twist the plot to allow his behaviour to continue unblemished when the thread of the narrative really dictates that that person act dishonestly. Or he may sometimes so arrange things that a villainous character is made to perform all manner of wicked deeds.

Biographers as well as novelists have been known to indulge in favouritism. Ieyasu's [17](#) biographer, recounting the battle of Ōsaka, would naturally defend Ieyasu's actions, whereas Toyotomi's [18](#) biographer, describing the same event, would favour Hideyori and his mother and revile the behaviour of Ieyasu and his son. If this can happen in histories, which ought to present the unvarnished facts, what hope is there for the novel? A novelist may speak good or ill of his characters as he pleases. He is free to portray the behaviour of the main object of his affections, the revered hero, as good and pure in every particular, or conversely, to paint the villain utterly black. Should he allow himself a biased attitude, therefore, Meiji society would see the appearance of a crowd of men as holy as the saints, who could put Yao and Shun to shame, and of villains so pitiless and cruel they would strike fear into the hearts of Dao Zhi [19](#) and Jie and Zhou. [20](#) Japanese authors in the past have shown a marked tendency towards favouritism. No writer whose guiding principle is to observe life as it is and write about it in strictly realistic terms ought to have such a bad habit, but as they pander to the frivolous tastes of women and children it is inevitable that such bias will occur. Women and children, simple creatures that they are, probably think that heroes are always good and villains always bad. In reality, however, even heroes are sometimes prey to evil passions, and even villains sometimes stirred by conscience. If an author loses sight of this fact even for an instant in the process of peopling his novel, his characters will not ring true. Take care!

6. Patronage

Patronage too relates to characterization. It occurs as a result of the favouritism just mentioned. When an author takes his partiality for his hero to extremes, he shelters him and saves him from every threatened danger. The practice is not wrong in itself, of course, since it is only in tragic novels that the hero must die, but things have been very badly managed if the reader takes it for granted that the hero will always be over-protected and rescued from peril. The eight heroes of *Hakkenden*, for example, are wizards who encounter no difficulties and never die. Inue no Masashi, [21](#) in particular, does not die even though he is killed, perhaps because he has the aid of a sacred rosary bead as well as of the divine spirit of the guardian angel Fusehime. Thanks solely to Bakin's literary talent, this defect goes unremarked throughout the novel. Any other author would have had the reader yawning and throwing the book away by the eighth or ninth chapter. Some English novelists--Richardson, [22](#) for example--are guilty of patronage.

7. Inconsistency

I address myself here to both plot and description. Let me give an example. *Shintō Suikoden* [23](#) was begun by Gakutei and continued by Chisokukan. Any inconsistencies are therefore excusable on the whole, but there is one particularly glaring discrepancy which makes a good example because of the unpleasant jolt it gives the reader. Gakutei describes Tamaoki Genkurō as swarthy, powerfully built, and round-eyed, whereas Chisokukan, much later, says that he is pale-complexioned with a straight nose. An astounding contradiction indeed! Of course, Tamaoki first appears in the story as a woodcutter deep in the mountains, so it is quite natural that he should appear dark, but it ought to be explained that this is the result of exposure to the sun. No matter how many years have passed, a rough, uncouth woodcutter cannot be transformed into an elegant Adonis. Too many such inconsistencies will weary the reader and take the edge off even the most interesting plot.

8. Ostentatious scholarship

Ostentatious scholarship--the flaunting of one's own erudition--is seldom seen in the work of experienced writers. It is younger authors who are often guilty of this abominable practice--they launch into lengthy accounts of past events when danger threatens, and give lectures on archaic words in front of their betters who cannot speak out, or they give a character more learning than he might reasonably be expected to have. The most frequent sinner in this regard among Japanese novelists was Bakin. The practice crops up occasionally in some of Lytton's earlier works, and even Scott is said to have yielded to the temptation to some extent in *The Pirate*,²⁴ for which he was trounced by the critics. Nonetheless, it would be a great pity if an author's learning were to pass completely unnoticed. He should take care to limit his display of it to occasions when the text of his novel calls for it, so as not to bore his reader.

9. Too long a story

I am not referring here to the story as a whole. There is nothing wrong with writing a long story, so long as an author provides enough variety in its plot to keep his reader's interest. If he delays the progress of the story interminably in the manner of a professional storyteller, however, the impatient reader may grow tired of waiting and lose all interest in the outcome. The impact of the denouement will be diminished because his attention will probably have wandered to something else by the time it is produced.

The following amusing anecdote illustrates my point. Not long ago, a certain prostitute from a brothel in the Shin'yoshiwara²⁵ took a handsome lover. The lover, thinking to cement their relationship even further by a trick, deliberately kept his distance for a time in an attempt to increase her longing for him. For more than ten days, he paid her no visit. Meanwhile the woman, who had forsaken her trade for love of him and was even ready to marry him, was in torment imagining various accidents which might have befallen him. She tried to find out what had happened by sending people to spy on his movements, or sending anonymous letters, but he smiled to himself to see his plan in action and from then on only returned commonplace answers once or twice a month. Eventually he sent not even a postcard. Three or four months passed in this way. The woman, who was in any case of a jealous disposition, thought he had transferred his affections elsewhere. She seemed to feel the first cold breath of an unexpected autumn wind. Jealousy tore at her. Try as she might, she could not forget the words of love they had exchanged in the past. In the months which had already passed, even when dressed to receive patrons, an unceasing rain of unseen tears had soaked her sleeve. When still not even the faintest whisper of a message came from her lover, however, she untied the knot of the wanton, fickle thread of a courtesan's love which bound them and entered into a close alliance with another lover. Meanwhile, her former lover had no idea what had happened. When the four months were up, he told himself that the time was ripe. Planning to meet her that very day and play out a fine stormy scene which would be by turn sad and humorous, he went triumphantly to visit her--with what little success the reader may deduce for himself! Had this self-assured paramour practised his delaying tactics in moderation, all would probably have been well. He failed because he did not appreciate this fact, which is also a key to the novel. Novelists, I implore you, keep his example in mind when you write!

10. Lack of poetic interest

This is not at all the term I am looking for, but it will do for the moment. What I really mean is lack of dramatic sense. Because the novel is a faithful reproduction of social conditions, its plot is apt to be plain and insipid. To avoid this, a novelist should strive to keep his reader's interest by weaving occasional touches of the romance into his plot--a secret feud, for example. I need not elaborate further.

11. Making characters relate long personal histories

This device not only helps to keep the story short, it has a charm of its own. It can be used without overdoing things two or three times in a long novel, but used too often it will provoke sighs of "Not again!" from the reader. In works of only a few chapters, especially, the less it is used the better.

That concludes my remarks on the subject of plot in general. There remain several things to be said about the plot of the historical novel, however, which I shall deal with in a separate chapter to avoid making this one too long.

Chapter Four

The Plot of the Historical Novel

Before going on to discuss plot, I propose to say a little about the difference between a historical novel and a history, because unless that difference is clearly understood, the historical novel will not be easy to write. I trust the reader will forgive me if I seem to repeat arguments already covered in earlier sections.

There are some who say that although many people read historical novels for pleasure because they fill in the gaps left by official histories, they would lose their attraction were histories to develop to such a stage of thoroughness that we could assume there were no omissions. Such an event, they claim, would mean the eventual demise of the novelist, who expends his energies on fanciful original fictions. Even Macaulay himself, it appears, felt the same way--he often put forward a similar idea in his works, and talked about why writers of novels and historical romances would ultimately disappear. "It is not only students and scholars who enjoy finding out the details of their country's past. Even laymen take a certain amount of pleasure in reading history, which of course is as it should be. How can they amuse themselves with the fictions of novels alone?" Surely he is mistaken: There is a vast--more than vast--difference between the so-called authentic histories found in England and what pass for chronicles in the Orient, of course, but it is hard to believe that, as matters now stand, outside literary circles a historian's literary style can have more appeal than a novelist's. An aptitude for writing history being essentially different from a talent for poetry or fiction, the two are never found in the same person. Macaulay was a talented historian, of course, with a flair for poetry as well. There can be little doubt, however, that had he been commanded to write a novel or a historical romance it would have been clumsy and undistinguished. Lord Brougham,¹ a prominent English historian, actually did write a few novels, but their unwieldy plots and ungraceful style rendered them hardly fit to read. Novelists, on the other hand, suffer no such handicap. Quite a few famous novelists have also written famous histories. Thackeray is one eminent figure whose novels have brought him prominence in recent times. I have heard that on several occasions he produced manuscripts for a history, but dropped the project before publication. I am firmly convinced that had he seen it through, the result would have been brilliant. *The Four Georges* and *The English Humourists*² prove beyond doubt that his is no ordinary historian's talent. George Eliot was similarly gifted; and Lord Lytton actually wrote several sections of a history which were well received.

Before I go any further, I shall spell out just what it is that distinguishes a novelist from a historian. In the first place, a novelist's penchant for fiction makes him reluctant to record facts in a plain, unvarnished manner. Without consciously realizing it, he introduces a certain amount of literary embellishment, and occasionally gets his facts wrong. Lapses into rhetoric are often unavoidable, however, when the topic under discussion is a person. Even Macaulay, both in his histories and his biographies, occasionally set down seemingly fanciful, questionable information. Carlyle,³ who enjoys a considerable reputation in England, was another whose style was exceedingly ornate. It is therefore difficult to distinguish between novelist and historian solely on the grounds that one writes fiction and the other fact. Such masters of the historical novel

as Sir Walter Scott always based their plots on historical fact, but one reading is enough to make apparent the difference between their works and the history books. It is not just attention to detail or ornateness of style which sets the two apart, but the fact that a novel can both smooth over the gaps left in histories by supplying missing facts from the author's imagination and also indulge freely in familiarity, by which I mean that when a novelist describes the words and actions of his characters (who are also historical figures) with meticulous attention to detail, he creates in his reader the impression that the novelist and the character as represented in the novel are well known to each other. A historian narrating facts must substantiate every incident. Not so a novelist, who is at liberty to perform the by no means easy task of dissecting human nature as he pleases, to trespass within even the forbidden inner sanctums of court ladies in order to give an account of how those ladies behave there, and to describe what is happening both inside and outside closed gates and doors, without having to go into the background of events in any detail.

The most important of the differences between a novel and a history is this ability of the novel to fill in gaps. Think, for example, about the fact that the Emperor Napoleon I of France⁴ finished his evening meal. No doubt he did finish it, and so he should have, but that point is far too trivial to record in a history. Everyone who has ever read a history of France has imagined that many a melancholy conversation must have preceded the Emperor's divorce from the Empress Josephine,⁵ yet anyone attempting to set down every one of the details which go to make up each event in a history book would be bound to attract criticism on the grounds of over-complexity. These small facts, however, make a deep impression on people. It is precisely because many such trifling matters are pinpointed in unofficial histories and pamphlet histories that readers lap them up. Having no more cherished memories of Napoleon the man than the next person, they are delighted by the feeling of intimate contact afforded by finding out any contemporary information about him. It is very difficult, indeed impossible, to escape the charge of superfluity incurred by recording such minutiae in official histories, however, unless the historian possesses an outstanding literary talent.

The novelist, on the other hand, is under no such constraint. In order to relate Napoleon's story, and to deal fully with the events leading up to his marriage to Marie Louise after his divorce from Josephine, he begins with a time and place of no particular importance and proceeds to fill in the full picture by stages, luring the reader ever onward to a marvellous climax and causing him to feel that past events have come alive before his eyes. All this lies within his competence! From a novel of this kind, a reader learns that Napoleon sat drinking coffee and chatting with the maids and pages in the depths of the palace, what his responses were, what the maids said to him, and why certain topics upset him. Not only does he find out how the Empress Josephine swallowed the bitterness overflowing her heart and restrained her crushing grief, often brushing away with her sleeve the tears in her eyes, but even the small things are revealed in every particular--how the coffee grew cold as the conversation lengthened, why the bread and butter were left on the table to no purpose with no-one to eat them, how someone forced herself to eat just a slice solely to keep up appearances. To report every single one of these details in a history would be impossible. That is the forté of the novel!

It is also very difficult to sketch in such things as clothing and customs in a history, whereas not only does a novelist have every facility to do so, his work is tantamount to a living history of manners. Authors like Scott come closest to achieving a true historical novel. While Bakin, Kyōden, and others are famous as historical novelists, their works are really more like social novels, perhaps because they carelessly described not the customs and clothing appropriate to the historical setting but those of the Kan'ei period⁶ and after.

The most important thing to remember in writing a historical novel is to keep as much as possible to the background of history rather than to its surface. By surface, I mean the facts recorded in history books; by background, things which cannot be discovered from that source. Bakin's very clever description of the

appearance of the Hōgen army in *Yumiharizuki*⁷ comes close to achieving the effect of a fictional biography. Also very clever is his ferreting out and detailed describing of all Hōjō Tokimasa's⁸ inner wickedness in *Asaina Shima Meguri no Ki*. It is probably even true to say that *Kyōkakuden*⁹ and *Bishōnenroku* qualify as outright historical novels from this point of view.

To sum up: the aims of the historical novel are to fill in gaps in both histories and histories of manners. To attain even one of these goals is sufficient. While an author is under no compulsion to use the great events and characters of history, a story centred on historical fact backed up wherever possible with accounts of customs and reminiscences is truly whole and perfect.

Authors of historical novels are prone to many weaknesses, of which the chief are chronological inconsistencies, factual errors, and misrepresentation of customs.

Even historians sometimes make mistakes in chronology. While slight errors may not seem a matter for any great concern in novels, which are fictitious, they are nevertheless undesirable and should be eliminated wherever possible, because regardless of how elegant and realistic the story may be, a perceptive reader will notice marked discrepancies at once and lose the feeling that he has entered a dream world and is communing with the ancients. Japanese novelists in the past have not placed much importance on chronological inaccuracies. Some have even openly advised their readers not to worry about them. Others like Bakin, as might be expected, paid scrupulous attention to dates, so that those who call *Hakkenden* and *Shima Meguri no Ki* historical novels are not really so far wide of the mark. I recall, however, that there were quite a few mistakes in *Kyōkakuden*, an outstanding work.

Factual errors involve making mistakes in historical data--describing a good man as a villain, for example, or vice versa. Japanese novelists are often guilty of this crime, although some like Bakin have done their best to avoid it. It must certainly be eliminated because the main purpose of the historical novel is to relate behind-the-scenes information about historical events and personages: this of course it cannot do with any degree of conviction if the external facts on which its story is based are inaccurate. No historical novel is perfect as long as it contains such errors, no matter how clever its plot or accurate its description of customs. A story dealing fully with customs but based on fictitious characters with no recourse at all to historical fact would be preferable.

An author misrepresents customs by describing anachronistic utensils, furnishings, customs, ornaments, or foodstuffs, or by taking for granted in the story customs which did not exist in that era--making an Ashikaga period character smoke cigarettes or play the *samisen*, for example, or one from the Hōjō period¹⁰ fire a gun or wield a lance. A further instance of this sort of carelessness would be to have a woman of the Keichō era¹¹ do up her hair in a *shimada* topknot,¹² or wear a kimono with long, trailing sleeves. There are other much worse cases--I mention these only by way of example. Inaccurate reporting of customs, like the inclusion of factual errors mentioned earlier, is a grave fault in a historical novel, one which, if not eliminated, will prevent the realization of its goals. How unfortunate it is that even a great writer like Bakin not only sinned frequently in this respect but made no attempt whatever to reform!

Chapter Five

The Hero

The hero is the central character of the novel. He may also be called the idol. While there is no restriction on

how many heroes a novel may have--sometimes there is only one, sometimes more than two--there must be at least one, because without him the continuity it needs would be totally lacking.

Because the novel, dealing as it does with human nature, must of course express the views of both sexes, the central character may be either male or female, designated hero and heroine respectively. A simple example of such a pair occurs in Bakin's *Kyōkakuden*, where Koroku Sukenori is the hero and Kusunoki Komahime the heroine. I need not elaborate further.

Historical romances with intricate plots sometimes have many sets of central characters. In Lytton's *Rienzi*,¹ Nina is paired with Rienzi, Irene with Adrian, and Adeline with Montréal.

Occasionally a novel may have a hero but no heroine, or vice versa. Yoshihide, hero of *Asaina Shima Meguri no Ki*, has no female counterpart, while Cui Qiao, heroine of *Cui Qiao Ji* (adapted by Bakin as *Kingyoden*),² lacks a male partner. These two examples are not really satisfactory; however, as nothing better suggests itself to me just now, they will serve my purpose for the time being.

Sometimes there are many heroes present at the same time, as in *Hakkenden*, *Shima Meguri no Ki*, *Ōuchi Jissanden*, *Nishi Kyūgyūshiden*, and *Shui Hu Zhuan*. In novels of this kind, however, the heroes are naturally ranked, one being as it were the central hero--Asaina in *Shima Meguri no Ki*, and Rienzi in *Rienzi*.

Here follow a few examples to help those not familiar with these ideas.

*Shiranui Monogatari*³

hero Aoyagi Harunosuke

heroine Wakanahime

*Jiraiya Monogatari*⁴

heroes Ogata Shūma

Orochimaru

heroine Tsunade

Bishōnenroku

hero Sue Harukata

heroine Kogane

Yumiharizuki

hero Tametomo

heroine Shiranuihime

Japanese novels often do not make clear just who is a hero and who is not. Kohata Nobuyuki and Inaba

Onikado are the central heroes of *Shintō Suikoden*; the others are secondary heroes.

Most people, reading a novel, are wont to pay more attention to the character of its hero than to the possible outcome of its plot. A hero above the common run of men elicits respect and a desire to know what will happen to him. As well as fashioning a clever plot, therefore, it is also necessary to provide a distinguished hero capable of stimulating the reader's interest. He need not always be a man who combines wit and good looks with virtue. So long as he possesses unusual qualifications which will impress and interest the reader, the central character may even be an ugly villain such as the heroes of *Bishōnenroku* and *Jin Ping Mei*, or an ill-favoured woman like Kakine Oiwa.⁵ Mean, foolish characters or cowards should be avoided, however, because not only do they fail to attract the reader, they are highly likely completely to destroy his interest in the story of their misdeeds. Such heroes are sometimes very successful in comic novels, so there is no reason not to use them in that sphere; but serious novels should avoid them wherever possible.

I said just now that an author may make his hero ugly and wicked if he wishes. Should he do so, however, he must also introduce a good hero to provide as much contrast as possible. In *Bishōnenroku*, Bakin used Mori Shirō Masakatsu as a foil for the wicked Sue Akenosuke. The filial Shidoroku in *Myōmyō Guruma*⁶ contrasts with the bad son Madoroku, and Shirayama Yukiwaka in *Jidai Kagami*⁷ with Fujinami Yukari. All of them are born of this need, mainly because variety is essential to the plot. The plot of the novel, as indeed do all fine arts, requires a heterogeneous design and a coherent plan. Even a scrupulously careful plot with a clearly connected sequence throughout will not stop a reader from eventually wearying of and abandoning a tale with no variety of ideas, where the doings of ugly, evil characters fill every chapter, or the only descriptions are of despicable, mean-spirited scoundrels. On the first day the head of a condemned man is exposed on a gibbet, men and women of all ages and ranks fall over each other to get there. They gather like ants to gaze upon the dreadful face. After a few days, though, all alike frown upon it, and hardly anyone looks at the head, let alone the gibbet. The human appetite for the curious being very strong, man takes pleasure in a thing's novelty regardless of its merits or appearance, but very rarely does he cherish ugliness and evil more than beauty and goodness. Indeed, he is born with a love of beauty--a passion for ugliness is merely a reaction, an anomaly, whose essential irregularity makes its fascination shortlived. That is why the novel cannot do without both a good and a bad hero. *Aoto no Sekibun* was written by Bakin's acquaintance Kingyo⁸ and checked over by Bakin. Neither its style nor its design is ill-devised, but such is the unmitigated villainy of its unsympathetic main characters that the reader has no inclination to continue past the first three or four parts. Every single character, from the hero Nakusa Gekisai (who overthrew Murai Chōan) and the heroine Oreki to the others, is a contemptible bandit whose every action serves only to fill the reader with disgust. Kumano Tanzō alone among them has an upright character, but his goodness is not of an order to match the wickedness and cruelty of Gekisai and the others. The book falls down on this point. It is a serious weakness, which authors should ordinarily take pains to avoid.

There are two schools of thought on the matter of inventing a hero. One favours realism, the other idealism. The proponents of the former take as hero an actual person, by which I mean they build a fictitious hero around the personality of an ordinary man from contemporary society. The Tamenaga school of *ninjōbon* writers used this method. The idealists' method, on the other hand, is to create a fictitious character based on the way man's nature ought to be. The essential difference between the two streams is that the realists take as their material ordinary men, the idealists men as they should be.

Within the idealist school itself there is a further subdivision into the "heredity" (deductive) method and the "environment" (inductive) method. The deductive method creates the characteristics of the hero as they appear in the book by dissecting and analyzing in minute detail an ideal nature which has already been decided upon. Bakin often used this method for his heroes, most notably the eight dog-knights of *Hakkenden*

and Sanketsu in *Shima Meguri no Ki*. The eight dog-knights are imaginary characters in whom the metaphysical characteristics of benevolence, justice, courtesy, wisdom, sincerity, loyalty, filial piety, and obedience are separated out and applied to the physical world. In other words, the eight abstract rules of conduct are embodied in tangible human form. Likewise the three heroes of *Shima Meguri no Ki*--Yoshihide personifies courage, Minamoto Kanja Yoshikuni benevolence, and Mitsunaka wisdom. While the deductive method is very interesting, if the author is not sufficiently selective he will sometimes create bizarre apparitions which seem like human beings but are not. The eight heroes of *Hakkenden* are rare, strange beings who resemble the saints and sages themselves perhaps because Bakin based them on philosophers' theories. While the deductive method should not be dismissed out of hand on this account, it would be highly improper to use it to recreate known historical personages (in historical novels). Asaina Yoshihide,⁹ for example, is an actual historical figure, not a fictitious character. One cannot therefore justify manufacturing his actions and words in such a way as arbitrarily to embody courage in his person. As I have already said in an earlier chapter, the aims of the historical novel are to fill in the facts omitted from histories and give the reader the subtle impression that he is in close contact with historical figures. When the Asaina Yoshihide of the story is made to personify courage, he is no longer the Asaina Yoshihide of history. The name is the same, but the person is different. Leaving aside for the moment the effectiveness of the device and looking at it from a theoretical point of view, it is inexcusable for an author to use the deductive method to wilfully recreate a historical figure in accordance with his own arbitrary opinions. Indeed, to do so is to forget the first principle of the historical novel. *Keikoku Bidan*, recently translated by Yano Fumio,¹⁰ has been criticized by a certain scholar because its three heroes symbolize wisdom, moral integrity, and emotion. If this is so, it seems somewhat less than satisfactory--Epaminondas¹¹ and Pelopidas¹² are actual historical figures, not creations of their author.

An author using the inductive method, on the other hand, creates his characters by using his own imagination to select and judiciously compound a collection of various characteristics found in living men. As he relies for the most part on experience and observation to help him formulate those characteristics which will make up elements of people's personalities, he does not, like those who apply the deductive method, become so carried away with empty theorizing that his characters bear no resemblance whatsoever to real human beings. Most eighteenth century novelists, including Britain's Scott, used the inductive method; Lytton and others also seem devoted to it.

The realist's approach, unlike the two methods just mentioned, involves taking real people as heroes--Tanjirō in *Umegoyomi*,¹³ for example, and Prince Genji in *Genji Monogatari*. There must have been many people like Tanjirō in Shunsui's day, and many men of rank like Genji in Lady Shikibu's. For that reason, indeed, inferior scholars of the classics have called *Genji Monogatari* a didactic work, and spread it about that each of its male and female characters represents a contemporary figure. They are very much mistaken--they have failed to realize that Lady Shikibu was using the realistic approach to characterization.

One may sum up the two techniques by saying that whereas it is easy to enter the gate of the realist school but not so simple to ascend to its chambers, it is difficult to gain entrance to the idealist school, but, once in, it is easy to get into its chambers. The former concentrates on describing human nature as it is, so that the author is under no compulsion to devise his own standards of perfect beauty and goodness. With the latter, on the other hand, it is the author himself who contrives the criteria for beauty and ugliness, and dreams up his own good and bad characters. The foremost difficulty he faces, however, is that if he does not set his standards high enough, the plot will often be the worse for it, and if he sets them too high, his characters will not be convincing. If his standards are just right, the rest will follow easily from his own ideas. Those who employ the realist method, on the other hand, face their worst difficulties after the gate has been breached. The realist

school may be compared to a painter painting a human form, the idealist to one painting an angel. Many can paint the human form, but few manage it with divine skill. Few can paint an angel, but many of those who can are able to move people with their portrait. It all goes back to the basic difference between truth and falsehood!

As I have already discussed in part in Chapter Three of Part One, the aspect of characterization which requires most care on the part of an author is that his own personality traits should not be incorporated into his characters, to emerge in their behaviour. If he attempts to create fictitious characters based on his own nature, he will of course end up with nothing more than a clutch of identical types, which in the end will give a false ring to the story. The reader will grow bored, and lose his sense of participation, of disporting himself in a dream world. Many inexperienced writers are prone to this fault, which renders *Shichi Henjin* and *Wagōjin*¹⁴, despite their interesting plots, totally unable to compare with *Hizakurige* in quality. All the libertines in *Shichi Henjin*, with the single exception of Wajirō, are so similar in nature that they seem like the same person. Birds of a feather flock together, true, but it is hard to believe there could be people whose actions and words are as similar as that. If it were not for the fact that they have individual names, *Shichi Henjin*¹⁵ would be no more than a nominal title for a book with an apparent population of only two or three. Most of the words and actions portrayed bear the same stamp rather than seeming to belong to seven individuals, because the whole thing resembles a soliloquy by the author. The toy which little girls play with, the "actor with one hundred faces," exemplifies the principle. In a bushy-haired wig, it looks like Ishikawa Goemon,¹⁶ in a priest's wig like Yokokawa Kakunori,¹⁷ in a *tonbogami*¹⁸ like Yojirō the monkey trainer,¹⁹ and in a *shimada* topknot like Hanako the temple dancer.²⁰ The facades are different, but it is always the same person underneath. Careful scrutiny of the toy reveals that under all its disguises is a cheap trinket, which makes it only something to entertain a little girl's undemanding eyes. Its novelty is certainly not of an order to impress adults and scholars.

Writing is an extremely difficult task. In both essays and descriptive compositions, a great deal of thought must be given to the ordering of structure and design, neither of which can be carelessly treated. Writing a novel is most difficult of all. Unlike other ordinary forms of writing, the novel requires more than a frank description of the author's own thoughts and feelings. Its duty is to hide those as well as it can so that they do not show, to portray vividly and with animation human nature as it exists in other people in its infinite variety. Ordinary writers write like experienced public speakers. For them, to inspire their readers by conveying their own wholehearted enthusiasms through their writing is both to meet their obligations and also to turn in a fine performance. Were a novelist to seem like an orator, however, he would be doing a very bad job, even worse if he had anything of the puppeteer about him. He should write in the manner of a Creator amusing himself with all the human beings in creation. If this is beyond him, then he will most nearly approach mastery by acting like a clever magician who makes insensate objects run or leap about from some distance away. To put it briefly, allowing the reader to become aware of the relationship between the novel's author and its characters is the height of incompetence. Anyone attempting to write a novel must take into account this crucial point.

Chapter Six

Narrative

I use the term "narrative" here to embrace all the non-dialogue parts of the novel, whether accounts of the background to characters and events or descriptions of temperaments and scenery.

The narration of past events sometimes demands brevity, sometimes detail. While he cannot predetermine his reader's reaction, an author should, of course, guard as much as practicable against boring him with an overabundance of detail. Historical novels, however, must necessarily begin by giving the reader some idea of the quality of human nature and events at the time in question. It would be wrong to insist that such particulars be arbitrarily curtailed merely to avoid the charge of over-complexity. The long historical account at the beginning of *Hakkenden* and the two or three chapters of factual information usually found in Scott's historical novels are no doubt prompted by this necessity. To begin with an unadorned, lengthy recitation of facts, though, would probably weary the reader--some other acceptable device must be found to sketch in the background for him. Bakin hit on an excellent idea in *Bishōnenroku* when he had a large snake speak of contemporary events, human nature, and social conditions rather than setting them down in narrative form. Leaving aside for a moment the quality of the book as a whole and looking at it in the light of the work Bakin put into it, one can indeed see in *Bishōnenroku* a novel device for making sport of the eccentricities of the times. Bakin's so-called technique of abbreviation may also be applied to narration. Used properly, its effectiveness is undeniable. To avoid redundancy I shall not go into the details here. Think about it yourselves!

Description needs as much detail as possible. Authors of Japanese novels in the past have been content to rely on miniature illustrations to make up any descriptive deficiencies in their text, often not bothering with verbal depictions of people and scenery at all, but in this they have made a grave mistake. The charm of the novel is not confined to bringing only its characters to life. Its object is to bring the whole of creation into play on paper. One of its abilities is to make its thunder rumble, its raging seas mount up to the skies, its nightingales warble, and its plum blossoms perfume the air. To describe only the attitudes of characters, to the exclusion of inanimate objects, is like drawing an ascending dragon without clouds.

There are two ways of describing a person's character. I shall call them the negative method and the positive method. The former, used by most Japanese novelists, indirectly makes a character's nature known through his speech and conduct rather than by stating it frankly. The latter, favoured by Western novelists, acquaints the reader from the beginning with a character's disposition by describing it openly. (See the section describing Princess Nina in Part 7 of *Rienzi*.) The positive method is probably more difficult to use than the negative--one needs a knowledge of the main points of psychology and a grasp of the principles of physiognomy and phrenology to succeed. One should not, however, make any hasty assertions about the relative merits of the two. An author should use whichever seems appropriate to the occasion. If the positive method is not skilfully used, subtle nuances will be lost, while mishandling of the negative method hinders discussion of the central issues of human nature. Authors may ponder their relative merits by examining the ancient and modern historical romances of both East and West.

I have not yet exhausted my topic, but I am being hurried by the bookstores, and I do not think it possible to complete my discussion, which could go on forever, within a set time limit. I shall therefore lay my pen down here for the time being, and fill in the gaps in a later supplement. It would please me greatly if the reader, instead of criticizing my uncompleted arguments and disorganized writing, would communicate to me his opinions, regardless of whether or not they agree with my own.

NOTES

1 Murasaki Shikibu, c.1005; Daini no Sanmi, second half of eleventh century; Sugawara no Takasue or his daughter (?), second half of tenth century; author unknown, thirteenth century. ↑

2 1559-1616. Talented writer and musician in the service of Yodogimi (1569-1615).[↑](#)

3 Ichijō Kanera (1402-1481).[↑](#)

4 Ihara Saikaku (1642-1693), Ejima Kiseki (1667-1736), Hachimonjiya Jishō (?-1745), Fūrai Sanjin (1726-1779), Santō Kyōden (1761-1816).[↑](#)

5 Jippensha Ikku (1765-1831), Shikitei Samba (1776-1822), Tamenaga Shunsui (1790-1843).[↑](#)

6 Ryūtei Tanehiko (1783-1843), Takizawa Bakin (1767-1848).[↑](#)

7 Dramatist, poet, and essayist (1611-1680).[↑](#)

PART ONE

Chapter One

1 Ernest Fenollosa (1853-1908), who taught at Tōkyō University in 1881-2.[↑](#)

2 Ōuchi Seiran, in an editorial in *Dai Nihon Bijutsu Shinpō* No. 1 (Nov. 1883).[↑](#)

3 Narrative ballads accompanied originally by the Japanese lute and later by the samisen. Later combined with puppets in the Bunraku puppet drama.[↑](#)

4 An accompaniment for *gidayū*, the narrative style of vocal music in Bunraku and Kabuki.[↑](#)

5 Classical Japanese verse-form of 31 syllables.[↑](#)

6 Long epic-poetry form, seldom used after the Heian period.[↑](#)

7 Two Chinese poems by Bai Ju-i (772-846).[↑](#)

8 *New Style Poetry*, a collection of nineteen poems published jointly in 1882 by Toyama Masakazu (1848-1900), Yatabe Ryōkichi (1851-99), and Inoue Tetsujirō (1855-1944), who attempted to revolutionize Japanese poetry by breaking away from the *tanka* form and replacing classical diction with the modern idiom.[↑](#)

9 An enlightenment magazine, published 1881-1930. Science-oriented, but also published much of the new style poetry.[↑](#)

10 Published in 1884. Inoue Sonken was a pseudonym for Inoue Tetsujirō.[↑](#)

11 John Milton (1608-74), English poet.[↑](#)

12 An 1879 translation for the Mombushō's *Hyakka Zensho* series by Kikuchi Dairoku (1855-1917) of the "Rhetoric and Belles Lettres" section of *Information for the People* by William (1800-83) and Robert (1802-71) Chambers.[↑](#)

13 Ninth century B.C. Greek poet, and Roman poet (70-19 B.C.).[↑](#)

14 Daniel Defoe (1660-1731), Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832), Edward George Lytton Bulwer-Lytton (1803-73).[↑](#)

Chapter Two

1 Tenth century, author and date unknown.[↑](#)

2 Aesop (620?-560? B.C.).[↑](#)

3 By Zhuang Zhou (365?-290? B.C.). Known in Japanese as Sōshi.[↑](#)

4 Japanese folktales originating in the Muromachi period (1392-1573).[↑](#)

5 By Wu Cheng-en (1500?-82). Known in Japanese as *Saiyūki*.[↑](#)

6 1678, by John Bunyan (1628-88), English preacher.[↑](#)

7 1590-1596, by Edmond Spenser (1552?-99), English poet.[↑](#)

8 Collection of mythological stories and historical events of ancient Japan, completed in 712.[↑](#)

9 Possibly a character from a *kyōgen* dealing with Osome and Hisamatsu, a famous love suicide which became the subject of several *jōruri*, notably *Osome Hisamatsu* (1780) by Chikamatsu Hanji.[↑](#)

10 Possibly a character from the *ninjōbon* *Nokinarabi Musume Hachijō* (1824) by Tamenaga Shunsui.[↑](#)

11 Ariwara Narihira (825-880) featured in two plays by Chikamatsu Monzaemon (1653-1724). This may be based on one of them, *Izutsu Narihira Kawagachigayoi* (1720), in which two princesses quarrel over Narihira.[↑](#)

12 Famous Kabuki playwright (1755-1829).[↑](#)

13 Probably Matsumoto Kōshirō V (1764-1838) and Iwai Hanshirō V (1776-1847).[↑](#)

14 Characters in *Imoseyama Onna Teikin* (1771), play originally written for puppets by Chikamatsu Hanji (1725-83) and later adopted by Kabuki.[↑](#)

15 Characters in Kabuki play *Kichisama Mairu Yukari no Otozure*.[↑](#)

16 The original form of *jūdō*, which developed in the Tokugawa period.[↑](#)

17 A style of drama reflecting everyday life, often comic. Originated as comic interludes in Noh programmes.[↑](#)

18 Illustrated popular fiction of the Tokugawa period, written for women and children.[↑](#)

19 Perhaps Sanyūtei Enchō (1839-1900), famous storyteller.[↑](#)

20 Ichikawa Danjūrō IX (1838-1903), popular Kabuki actor.↑

21 Poses used in Kabuki to freeze the action at a climactic moment.↑

22 Kabuki play (1871) by Kawatake Mokuami (1816-93).↑

23 A Kabuki theatre established in 1660 in Edo.↑

24 Kabuki play by Namiki Gohei (1747-1808).↑

25 Kabuki play by Sakurada Jisuke (1734-1806).↑

26 Johann Schiller (1759-1805), German poet and dramatist.↑

27 Thomas Babington Macaulay (1800-59), English historian, poet, essayist, and politician.↑

28 Alexandre Dumas (1802-70), French novelist. George Eliot (1819-80), English novelist.↑

Chapter Three

1 *Nansō Satomi Hakkenden*, an enormously popular work written between 1814 and 1841. It tells the story of eight heroes fathered by a dog, who represent the eight cardinal virtues of benevolence, justice, courtesy, wisdom, sincerity, loyalty, filial piety, and obedience.↑

2 Two legendary benevolent Chinese emperors, said to have reigned 2357-2255 B.C. and 2255-05 B.C. respectively.↑

3 The Japanese version of chess has twenty pieces on a 9x9 board, some of which have no counterpart in the European game. The pieces and their European equivalents, if any, are: *gyoku* (king), *hisha* (rook), *kaku* (bishop), *kin*, *gin*, *kei* (weaker form of knight), *kyō* (weaker form of rook), and *fu* (pawn). Each player begins with 2 *kyō*, 2 *kei*, 2 *kin*, 2 *gin*, 1 *gyoku*, 1 *kaku*, 1 *hisha*, and 9 *fu*.↑

4 Statesman and man of letters (1838-1923).↑

5 Japanese classical scholar (1730-1801). *Tama no Ogushi* is a critical discussion of *Genji Monogatari*.↑

6 Deep sensitivity, the intuitive ability to discern an essence of deep significance in the ordinary things of life. Considered the highest aesthetic virtue.↑

7 Female characters of *Genji Monogatari*.↑

Chapter Four

1 1828.↑

2 *Musōbyōe Kochō Monogatari*, 1810.↑

3 1813 and 1809-13.↑

- 4 Pen-name of Hiraga Gennai (1728-79), writer of popular fiction in mid-Tokugawa period, who also used the name Furai Sanjin.[↑](#)
- 5 *Kinse Setsu Bishōnenroku*, 1829.[↑](#)
- 6 "Reading books", meant to be read at home rather than heard at a recital hall or on the stage. Popular in the late eighteenth century.[↑](#)
- 7 A type of Tokugawa-period novel dealing with the love life of the townspeople.[↑](#)
- 8 Written in 1844 by Benjamin Disraeli, Earl of Beaconsfield (1804-81), and translated into Japanese by Yano Fumio (1850-1931) as *Keikoku Bidan*.[↑](#)
- 9 War chronicles of the Kamakura period (1185-1333).[↑](#)
- 10 Late Tokugawa period writer of popular fiction (1769-1858).[↑](#)
- 11 Jōruri play *Kagamiyama Kokyō no Nishikie* (1782), by Yō Yōtai (dates unknown).[↑](#)
- 12 Member of Tamenaga school of *ninjōbon* writers, (1824-62).[↑](#)
- 13 Puppet play *Meiboku Sendai Hagi*, written in 1777 by Nagawa Kamesuke (dates unknown, flourished 1764-88). Later adopted by Kabuki.[↑](#)

Chapter Five

- 1 "Pictures of the floating world", a genre style of wood-block prints developed during the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The Utagawa school was named after its founder, Utagawa Toyoharu (1735-1814).[↑](#)
- 2 A school of painting founded by Kanō Masanobu (1453-90).[↑](#)
- 3 Two erotic Chinese classics. *Jin Ping Mei* was a four volume novel edited by Jin Sheng-tan (c. 1627-62). *Rou Pu Tuan* was written by Li Yu (1611-80?).[↑](#)
- 4 Powerful family who dominated Japanese politics in the Heian period, when *Genji Monogatari* was written.[↑](#)
- 5 Writers of *ninjōbon*, led by Tamenaga Shunsui.[↑](#)
- 6 Refers to the famous love suicide of Osome and Hisamatsu which became the subject of several *jōruri*, notably *Osome Hisamatsu* (1780) by Chikamatsu Hanji.[↑](#)
- 7 Scottish writer and geologist (1802-56).[↑](#)
- 8 English novelists Henry Fielding (1707-54) and Samuel Richardson (1689-1761).[↑](#)
- 9 Robert Dodsley's registers of English dramatic authors, published mid-eighteenth century.[↑](#)

10 John Home (1722-1808), Scottish dramatist. Published a *History of the Rebellion of 1745* in 1802.↑

11 William Makepeace Thackeray (1811-63).↑

12 Chinese classic of the Ming dynasty, known in Japanese as *Suikoden*.↑

13 Warren Hastings (1732-1818) was impeached for corruption in the administration of government in India in 1787 at the instigation of Edmund Burke (1729-97).↑

PART TWO

Chapter One

1 Popular fiction.↑

Chapter Two

1 Literally, "Japanese style".↑

2 Classical scholar and comic poet (1753-1830).↑

3 Classical scholar, *yomihon* writer, poet (1719-74).↑

4 Another name for Ishikawa Masamochi, classical scholar and comic poet (1753-1830).↑

5 Edo dwellers.↑

6 *Er Cheng Quan Shu*, 66 volume collection of aphorisms and poems by Cheng Hao (1032-85) and Cheng Yi (1033-1107).↑

7 "Zhuzi Yubi" (1270), 140 volume collection of the discussions of Zhuzi (neo Confucianist) and his followers, compiled by Li Jing De.↑

8 Not identified.↑

9 Oldest of the *monogatari* (tales), written early in the Heian period. Exact date and author unknown.↑

10 Story books.↑

11 English novelist Charles Dickens (1812-70).↑

12 Called by Tsubouchi *gazoku setchūbun*.↑

13 Ancient verse form of four lines, each divided into two parts of seven and-five syllables.↑

14 Short love song or ditty.↑

15 Kabuki playwright (1806-81).↑

- 16 George Wither (1588-1667).[↑](#)
- 17 Famous poet and warrior (1106-1180).[↑](#)
- 18 Temple at Uji, south of Kyōto.[↑](#)
- 19 War chronicle of the late twelfth century, attributed to Hamuro Tokinaga (dates unknown).[↑](#)
- 20 Mid-fourteenth century war chronicle, attributed to a priest named Kojima (?-1374).[↑](#)
- 21 Chinese classic of the Ming dynasty, known in Japanese as *Suikoden*.[↑](#)
- 22 *Er Cheng Quan Shu*, 66 volume collection of aphorisms and poems by Cheng Hao (1032-85) and Cheng Yi (1033-1107).[↑](#)
- 23 Writer of popular fiction (1807-58).[↑](#)
- 24 Writer of popular fiction (1819-90).[↑](#)
- 25 The name given to the Kyōto-Ōsaka area.[↑](#)
- 26 Famous imitation of *Genji Monogatari*, written by Ryūtei Tanehiko between 1829 and 1842.[↑](#)
- 27 Another name for the Muromachi period (1392-1573).[↑](#)
- 28 1156-59.[↑](#)
- 29 The play was probably *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, one of the Heike-Genji cycle. *Shizuka Gozen* was concubine to Minamoto Yoshitsune (1159-1189).[↑](#)
- 30 1804-29.[↑](#)
- 31 *Kana* glosses printed beside *kanji* (Chinese characters) to facilitate reading.[↑](#)
- 32 Ryūtei Senka (1806-68), writer of popular fiction.[↑](#)
- 33 Tamenaga Shunshō (1823-86), writer of popular fiction.[↑](#)
- 34 Two clubs formed in 1883 and 1885 with the aim of replacing Chinese characters with the simple phonetic *kana* or Roman scripts.[↑](#)

Chapter Three

- 1 In *Haishi Shichi Kisoku* (1835).[↑](#)
- 2 c. 1280 to 1368, and 1368 to c. 1644.[↑](#)
- 3 The protagonist in a Noh play is called *shite*, the deuteragonist being known as *waki*.[↑](#)

- 4 Chinese literary critic, d. 1661, who wrote a critical commentary of *Shui Hu Zhuan* (*Suikoden*).[↑](#)
- 5 Characters and events in Bakin's *Hakkenden*.[↑](#)
- 6 Li Zhi (1527-1602), Chinese man of letters.[↑](#)
- 7 *Chinsetsu Yumiharizuki* (1807), by Bakin.[↑](#)
- 8 *Tōkaidō Hizakurige* (1802-22), by Jippensha Ikku.[↑](#)
- 9 Baitei Kinga (1821-93), writer of *kokkeibon* (jokebooks) and *ninjōbon*. *Shichi Henjin* appeared from 1857 to 1863.[↑](#)
- 10 1836-37.[↑](#)
- 11 1818-29.[↑](#)
- 12 Painter and engraver (1645-1715).[↑](#)
- 13 Founder of the Ukiyoe school (1578-1650).[↑](#)
- 14 Published in 1837.[↑](#)
- 15 Plays dealing with the lives of ordinary people (as opposed to historical figures).[↑](#)
- 16 Story of the love of seventeenth-century actor Kingorō (who dies) and a courtesan, Kosan. Subject of *jōruri Kaneya Kingorō Ukina no Gaku*, and Kabuki play *Oedo Meibutsu Nishikie no Hajimari* by Nagawa Tokusuke.[↑](#)
- 17 Tokugawa Ieyasu (1542-1616), first Tokugawa shogun.[↑](#)
- 18 Toyotomi Hideyori (1593-1615), killed with his mother Yodogimi (1569-1615) during the 1615 siege of Ōsaka by Ieyasu.[↑](#)
- 19 Notorious thief of the Chun Qiu period (722-481 B.C.) in China.[↑](#)
- 20 Last rulers of the Xia (?1989-?1523 B.C.) and Shang (?1523-?1028 B.C.) dynasties respectively. Their names are used to typify fierceness and cruelty.[↑](#)
- 21 One of the eight dog-knights of *Hakkenden*.[↑](#)
- 22 Samuel Richardson (1689-1761).[↑](#)
- 23 *Shunketsu Shintō Suikoden*, long *yomihon* begun in 1829 by Gakutei Kyūzan (?-1848) and continued by Chisokukan Shokyoku (dates unknown, published c. 1830-68).[↑](#)
- 24 1822.[↑](#)

25 Pleasure quarters of Edo.[↑](#)

Chapter Four

1 Henry Brougham, Baron (1778-1868), politician and lawyer.[↑](#)

2 1860 and 1853.[↑](#)

3 Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881), Scottish historian and critic.[↑](#)

4 Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1821), emperor of France between 1804-1814.[↑](#)

5 Wife of Napoleon, (1763-1814). Divorced by him for Marie Louise of Austria (1791-1847).[↑](#)

6 1624-43.[↑](#)

7 *Yumiharizuki* tells the story of Minamoto Tametomo (1139-70), who took part in the civil war which broke out in 1156 in the Hōgen period.[↑](#)

8 Hōjō Tokimasa (1138-1215), ruler of Japan under the title Regent of Kamakura 1200-1205.[↑](#)

9 1835.[↑](#)

10 1200-1333, period during which the head of the Hōjō family ruled Japan as Regent of Kamakura.[↑](#)

11 1596-1614.[↑](#)

12 Hairstyle worn by young unmarried girls in the feudal era.[↑](#)

Chapter Five

1 *Rienzi, Last of the Tribunes* (1835).[↑](#)

2 *Cui Qiao Ji* was a Chinese novel of the Qing dynasty (c. 1644-1912). Bakin wrote a Japanese version called *Fūzoku Kingyoden* (1829-32).[↑](#)

3 Collaborative work by Ryūcatei Tanekazu et al., published 1849-85.[↑](#)

4 Several versions of this story exist, including the *yomihon* *Jiraiya Setsuwa* (1800-7) by Kanwatei Onitake (? -1818) and a Kabuki play *Jiraiya Monogatari* (1809) by Namiki Shunzō et al.[↑](#)

5 Heroine of *Yotsuya Kaidan*, Kabuki play by Tsuruya Namboku (1755-1829). Oiwa is transformed by poison from a beautiful woman into a hag.[↑](#)

6 *Dōyomi Myōmyō Guruma* (1855 +), collaborative work by Tanekazu and Tanehiko.[↑](#)

7 *Ninjōbon* by Tamenaga Shunshō, 1855 +.[↑](#)

- 8 Rekitei Kingyo, writer of popular fiction (1787-1831), wrote *Tōhitsu Aoto no Sekibun*.[↑](#)
- 9 Asaine Yoshihide, thirteenth-century warrior renowned for his strength.[↑](#)
- 10 Written in 1844 by Benjamin Disraeli, Earl of Beaconsfield (1804-81), and translated into Japanese by Yano Fumio (1850-1931) as *Keikoku Bidan*.[↑](#)
- 11 Theban general and statesman (c. 418-362 B.C.).[↑](#)
- 12 Theban general and statesman (?-364 B.C.).[↑](#)
- 13 *Shunshoku Umegoyomi* (1832-33), *ninjbōn*, by Tamenaga Shunsui.[↑](#)
- 14 *Kokkei Wagōjin*, *kokkeibon*, the first three parts of which were written by Ryūtei Rijō (?-1841) in 1823-24, later volumes being added by Tamenaga Shunsui in 1844.[↑](#)
- 15 The title means "The Seven Eccentrics".[↑](#)
- 16 Notorious thief (1558-94).[↑](#)
- 17 Priest of the Kongōbuji at Yoshino in the twelfth century. Character in Kabuki play *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura* (1747), by Takeda Izumo II (1691-1756), Namiki Sōsuke (1695-1751) and Miyoshi Shōraku (dates unknown).[↑](#)
- 18 Small topknot worn by boys and old men.[↑](#)
- 19 Yojirō the monkey-trainer. Character in *Chikagoro Kawara no Tatehiki* (1782), Kabuki play by Tamegawa Sosuke, Tsutsui Hanji, and Nagawa Shimesuke.[↑](#)
- 20 Possibly subject of *Hanako*, *nagauta* and dance drama. Words by Namiki Ryosuke. First performed 1758.[↑](#)