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Nakajima Atsushi Influences of Romanticism and Taoism

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Nakajima Atsushi

Influences of Romanticism and Taoism

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B.S. Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Cambridge, MA, 1999

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts in the
Department of Asian Studies at Seton Hall University
South Orange, NJ

April 2009

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Nakajima Atsushi (1909-1942)
Influences of Romanticism and Taoism
Thesis Title

By

Evelyn Huang

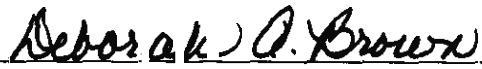
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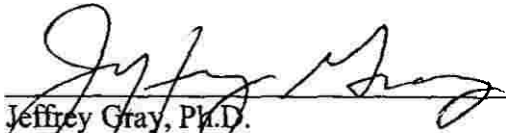
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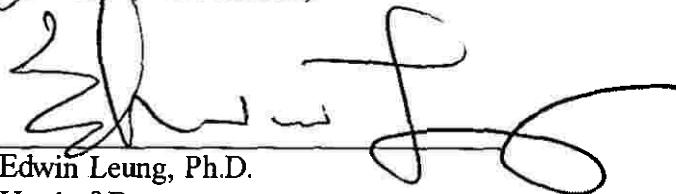
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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in the Department of Asian Studies at Seton Hall University, South Orange, NJ

To my father, who taught me the principle of *wu wei*.

Table of Contents

Abstract	vi
Acknowledgements	vii
Preface	viii
Chapter 1. Introduction	1
Chapter 2. Life and Thought of Nakajima Atsushi	8
Chapter 3. Nostalgia for the Past	30
Chapter 4. Anti-Colonial Sentiment	54
Chapter 5. Completion of Man	79
Chapter 6. Conclusion	102
Appendix 1. Translation of Chameleon Diary	106
Appendix 2. Glossary	138
Bibliography	144

Abstract

Nakajima Atsushi (1909-1942) is an erudite writer who has combined Eastern and Western thoughts in his short stories. This thesis focuses on the influences of Romanticism and Taoism on his writings. Nakajima is skeptical of civilization and yearns for a natural and simple existence. The concepts central to Nakajima's works as articulated by Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Lao Tzu are introduced in chapter 1. Chapter 2 examines Nakajima's upbringing and the influences of his family, education, and work on him, as well as his thoughts revealed in his autobiographical fiction. His nostalgia for the past and nature, which concurs with Romantic and Taoist ideas, is discussed in chapter 3. Chapter 4 assesses Nakajima's experience in the South Seas and his anti-colonial sentiments that arise out of his affinity toward the natives. Chapter 5 is an analysis of Nakajima's Taoist allegory and historical fiction that represent his images of the ideal man. In conclusion, the philosophical ideas presented in Nakajima's short stories are reviewed in chapter 6.

Nakajima's short stories are also contrasted with the writings of Chuang Tzu, Lieh Tzu, Plato, Anatole France, Giacomo Leopardi, and Robert Louis Stevenson in order to identify similarities in the Taoist and Romantic thoughts from which Nakajima has extracted. Nakajima aspired to write literature that portrays the problems of existence and humanity that are revealed through the struggles of his characters. He often formulates stories based on parables and well-known tales and heightens the plot with new twists. Nakajima's tales regarding the distant past and foreign lands have not aged, but instead allow readers to experience history as lived by the characters. A translation of Nakajima's "Kamereon Nikki" (Chameleon Diary) is presented in the appendix.

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Preface

After all, science only explains the principles of observed phenomenon, doesn't it? It can't touch the real essence of the world, can it?

「科学は結局現象の間の法則しか説明しよいか。世界の本質には触れ得ないじやないか。」

—Nakajima Atsushi¹

May 5, 2009, marks the 100th anniversary of Nakajima Atsushi's birthday. He is also known as Nakajima Ton, the Chinese (*on-yomi*) reading of his name. Nakajima's brief life and writing career have been likened to a dazzling comet by critic Sasaki Kiichi.

The primary sources of Nakajima's writing are the two editions of the collected works of Nakajima Atsushi, *Nakajima Atsushi zenshū*, published by the Chikuma shobō from 2001 to 2002, and the Chikuma bunko in 1993. Although the bunko version is smaller and not as extensive, it contains many informative notes. Japanese and Chinese names appear in order of last name followed by first name.

While the pinyin system for denoting Chinese has become the standard, many of the older sources consulted use the Wade-Giles system. To avoid confusion in referencing names and places from old translations, the Chinese names of historical characters and books that appear in the main body of this thesis remain in the Wade-Giles format. For the ease of locating sources in libraries and catalogs, sources in the Chinese language that appear in the footnotes and bibliography are in the pinyin format.

All translations of Nakajima Atsushi are mine except for certain excerpts, whose English sources have been attributed.

¹ Nakajima Atsushi, *Nakajima Atsushi zenshū*, vol. 2 (Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 2001), 248.

anti-imperialist.³ Rie Askew, assessing Nakajima's writings in 2002, discusses orientalism and cultural paradox in his imaginative short stories, characteristics which reveal Nakajima's mixed feelings about Western civilization and China.⁴ Three years later, Robert Tierney focused on the influences of colonialism on Nakajima's writings about experiences in the South Seas.⁵

Because Nakajima was influenced not only by Chinese Confucianism and Taoism but also by numerous European writers and philosophers, Evans views Nakajima as lacking a set of central philosophical beliefs. Although Nakajima's works contain existential elements, discuss subjects related to colonialism, and reveal cultural paradoxes between the East and West, no previous study has offered a view that unifies his philosophy and works. The present thesis attempts to reexamine the writings of Nakajima Atsushi through the lenses of both Romanticism and Taoism, which were central to his philosophy and worldview.

While Romanticism originated in the late eighteenth century in Europe as a response to industrialization and scientific rationalization brought about by the Age of Enlightenment, Taoism was a critical part of the Chinese tradition, with Lao Tzu's (circa 6 BC) *Tao Te Ching* in place since the fourth century BC. Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778), a proponent of Romanticism, believed in the intrinsic goodness of man in his natural state. Lao Tzu wrote the *Tao Te Ching* to reflect on the decline of man's morals during the Chou dynasty (1045-256 BC), when people's lives became decadent.

³ Scott Charles Langton, "The Works of Nakajima Atsushi: 'War Is War and Literature Is Literature'" (Columbus: Ohio State University, 1992), 5.

⁴ Rie Kido Askew, "Nakajima Atsushi and the Cultural Paradox of Modern Japan" (Victoria, Australia: Monash University, 2002), 5-6.

⁵ Robert Tierney, "The Colonial Eyeglasses of Nakajima Atsushi," *Nichibunken Japan Review: Journal of the International Research Center for Japanese Studies* 17 (2005): 149.

Although the two philosophies have developed under different circumstances, they have striking similarities in their ideas regarding human nature, civilization, and how man should conduct his life.

Romanticism and Taoism both distrust civilization and recommend a return to a natural state of life. Romanticism, as expressed by Rousseau, was a belief that civilization led to the corruption of human nature because of the inequalities and excessive greed which accompany civilization. Technology and civilization themselves are not corruptive; the accumulation of wealth as a benefit of civilization corrupts man as he becomes greedy and seeks power. The foundation of the Taoist philosophy as recorded in the *Tao Te Ching*, states that rituals and laws were established to correct human morals only after man had lost harmony with the natural way. Man became pretentious when civilization was created:

When the great Tao declined, the doctrine of humanity and righteousness arose. When knowledge and wisdom appeared, there emerged great hypocrisy. When the six family relationships are not in harmony, there will be the advocacy of filial piety and deep love to children. When a country is in disorder, there will be the praise of loyal ministers.⁶

Although the *Tao Te Ching* does not explicitly state the reason for man's departure from his natural goodness, both Romanticism and Taoism consider civilization superfluous and advocate a simpler way of living.

Since civilization is corruptive, Rousseau proposed in *Émile* that children should be exposed to nature rather than enclosed in cities.⁷ Rousseau believed that by living closer to his original state, through a simple life unencumbered by civilization, man can retain his natural goodness. The same concept of simple living was preached by Lao Tzu

⁶ Wing-Tsit Chan, *The Way of Lao Tzu* (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1963), chapter 18, 131.

⁷ Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Émile*, trans. Barbara Foxley (North Clarendon, VT: Tuttle Publishing, 1993), 30.

in the *Tao Te Ching*. Lao Tzu encouraged people to decrease their desires, since the accumulation of material wealth leads to envy and disorder, while excessive sensual and material pleasures dull one's mind and perceptions. Both Romantics and Taoists consider civilization ridden with vice, and believe that man can return to his natural state only by discrediting civilization.

Rousseau believed that the ill effects of civilization could be countered by man's consent to a democratic government, while Lao Tzu considered a small nation with indifferent and stoic inhabitants an ideal state of existence:

Let there be a small country with few people. Let there be ten times and a hundred times as many utensils but let them not be used. Let the people value their lives highly and not migrate far. Even if there are ships and carriages, none will ride in them. Even if there are arrows and weapons, none will display them. Let the people again knot cords and use them (in place of writing).⁸

Although Rousseau and Lao Tzu differ in their outlook on government as an instrument to curb the corruptive effects of civilization, both believe in the equality of man, and that people should live in harmony.

Skepticism of civilization and nostalgia toward man's goodness in his natural state are reflected in the writings of Nakajima. Having read numerous European authors and philosophers and studied the Chinese classics, Nakajima was influenced by both Romanticism and Taoism. At a time of China's decline, Japan's modernization, and Europe's international dominance, it is unsurprising that questions about human nature, civilization, and technological advancement occupied Nakajima, who turned to the Romantic and Taoist traditions and examined these issues through his short stories. Nakajima's yearning for the past represents his longing for a simple and pure life, an

⁸Chan, *The Way of Lao Tzu*, chapter 80, 238.

ideal common to both Romanticism and Taoism. His opposition to colonialism was founded in his distrust for civilization and society, in accordance with Lao Tzu's view of small government. Although Nakajima may have viewed the world as dark and evil, he remained a Romantic at heart and believed in the ability of man to grow and to achieve self-fulfillment, ideas which are consistent with Rousseau's beliefs.

The present study begins by exploring the influences of Romanticism and Taoism on Nakajima's works. Chapter 2 recounts Nakajima's life, by highlighting the factors from his childhood, education, work, marriage, and illness that shaped his attitudes and philosophy. Nakajima's family had followed a tradition of studying Chinese classics, a tradition that exposed him to Confucian and Taoist ideas. He also moved frequently with his family during his childhood, depending on his father's work assignments, and consequently he gained first-hand knowledge of colonial Korea and Manchuria. Nakajima read numerous works of European literature during college and when he was employed as a high school teacher. Early exposure to life in the colonies and his reception of both Eastern and Western philosophies contributed to his Romantic and Taoist leanings.

Nakajima's longing for the past is discussed in chapter 3 by examining his short stories, "Tonan sensei" (Master Tonan), "Mojika" (The Curse of Graphs), and "Gojō Tan'i" (Wu-ching's Admiration). "Tonan sensei," a short autobiographical fiction, reveals Nakajima's nostalgia for the fading Confucian ideals through the narrator's remembrance of his uncle. "Mojika," a short story which discusses the harmful effects of writing on memory and the loss of instincts, represents Nakajima's distrust of civilization. "Gojō Tan'i," a short story which describes different life styles and philosophies,

In conclusion, chapter 6 reviews the Romantic and Taoist influences that can be found in many of Nakajima's short stories. Through his autobiographical fiction, his imaginative rendering of Chinese history and ancient civilization, as well as his travel narratives of the South Seas, Nakajima portray different aspects of Romanticism and Taoism. Nakajima's longing for the past, anti-colonial sentiments, and optimistic view of man are all consistent with his Romantic and Taoist ideals.

Finally, a translation of Nakajima's autobiographical short story, "Kamereon nikki" (Chameleon Diary), is included in appendix 1. The short story can be viewed as a partial record of Nakajima's life and thoughts, giving readers a glimpse into his life as a high school teacher, his personal struggles, and his philosophical leanings.

Chapter 2. Life and Thought of Nakajima Atsushi

Japan has undergone significant ideological changes since the Meiji Restoration (*Meiji ishin*). During the Meiji period (1868-1912), the Japanese overthrew the shogun feudal system, restored the monarchy, opened a naval school, and quickly adopted Western technologies in medicine, science, and maritime fields. The vernacular literature (*gembun-icchi*) movement was begun in 1887 by Futabatei Shimei (Hasegawa Tatsunosuke, 1864-1909), and the Japanese were eager to absorb Western ideas through a vast array of literature. They turned away from Chinese traditions amid the Chinese imperial decline and looked toward Western civilization for guidance. It was into this period of social change and modernization that Nakajima was born.

Childhood

Nakajima Atsushi was born on May 5, 1909, in Yotsuya, Tokyo, in a family with a strong tradition in classical Chinese studies. Although the family's literary tradition began with his grandfather, Nakajima Busan (1829-1911), literary critic Shimizu Masahiro points out that the Neo-Confucian values already had permeated society during the Edo period (1603-1867).¹ The members of the Nakajima family, which was in the palanquin trade, valued benevolence (*nin*), trust (*shin*), propriety (*rei*), virtue (*toku*), as well as frugality (*kenyaku*) and honesty (*shōjiki*) in their daily business. It was widely believed that merchants who adhered to these values would succeed in trade, while those who did not would certainly fail. Given the emphasis on Confucian values, it was not rare for progeny of merchant families to take up scholarly pursuits.

¹ Shimizu Masahiro, *Gudōsha no bungaku: Nakajima Atsushi ron* [The literature of one who seeks Tao: A discussion on Nakajima Atsushi] (Tokyo: Bungeisha, 2002), 10.

Busan studied with Kameda Ryōrai (1778-1853) and deeply admired Kameda Hōsai (1752-1826).² Busan chose not to partake in the family trade because he disliked fawning the Tokugawa officials and feudal lords. He opened his own Chinese studies (*kangaku*) academy called Sakitama Kyōsha,³ in Kuki, Saitama, and devoted himself to teaching and researching Confucian and Taoist studies, even during the unstable political circumstances and changes brought about by the Meiji Restoration. He wrote a number of treatises, one titled *A Discussion on Nature* (*Seisetsu sogi*), which explored the nature of man in terms of his tendency toward good or evil according to the Chinese Neo-Confucian concepts of nature based on principle (*ri*) and energy (*chi*).⁴ Busan kept an extensive archive of Chinese classics typically found in a Chinese academy (*kangaku jyuku*) of the late Edo and early Meiji periods. Although many books were lost in the floods of 1910 and 1947, the list of books from the archive as published by the Kuki Educational Council, reveals that Busan not only kept Confucian texts such as the *Four Books*, *Classic of Changes*, *Classic of Poetry*, *Classic of Rites*, and *Spring and Autumn Annals*, but also history and philosophy books such as the *Records of the Grand Historian*, *Book of Han*, *Chuang Tzu*, *Hsun Tzu*, *Mo Tzu*, *Sun Tzu*, and some Buddhist texts.⁵ The collection also included Tang poetry, Sung lyrics, and novels from the Tang, Ming, and Ching dynasties.

Atsushi's father, Nakajima Tabito (1874-1945), taught classical Chinese (*kanbun*) in middle school under the old education system, and was teaching in Chiba Prefecture

² Katsumata Hiroshi, *Nakajima Atsushi no henrei* [The journey of Nakajima Atsushi] (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 2004), 6.

³ Katsumata Hiroshi, *Spirit Nakajima Atsushi: Sakka to sakuhin* [Spirit Nakajima Atsushi: The writer and his work] (Tokyo: Yuseido, 1984), 7.

⁴ Katsumata Hiroshi, "Nobete tsukurazu no reikishi" [The history that recounts without fabricating], in *Nakajima Atsushi zenshū betsu*, ed. Takahashi Hideo et al. (Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 2002), 175.

⁵ Kukishi kyōiku iinkai, *Buzan Nakajimake zōsho mokuroku* [Book list of home archive of Nakajima Busan], ed. Murayama Yoshihiro (Kuki, Saitama: Kukishi kyōiku iinkai, 1978), 5-15.

when Atsushi was born. Tabito obtained his teaching certificate through a certifying examination instead of acquiring a college degree, so his career prospects were limited, and therefore he later moved to Japanese colonies which offered higher pay in order to attract teachers.⁶ The nature of Tabito's job would dictate the Nakajima family's frequent moves throughout Atsushi's childhood.

Unfortunately, Nakajima Atsushi's parents divorced within the year after he was born.⁷ His mother Chio remarried, and passed away in 1921 due to tuberculosis.⁸ Atsushi moved to Saitama and stayed with his grandparents and uncles for a few years. Busan passed away when Atsushi was two years old, but nonetheless, it was during this time in Saitama that Atsushi was first exposed to the Chinese tradition by his uncles. Atsushi had six uncles, two (Yasushi and Tanzō) of whom were also scholars in Confucian studies. Atsushi is said to have most resembled his uncle Tanzō (1859-1930), who was portrayed in the short story "Tonan Sensei."

By the time he was six years old, Atsushi's father had remarried. Atsushi moved to Nara with his father and stepmother Katsu. His stepmother reprimanded him once by tying him to a tree; Atsushi was probably traumatized by the severe punishment but he did not tell his father.⁹ As a precocious child, he was highly sensitive and realized the nature of loneliness in each individual, and felt that there was no one who could understand his sadness. His stepmother passed away after giving birth to his stepsister Sumiko, when he was fourteen. Tabito remarried again to Kō, when Atsushi was sixteen. His second stepmother gave birth to fraternal triplets (two boys and a girl) in 1926, but

⁶ Faye Yuan Kleeman, *Under an Imperial Sun: Japanese Colonial Literature of Taiwan and the South* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2003), 46.

⁷ Hamakawa Katsuhiko, *Kajii Motojiro, Nakajima Atsushi* (Tokyo: Kadokawa shoten, 1982), 244.

⁸ Katsumata, *Nakajima Atsushi no henreki*, 8.

⁹ Hamakawa, *Kajii Motojiro, Nakajima Atsushi*, 245.

the two boys died within a year and the girl died when she was four years old. The frequent encounters with deaths of family members may have made Atsushi sensitive to the transient nature of life. Atsushi did not get along well with his second stepmother, as reflected in his writing sketch, “Danpen 2” (Fragment 2). He despised her materialism, a negative trait stereotypical of the Osaka merchant personality.¹⁰ The tension between Nakajima and his father and stepmother is also depicted in the unpublished short story, “Pūru no soba de” (By the Pool).¹¹ The son is jealous when his father comes home with the new stepmother after their dinner at a restaurant; although his father brings broiled eel (*kabayaki*) for him, out of resentment, the son takes only one bite and gives the rest to his cat. His father becomes angry and kicks the cat while scolding him, to which the son answers that once something is given, the receiver should be free to do whatever he wishes. His father turns furious and beats him on the head, but the boy remains silent without defending himself.¹²

Adolescence

Nakajima had moved often throughout his childhood, depending on his father’s teaching station assignment. By the time he was seventeen, he had lived in Saitama, Nara, Hamamatsu, Keijō of Korea, and Dairen of China, which had become part of the expanded Japanese occupied territory. Despite the frequent changes in school and environment, Nakajima kept excellent grades, and was often one of the top three students in his class. During middle school, Nakajima was number two in his first year, and

¹⁰ Nakajima Atsushi, *Nakajima Atsushi zenshū*, vol. 3 of 4 vols. (Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 2002), 314. Hereafter abbreviated as *NAZ*.

¹¹ Hamakawa, *Kajū Motojiro, Nakajima Atsushi*, 247-48.

¹² *NAZ*, vol. 2, 222-23.

number one in his second and third years.¹³ Though Nakajima was a smart and stellar student, literary critic Katsumata Hiroshi theorizes that, perhaps out of his loneliness from being constantly on the move and the lack of family warmth, reading books and getting good grades was his self-protection mechanism.¹⁴

The frequent relocation of his family fostered Nakajima's sensitivity to changes in his surroundings and the cultural customs of the different regions, in which he lived. The observation of various cultural practices and standards led Nakajima to reflect on civilization and its effects on man. Nakajima's objective view of Japan and its colonies from his detachment from a certain hometown is similar to what Edward W. Said quoted from Auerbach and Hugo of St. Victor:

“The man who finds his homeland sweet is still a tender beginner; he to whom every soil is as his native one is already strong; but he is perfect to whom the entire world is as a foreign land.” The more one is able to leave one's cultural home, the more easily is one able to judge it, and the whole world as well, with the spiritual detachment and generosity necessary for true vision.¹⁵

Since Nakajima moved repetitively, he did not have a true hometown, and could therefore judge each culture more impartially. His short stories on ancient civilizations exemplify Nakajima's spiritual detachment and open-mindedness to different cultural practices and norms.

Nakajima describes learning different customs and practices in his early autobiographical short story, “Toragari” (Tiger Hunt), written in 1934, which received honorable mention in a writing contest by the *Chūō Kōron*. Based on Nakajima's experience in Korea, “Toragari” describes the developing friendship between two

¹³ Hamakawa, *Kajū Motojūro, Nakajima Atsushi*, 247.

¹⁴ Katsumata, *Spirit Nakajima Atsushi*, 22.

¹⁵ Edward W. Said, *Orientalism*, Vintage Books ed. (New York: Random House, 1978), 259.

students, a Japanese and a Korean, and their tiger hunt adventure. Critic Kimura Kazuaki notes in *Nakajima Atsushi ron* that, although “Toragari” was presented as an adventure tale to attract readers, its main focus was not on the tiger hunt, but on life and friendship episodes in Korea.¹⁶

Through the narrator in “Toragari,” Nakajima describes the difficulty and distress in frequent changes of school following the family’s repeated relocation:

In the second semester of fifth grade, I had transferred from Japan to an elementary school in Ryūsan. Because of the nature of their fathers’ work, those who had changed schools a number of times when they were little would probably remember. There is nothing more dreadful than the beginning of going to a different school. Different customs, different rules, different pronunciation, different readings of textbooks. Besides these, the vicious eyes and the bullying toward a new student without reason.¹⁷

As Nakajima moved from town to town and transferred schools, he had to adapt to the customs, rules, and accents numerous times; thus, he developed the awareness of different cultural practices at a young age. Nakajima wanted to make sense of why there were many regional differences, but came to realize that there was nothing methodical or consistent in the cultures of different regions; rather, social practices were developed and diverged over time fortuitously. From a twenty-first century perspective, one may consider Japan as a small geographic region, easy to travel with its extensive network of high-speed trains. However, as Katsumata Hiroshi points out in *Spirit Nakajima Atsushi*, Nakajima’s elementary and middle-school years were in the course of the Taisho period (1912-1926), during which a trip between Shinbashi and Kobe took twenty hours.¹⁸ Separated by long travel time and geographic isolation, customs and traditions varied

¹⁶ Kimura Kazuaki, *Nakajima Atsushi ron* [A discussion on Nakajima Atsushi] (Tokyo: Sōbunsha, 1986), 11.

¹⁷ *NAZ*, vol. 1, 74.

¹⁸ Katsumata, *Spirit Nakajima Atsushi*, 21.

greatly even within a country depending on the region, and much more so across different nations.

It is important to note that, during Nakajima's time, the various regional dialects in Japan had not yet been entirely standardized after the Meiji Restoration, which pushed to formulate a standard dialect to facilitate communication among different regions.¹⁹ The government designated textbook (*kokutei kyōkasho*) had been put to use beginning in 1904.²⁰ As a part of the Japanization policy (*kōminka seisaku*), similar textbooks were also used in Taiwan, which became a Japanese colony in 1895, and Korea, which became a Japanese colony in 1910. Even with a standardized national textbook, there were different local readings for Chinese characters. For example, "fly" could be read as "hae" or "hai," "on the way" could be read as "tochu," or "tochū."²¹ Youngsters in Japanese colonies learned Japanese through the Japanese school system, but they sometimes spoke unnatural Japanese.²² When the colonial Koreans, who had learned Japanese from the government-designated textbook, traveled to Japan, they thought that the various local dialects spoken within Japan were strange and sometimes incomprehensible. The nonstandard use of the Japanese language probably implanted doubts in Nakajima about the absolute authority of language and writing. Nakajima's exposure to various locales, customs, and spoken dialects during the 1910 through the 1920's therefore made him aware that there were many different ways of living as he witnessed various traditions and practices among the people of Japan and Korea.

¹⁹ Yasuda Toshiaki, *Kokugo no kindai shi* [Modern history of Japanese language] (Tokyo: Chūō kōron shinsha, 2006), 7.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 65.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 21.

²² *Ibid.*, 17.

Furthermore, in the process of modernization, the Japanese imported and translated many European concepts and terminologies into Japanese. There was a flood of newly coined words at the beginning of the Meiji Period. As scholar Takashima Toshio explains, many terms and phrases translated at this time had the same pronunciation and therefore one had to depend on the use of the visually distinct Chinese characters to distinguish the meanings of these words.²³ For example, *kōgyō* has the possible meanings of industry or mining, and *seishi* has the possible meanings of filature or paper manufacturing.²⁴ Takashima argues that Japan's long dependence on the use of Chinese characters had already produced many words that had the same sound but different meanings. This trend was exacerbated during the period of modernization when the Japanese resorted to coining new terms from classical Chinese that took on new meanings. This resulted in a large number of homophones, words with the same pronunciation but different meanings, which are dependent upon the context of usage. For instance, *densen* can mean infection or electric wire, and the correct parsing relies on its context.²⁵ This probably created confusion among the Japanese as they began to adapt these new vocabularies into daily usage. Nakajima's doubt on writing in terms of the words, sounds, and their meanings, which would be discussed later in "Rōshitsuki" (A Man with an Insidious Malady) and "Mojika," can be seen as a reaction against modernization.

In 1926, Nakajima enrolled in Tokyo First High School, and lived away from his parents. In 1927, he was forced to take a year's leave of absence due to pleurisy, which

²³ Takashima Toshio, *Kanji to nihon jin* [Chinese characters and the Japanese] (Tokyo: Bunshun shinsho, 2001), 128-29.

²⁴ Industry (工業), mining (鉱業), filature (製糸), paper manufacturing (製紙).

²⁵ Takashima, *Kanji to nihon jin*, 152. Infection(伝染), electric wire (電線).

caused soreness of the lungs and breathing difficulties. During this time, Nakajima's interest in literature became more deeply rooted, and later on he would submit his writing to his high school publication in *Kōyūkai zasshi*.²⁶ Nakajima became friends with Hikami Hidehiro and Kugimoto Hisaharu when they were staff members of the school magazine. "Shimoda no onna" (The woman in Shimoda), "Aru seikatsu" (One such life), "Kenka" (Quarrel), "Warabi, take, rōjin" (Bracken, bamboo, and the old man), "Jansa no iru fūkei" (A scene with police), and "D-shi shichigatsu jokei" (A sketch of city D in July) are short stories published in the *Kōyūkai Zasshi* from 1927 to 1930. Nakajima's early writings consisted of experimenting with the new impressionism movement as well as with social movement themes, discussing the hardships in the lives of people subjected to inequality and colonial rule, as well as poverty among farmers, themes which echoed the proletarian literary movement at the time.²⁷

College

Nakajima entered Tokyo Imperial University in 1930. He wrote his graduation thesis on "The Study of Aestheticism" (*Tanbiha no kenkyū*) in literature. He not only traced the origins of the modern Japanese literature movement to the influences of the Western authors Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849), Charles Baudelaire (1821-1867), Oscar Wilde (1854-1900), but also analyzed the works of Mori Ōgai (1862-1922), Ueda Bin (1874-1916), Nagai Kafū (1879-1959), and Tanizaki Junichirō (1886-1965) extensively.²⁸ Nakajima discussed the different representations of naturalism, idealism, dilettantism, and hedonism in literary aestheticism. He pointed out that the major flaw of

²⁶ Tanabe Yukinobu, *Shashin shiryō Nakajima Atsushi* [Photographic sources of Nakajima Atsushi] (Tokyo: Sorinsha, 1981), 36.

²⁷ Hamakawa, *Kajii Motojiro, Nakajima Atsushi*, 248-49.

²⁸ *NAZ*, vol. 3, 5-200.

the naturalist school of literature in Japan was its lack of scientific objectivity, which created literary works prone to the dark side of human existence.²⁹ Perhaps the weakness of the naturalist school is not unlike the criticism that the decadent school had received earlier, that “instead of writing a part of the whole, they wrote the entirety of a part.”³⁰

The various underlying philosophies of the aesthetic school impacted Nakajima’s worldview and the subject matter of his writing. Specifically, Nakajima was heavily influenced by Oscar Wilde’s idea of “art for art’s sake” and the beauty of sorrow. As Wilde notes, “There is nothing that stirs in the whole world of thought or motion to which Sorrow does not vibrate in terrible if exquisite pulsation.”³¹ The sorrow and miseries of life and civilization are recurring topics in Nakajima’s writing. Nakajima opted to write stories about the ancient world or unfamiliar cultures and to avoid naturalism and realism which he did not consider to be representative of art. However, he particularly admired Stenhal’s techniques in narrating the psychological profiles of the protagonists, as exemplified in *The Red and the Black*. Nakajima also found inspiration from Anatole France’s writings.

In his pursuit of literary studies, Nakajima studied Latin, Greek, French, and German on his own in order to read many original texts of European literature.³² Besides his voracious reading, he also pursued many hobbies during his college years. He enjoyed playing Japanese chess, and Chinese Mahjong, and also hiking, dancing, traveling, and attending art exhibits, Kabuki, and opera. In one summer, he had read all the Japanese

²⁹ Ibid., 28.

³⁰ Ibid., 25.

³¹ Oscar Wilde, *De Profundis: The Ballad of Reading Gaol & Other Writings* (London: Wordsworth Classics, 1999), 47.

³² Sagi Tadao, *Nakajima Atsushi ron: “Rōshitsu” no hōhō* [Discussion on Nakajima Atsushi: The method of internal conflict] (Tokyo: Yuseidō, 1990), 194.

chess moves recorded of the chess genius from the Edo period, Amano Sōfu (1816-1859).³³

Marriage and Work

Longing for love and family warmth, Nakajima married at an early age, overcoming family disapproval. His wife, Hashimoto Taka, was a woman he had met at his friend's Mahjong club.³⁴ Their son Takeshi was born in 1933. Although Nakajima had entered graduate school at Tokyo Imperial University the same year with the intention of studying Mori Ōgai, he withdrew after he began working to support his family. Nakajima worked as a high school teacher in Yokohama from 1933 to 1941 and led a peaceful and ordinary life in which he devoted time to his family and gardening. He had developed a chronic asthma condition in 1928, but when he was healthy, he also pursued writing, concerts, sports, and traveling.³⁵ Kugimoto Hisaharu, Nakajima's college friend, noted that Nakajima was lively and adventurous.³⁶ Another friend, Miyoshi Srō, was similar to Nakajima in that both had carefree spirits and held deep appreciation for Chinese culture. Miyoshi and Nakajima had planned a trip to China together in 1936; however, Miyoshi planned to depart ten days earlier. They agreed to meet in the Meiji Confection shop in Taipei, even though Nakajima had never been to Taipei previously. Kugimoto reminisced about their conversation about the China trip, and the boldness and audacity that belonged to the youth.³⁷

³³ Kugimoto Hisaharu, "Ton no koto" [Regarding Atsushi], in *Nakajima Atsushi zenshū betsu*, ed. Takahashi Hideo et al. (Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 2002), 192.

³⁴ Hamakawa, *Kajū Motojiro, Nakajima Atsushi*, 250.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 253.

³⁶ Kugimoto, "Ton no koto," 194-195.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 196.

Nakajima continued to pursue writing while working as a high school teacher. Besides prose, he wrote Japanese poems (*waka*) as well as Chinese poems (*kanshi*), and also translated English essays into Japanese. "Kamereon nikki" (Chameleon Diary), an autobiographical short story, was first written around December 1936, and completed in 1939.³⁸ The diary is an account of a few days in the life of a science teacher, during which a chameleon is given to him. Like Nakajima, the narrator also has chronic asthma and feels miserable about his own life, realizing that he has become cynical and anxious. His disregard for utilitarianism leaves him living aimlessly in an illusory state, while everyone else lives in reality, planning to achieve a goal each day.

Nakajima's inability to seek external rewards and to acclimate himself to the ways of pragmatism is symbolized by the chameleon in the story. Nakajima uses the chameleon as a parallel to himself and to describe how his honest values are out of place in a modernizing Japan which emphasizes utilitarianism, just as the color-changing chameleon of the tropics is unfit to survive in the cold winter. The presence of the chameleon represents Nakajima's ill-suited Confucian temperament to modernized Japan. Nakajima's disinterestedness offers no merit toward his future success or individual worth, just as the chameleon's ability to change color is no defense against the cold winter. Nakajima narrates his own withdrawal in section three of "Chameleon Diary":

For everything in the same way, eventually I decide not to have any hope from the beginning in order to avoid disappointment. In order to avoid discouragement, I neither desire nor anticipate to succeed from the start, so I don't even try....³⁹

³⁸Ochner, "Nakajima Atsushi: His Life and Work," 118.

³⁹ *NAZ*, vol. 1, 390.

Because Nakajima knew that his temperament was unfit for modern society, his narrator gives up trying altogether. Nakajima's withdrawal reflects an emptiness and pessimism which Giacomo Leopardi (1798-1837) describes:

Even in the prime of youth, with little experience, I was clearly convinced of the emptiness of life and the foolishness of men, who constantly struggled with each other to acquire pleasure which did not please and possessions which did not fulfill.... For these reasons, abandoning all other desires, I resolved – not annoying anyone whomsoever, not trying in any way to advance my state, not competing with others for any wealth in the world – to live an obscure and tranquil life.⁴⁰

Both Nakajima and Leopardi viewed external objects—fame and wealth—as empty and illusive happiness, and consequently recoiled from chasing superficial possessions.

Nakajima's non-utilitarian beliefs, however, kept him from looking outward for status or wealth as a validation for individual existence. It thus becomes all the more traumatic when his narrator loses self-reliance upon realizing that his internal capacities are declining. The narrator used to look down on having an acute faculty of memory. He considered people who only had good memories to be the same as people who could only add in math, and tried to suppress his good memory. When he realizes how precious memory is, however, he has already lost the ability to remember things easily due to his weakening health and the undesirable side-effects of medication.⁴¹

When the narrator realizes that his own physical body and skills are also temporary, he begins to contemplate what constitutes himself, yet the more he thinks about who he is, the more he realizes that he is merely a product of habit and environment. He ponders his own existence: "The more I thought about it, the more uncertain I became of the object called 'I.' My existence had been controlled by the

⁴⁰ Giacomo Leopardi, *A Leopardi Reader*, trans. Ottavio Mark Casale (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois, 1981), 114.

⁴¹ *NAZ*, vol. 1, 386.

workings of customs and environment instead of myself.”⁴² Nakajima seems to imply that the self merely exists in one’s habits and responses to the external environment, and that the self is powerless to external factors. The narrator thinks that, if he lets the external factors control his existence, he might disappear if things stay the same; therefore, he desperately wants to break out of this stalemate situation. Nakajima questions the necessity of the various institutions and structures, and tries to make sense of the current state of the world before he loses his identity and is engulfed by customs and traditions:

Those free individuals have the urge to look back again on the history of human development within themselves. Ordinary people follow customs blindly. The unique free individuals examine the customs, and they do not follow it as long as they have not ascertained the inevitability of its formation.⁴³

Like the free individuals who search for truth, Nakajima was skeptical of how society evolved to the existing state, and attempted to understand how mankind and civilization reached their current circumstances.

In “Kamereon nikki,” the narrator quips that he is like an ugly bird with feathers from Giacomo Leopardi, Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860), Titus Lucretius Carus (94-55 BC), Chuang Tzu (circa 4 BC), Lieh Tzu (circa 4 BC), and Michel de Montaigne (1533-1592). Literary critic Nakamura Mitsuo points out that, although Nakajima made such exaggerated remarks in self-mockery, one can still learn the depth of Nakajima’s education from his list of authors.⁴⁴ From these writers and philosophers, the influences of Romanticism and Taoism can be identified. Leopardi was much influenced by

⁴² Ibid., 388.

⁴³ Ibid., 392.

⁴⁴ Nakamura Mitsuo, “Nakajima Atsushi ron” [A discussion on Nakajima Atsushi], in *Nakajima Atsushi zenshū betsu*, ed. Takahashi Hideo et al. (Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 2002), 7.

Rousseau in his early years of writing, and believed that man's misery was a result of civilization which had removed him from nature. He later stressed "cosmic" pessimism, that man's suffering is an inevitable part of existence; similar pessimism can be seen in the philosophical writings of Schopenhauer. Nakajima had read the works of Lieh Tzu and Chuang Tzu, which contain Taoist ideas of "inaction" (*wu wei*, actionless action) and conformation to the natural progressions of the world.

Doubts Regarding Existence

Nakajima's repetitive moves during his childhood had led to his distrust of established customs, since they appear random and arbitrary. An individual's life changes drastically depending on his environment. Nakajima begins to explore the uncertainty of existence in another autobiographical fiction "Rōshitsuki" (A Man with an Insidious Malady) through the protagonist Sanzō. In the opening of the story, Sanzō is studying a picture of an ancient tribe, wondering whether he could have been born among them and led the same way of life as theirs, knowing neither the history of mankind nor the structure of the solar system.⁴⁵

The uncertainty of existence is perceived by Sanzō even in the writing of words; as he reduces the characters into their components, the strokes appear strange and begin to lose their essential meaning. In the story, Sanzō often thinks that the world is merely a random collection of multiple events occurring consecutively which resulted in the current state: "The world is just a coincidental gathering of perceptions."⁴⁶ Nakajima's idea that events occur under randomness is an underlying cause of his attempt to understand the formation of various customs and practices that different cultures have

⁴⁵ *NAZ*, vol. 1, 406.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 408.

adopted. Nakajima's quest to explain the development of civilization took shape in the form of Romanticism. Influenced by Romanticism, the idea that man is happiest in his natural state, Nakajima did not necessarily consider civilization to be a superior existence to a primitive state of life in nature.

Nakajima reveals his pessimistic outlook when he describes Sanzō's distrust of the world and uncertainty of existence in a science lecture. Sanzō's fourth grade teacher lectures about the fate of the earth, how it is going to cool, human beings will become extinct, and how meaningless human existence is. Sanzō thinks that he could deal with the pain of an extinct earth, but he cannot deal with the fact that the sun will cool and the only thing remaining among the planets will be a cold sun. To Sanzō, then, individual death is acceptable as long as life continues; even the destruction of earth is tolerable, as long as the sun continues to shine for other planets. Nakajima's incorporation of scientific theories to show the uncertainty of existence and human fate is perhaps influenced by Anatole France, who had written an essay on the fate of the human race: "When the sun goes out,—a catastrophe that is bound to be,—mankind will have long ago disappeared."⁴⁷ While France forecasts the future of mankind objectively, Nakajima contemplates on the fragility of existence with empathy.

Sanzō thinks he can choose to lead one of two lives, to succeed and become famous, or to live day by day without concern for success. He chooses to live the second way, to avoid the hardships required to achieve success. He reasons that his fragile health would suffer if he had endeavored to succeed. He realizes later that it was his timid pride, afraid of failure, which had led him to give up without trying. Through Sanzō, Nakajima

⁴⁷ Anatole France, *The Garden of Epicurus*, trans. Alfred Allinson (London: John Lane the Bodley Head Limited, 1908), 26.

tried to reflect on his own actions, and attempt to understand if it was his individual will or fate that had led him to his current state in life. Given his severe asthma, weak health, and a premonition of living a short life, Nakajima often felt powerless against fate. Birth and death are events that occur beyond individual will: “We are born not through our will, but by a reason which we do not understand. We die by that same incomprehensible cause.”⁴⁸

While critic Nakamura Mitsuo considers “Rōshitsuki” and “Kamereon nikki” to be undeveloped works whose protagonists could not evoke sympathy from readers,⁴⁹ critic Takeda Taijun praised the two stories as well-developed in both techniques and thinking, which contributed to new forms of post-war literature.⁵⁰ Literary critic Katsumata Hiroshi has noted Nakajima as an asthma writer (*zensoku bungakusha*), because his writing career began at the same time when his asthma condition appeared.⁵¹ Indeed, it was when Nakajima went through sleepless nights under the effect of asthma medication that he began to reconsider the meaning of human existence, why and how the organizations, habits, and social order had evolved to their present state. Nakajima would look back through history of various civilizations to search for answers.

Micronesia

As Nakajima’s asthmatic condition worsened in the late 1930’s,⁵² he had to rely on injections of epinephrine to soothe his breathing, which caused headaches and

⁴⁸ *NAZ*, vol. 1, 409.

⁴⁹ Nakamura, “Nakajima Atsushi ron,” 9-10.

⁵⁰ Takeda Taijun, “Sakka no rōshitsu - Nakajima Atsushi ‘Waga Saiyuki’ wo yomu” [Writer’s illness - reading Nakajima Atsushi’s ‘My Journey to the West’], in *Nakajima Atsushi zenshū betsu*, ed. Takahashi Hideo et al. (Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 2002), 17.

⁵¹ Katsumata, *Spirit Nakajima Atsushi*, 30-31.

⁵² Ochner, “Nakajima Atsushi: His Life and Work,” 122.

insomnia as side effects.⁵³ Being concerned with his health, Nakajima thought that living in the South Seas region might help to improve his health. Nakajima had read Robert Louis Stevenson's *In the South Seas*, along with *Vailima Letters* and other works when he was writing a biography of Stevenson. Nakajima had a conceptual knowledge of what life in the tropical islands could be like, and an idyllic vision of the South Seas. His transfer to Palau as a Japanese textbook editor rose out of his desire to alleviate his asthma and to experience island life first-hand. In July 1941, Nakajima began his appointment in Palau, working for the Japanese government to revise Japanese language textbooks for the natives.

During his stay in the South Sea, he wrote numerous letters to family and friends, especially to his father, wife, and children, Takeshi and Noboru. He wrote to his older son Takeshi, to make sure that Takeshi would do his summer vacation homework, but also to share his own experiences in the South Seas islands. He wrote about how hot it was in Saipan,⁵⁴ seeing the Mango trees at the Palau office,⁵⁵ how big the coconut trees were and suitable for climbing,⁵⁶ and he even drew pictures of how the banana plants looked, and accounted for the presence of bats, alligators, and monkeys in Palau and nearby islands.⁵⁷ Nakajima also wrote to Takeshi about how much he missed his family, but since he could not see them, he had to endure his loneliness. Nakajima complained, however, that he had not heard any radio news nor read any newspapers, and of his

⁵³ Nakajima Taka, "Ore ni kaete" [Returning Gift], in *Nakajima Atsushi kenkyū*, ed. Nakamura Mitsuo, Hikami Hidehiro, and Gunji Katsuyoshi (Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 1978), 293. See also Yamaguchi Hinan, "Jyu ni gatsu rokka made" [Until December 6th], in *Nakajima Atsushi kenkyū*, ed. Nakamura Mitsuo, Hikami Hidehiro, and Gunji Katsuyoshi (Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 1978), 257.

⁵⁴ Letter to Takeshi, July 16, 1941, in *NAZ*, vol. 3, 566-67.

⁵⁵ Letter to Takeshi, July 23, 1941, in *ibid.*, 567.

⁵⁶ Letter to Takeshi, July 23, 1941, in *ibid.*, 568.

⁵⁷ Letter to Takeshi, July 1941, in *ibid.*

cravings for soba, sushi, cake, and tempura, all of which were unavailable in Palau.⁵⁸ His letters also highlighted his excitement about and his wish to share the discovery of new things in the tropical islands, such as seeing the flying fish,⁵⁹ and dolphins,⁶⁰ and learning about how the natives light fires at night to indicate their presence so that boats or ships would not collide or become stranded ashore.⁶¹ In these letters, Nakajima revealed his affectionate side as a father who was not only proper and strict, but loving and playful.

Nakajima had gone to the Micronesian Islands in hopes of curing his asthma, as he had told Tanabe Hideho that asthma symptoms often stop within three to four years after patients moved to warmer climates.⁶² Nakajima arrived at Palau in July 1941. In his August 7, 1941 letter to his wife, he wrote that his asthma condition had already improved greatly. Nakajima thought that if the good condition persisted, he would not need to take any ephedrine after two to three weeks. "At this time, my asthma symptoms, are incredibly well... after two, three weeks, I think I would be fine without having to take any medicine."⁶³ However, Nakajima had dysentery in July and contracted dengue fever in late August. Written when he was ill and homesick, his September 20 letter to his wife expressed doubts and desperation as to why he had traveled to the Micronesia Islands. Nakajima reveals his misery and hopelessness in the letter:

Why is it that my true hopes cannot be realized? Why did I have to leave the house in Hongō? Why couldn't we continue the peaceful life in that house? (That's right, I suffered from asthma in the winter time in that

⁵⁸ Letter to Takeshi, August 16, 1941, in *ibid.*, 570.

⁵⁹ Letter to Takeshi, September 15, 1941, in *ibid.*, 586-87.

⁶⁰ Letter to Takeshi, September 28, 1941, in *ibid.*, 602.

⁶¹ Letter to Takeshi, September 24, 1941, in *ibid.*, 598.

⁶² Tanabe Hideho, "Suteibunson no inai shima - Nakajima Atsushi to no ni shu kan" [The island without Stevenson - two weeks with Nakajima Atsushi], in *Nakajima Atsushi kenkyū*, ed. Nakamura Mitsuo, Hikami Hidehiro, and Gunji Katsuyoshi (Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 1978), 263.

⁶³ *NAZ*, vol. 3, 570.

house. But, what about now? Even in the summer, I am suffering from illness.) It was never my wish to have things become this way.⁶⁴

Nakajima lamented his inability to live his life as he truly wished. He missed his peaceful family life in Yokohama with his wife and children, but he was forced to leave in search for a cure for his asthma. Yet, now that he was on a tropical island during the summer time, he was still plagued by disease. He did not wish to have things turn out this way, but life was beyond his control.

Unfortunately, the humid weather in Micronesia did not help to improve Nakajima's asthma. Yet, Nakajima made excursions to various islands, and interacted with many locals. His stay in Palau provided a different perspective and raw material to him for his later writing. From his interaction with the locals, Nakajima became aware that Japan's colonial government policy which utilized Japanese language in education was not going to bring social good to the native people, which eventually led to his resignation from his post of editing secretary in March 1942.⁶⁵ Nakajima's short stories, "Sangetsuki" (Tiger Poet) and "Mojika" (The Curse of the Graph), had been published in the February 1942 issue of the *Bungakkai* magazine.

Upon his return to Japan, Nakajima developed pneumonia and was under a physician's care for nearly two months.⁶⁶ After he recovered, he announced his decision in July 1942 to be a full-time writer. In the short span of six months, Nakajima produced "Deshi," "Nantōtan" (Tales of Islands in the South), "Kōzoku" (Old Customs), "Meijin den," and "Riryō." Unfortunately, Nakajima's asthma condition worsened as winter approached. He was hospitalized in mid-November, and passed away on the morning of

⁶⁴ Ibid., 588-589.

⁶⁵ Tanabe, *Shashin shiryō Nakajima Atsushi*, 86.

⁶⁶ Ochner, "Nakajima Atsushi: His Life and Work," 201.

December 4, 1942.⁶⁷ Nakajima was still writing “Riryō” when he was in the hospital and expressed that he wished he could have time to write more.

Criticism

Nakajima is often compared to Akutagawa Ryūnosuke (1892-1927) for his short stories based on adaptations of Chinese tales. The most famous among Nakajima’s works is “Sangetsuki,” an adaptation of the Chinese tale “Jen hu chan” (Man tiger tale), which is included in the second-year high school Japanese textbook, widely read by Japanese students.⁶⁸ Literary critic Nakamura Mitsuo points out in his review that Nakajima is perhaps the closest to Akutagawa as a writer in terms of his gift, temperament, and literary style.⁶⁹ Critic Usui Yoshimi also remarks that, “The writing is similar to Akutagawa, with delicate clarity throughout, small distinctions beautifully crystallized.”⁷⁰

Nakajima’s writing regarding Chinese history is also regarded as similar to Mori Ōgai and Kōda Rohan (1867-1947). Usui Yoshimi notes the similarity and closeness to Akutagawa and Mori Ōgai found in Nakajima’s historical novels and short stories of Chinese origin.⁷¹ Regarding the work often considered Nakajima’s masterpiece, Usui writes, “When one reads ‘Riryō,’ without doubt, one would be reminded of Ōgai.”⁷² Literary critic Nakano Yoshio points out the resemblance of Nakajima’s writing to that of Kōda Rohan.⁷³ In particular, Nakano argues that the immeasurable abyss of human fate as presented in “Riryō” follows that of Rohan’s *Unmei* (Destiny), a historical novel that

⁶⁷ Tanabe, *Shashin shiryō Nakajima Atsushi*, 123.

⁶⁸ Takahashi Shunzo and Gunma daigaku kyoiku gakubu, “*Sangetsuki*” *wo yomu* [Reading the “Tiger Poet”] (Tokyo: Sanseidō, 2002), 99-100, 170.

⁶⁹ Nakamura Mitsuo, “Nakajima Atsushi ron,” 14-15.

⁷⁰ Usui Yoshimi, “Nakajima Atsushi no bungaku” [Nakajima Atsushi’s literature], in *Nakajima Atsushi zenshū betsu*, ed. Takahashi Hideo, et al. (Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 2002), 26.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 22-26.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 22.

⁷³ Nakamura Mitsuo, Hikami Hidehiro, and Gunji Katsuyoshi, *Nakajima Atsushi kenkyū* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1978), 298-99.

explores forces of karma and fate and addresses the question: “Does destiny exist as an actual force?”⁷⁴

One of the highest praises of Nakajima comes from critic Sasaki Kiichi, who describes Nakajima as like “a comet that shines the night sky with light in an instant and disappears into the empty space in a flash, Nakajima Atsushi spent all his energy and life in the two years of writing, without sparing his talent, and died after a brief life.”⁷⁵ Critic Ara Masahito points out that it would be a mistake to consider Nakajima a “minor poet,” and that “Nakajima’s true essence lies in his family background of Chinese studies, his keen sensitivity, and his devotion to aestheticism.”⁷⁶ Hikami Hidehiro praises Nakajima’s writing for its “straightforward and fit rhythm in the classical Chinese format, a style born out of a conviction for clear logic.”⁷⁷ Nakamura laments the death of Nakajima, for a writer who was “so well-educated and refined, with such lucid thoughts” would not appear again in many years.⁷⁸

⁷⁴ Chieko Irie Mulhern, *Kōda Rohan* (Boston: Twayne, 1977), 143.

⁷⁵ Sasaki Kiichi, “Kaisetsu” [Commentary], in *Nakajima Atsushi zenshū betsu*, ed. Takahashi Hideo et al. (Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 2002), 51.

⁷⁶ Ara Masahito, “Nakajima Atsushi ron” [A discussion on Nakajima Atsushi], in *Nakajima Atsushi*, ed. Sagi Tadao (Tokyo: Bunsendō, 1977), 180.

⁷⁷ Hikami Hidehiro, “Nakajima Ton - hito to sakuhin” [Nakajima Ton - his personality and works], in *Nakajima Atsushi zenshū betsu*, ed. Takahashi Hideo et al. (Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 2002), 207.

⁷⁸ Nakamura, “Nakajima Atsushi ron,” 13.

Chapter 3. Nostalgia for the Past

Given his doubts about existence and the inevitability of social and cultural development, Nakajima looked into the past for a time before the modernization of Japan when Western technologies were adopted and Western civilization changed the values of Japanese society. In “Tonan Sensei,” Nakajima shows his nostalgia for a Confucian Japan before the invasion of Western ideologies. In “Mojika,” Nakajima traces civilization back to the time of Assyria and examines how the invention of writing had brought demise to Assyrian society as people lost their instincts from over-reliance on writing. In “Gojō Tan’i,” Nakajima demonstrates that there is no superior way of life, as each man fulfills a mode of life that is suitable to him.

Japan Under Modernization

Nakajima was born toward the end of the Meiji period, following the Meiji Restoration which had created a new order in Japan to westernize (*seiyoōka*) and become a modern nation. It is important to recognize that Neo-Confucian teaching was the prominent philosophy before the Meiji Restoration, and that scholars in Chinese classics were highly respected. During the Edo period, Confucian teaching was the dominant ideology among members of the samurai class and within the government (*bakufu*). Sung Neo-Confucianism was incorporated into the creed and code of the ruling class under the Tokugawa Shogunate by Hayashi Razan (1583-1657), who had studied with Fujiwara Seika (1561-1619), the unofficial Confucian adviser to Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543-1616), appointed shogun in 1603.¹ Confucianism and its emphasis on loyalty toward one’s superior helped the Tokugawa rulers to maintain social order, and influenced the

¹ Wm. Theodore de Bary, Carol Gluck, and Arthur E. Tiedemann, eds., *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, vol. 2, 2nd ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 52.

formulation of the way of the warrior (*bushidō*).² Hayashi Razan believed that samurai should devote themselves to Confucian learning in order to foster a stable social order based on Confucian ethical ideals.

Furthermore, Yamaga Sokō (1622-1685), a student of Hayashi Razan, expounded that a samurai's duty was to serve his lord with utmost loyalty and to cultivate moral principles; therefore, a samurai should study Confucian ideology. He maintained, "Taught by the moral Way of rightness and duty, shown in what is essential to the Way of the samurai ... and the great Confucian Way of human moral relations will be illuminated."³ Yamaga stressed that letters and history were essential to the intellectual disciplines of the samurai; indeed, his initiative contributed to creating a ruling aristocracy that was forceful in military, political, and intellectual leadership.⁴ Nitobe Inazō (1862-1933) explained that, while *bushidō* had obtained its philosophical outlook from Buddhism and Shinto, which taught samurai to embrace their fate, to love one's country, and to be loyal to the sovereign, its moral principles were influenced by Confucianism:

As to strictly ethical doctrines, the teachings of Confucius were the most prolific source of Bushidō.... The calm, benignant and worldly-wise character of his politico-ethical precepts was particularly well suited to the samurai, who formed the ruling class.⁵

The Confucian doctrines thus helped the samurai to become effective bureaucrats in the peaceful Edo period.

² Wm. Theodore de Bary, Ryusaku Tsunoda, and Donald Keene, eds., *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, vol. 1 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1958), 342-43.

³ de Bary, Gluck, and Tiedemann, *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, vol. 2, 192.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 186-87.

⁵ Nitobe Inazō, *Bushidō*, Bilingual Books (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1998), 49.

Neo-Confucianism in Tokugawa Japan therefore was a way of life, setting the foundation for public morality that guided not only samurai and scholars, but also farmers, artisans, and merchants. Ishida Baigan (1685-1744), a Confucian scholar, believed that all classes, warriors (*shi*), farmers (*nō*), artisans (*kō*), and merchants (*shō*) had their duties to fulfill, and that no class was above others. Ishida advocated honesty as the basis of personal conduct would bring about success:

Those who do not know the Way of the merchant invest in greed and bring ruin to their households. When one knows the Way of the merchant, one abandons desires, strives to maintain a humane attitude, and regards prosperity that accords with the Way as the virtue of learning.⁶

Thus, tradesmen did not aim for riches intentionally, but practiced honest trading which naturally resulted in profit. This value system was consistent with the teachings of Mencius and Ch'eng I,⁷ whose ideologies were widely studied by Neo-Confucian scholars of the Chu Hsi school in Japan.

Although Confucianism flourished during the Edo period, as seen through the practices and values that people adopted, its popularity declined after the Meiji Restoration as Japan focused its efforts on rapid modernization. Along with the decree to return *daimyō* domains to the emperor for the establishment of prefectures (*haihan chiken*) that rendered samurai classless in 1871, Confucianism lost its prominence. In particular, Fukuzawa Yukichi (1835-1901) wrote in *Bunmeiron no gairyaku* (An Outline of a Theory of Civilization) that Confucianism had become an antiquity, not applicable to modern society. "Confucian principles no longer work in practice. Witness the fact that for thousands of years no one has ever really succeeded in ruling an empire with

⁶ de Bary, Gluck, and Tiedemann, *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, vol. 2, 303.

⁷ Mengzi, *Mengzi: With Selections from Traditional Commentaries*, trans. Bryan W. Van Norden (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, 2008), 1-2.

Confucian principles of government.”⁸ Even though Confucianism had profound influence in the development of Japanese culture and civilization, Fukuzawa considered it to be outdated. “Confucianism’s meritorious achievement in refining and purifying men’s hearts has not been insignificant. The only trouble is that, while in ancient times it performed a service, today it is useless.”⁹ Fukuzawa further expounded that,

You can let our present-day scholars of antiquity read the thousands of volumes of the ancient classics of both China and Japan, and let them dream up some superb methods of governing the people by means of spiritual beneficence and authority, but they will still have no idea how to conduct political and economic affairs as they are practiced in the modern world.¹⁰

In the newly modernized Japan, the criteria for personal success was perhaps defined as financial success. As Japanese adapted to the new ideology of the West, advocated by Fukuzawa in his *Gakumon no susume* (Encouragement of Learning), Confucian values gradually diminished. Fukuzawa believed that learning should be pragmatic, as it should teach people to become independent and support themselves financially:

Learning does not essentially consist in such impractical pursuits as the study of obscure Chinese characters, reading ancient texts which are difficult to make out.... they should not be esteemed as highly as the Confucian and Japanese Learning scholars have esteemed them since ancient times.... Such impractical studies should thus be relegated to a secondary position. The object of one’s primary efforts should be practical learning that is closer to ordinary human needs.¹¹

Since Nakajima was born in a family that valued Chinese learning and Confucian education, he was all the more distressed by the emphasis of modernization and the

⁸ Fukuzawa Yukichi, *An Outline of a Theory of Civilization*, trans. David A. Dilworth and G. Cameron Hurst (Tokyo: Sophia University, 1973), 57.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 153.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 91.

¹¹ Fukuzawa Yukichi, *An Encouragement of Learning*, trans. David A. Dilworth and Umeyo Hirano (Tokyo: Sophia University, 1969), 1-2.

crumbling of Confucian ideology. He recounts the decline of Confucianism through a memoir about his uncle in “Tonan Sensei.”

“Tonan sensei” (Master Tonan)

“Tonan sensei” is a fictional autobiographical account about Nakajima’s uncle Tan (1859-1930), narrated in third person from the perspective of the protagonist Sanzō, the fictional semblance of Nakajima. Sanzō recounts memories of his uncle from the past in order to try to make sense of his uncle’s character, temperament, and role in society. Tan had a Confucian upbringing and was a sinologist. However, although Tan had excelled in Chinese studies, he was perceived by the world as a failure, having died without accomplishing anything. Nakajima sketches the changes in social values of early twentieth-century Japan and the decline of Confucian philosophy in “Tonan Sensei,” and expresses nostalgia for his uncle’s Confucian essence, described as one of the last spiritual archetypes to survive under the pressure of Western ideological invasion and modernization.¹²

Uncle Tan, if one should describe him, had the mannerism of the old Chinese scholar, mixed with a passionate temperament of patriot – the type whose shadow is disappearing from Japan. To the extent he knows of, his uncle is among one of the last genuine people.¹³

The sense of loss in “Tonan sensei” sets a strong overtone; Nakajima lost not only his favorite uncle, but also his last exemplar of a Confucian scholar. As Japanese society adopted Western values, traditional Chinese learning and Confucian teachings had lost their prestige.

¹² *NAZ*, vol. 1, 62.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 44.

The change in social values altered the public perception of Confucian scholars, including Nakajima's view of his own uncle. Nakajima describes his uncle Tan as a brilliant scholar in Chinese classics, but a failure in modern society:

The uncle was said to have been extremely brilliant when he was a child. He started reading at age six, and when he was thirteen, he could compose Chinese poems and essays, so he must have been a prodigy in Confucian studies without a doubt. Nevertheless, his whole life, he did not draw together any completed work, nor fill his ambition, and died while blaming the world and people. As stated in the introduction of his manuscript, he did not have a wife. Sanzō doesn't know the reason behind it. Sanzō thought that his uncle made frequent trips to China without a purpose. He stayed in China for an extended period of time. Rather than accepting what his uncle had said about his worry regarding the Chinese national affairs, Sanzō, who was in high school, thought that his uncle was just fascinated by China's romanticism and exoticism.¹⁴

Uncle Tan had traveled to China frequently, because he was concerned about the fate of China, yet Sanzō had not believed him at the time, and thought that Tan had traveled to China merely to experience the romantic exoticism. Although Tan had published a book, *Shina bunkatsu no unmei* (Fate of Divided China),¹⁵ its sales being minimal, Tan received no royalties and had to rely on financial help from friends and family. Sanzō had been said to resemble his uncle Tan, but he disliked the resemblance for he also considered his uncle, who could not even make a living to support himself, a failure:

In his college years, or a certain time period, he had endeavored to overcome certain traits he disliked common to his own and his uncle's temperament. Despite the unreasonable intention, his view towards his uncle had been incomplete, or rather, incorrect.¹⁶

Nakajima admits that he had misunderstood his uncle because he was using Westernized standards to judge his uncle. He was embarrassed by his unproductive uncle who did not hold a regular job and only published an unrecognized book, without earning any income.

¹⁴ Ibid., 43-44.

¹⁵ Published in October, 1912.

¹⁶ *NAZ*, vol. 1, 44.

As Okakura Kakuzō (1862-1913) pointed out, Western views of progress measured in material riches does not necessarily produce refinement or increase overall happiness.¹⁷ In fact, Japanese modernization and adaptations of Western standards have created more people who chase after material wealth at the expense of individual contentment:

The West is for progress, but progress toward what? When material efficiency is complete, what end, asks Asia, will have been accomplished? When the passion of fraternity has culminated in universal cooperation, what purpose is it to serve? If mere self-interest, where do we find the boasted advance?

The picture of Western glory unfortunately has a reverse. Size alone does not constitute true greatness, and the enjoyment of luxury does not always result in refinement. The individuals who go to the making up of the great machine of so-called modern civilization become the slaves of mechanical habit and are ruthlessly dominated by the monster they have created. In spite of the vaunted freedom of the West, true individuality is destroyed in the competition for wealth, and happiness and contentment are sacrificed to an incessant craving for more. The West takes pride in its emancipation from medieval superstition, but what of that idolatrous worship of wealth that has taken its place? What sufferings and discontent lie hidden behind the gorgeous mask of the present?¹⁸

Okakura depicts the cruel nature of modern civilization, which constantly displaces the obsolete in search of improvement, measured by magnitude and lavishness. Externally visible wealth does not, however, equate to an elevated immaterial contentment. Romantic and Taoist sentiments lie at the heart of Okakura's argument, which expresses despair over the domination of mechanical industrialization and the loss of happiness.

In contrast to the Western values of capitalism and utilitarianism, Tan is characterized by his lack of concern toward gains and profits, that "he sometimes

¹⁷ Okakura Kakuzō, *Awakening of Japan*, ed. Japan Society (New York: The Century, 1904), 97.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 97-99.

displays the beauty of a childish simple disinterestedness.”¹⁹ Disinterestedness is a trait that Confucian ideology values, which consists of acting on morals and doing what is proper, without seeking reward or benefits. Thus, under the new material standards, Tan was a poor scholar who had nothing to show for himself. In “Tonan Sensei,” Sanzō draws a parallel between his uncle and Don Quixote, who had been out of sync with his era, and metaphorically describes his uncle’s Confucian character as an extinct model displayed in a museum:

But his memory and his profound contemplation (that is, the eastern insight) was unusually excellent, furthermore, he was able to preserve his uncalculating purity, yet his fierce temperament exceeded way beyond the ordinary people that it made him appear all the more tragic. That was, from before when the east had been subjected to the modern invasion [of the West], or a superior spiritual exemplar in the museum of soul....²⁰

Uncle Tan personified the Confucian values of honesty, virtue, and loyalty (patriotism) in his “uncalculating purity,” as the rest of Japan abandoned Confucian morals to adopt Western values.

Despite Uncle Tan’s striking manifestation of traditional Confucian virtues, Nakajima was embarrassed so much by his uncle’s failure, that after his uncle passed away in 1930, he felt too ashamed to deliver, in person, his uncle’s manuscripts to the library to which they were to be donated, and, instead, sent them in a package. As time passed, Nakajima came to understand and appreciate his uncle’s foresight on the nature of war as a conflict of races in East Asia, and lamented the deplorable fate of his brilliant uncle.

In the addendum of “Tonan Sensei,” written in 1942, ten years after the original draft, Nakajima expresses his regret over his misconceptions about his uncle. Sanzō

¹⁹ *NAZ*, vol. 1, 61.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 62.

recounts that, when the Second Sino-Japanese war broke out in 1937, he finally began to read his uncle's book, *Fate of Divided China*, which had been published in 1912.²¹ In the book, Uncle Tan describes, some twenty years before the Second Sino-Japanese War, how Japan must make a decision when China becomes occupied by Western countries, whether Japan should participate in dividing and conquering China. Tan observes that the division of China is symbolic of the fate of Asians under the domination of Caucasians, and that it would be up to Japan to save Asia from Western domination:

Suppose we Japanese were to rely and follow suit behind [the strong attack of] Caucasians, and acquire twenty, thirty thousand square kilometers and forty, fifty million people by dividing two, three provinces, it couldn't compensate for the decline of Asians, nor obstruct the swagger of Caucasians. Should Japan stay in lonesome isolation in the future, it would not be considered the same as other countries when one takes a glance around the five continents, nor be counted as a country which one can rely on and help others like the cooperation between the lips and teeth, the wheels and axle. In vain, should Japan leave a scandalous name as a country greedy for immediate small profits for a thousand years, it would be an unprecedented downright shame.²²

Whether Japan had joined in the division and conquest of China, or remained in isolation to protect only its own independence, in either case, Japan would have been regarded as a betrayer of Asia. Japan could only win in the conflict of the races if it strengthened itself to lift Asia from under Western domination. Nakajima reveals the deep impression left on him by his uncle Tan's acute perception of the impending fate of China and Japan.

In the backdrop of "Tonan Sensei," the West represents an advanced civilization characterized by industrialization, while Asia embodies a barbaric civilization marked by the feudal system. Modernization indicates progress, while Confucianism and traditional Chinese thoughts become traits of obsolescence. The invasion of China by Western

²¹ Nakajima Atsushi, *Nakajima Atsushi zenshū*, 3 vols., vol. 1 (Tokyo: Chikuma bunko, 1993), 86.

²² *NAZ*, vol. 1, 68.

countries is symbolic of modernized civilizations inundating less-civilized ones. Although Japan was not physically occupied by Western countries before World War II, its modernization during the Meiji period generated a similar impact of Western civilization overtaking traditional Japanese ways. Nakajima was aware that Japan was changing, and that the traits visible in his uncle, natural and pure qualities cultivated by a Confucian upbringing, were disappearing there. Critic Kimura Kazuaki explains that Nakajima wrote "Tonan sensei" not only to reminisce about his uncle, but also to examine his Confucian heritage, and perhaps to express a lament on the perceived anachronism of Confucianism under the growing influence of Western ideologies.²³

Beneath the conflict of races between Caucasians and Asians depicted in "Tonan Sensei," there lies a more fundamental struggle: the one between civilization and the natural state of man. Nakajima questions whether advanced civilization really improved the welfare of its people. Echoing Okakura's comment that "the individuals who go to the making up of the great machine of so-called modern civilization become the slaves of mechanical habit and are ruthlessly dominated by the monster they have created," Nakajima expresses doubts about advanced civilization. To examine the issue without the complication of competing nations and ideologies, Nakajima distills the issue to its bare essentials. He looks back into history and explores the impact of civilization through a fictional account of the invention of writing in Assyria.

"Mojika"(The Curse of the Graphs)

The influence of Romanticism can be found in Nakajima's longing for the past in a simple and pure form, partially represented by his skepticism toward technology and civilization. In "Mojika" (The Curse of the Graphs), a story concerning an old scholar set

²³ Kimura Kazuaki, *Nakajima Atsushi ron* (Tokyo: Sōbunsha, 1986), 53.

in ancient Assyria, Nakajima explores the effects of writing on human and social advancement in Assyrian society. He introduces the idea of the apparition of words, that words have spirits, and recounts the rumors that strange voices were heard in the library built by Ashurbanipal (685-627 BC), the last king of the Neo-Assyrian Empire. King Ashurbanipal asked the old scholar Nabu-ahe-eriba to investigate these unknown ghosts. Since papyrus paper was not produced in the Mesopotamian region, writing was carved in tablets, so Nabu-ahe-eriba spent his days among the mountains of clay tablets, searching for records regarding the spirits of the words and staring at the various pictographs that resembled cuneiform scripts. As the old scholar stared at the pictographs for a long time, the words seem to dissociate into meaningless lines and strokes, causing him to wonder how the words had obtained their sounds and meanings originally. The old scholar becomes convinced that it must be the spirit of a word that gave the word its meaning, just as the soul gives life to man, which is otherwise an assembly of inanimate body parts. The spirit of the word imbues meaning and sound to the form created from lines and components.

Interestingly, "Mojika" could have been inspired by the short story, "How I Discoursed One Night with an Apparition on the First Origins of the Alphabet," written by Anatole France.²⁴ Ochner notes that France is the most important figure in the discussion of Nakajima's readings, because Nakajima read France's works in thirty-two volumes in English translation.²⁵ In France's short story, a ghost appears in the library while the protagonist is writing at his desk, to which the protagonist exclaims, "What place more likely than a library to be haunted by apparitions? Where should the spirits of

²⁴ Anatole France, *The Garden of Epicurus*, trans. Alfred Allinson (London: John Lane the Bodley Head Limited, 1908), 153-64.

²⁵ Ochner, "Nakajima Atsushi: His Life and Work," 91-92.

the dead appear, if not amid the signs that preserve our memory of them?"²⁶ The apparition identifies himself as Cadmus, known to the writer through the Greek fables as a mythical dragon slayer. Cadmus explains that, to develop a more efficient way of keeping traders' books, he had invented the Phoenician alphabet from the hieroglyphs.

The subject, setting, and approach of both stories are very similar; apparitions appear in libraries and the significance of writing systems is examined. Nakajima uses his technique of reinterpretation and adaptation of existing literature to create "Mojika," as a polarizing image to France's story. While Nakajima questions the effects of the invention of a writing system in its initial pictogram format, France gives unreserved praise, through views of the protagonist, to the invention of alphabet which replaced hieroglyphs:

"Yes, no doubt it was ingenious, and even more so than you think. We owe to you a gift of incalculable price. For without an alphabet, no accurate record of speech is possible; there can be no style, and therefore no thinking of any precision and refinement, no abstractions, no subtle speculation... the Phoenician alphabet has become throughout the whole world the necessary and perfect instrument of thought, and the history of its transformations is intimately bound up with that of the development of the human mind."²⁷

Since France is known for his satire, it is possible that he gave praises to alphabets in order to undermine their importance. On the other hand, Nakajima purposely raised doubts about the invention of writing because he was skeptical of civilization.

The invention of writing is part of the evolution of human civilization. Perhaps in "Mojika," Nakajima also questions the significance of technology, and whether evolution and changes have always yielded benefits without disadvantages:

²⁶ France, *The Garden of Epicurus*, 154.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 162.

When people began wearing clothes, their skin became weak and ugly. When they invented vehicles, man's legs became weak and ugly. When words became commonplace, man's head stopped working immediately.²⁸

Although people accustomed to modern civilization would not dwell over the convenience of clothes, vehicles, and writing, Nakajima perceived the negative impacts of enfeebled human faculties that accompanied civilization. In this sense, Nakajima was a Romanticist, who viewed civilization dubiously since arts and sciences do not necessarily bring benefits to mankind. As Ochner points out, Sasaki Mitsuru is the first critic to mention that Nakajima's incorporation of the concept that writing weakens man's mind in "Mojika" was influenced by Plato's *Phaedrus*:

"Now you, the father of letters, as a result of your affection for them, are stating just the opposite of what their effect will be. If people learn them it will make their souls forgetful through lack of exercising their memory. They'll put their trust in the external marks of writing instead of using their own internal capacity for remembering on their own. You've discovered a magic potion not for memory, but for reminding, and you offer your pupils apparent, not true, wisdom."²⁹

While the invention of writing represents a great advance for man because he could then record knowledge in a tangible form, it also created a detrimental effect in that man would relinquish the information that he once knew by heart. Although the original intent of writing was to preserve knowledge, it actually decreased the common sense of man because he forgets the facts he used to know.

In addition to postulating a degenerative impact of writing on memory, Nakajima also suggested that an over-reliance on writing decreases man's instincts and direct experience with the physical world: "Compared to the time before men have learned to write, workers' handy skills have dulled, warriors have become timid, and hunters' losses

²⁸ *NAZ*, vol. 1, 33.

²⁹ Plato, *The Symposium and The Phaedrus: Plato's Erotic Dialogues*, trans. William S. Cobb (Albany, NY: State University of New York, 1993), 132.

in shooting the lions have increased.”³⁰ As Ochner discusses, “Words, like a veil, obscure reality, making it impossible for people to have direct experience.”³¹ In “Mojjika,” Nakajima portrays words as inadequate and problematic representations of reality, when he describes hunters who upon learning the word “lion,” which is a mere shadow of the real lion, become ineffective hunters because they aim to shoot at the shadow of the lion rather than at the lion itself. Nakajima’s discussion of the inadequate or false representation of the physical world by words is influenced by “Book X” of Plato’s *Republic*. Plato proposed that there is only one true notion of an object, and that physical objects manufactured by craftsmen are merely imitations and manifestations of the true object, and further, that painters who draw and poets who use words to describe imitated physical objects are third from truth:

“Then let us not be surprised if the manufactured article is also somewhat indistinct as compared with truth.... Now there are these three beds, first the bed exists in nature, which we should say, I fancy, was made by God. Should we not?.... And one made by the carpenter?.... And one made by the painter?.... Painter, carpenter, and God, these three are set over the three classes of beds.”³²

As people use words to describe objects and matters, they only distant themselves more from the actual truth, because words portray only imitations of the actual objects. Nakajima therefore holds reservation about man’s comprehension derived solely from the reading of words.

Arai Michio has pointed out that Nakajima had read *The History of Assyria* and *The Civilization of Babylonia and Assyria* before writing “Mojjika,” as recorded in

³⁰ *NAZ*, vol. 1, 32.

³¹ Ochner, “Nakajima Atsushi: His Life and Work,” 470-71.

³² Plato, *The Republic of Plato*, ed. Ernest Rhys, trans. A. D. Lindsay, Everyman’s Library (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1940), 298.

Nakajima's Notebooks Numbers Three and Six.³³ Nakajima's fictional exploration of the invention of writing in ancient Assyrian society is a reflection of his doubts about writing as one of the inevitable cultural and civilized practices of mankind. This doubt is expressed most clearly in the "Kamereon nikki."

In his desire to know how culture and customs had come about, Nakajima may have been influenced by Rousseau, who speculated on the formation of writing and the transition of mankind from a natural state to an institutional civil society. Rousseau attempted to describe the development of writing in his essay, "On the Origin of Languages," written in 1852. Rousseau categorized writing into three groups: savage, barbarian, and civilized:

The primitive way of writing was not to represent sounds, but objects themselves whether directly, as with the Mexicans, or by allegorical imagery, or as the Egyptians did in still other ways.... The second way is to represent words and propositions by conventional characters. That can be done only when the language is completely formed and an entire people is united by common laws; for this already presupposes a twofold convention. Such is the writing of Chinese; it truly represents sounds and speaks to the eyes. The third is to break down the speaking voice into a given number of elementary parts, either vocal or articulate, with which one can form all the words and syllables imaginable.³⁴

Rousseau's view regarding the relationship between ideograms and their sounds and meanings as self-evident is an overly idealistic conception of the ancient and foreign language. Through the old scholar in "Mojika," Nakajima reexamines the same issue from Eastern perspective on the necessary sound and meaning associated with the pictographs used by the Assyrians. In the Japanese language, although the meaning of Chinese characters that are pictographs or ideographs are readily apprehended, most

³³ Arai Michio, "The World Portrayed in 'Mojika' by Nakajima Atsushi," *Nisho: Bulletin of the Graduate School of Nisho-Gakusha University* 20 (2006): 122.

³⁴ Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Johann Gottfried Herder, *On the Origin of Language*, trans. John H. Moran and Alexander Gode (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966), 17.

Chinese characters are complicated semantic-phonetic compounds, which are combinations of semantic and phonetic elements from ideographs and pictographs, such that their meanings are no longer obvious. Nakajima also expresses his skepticism about the relationship of words and their meanings in the act of writing Chinese characters and their components in his short story, "Rōshitsuki."

Nakajima questions the relationship between words and their meanings in "Mojika," written in 1940. Likewise, the insufficient or false representation of reality by words is revisited by Foucault in 1970 in "Las Meninas," in which he explains that words were never meant to be substitutes for reality derived through imagination:

It is not that words are imperfect, or that, when confronted by the visible, they prove insuperably inadequate. Neither can be reduced to the other's terms: it is in vain that we say what we see; what we see never resides in what we say. And it is in vain that we attempt to show, by the use of images, metaphors, or similes, what we are saying; the space where they achieve their splendour is not that deployed by our eyes but that defined by the sequential elements of syntax.³⁵

Furthermore, Foucault explains the difference between alphabet writing and ideograms in "Language to Infinity," by emphasizing that writing is a repeated process of self-representation and reduplication:

Alphabetical writing is already, in itself, a form of duplication, since it represents not the signified but the phonetic elements by which it is signified; the ideogram, on the other hand, directly represents the signified, independently from a phonetic system which is another mode of representation.³⁶

Foucault describes ideograms as a more direct representation of objects, in comparison to alphabets that represent speech, which in turn represents objects. Nakajima, however, expresses fundamental doubts about the necessity of ideogram representation, the

³⁵ Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things*, Vintage Books, 1994 ed. (New York: Random House, 1970), 9.

³⁶ Michel Foucault, *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*, trans. Donald F. Bouchard and Sherry Simon (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, 1977), 55-56.

arbitrary equivalence of the ideogram and its meaning, even though it is already a form of direct representation. Foucault elucidates the arbitrary equivalence of the ideogram and its meaning based on Ferdinand de Saussure's (1857-1913) linguistic theory in his essay, "Representing." He attributes the arbitrary relationship between the signifier and the signified to the loss of an intermediary figure that previously established the bond between the representing sign and the object it signified:

... the relation of the sign to its content is not guaranteed by the order of things in themselves. The relation of the sign to the signified now resides in a space in which there is no longer any intermediary figure to connect them: what connects them is a bond established, inside knowledge, between the *idea of one thing* and the *idea of another*.... 'The sign encloses two ideas, one of the thing representing, the other of the thing represented; and its nature consists in exciting the first by means of the second.'³⁷

Foucault offers the forgotten link as the explanation for the arbitrary relationship between the writing of ideograms and alphabet and the meaning they represent. It is interesting that Nakajima attributes the relationship between words and their meanings to a notion of the spirit of word. Although it is not certain whether Nakajima had read Saussure before writing "Mojika," the questions that Nakajima raises in "Mojika" indeed penetrate into the essence of writing as a representation system.

The idea that words are not sufficient representation of actual reality is also mentioned in one of France's short essay in *The Garden of Epicurus*, in which France writes,

We live too much in books and not enough in nature, and we are very like that simpleton of a Pliny the Younger who went on studying a Greek author while before his very eyes Vesuvius was overwhelming five cities beneath the ashes.³⁸

³⁷ Foucault, *The Order of Things*, 63-64.

³⁸ France, *The Garden of Epicurus*, 122.

France, known for his parody, ridicules the youth who searches for abstract knowledge through books, while ignoring the wonders of the real world. The insufficiency of words was also expressed by Chuang Tzu in a parable concerning Duke Huan and the wheelwright in "The Way of Heaven":

What the world thinks the most valuable exhibition of the Tao is to be found in books. But books are only a collection of words. Words have what is valuable in them;—what is valuable in words is the ideas they convey. But those ideas are a sequence of something else;—and what that something else is cannot be conveyed by words. When the world, because of the value which it attaches to words, commits them to books, that for which it so values them may not deserve to be valued;—because that which it values is not what is really valuable.... The form and colour, the name and sound, are certainly not sufficient to convey its real nature.... The wheelwright said, '... in making a wheel [on a spinner], if I rotate too slowly, the chisel slides and won't take hold. But if I spin too quickly, the chisel gets repelled and can't carve into the wood. Not too slow, not too fast, you can get it in your hand and feel it in your mind. I cannot express this through words; there is a knack to it. I cannot teach this to my son, nor can he learn it from me. So I've gone along for seventy years and at my age I'm still chiseling wheels. But these ancients, and what it was not possible for them to convey, are dead and gone:— So what you are reading is but the chaff and dregs of the ancients.'³⁹

The wheelwright cleverly explains the inadequacy of writing through his ordinary work. In this way, the Taoist philosophy holds a similar distrust of words, as they cannot convey the true essence of matters, but only a superficial description of the inexpressible truth. The essence can be understood only through actual experience and contact with reality. Rousseau, representative of the Romantic school, also expresses his distaste for books plainly in *Émile*: "I hate books; they only teach us to talk about things we know

³⁹James Legge, *The Texts of Taoism: The Tao Te Ching, the Writings of Chuang-Tzu, the Thai-Shang* (New York: The Julian Press, 1959), 391-92. See also Burton Watson, *The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968), 152-53, and Zhuangzi and Gengguang Zhang, *Zhuangzi* (Taipei: Taiwan guji chu ban she, 1996), 269-71.

nothing about.”⁴⁰ Rousseau protests against books and writing because they give only external descriptions and cannot provide the actual experience.

Ironically, although writing and words can never replace reality, in “Mojika,” Nakajima explores the notion that words have taken on an eternal and powerful existence of their own. As men depend on writing for the recording of history, omitted events disappear from history altogether as people’s memories fade. People who believed only in the books and writing of the ancients, begin to doubt the real physical world: “Why doesn’t the star, which has not been recorded in the books since the ancient times of Anu Enruru, disappear?”⁴¹ As man constructs his reality based on written history, his instinctive senses become distorted.

Nakajima’s discussion on the writing and preservation of history appears to have also been influenced by France’s essay in *The Garden of Epicurus*. France believed that history can never be impartial, since only a fraction of history is recorded:

Now, how is the historian to discriminate whether a fact is notable or no? He decides this arbitrarily, according to his character and idiosyncrasy, at his own taste and fancy,—in a word, as an artist.... Is the historian to present the facts in all their complexity? That is an impossibility. He will represent them stripped of almost all the individual peculiarities that constitute them facts,—maimed, therefore, and mutilated, other than what they really and truly were.⁴²

Since the recording of history can capture only a glimpse of what actually happened, or even a fabrication of what happened, “Mojika” suggests the necessity of caution in the study of history. Nakajima points out that although writing can help preserve information, its interpretation can be harmful if people hold on to old and inaccurate ideas obstinately.

⁴⁰ Rousseau, *Émile*, 176.

⁴¹ *NAZ*, vol. 1, 36.

⁴² France, *The Garden of Epicurus*, 123.

By discrediting the absolute value of writing with examples of loss of instincts and misrepresentation of history, Nakajima invalidates the supremacy of civilization. Romanticism advocates that man should be in harmony with the world in his natural state of existence. A similar concept in Taoism preaches inaction (*wu wei*), to return to nature through taking no action. As stated in the *Tao Te Ching*, “He learns to be unlearned, and returns to what the multitude has missed (Tao). Thus he supports all things in their natural state but does not take any action.”⁴³ As a proponent of Romanticism and Taoism, Nakajima explores the coexistence of different modes of life at various stages of civilization in the story “Gojō Tan’i.”

“Gojō Tan’i” (Wu-ching’s Admiration)

Nakajima’s view on different philosophies of life is represented in his rendition of “Gojō Tan’i,” based on the Chinese imaginary folktale written in the Ming dynasty, *Hsi Yu Chi*, the story of Tripitaka’s expedition to India to seek Buddhist scriptures. Tripitaka is the main protagonist on his journey to India, protected by his three disciples, Wu-kung, a monkey, Wu-neng, a pig, and Wu-ching, a river monster. Nakajima sets up the story with Wu-ching, the observer, describing the actions of Wu-kung, Wu-neng, and Tripitaka. As Ochner and Langton explain, “Gojō Tan’i” uses the same characters as *Tannishō* (Collection Inspired by Concern over Heresy), the recorded teachings of Shinran, which means to lament the differences.⁴⁴ Nakajima’s adaptation of *Hsi Yu Chi* is a character analysis through the eyes of Wu-ching, based on adventure narratives in the original.

Wu-ching admires Wu-kung, who is pure in thought and earnestly focuses on his goal at-hand. Wu-kung lives with intensity and earnestness, as though there is a flame

⁴³ Chan, *The Way of Lao Tzu*, chapter 64, 214.

⁴⁴ Ochner, “Wu-jing’s Admiration: Nakajima Atsushi’s Gojo Tan’i,” *Monumenta Nipponica* 41, no. 2 (1986): 223. See also Langton, “The Works of Nakajima Atsushi,” 40.

burning within him. Wu-kung's mission and purpose of living is to protect Tripitaka, for whom he would risk his life. Although Wu-kung is illiterate, he is well-versed in the knowledge of animals, plants, and astronomy. He knows which plants can be used as herbal medicines, and can tell the season and time based on the position of the stars, even though he knows neither the names of the stars, nor those of the plants. Wu-ching, who knows the names of the stars but cannot even locate them in the sky, observes Wu-kung and holds a high regard for his instinctive knowledge. Wu-ching describes his awe for Wu-kung in the narrative:

I know that Wu-kung is illiterate.... Even so, there are times when I think Wu-kung is sophisticated. At least, as far as animals, plants, astronomy are concerned, he has considerable knowledge. He can discern the nature, strength, and characteristics of the primary weapon of most animals from just one glance. Even with regards to weeds, he knows which ones are herbs and which ones are poisonous by heart. Yet, with such inclination, he has no idea what the names (common names used generally in the world) of those animals and plants are. He is also good at telling directions, times, and seasons based on the positions of the stars, but he doesn't know names of constellations like Virgo and Scorpio at all. In comparison, while I know the names of each of the twenty eight constellations, I cannot tell them apart, what a startling difference! In times like this I cannot help but feel pathetic about an education based on literacy in front of a monkey who has seen not even one word.⁴⁵

In the juxtaposition of the illiterate but knowledgeable Wu-kung and the literate but ineffectual Wu-ching, Nakajima again raises doubts about the value of writing and literacy. Like Rousseau, Nakajima emphasizes the understanding of the world through direct interaction with nature, as in the case of Wu-kung. Rousseau describes in his treatise on education, *Émile*, that "scientists study natural history in cabinets; they have small specimens; they know their names, but nothing of their nature. Émile's museum is

⁴⁵ *NAZ*, vol. 1, 343-44.

richer than that of kings; it is the whole world."⁴⁶ Wu-ching, who studied the names of the stars, but was unable to identify them, is like the scientist who studies from lifeless laboratory specimens, without observing the living creatures in the natural world.

Nakajima continues to question the value of writing and compares direct experience to book knowledge. Similar to ideas discussed previously in "Mojika," perhaps the problem lies not in the creation of a writing system, but in people's loss of direct experience and instinct when they look only to written words for understanding but not to the actual events or phenomenon for a first-hand experience. As Rousseau points out:

...there is no real advance in human reason, for what we gain in one direction we lose in another; for all minds start from the same point, and as the time spent in learning what others have thought is so much time lost in learning to think for ourselves, we have more acquired knowledge and less vigor of mind.⁴⁷

As knowledge accumulates in written books, individual instincts decrease because people grow to rely on transmitted knowledge rather than on their own experience. Nakajima portrays Wu-ching as a product of civilization, a literate individual who has lost his sense of instinct. Wu-ching knows the name of stars, but his knowledge is superficial since he cannot identify them. Wu-kung is depicted as an uncivilized individual, but full of instincts. The names of stars are irrelevant to Wu-kung; the fact that he knows where the stars are and how to identify directions and the change of seasons is much more significant than a cursory acquaintance with the names. Thus, Nakajima scraps the notion that civilization is necessarily better or that the primitive state is automatically disadvantageous.

⁴⁶ Rousseau, *Émile*, 489.

⁴⁷ *NAZ*, vol. 1, 369.

In contrast to Wu-kung, whose mind is pure and focused, Wu-neng's mind is full of worldly thoughts and material desires that prevent him from changing his physical form successfully. There is probably no one who loves the world as much as Wu-neng. He counts the pleasures of life: napping under the cool shadows of trees in the summer, bathing in the flowing stream, listening to flute music under the moonlight, touching a young woman's body, and eating food from the four seasons. Wu-neng wonders what the purpose of finding the Buddhist paradise is when the world has so many attractions to offer. Wu-ching came to admire Wu-neng's dilettantism after he realized that it also takes talent and ability to lead a life of enjoyment:

I was astonished. There are so many pleasant things in the world that I didn't even think of, and there is someone who already experienced them all. Indeed, I realized that it takes talent even for things like enjoyment, since then, I have stopped despising this pig.⁴⁸

Through Wu-ching's change of perspective, Nakajima presents the alternate view that, Wu-neng's Epicureanism can be regarded as an ability to be admired, rather than a habit to be disdained.

Tripitaka lacks physical strength and relies on his disciples to protect him, for he knows no magic nor has the physique to defend himself. Wu-ching maintains that, if Wu-kung is the absolute extreme of action, then Tripitaka is the exact reverse. In time of danger, he can search only internally for peace and the strength to accept outside occurrences, since he has no power to counter external threats. In Wu-ching's eyes, it is amazing that Tripitaka can be in such state of tranquility, even though he encounters danger almost constantly. Tripitaka always looks to eternity, in the face of the suffering of humanity:

⁴⁸ Ibid., 351.

Chapter 4. Anti-Colonial Sentiment

Nakajima was stationed in Micronesia in 1941 as an editorial secretary for Japanese language textbooks, which would be used by the natives on the Micronesian Islands. He accepted the position because he had thought the warm climate would cure his asthma. He also had a strong yearning to experience tropical island life from his reading of Robert Louis Stevenson's accounts of life on Samoa. Nakajima's yearning for a simple way of life and his anti-colonial sentiments under the influence of Romanticism are evident in his short stories. Ironically, Nakajima himself became an agent of colonization, when his textbook revisions became instruments of Japanese suppression and subjugation of the Micronesian people.¹

Micronesia under Colonization

Japanese interest in the South Seas began during the Meiji period. Japan strengthened its maritime power to compete with the European nations for the remaining island territories in the South Seas. The idea that Japan should have its own colonies began with Honda Toshiaki (1744-1821), when he recognized that Japan could not continue to support its growing population with limited natural resources.² However, it was not until 1891 that Honda's proposal, *A Secret Plan of Government*, came into print and became popular.³ The Japanese government was anxious to obtain more land and natural resources to support a growing population and to strengthen the nation. Japan declared war on Germany in 1914 and took possession of Micronesia (the three

¹ Kawamura Minato, "Tsushitara Atsushi no monogatari," 167.

² Donald Keene, *The Japanese Discovery of Europe, 1720-1830* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1969), 110-122.

³ *Ibid.*, 94.

archipelagoes of the Marianas, the Carolines, and the Marshalls) from Germany.⁴ In 1922, the Nan'yōchō – South Seas Agency – was established to administer the new island territories under the Japanese government. In the 1930s, the Japanese empire began forced assimilation of its colonial populations in Micronesia.⁵

By the 1930s, the Nan'yōchō had established twenty-four public schools and education was compulsory for all children on larger islands, as Japan considered education a means to produce obedient colonial subjects. The eight-year primary schools (*shōgakkō*) that Japanese children attended, taught the values of self-fulfillment and advancement; by contrast, the public schools for Micronesians were limited to practical education, which taught only manual skills and Japanese language “to produce a supply of general laborers and domestic servants who understood Japanese.”⁶

Japan established the Tropical Industries Research Institute at Palau in 1922 to study plants, livestock, fertilizers, and pest control programs suitable for commercial farming in the Pacific.⁷ Exports from Micronesia to Japan grew steadily from 1927 to 1938, and the four major commodities exported were sugar (from sugar cane), phosphate, dried bonito, and copra (dried coconut kernels). From the late 1920s to the late 1930s, the Japanese population in Micronesia nearly quadrupled, from 20,000 in 1930 to 77,000 in 1940. By 1938, the Japanese population in Micronesia already had surpassed 50 percent of the total island population.⁸

⁴ Yanaihara Tadao, *Pacific Islands under Japanese Mandate* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1940), 22.

⁵ Mark R. Peattie, *Nan'yō: The Rise and Fall of the Japanese in Micronesia, 1885-1945*, Pacific Islands Monograph Series (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1988), 85.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 92-93.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 135.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 160-61.

Many Japanese sought to emigrate as the population in Japan grew, with little available land or opportunity. Following the Great Kanto Earthquake of 1923 and a series of ruinous crop failures in Northern Japan, many jobless and landless people saw the perfect location for emigration in the South Seas region: it was warm, occupied by the Japanese government, and closer than Brazil.⁹ Thus, Japanese looked to the Micronesian territories as lands of conquest in which Japanese citizens could settle, as Said describes in *Culture and Imperialism*:

Territory and possessions are at stake, geography and power. Everything about human history is rooted in the earth, which has meant that we must think about habitation, but it has also meant that people have planned to *have* more territory and therefore must do something about its indigenous residents. At some very basic level, imperialism means thinking about, settling on, controlling land that you do not possess, that is distant, that is lived on and owned by others.¹⁰

Japan, after its considerable effort in rapid modernization, had joined the competition among Western countries in seizing colonies to expand territory and obtain additional resources.

Nakajima in Micronesia

Amid the momentum of colonization, assimilation, and Japanization, Nakajima took up the position of clerk for Japanese language textbook compilation (*Kokugo henshū shoki*) in Palau in July 1941. Nakajima wrote to his friend, Yoshimura Nobukatsu, that he was going to Palau to escape from asthma.¹¹ During his stay in Micronesia, Nakajima wrote numerous letters to his family and friends, which documented the island conditions and his experiences.

⁹ Ibid., 155-56.

¹⁰ Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993), 7.

¹¹ *NAZ*, vol. 3, 556.

In Palau, Nakajima had befriended Hijikata Hisakatsu, an artist who had lived in Micronesia for more than ten years and was interested in the indigenous culture. Hijikata arrived in Palau in 1929, after which he immersed himself in Palauan life and wrote down the oral history of Palau in *Parao no shinwa densetsu* (Folk Legends of Palau), which was published in 1942.¹² Hijikata's diary, which records the life of the island in detail, including its people, customs, and natural surroundings, was published in 1943 as *Ryūboku* (Driftwood).¹³ In the September 10, 1941 entry of his Nan'yō diary, Nakajima records that Hijikata frequently sighed about the forced relocation of the island inhabitants as a result of road construction for military use. Nakajima observed that many coconut trees had been felled to open land for plantations in Koror.¹⁴ Hijikata's compassion for the natives may have amplified Nakajima's sympathy toward the fate of the islanders.

Nakajima boarded the *Parao-Maru* on September 15, 1941, and traveled eastward for his first tour of the Micronesian islands for the purpose of school inspections. He visited Dublon (Truk Atolls), Ponape (Caroline Islands) and its town Kolonia, Kusaie (Caroline Islands), and Jaluit Atoll (Marshall Islands) and its town, Jabor.¹⁵ On the return route, he visited islands in the reverse order: Kusaie, Ponape, and the Truk Atolls. He spent about two weeks surveying the individual islands by small boat in the Truk Atolls: Dublon (Natsu shima), Uman (Fuyu shima), Fefan (Aki shima), Toi (Suiyō shima), and Udot (Getsuyō shima). Nakajima returned to Palau by airplane when the first tour ended on November 5, 1941.

¹² Peattie, *Nan'yō*, 193. Hijikata Hisakatsu, *Parao no shinwa densetsu* (Tokyo: Daiwa shoten, 1942).

¹³ *Ibid.*, 193-194.

¹⁴ *NAZ*, vol. 3, 464.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 501-02, 79. See also map in Peattie, *Nan'yō*, 4.

Nakajima was very interested in the indigenous culture, and wrote about the native customs and practices of which he learned during his tour. He records the songs and dances the students performed at a public school on Fefan (Truk Atolls) in the October 12 entry of his diary.¹⁶ He notes that the Losap lullaby song is similar to Japanese folk songs. Nakajima found the Losap Island's bamboo dance, in which dancers held long bamboo sticks to make sounds by hitting the floor or tapping the sticks with one another, interesting. He also writes about the Truk folktales in letters to his son Takeshi. There was a Truk legend about the origin of Mt. Tumuital on Toi and another legend from the island of Yap about how two brothers killed a huge sea lizard.¹⁷

Of the islands that Nakajima visited, his favorite was Jaluit, situated among the Marshall Islands. The shores had white sand, tall coconut palms, clear water, and a variety of fish; it was the prettiest place he had ever seen. The clarity of the sea water at Jaluit was much better than that of the western islands in Micronesia. Nakajima was also very impressed with the delicious native food, particularly roasted chicken, which was cooked between layers of hot stone pebbles separated by coconut tree leaves.¹⁸ Nakajima explained in a letter to his wife that he had become good friends with Takeuchi, also a government official at the South Seas Agency.¹⁹ Takeuchi had given tours of the Marshall Islands to visitors such as the translator, Ōkubo Yasuo.²⁰ When Nakajima told Takeuchi that his favorite island was Jaluit because it was the most pristine, closest to

¹⁶ *NAZ*, vol. 3, 473-74.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 617-19.

¹⁸ *NAZ*, vol. 3, 606.

¹⁹ *NAZ*, vol. 3, 605.

²⁰ Ōkubo translated *Gone With The Wind* into Japanese in 1938.

The beautiful tropics and mahjong games were no more than diversions to Nakajima when he longed for happiness with meaning.

As Nakajima interacted with the locals in Micronesia, he came to disagree with Japanese colonization efforts. He dissented from government policies adopted in Micronesia, and expresses his concern for the natives in his letter to his wife on November 9, 1941:

Well, after I have taken the trip [of school inspection in eastern Micronesia], I have come to see the utter meaninglessness of this job of editing textbooks for the natives. There are many more important things to be done for the welfare of the natives; things like textbooks are so insignificant. Yet, at this time, it's not possible to improve the welfare of the natives. The circumstance at Nan'yō now is that it's increasingly difficult to provide adequate shelter and food for the natives. At such times, again, what can a slightly improved textbook achieve? Giving the natives a perfunctory education may cause them misery. I have lost my zeal for the editing job completely. It is not because I dislike the natives. It is because I love them. I like the island inhabitants. I like them way more than the pushy inlanders [Japanese]. There is loveliness in their simplicity. Even adults are like big children. In the past, they were happy. Nature endowed them with abundant breadfruits, coconuts, bananas, and taro; even if they didn't work, it would be all right because they could eat those food. They could spend the rest of the day sleeping, dancing, and talking. Now they are [put to work and] exhausted the whole day, in addition their coconut trees and breadfruit trees have been cut down almost entirely. They are pitiful beings.²⁵

Nakajima adored the simplicity and innocence of the natives. He also sympathized with them, for they once enjoyed the abundant food provided by nature, and could spend their days dancing and playing. Now that the island had been colonized, many fruit trees had been cut down to make plantation fields; the natives were put to work, but food deficiency threatened their survival. In a separate letter to his father, Nakajima also expresses his concern for how the Japanese government was treating the natives:

²⁵ NAZ, vol. 3, 631-32.

In the present emergency situation, education of the natives is hardly a priority. It seems that the policy of the authorities is to treat the natives as a labor force and exploit them until they are used up. In these circumstances I have totally lost even the modicum of enthusiasm for my job that I had previously.²⁶

Nakajima disagreed with the exploitation of the natives by the Japanese government, and wished for other ways to improve the welfare of the natives besides cursory education.

In the same letter, Nakajima also expresses concerns about his health. Although he had not had any asthma attacks when he was on the tour of the islands, the intense heat made him lethargic, and he felt his memory was declining.²⁷ The effect Nakajima described was common to the Japanese who moved to Micronesia: "The heat and humidity ... often crushed the energy and initiative of the newcomer. There were also the debilitating effects of the climatic monotony in the tropics."²⁸ Even for a healthy person, the South Seas were not a good environment because of impoverished food sources and the lack of nutrition, both of which predispose people to tuberculosis. Nakajima wished to quit his job soon because of his declining health and his dissent from government policies.

The second school inspection tour started on November 17, 1941, and covered the islands of Yap, Rota, Tinian, and Saipan. Nakajima observed that there were no dark-skinned natives in Rota and Saipan, but only the lighter skinned Chamorros, who had intermarried with the Spaniards.²⁹ All the Chamorros in Saipan went to church on Sundays. According to Yanaihara Tadao, the Chamorros had settled in the Mariana Islands, converted to Catholicism, intermarried with Spaniards and Filipinos, adopted a

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 627-28. Translation taken from Tierney, "The Colonial Eyeglasses of Nakajima Atsushi," 156.

²⁷ *NAZ*, vol. 3, 632.

²⁸ Peattie, *Nan'yō*, 202.

²⁹ *NAZ*, vol. 3, 640.

European lifestyle, and therefore maintained higher living standards than the Kanakas, who had settled in the Caroline and Marshall Islands and had not intermarried with foreigners.³⁰ Nakajima was surprised at the militaristic style of school operation in Saipan.³¹ Nakajima returned to Palau on December 14, 1941.

Although Nakajima had read about life in the South Seas and the interaction with the natives through Stevenson's *Vailima Letters* and *In the South Seas*, Nakajima's Romantic ideals toward a primitive life were probably further reinforced from his own interactions with the natives in Micronesia. Ochner describes Nakajima's works about the South Seas as representations of Nakajima's "cross-cultural experiences"³² and "cultural relativism."³³ Nakajima's perception and interpretation of Micronesia display a close relation to the ideals of Romanticism and Taoism. Nakajima's distrust of civilization and anti-colonial sentiment are reflected through his novel *Hikari to kaze to yume* (Light, Wind, and Dreams) and the short stories "Mahiru" (High Noon), "Mariyan" (Marian), and "Kōhuku" (Happiness).

***Hikari to kaze to yume* (Light, Wind, and Dreams)**

Nakajima's fictional biography of Robert Louis Stevenson in Samoa was written in 1940 before his visit to Micronesia. Nakajima's admiration for Stevenson and his picturesque ideas about the South Seas were derived from reading Stevenson's books and were the motivation for his journey to Micronesia. In *Hikari to kaze to yume*, Nakajima depicts the island's struggle against colonization through an objective third-person report as well as the subjective first-person perspective in the format of Stevenson's diary which

³⁰ Yanaihara, *Pacific Islands under Japanese Mandate*, 6-7.

³¹ *NAZ*, vol. 3, 484.

³² Ochner, "Nakajima Atsushi: His Life and Work," 193.

³³ *Ibid.*, 402.

was filled with Nakajima's psychological reconstruction of Stevenson. Literary critic Ara Masahito notes that Nakajima must have been extremely absorbed in reading Stevenson's letters and books, to the extent that he "painted in his heart [the scenes described] through Stevenson's essays."³⁴ Ochner explains that *Hikari to kaze to yume* is a significant work because Nakajima was able to externalize and project his thoughts and emotions into the character of Stevenson.³⁵ Nakajima's sympathy toward the natives was probably influenced by Stevenson's support for the natives of Samoa. *Hikari to kaze to yume* was one of the semi-final works considered for the prestigious Akutagawa literary award, which was not awarded in 1942.³⁶

There have been a number of discussions about the presence of anti-white sentiment in the novel. Nakajima recreates the speech in which Stevenson urges the island's chiefs of Samoa to develop their own land and take hold of their resources. Donald Keene points out that Nakajima's alteration of the speech instills anti-white sentiment, which was not present in the original:³⁷

Chief's Seeing that you are working, I felt my heart warmed. It is not only because of my gratitude but also with hope. There I saw the promise that would bring us good things for Samoa – what I want to say is that your time as brave fighters against foreign enemies is already over. Now, the only way for you to protect Samoa is to construct roads, to make orchards, to plant trees, to manage them well, and to sell the produce of your own hands. In short, it is to develop the rich resources of your country by your own hands. Unless you do this, people of a **different color** will do it.... The **white men** with land surveying instruments will surely come to your villages.... The true saviours of Samoa must be those who will make roads,

³⁴ Ara, "Nakajima Atsushi ron," 161.

³⁵ Ochner, "Nakajima Atsushi: His Life and Work," 337, 652.

³⁶ "Dai jūgokai Akutagawa shō senpyō" in *Nakajima Atsushi zenshū betsu*, ed. Takahashi Hideo et al. (Tokyo: Chikuma shobo, 2002), 277-84.

³⁷ Donald Keene, "The Barren Years: Japanese War Literature," *Monumenta Nipponica* 33, no. 1 (1978): 97.

plant fruit trees, and increase the yield of crops; that is, those who will exploit the plentiful resources blessed by God.³⁸

Nakajima had explicitly added that it would be people of a different color who would come and compete for the resources of the island. Ochner argues that Nakajima made the implicit reference to the white man explicit in the speech.³⁹ Langton interprets this anti-white sentiment as Nakajima's misunderstanding of the biblical allusion to Ezekiel's visions.⁴⁰ In comparing Nakajima's version of the speech to the original, we see that, although Stevenson did not specifically use the phrase "people of a different color will," he did cite that it was the white men who had taken over lands in Hawaii and created sugar fields out of them, and that the original inhabitants had been ousted, and were long dead and gone. The competition among different people for natural plentiful resources was clearly delineated, and Stevenson referred to tribes that had lost the battle and given way to imperialism as a warning to the Samoans:

I will tell you, Chiefs, that, when I saw you working on that road, my heart grew warm; not with gratitude only, but with hope. It seemed to me that I read the promise of something good for Samoa.... There is but one way to defend Samoa. Hear it before it is too late. It is to make roads, and gardens, and care for your trees, and sell their produce wisely, and, in one word, to occupy and use your country. **If you do not others will....** And I repeat to you that thing which is sure: if you do not occupy and use your country, others will.... For to-day they were empty; the doors were closed, the villages had disappeared, the people were dead and gone; only the church stood on like tombstones over a grave, in the midst of the white men's sugar fields. The other people had come and used that country, and the Hawaiians who occupied it for nothing had been swept away....⁴¹

Nakajima's use of the phrase "people of a different color" can be extended to mean "people of a different race." On the island of Samoa, the natives were put to work for the

³⁸ Nakajima Atsushi, *Light, Wind, and Dreams: An Interpretation of the Life and Mind of Robert Louis Stevenson*, trans. Akira Miwa (Tokyo: HokuSeido Press, 1962), 130-32.

³⁹ Ochner, "Nakajima Atsushi: His Life and Work," 316.

⁴⁰ Langton, "The Works of Nakajima Atsushi," 82.

⁴¹ Robert Louis Stevenson, *Vailima Letters*, vol. 2 (New York: Greenwood Press, 1969), 271-73.

cultivation of pineapples to be sold, while on the Micronesian islands, the natives were growing sugar cane and coconut trees. From Nakajima's letters to his wife and father, which express his discontent with the Japanese presence in Palau and with their efforts to convert its people, Nakajima also considered the Japanese to be encroaching on the natives living on the Micronesian islands, and therefore "people of a different color" could refer to not only white men, but to the Japanese as well. Thus, Nakajima's deliberate emphasis on color and race was not meant to express an anti-white sentiment, but to show the conflict of values and practices, and the domination of one people over another, especially when the struggle comes from differences between colors, races, and cultures.

The central idea of Stevenson's speech is for the native Samoans to develop and make use of their own land before outsiders come and take over their land. As European populations grew, European imperialist countries sought new virgin lands in the Pacific in order to obtain more materials and to expand their trade. Stevenson's depiction of the competition for the same limited physical resources concurs with sociologist Charles Sumner's observations about population growth:

The foundation of human society, said Sumner, is the man-land ratio. Ultimately men draw their living from the soil, and the kind of existence they achieve, their mode of getting it, and their mutual relations in the process are all determined by the proportion of population to the available soil. Where men are few and soil is abundant, the struggle for existence is less savage, and democratic institutions are likely to prevail. When population presses upon the land supply, earth hunger arises, races of men move across the face of the world, militarism and imperialism flourish, conflict rages – and in government aristocracy dominates.⁴²

⁴² Richard Hofstadter, *Social Darwinism in American Thought*, Revised ed. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1944), 56.

As European civilization advanced beyond barbaric cultures, those who lived in primitive societies became prey to the European nations armed with technologies and seeking material resources. Nakajima wrote *Hikari to kaze to yume* prior to his visit to Micronesia, so he had not yet experienced the life of a primitive people subjected to imperialism. Through his interaction with the natives in Micronesia, Nakajima's conception about civilization and primitive natural people would be revealed in his later short stories.

“Mahiru” (High Noon)

Prior to his visit to Micronesia, Nakajima was already doubtful about the supremacy of civilization, as revealed in his distrust of writing in “Mojika.” As Nakajima spent time in the islands, he saw the natives as big children who lived simply and enjoyed their daily activities of dancing and talking. Nakajima did not hold the negative bias that Japanese typically held toward the island natives:

Because their life is extremely simple and primitive, it is needless to say that their thought is also childish. They do not possess any desire or spirit of self-improvement. Their pleasures are eating, dancing, and satisfying their sexual desires....⁴³

Rather, Nakajima tried to appreciate the simple ways of the natives, a life that people lived before civilization taught them to live otherwise: “Before art had moulded our behavior, and taught our passions to speak an artificial language, our morals were rude but natural.”⁴⁴ Rev. Yamaguchi Shokichi, a Japanese Christian missionary on Truk Island, described the original natives of the island accordingly: “The islanders had a spoken language but no form of writing. All of

⁴³ Peattie, *Nan'yō*, 113.

⁴⁴ Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract and the Discourses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993), 6.

the stories and traditions of old were handed down orally. They walked about at night without lights, for they could see in the dark as the animals do.”⁴⁵

In “Mahiru,” through the conflicting thoughts of the narrator, Nakajima expresses doubts about the moral standards and values that civilization had created. The narrator has just awoken after his nap on the beach. He describes the beautiful island scenery around him, the pure white sand, the cool shade under the Talisay trees, the canoe cutting across the sea water with a color like that of a blue mackerel. The vague memory of the cold wintry weather a year ago seems so far away that he cannot even imagine what coldness feels like on his skin. As the narrator rests peacefully on the beach, an inner restless voice speaks to him, reminding him that he had expectations when he traveled to the South Seas, and that he did not travel all the way here just to live a slothful existence. The rigid voice melts away in the sea wind, and the narrator idles in his dream-like bliss, enjoying it without any regret.

The rigid voice, representative of civilization, comes back to question whether the narrator really has no regrets about carrying on such a lackadaisical life, to which the unchained primitive self answers that he doesn't mind being lazy. He has been released from the ghost of the artificial, European, and modern. But the voice shifts to defend civilization, asserting that what he feels now is only temporary. The physical self has not changed; he is only momentarily blinded under the sun and heat, to the point that he thinks he can look at the sky and the sea in the same way the natives look at them. The rigid voice mocks the narrator by saying that he is not looking at the real Micronesia, but only at a replica created by the perspective of civilization: “You are only looking at a replica of Gauguin. You are not looking at Micronesia. You are merely looking at

⁴⁵Yanaihara, *Pacific Islands under Japanese Mandate*, 256.

reenactments of the faded Polynesia that Loti and Melville illustrated.”⁴⁶ By using a counter-voice to question whether someone from the civilized world can truly live a primitive life, Nakajima realizes that a civilized individual can never forget the worldview he has accumulated from his knowledge based on the literature and art he already learned.

Just at the point when it seems that the rigid civilized voice has won the debate, Nakajima throws in a third objective voice into the debate. While primitiveness and laziness are not necessarily healthy, and undue preference for nature that leads to ludicrous escapes from civilization can possibly be dangerous, there is no relation between health and the degree of civilization. Enforcing civilization upon a primitive society does not make the natives healthier than they were. Nakajima may have been influenced by Hijikata, who made the observation that,

On the surface, Palau is today civilized as a result of outside cultures which have come to Palau one after another. The appearances of young people when they go to church attest to this. Both men and women wear western clothes, some of them even wear ties and shoes. At the same time, the Palauans have been the victims of infectious diseases, venereal diseases are spreading, people's hearts have been withering, and I cannot see the richness in another sense that they used to have. Even the full-blood Palauan is on the way to extinction. When I hear their legends and see many ruins which correspond to these legends, I see their current villages as corpses, and I am profoundly saddened by it.⁴⁷

Nakajima argues that one does not become a gentleman just by wearing clothing. The healthy person is one who discerns reality with his own eyes and lives earnestly with his soul. The external civilization imposed on the Palauans is just as harmful as a forced retreat from civilization.

⁴⁶ Nakajima, *Nakajima Atsushi zenshū*, vol. 2 (Tokyo: Chikuma bunko, 1993), 76.

⁴⁷Hijikata Hisakatsu, *Collective Works of Hijikata Hisakatsu: Society and Life in Palau*, ed. Endo Hisashi (Tokyo: The Sasakawa Peace Foundation, 1993), 126.

Nakajima had gone to Micronesia because of his own Romantic views of life in the tropics. He did not consider the primitive life that the natives led as inferior to civilized existence. By interjecting the third voice, Nakajima moves beyond the binary view of either a primitive or civilized existence as being superior. As long as one lives truthfully through his own eyes and thoughts, instead of in deference to other people's ideas and opinions, his existence has been fulfilled.

“Mariyan” (Marian)

Although Nakajima did not believe in the necessary supremacy of civilized life over the native's primitive existence, the life of the island inhabitants is inevitably changed in the colonization process. In “Mariyan,” Nakajima describes the changes in Palau through Mariyan, a woman who resides on the island and works as a translator-aide to Hijikata. The narrator explains that the island's tropical beauty has been undermined by new standards imposed by civilization from the temperate zone, but things considered beautiful from the temperate zone look out of place in the tropics. Although Mariyan probably would be considered beautiful in the Kanaka tradition, she has studied in Japan for some years, adopted Japanese values, and felt embarrassed about her own appearance:

Marian herself seems to be a bit ashamed of her own Kanakan looks... (because) she lives in Koror City (the cultural center of the Nan'yō Archipelago) where standards of civilized beauty exert a great influence even among the indigenous islanders. In reality, it seems to me that this Koror – and the fact is that I have lived longest in this place – is in a state of chaos brought through the intrusion of values belonging to the temperate zones in a city that lies in the tropical zone. I was not so struck by this fact when I first came to Koror, but now whenever I return to the city after making a circuit of islands where there are no Japanese residents, I have come to feel it quite clearly. In this place, neither tropical nor temperate things seem very beautiful. Or it would be more accurate to write that what we call beauty – whether tropical or temperate – does not exist here at all. Things that you would expect to have tropical beauty wither after suffering castration at the hands of temperate civilization,

while things that ought to possess a temperate beauty become feeble and lose their poise in this tropical landscape, particularly under the relentless light of the sun. The city absolutely reeks with decadence and a strange poverty; everyone is obviously obsessed with keeping up appearances, but that only adds to the sense that the place is a colonial backwater.⁴⁸

Nakajima depicts the changes of values in the natives living on the island after they have been exposed to both Western and Japanese thoughts. Mariyan knows English because her foster father, William Gibbon, had been an interpreter working under German ethnographer Kramer; she is also fluent in Japanese from having attended a girls' high school in Japan. Nakajima considered the mix of temperate and tropical incongruous, and both have lost their original beauty as a result of discordance.

Robert Tierney notes that Nakajima used climate zones to describe a set of values and esthetic standards particular to a region, similar to Watsuji Tetsuo's (1889-1960) *Fūdo*, which theorized how place and climate shaped a region's culture and character.⁴⁹ Perhaps Nakajima's discernment regarding the decadence on the island is a representation of his desire for the pure beauty of the original island life. As colonization forces expanded over the islands, Nakajima saw that the lives of indigenous people were being transformed, but not necessarily for the better. As Homi K. Bhabha explains, native culture becomes hybridized during colonization:

The native intellectual who identifies the people with the true national culture will be disappointed. The people are now the very principle of 'dialectical reorganization' and they construct their culture from the national text translated modern Western forms of information technology, language, dress.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ *NAZ*, vol. 1, 282-283. Translated excerpt taken from Tierney, "The Colonial Eyeglasses of Nakajima Atsushi," 164.

⁴⁹ Tierney, "The Colonial Eyeglasses of Nakajima Atsushi," 165.

⁵⁰ Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 38.

On the colonized island of Palau, Mariyan represents a hybrid individual who is no longer proud of her original heritage, but wants to become integrated into colonialist Japan. Given his criticism of incongruity and loss of beauty when a culture becomes hybridized, Nakajima probably wished various cultures could remain in their pristine state.

“Kōhuku” (Happiness)

Even though Nakajima did not regard civilization to be superior to primitive society, he saw that native culture was being irreparably altered. Did modernization, Westernization, and Japanization really create a better existence for the natives? Nakajima attempted to address these issues in his short story, “Kōhuku.”

“Kōhuku” is an adaptation of the Chinese story in section 5 of chapter 3 (King Mu of Chou) in *Lieh Tzu*, as Sasaki Mitsuru has noted.⁵¹ The servant of a wealthy merchant dreams every night that he is the king, while the merchant, Yin, anxious about his business, dreams that he is a servant. Upon a friend’s advice, Yin decides to reduce his own stress over work and to lessen the work of the servant.

The plot of “Kōhuku” and the story by Lieh Tzu are similar, except that Nakajima has changed the setting to that of an island in the South Seas. Nakajima depicts the story of a servant with a life of manual labor in contrast with that of his owner, the island’s chief who leads an opulent life.⁵² The servant does heavy labor all day long, but when he sleeps in his shack, he has the most wonderful dreams about living a life of luxury. The island chief enjoys all the benefits of material wealth, but has miserable dreams every night. The servant wakes up earlier than the birds to go fishing, and has been bitten by a

⁵¹ Sasaki Mitsuru, *Nakajima Atsushi no bungaku* [Nakajima Atsushi’s literature] (Tokyo: Ōfūsha, 1973), 273-74.

⁵² *NAZ*, vol. 1, 221-22.

large octopus, chased by a shark, and had his toes clamped by shellfish. While everyone napped in the afternoon, he would be cleaning the house, building a hut, harvesting coconut honey, making furniture, and so on. The island chief owns half of the island's potato fields and two-thirds of the coconut forest. He eats delicacies such as sea turtle fat, stone-barbecued pork, mermaid's embryo, and steamed bat. It is said, however, that when white men came, they brought a vile disease (probably tuberculosis),⁵³ and some of the island's people have become diseased. They cough lightly, their skin pales, and their bodies become weak and thin. The island chief has also become sick.

Although the servant lives a life of hardship, he is thankful for each day, and treats all of his work as an innate responsibility, like a woman in labor during child birth. The servant sometimes prays to God to cure his sickness and decrease his pain. After a while, he begins dreaming that he is the island chief when he sleeps at night. In these dreams, he lives in a large house where everyone listens to him; he has delicacies for dinner and many servants to carry out his orders. When he awakens in the morning, he must labor all day, but when he sleeps, he has wonderful recurring dreams of being the island chief.

Just as the servant begins to have good dreams every night, the island chief begins to dream every night that he is the poorest servant and performs hard labor. He is bitten by an octopus, and has his toes clamped by shellfish, and at meal time has only potato ends and fish bones to eat. The chief becomes ill and thin to the point that he cannot bear it any longer. So he calls the servant with the intention of punishing him. But when he sees that the poor servant has improved in health, gained weight, and appears to be in good spirits, he loses his sense of superiority because of his own emaciated condition,

⁵³ Ochner, "Nakajima Atsushi: His Life and Work," 339.

and wonders whether day or night is reality. When the chief unintentionally asks the servant how he improved his health, he learns that they have opposite dreams every night. He becomes shocked at how the dream world can have such an impact on the physical body, and at how the dream world seems almost more real than the physical world. Since the island of Oruwangaru sank along with its inhabitants eighty years ago, no man in Palau has had such a wonderful dream.

The near realism of dreams in “Kōhuku” has been attributed to similar ideas found in *Pensées*, written by Blaise Pascal (1623-1662).⁵⁴ Dreams can be more truthful than the illusions of the actual physical world, as Pascal describes:

Moreover, no one can be sure, apart from faith, whether he is sleeping or waking, because when we are asleep we are just as firmly convinced that we are awake as we are now. As we often dream we are dreaming, piling up one dream on another, is it not possible that this half of our life is itself just a dream, on to which the others are grafted, and from which we shall awake when we die? ... As a result, since half our life is spent in sleep, on our own admission and despite appearances we have no idea of the truth because all our intuitions are simply illusions during that time. Who knows whether the other half of our lives, when we think we are awake is not another sleep slightly different from the first, on to which our dreams are grafted as our sleep appears, and from which we awake when we think we are sleeping?⁵⁵

The indistinctness between sleep and awareness, dream and reality, is the foundation of the parable of “Kōhuku,” in which the dream world has an equal impact on the physical world. The blur between dream and reality is also discussed by Chuang Tzu in chapter 2 of the Inner Book, “Discussion on Making All Things Equal.” In the discussion, Chang Wu-tzu points out,

“When they were dreaming they did not know it was a dream; in their dream they may even have tried to interpret it; but when they awoke they

⁵⁴ Sasaki, *Nakajima Atsushi no bungaku*, 273.

⁵⁵ Blaise Pascal, *Pensées*, trans. A. J. Kraitsheimer (New York: Penguin Putnum, 1995), 33.

knew that it was a dream. And there is the great awaking, after which we shall know that this life was a great dream.”⁵⁶

The Taoist philosophy also views life as a dream, which is a perspective that has helped people to accept the absurdities and hardships of life.

On the surface, “Kōhuku” is just a fable adapted from a Chinese tale, but it could be interpreted in subtle ways. The story can be viewed as a parody of the subjugation of colonized people and their unconscious attempt to seek redress. The servant represents the colonized people who labor on plantations, and grow crops for the sake of the chief who symbolizes the imperial rulers. In the narration, only when the white men came did the island people become ill and pray to gods for a cure.

According to Yanaihara, Micronesian inhabitants traditionally lacked a clear-cut distinction of property. When clansmen were asked to whom the land belonged, they replied that the land belonged to the chieftain as well as to the clan. Yanaihara further explains that “the chieftain was never the possessor of the land, nor was he ever regarded as a landowner.”⁵⁷ Yanaihara also quotes from Isoda Isao’s *The History of the Civilization of the Marshall Islands*, to demonstrate that the islanders often regarded food as communal property:

When a large number of fish were caught, they were brought before the chieftain, not as a tribute to him, but to be distributed by him among all members of the community, and the chieftain did so very impartially, taking a share for himself.⁵⁸

In this way, the behavior of the Micronesians is the same as that of the primitive society in the south, in the parable of “The Mountain Tree” by Chuang Tzu:

⁵⁶ Legge, *The Texts of Taoism*, 242-43. See also Zhuangzi and Zhang, *Zhuangzi*, 44.

⁵⁷ Yanaihara, *Pacific Islands under Japanese Mandate*, 141.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 75.

“In Nan-yueh there is a city and its name is The Land of Virtue Established. Its people are foolish and naïve, few in thoughts of self, scant in desires. They know how to make, but not how to lay away; they give, but look for nothing in return. They do not know what accords with right, they do not know what conforms to ritual.”⁵⁹

Because natural resources were abundant in primitive societies, the inhabitants shared them promptly and had no selfish desire to hoard objects for personal keeping. Incidentally, this innocent state of existence is also described by Montaigne in his essay “Of Cannibals”:

They are not fighting for the conquest of new lands, for they still enjoy that natural abundance that provides them without toil and trouble with all necessary things in such profusion that they have no wish to enlarge their boundaries. They are still in that happy state of desiring only as much as their natural needs demand; anything beyond that is superfluous to them.⁶⁰

Hijikata also explicitly mentions that, “in Palau, the concept of owning property at the private level was not developed until foreigners came.”⁶¹ In addition, Yanaihara rationalizes that chieftains did not lead luxurious lives because “the natural resources of the islands are too poor and the personal incomes of the chieftains too limited” such that they could not afford many wives.⁶² Therefore, traditional chieftains in Micronesia did not hold an economic or power status much higher than that of a typical clansman.

However, the communal practice of the natives was changed under German occupation, during which the copra trade was established:

The islanders now began to count their wealth in terms of this new product [copra] which fetched money since it was supplied almost entirely to meet the demand of foreign traders. The tribute to the chieftain now became half of the entire quantity of copra produced by the clansmen.... This system of tribute was an innovation which accompanied the production of

⁵⁹ Watson, *The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu*, 211. See also Zhuangzi and Zhang, *Zhuangzi*, 395.

⁶⁰ Michel de Montaigne, *The Complete Essays of Montaigne*, trans. Donald M. Frame (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1965), 156.

⁶¹ Hijikata, *Society and Life in Palau*, 103.

⁶² Yanaihara, *Pacific Islands under Japanese Mandate*, 216.

copra. In fact it was an outcome of the commercial policy of the Jaluit Company, which monopolized the export trade of copra and contrived this system as a means by which the chieftain was made to exert his influence upon the generally lazy clansmen, to increase their production of copra.⁶³

The chief portrayed in “Kōhuku” as a wealthy and powerful figure was thus a product of commercial activities begun by the Germans, and not a traditional Micronesian chieftain according to the native customary ways. The primitive egalitarian practice of the natives follows the way of nature described in the *Tao Te Ching*. “The Way of Heaven reduces whatever is excessive and supplements whatever is insufficient. The way of man is different. It reduces the insufficient to offer to the excessive.”⁶⁴ But the natural way of life was changed when the imperialists took control of the island to establish trade for profit. The overworked servant represents the natives who worked on the coconut farms, sugar cane fields, and phosphate mines under colonization. Nakajima sympathized with the fate of the natives who labored under imperial control, but saw their welfare reduced. In this way, “Kōhuku” echoes the plea against harsh rule by Lao Tzu in the *Tao Te Ching*.

The people starve because the ruler eats too much tax-grain. Therefore they starve. They are difficult to rule because their ruler does too many things. Therefore they are difficult to rule. The people take death lightly because their ruler strives for life too vigorously. Therefore they take death lightly. It is only those who do not seek after life that excel in making life valuable.⁶⁵

The exploitation of the servant by the chief, which implicates the unfair treatment of the natives by the imperialists, is an artificial system that civilization has created. The rulers at the top of the social structure are desirous of life and its luxuries. Only those who are not desirous of individual comfort and material gains can give welfare back to the people.

⁶³ Ibid., 143.

⁶⁴ Chan, *The Way of Lao Tzu*, chapter 77, 234.

⁶⁵ Ibid., chapter 75, 232.

The ending of “Kohoku” may have been inspired by the Palau legend on the sinking of Ngeruangel, about which Hijikata had probably written.⁶⁶ Hijikata learned of the story about a gravestone located at Ollei, of a man called Delengeli Ruangel, who had escaped to Palau from Ngeruangel before it sank.⁶⁷ Ngeruangel was an island with large and strong inhabitants who used to ridicule and mock the inhabitants of the Ngcheangel, who were small and weak. The weak children of Ngcheangel were forced into burdensome labor by the people of Ngeruangel, such as holding the sail mast of their canoes. As the people of Ngcheangel were resentful, the chief of Ngcheangel prayed to the gods, and seven great waves came over Ngeruangel, which sank into the sea. Literary critic Sasaki Mitsuru mentions that there are no plot similarities between “Kōhuku” and the legend of Ngcheangel.⁶⁸ By recounting that the story occurred on an island that no longer exists, however, Nakajima may have been expressing a wish that the subjugation of the natives on the colonized islands would disappear, just as the island of Ngeruangel and its bullies had sunk into the sea as part of the gods’ punishment. In fact, by specifying that the island had sunk some eighty years ago, Nakajima supplies a date range that coincides with, and may allude to, the arrival of white men in Palau. Yanaihara’s historical account shows that the English and Germans had begun copra trade in Palau in the 1860s and 1870s.⁶⁹

If the physical world represents material wealth and the dream world represents spiritual wealth, the subjugated island people can still be content and happy in spirit

⁶⁶ Hijikata Hisakatsu, *Collective Works of Hijikata Hisakatsu: Myths and Legends of Palau*, ed. Endo Hisashi (Tokyo: The Sasakawa Peace Foundation, 1996), 94.

⁶⁷ Hijikata Hisakatsu, *Collective Works of Hijikata Hisakatsu: Gods and Religion of Palau*, ed. Endo Hisashi (Tokyo: The Sasakawa Peace Foundation, 1995), 136.

⁶⁸ Sasaki, *Nakajima Atsushi no bungaku*, 279-80.

⁶⁹ Yanaihara, *Pacific Islands under Japanese Mandate*, 13.

because they are simple and pure, and free of the greed of the imperial rulers who want to develop their lands in order to reap the benefits of crop farming. Ochner has noted that the different ending in “Kōhuku” is no longer didactic but dreamy, with its non-existent island.⁷⁰ There are two possible didactic endings: the first is from the original Chinese moral that an owner should not abuse his servant; the second is from the Palau legend that bullies will be punished by the gods. Nakajima leaves out both alternatives, perhaps because he did not believe a didactic ending could offer a solution to the problems that the colonized natives faced, as Micronesia had been continuously colonized by different people — the Spanish, the Germans, and the Japanese. The irony of the title “Kōhuku” lies in that the happiness of the Micronesians remains as elusive as dreams.

Anti-Colonial Sentiment

Nakajima sympathized with the fate of the Micronesian natives, who were forced to adapt to new value standards and a new way of life. Even though Nakajima felt the exploitation had been unjust, he could not change government policies, and could express his discontent only through story writing. Perhaps the cruel treatment of the colonized people made Nakajima disillusioned with the expanding Japanese empire, but he did not write stories that criticized national government directly. Instead, he turned to Chinese history to examine the same patterns of imperialism and cultural domination. Upon Nakajima’s return from the Micronesian islands, he wrote not only stories about his experience in the South Seas, but also period tales based on Chinese historical sources that examined the subjugation of one people by another.

⁷⁰ Ochner, “Nakajima Atsushi: His Life and Work,” 342.

Chapter 5. Completion of Man

From his experiences in Micronesia, Nakajima became disillusioned with the Japanese government's treatment of the natives. Nakajima disagreed with the exploitation of the natives based on the technological advantages that Japan had learned from the West. But as much as he sympathized with the natives and cherished their purity in a natural state of life, Nakajima himself was a product of contemporary civilization; he could not revert to a primitive life no matter how much he commiserated with the natives. Can civilization advance itself without generating detrimental effects on society and letting itself be used as a harmful tool? Nakajima examined the issue through Chinese history and the Taoist philosophy.

Pacific War

The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, set off the involvement of the United States in the Pacific War. Nakajima received the news of war through radio broadcasts regulated by the Nan'yōchō. In Nakajima's December 14 letter to his wife, he expresses that he wished he could listen to radio freely like those living in Japan.¹ In the same letter, Nakajima also tries to reassure his wife that, despite Palau's proximity to the Philippines, it is not in danger of an air raid. Although there have been air raid alerts, no one had seen enemy planes.² However, due to the war efforts, Nakajima informs Taka that the delivery of express packages by airmail has been halted, and that she would have to send packages to him via surface mail.³ Also, all mail correspondences between the South Seas and Japan were now monitored. Nakajima writes to Taka that he dislikes having his personal family letters read by strangers, and will try to make

¹ *NAZ*, vol. 3, 653.

² *Ibid.*, 654.

³ *Ibid.*, 655.

arrangements to have his acquaintances who are returning to Japan bring letters back for him and send occasional telegrams.⁴

Nakajima turned to the genre of historical fiction in the wake of World War II. Rohan had stopped writing fiction because he considered it inappropriate during the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905), and instead worked on historical fiction.⁵ Nakajima did not produce creative work during his stay in Micronesia, but upon his return to Japan in March 1942, similar to Rohan, he chose historical fiction to convey ideas and values that were relevant to his time. In his essay, "Tako no ki no shita de" (Under the Pandanus Tree), Nakajima asserts his belief that one should not produce literature for the purpose of war propaganda.⁶ Perhaps, Nakajima wrote "Deshi" and "Riryō" not only because of his affinity to history through Chinese studies, but also because he thought that these works could not be manipulated for use as propaganda.

"Meijinden" (The Expert)

"Meijinden" (The Expert, or The Best Archer in the World) is also an adaptation of stories in *Lieh Tzu*, specifically of section 5 of chapter 2 (Huang ti), section 13 of chapter 4 (Chung ni), and section 14 of Chapter 5 (T'ang wen).⁷ "Meijinden" describes the quest of a man called Chi Ch'ang to become the best archer in the world. Chi Ch'ang begins to study archery under a master called Fei Wei, who teaches him to train his eyes by not blinking. Chi Ch'ang practices by staring at the moving shuttle inside the loom of a weaver. After two years, Chi Ch'ang perfects the skill of not blinking his eyes to the extent that he sleeps with his eyes open, and a spider makes a web between his eye lashes.

⁴ Ibid., 657.

⁵ Donald Keene, *Dawn to the West: Japanese Literature of the Modern Era* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 160.

⁶ *NAZ*, vol. 2, 23.

⁷ Sasaki, *Nakajima Atsushi no bungaku*, 289, 292.

Next, Fei Wei tells Chi Ch'ang to train his ability to look by focusing on tiny objects until they appear enormous. Chi practices by looking at an insect hanging from a window. After three years, an insect appears as large as a house to Chi Ch'ang, pedestrians as large as cathedrals, and horses as large as mountains.

Fei Wei begins to teach Chi Ch'ang the methods of shooting arrows. After a month, Chi Ch'ang shoots so precisely that the one hundred arrows he shot all link up in a chain with each arrow head lodging in the nock of the previous arrow. Chi Ch'ang masters the art of shooting from Fei Wei, and becomes conceited. He attempts to kill Fei Wei in order to become the best archer in the world. Fei Wei quickly reacts and fends off the attack by discharging arrows to block those shot by Chi Ch'ang. Fei Wei then recommends that Chi Ch'ang study with the foremost archer, Kan Ying, at Mount Ho.

Chi Ch'ang eagerly displays his shooting ability to Kan Ying, only to be rebuffed that he merely knows how to shoot for shooting's sake. The highest skill is to shoot without shooting. Kan Ying demonstrates this principle by shooting a hawk from the sky with an invisible arrow and bow. Chi Ch'ang is dumbfounded and stays on the mountain for nine years to study with Kan Ying. When Chi Ch'ang returns to his hometown, he has an impassive composure. When someone asks why he never holds the bow anymore, he replies, "True security of living lies in idleness; the perfection of eloquence is nothing but silence, and the ideal archer never displays his art in archery at all."⁸

By the time he is in old age, Chi Ch'ang has not touched a bow in such a long time that he even forgets the name of the bow and its purpose. Subsequently, for some period of time in that town, the painters hide their paint brushes, musicians cut strings of the zither, and carpenters feel embarrassed to use rulers. Nakajima portrays Chi Ch'ang

⁸ Ota Yoshisaburo, "The Best Archer in the World," *Quarterly Review of Literature* 7, no. 2 (1953): 165.

as the epitome of the Taoist sage, one who knows everything, but says nothing and shows nothing. The characteristics of the Taoist sage seen in Chi Ch'ang correspond with the description of Nan-kuo-tzu, who has found the way (*Tao*) in *Lieh Tzu*, section 5 of chapter 4:

“He hides his perfection in the void, under a corporeal appearance. He no longer listens with his ears, looks with his eyes, speaks with his mouth, or thinks with his mind.... He who has found what he was seeking, no longer speaks of it.... His apathetic look hides his perfection. This man no longer thinks or speaks because he knows.”⁹

Chi Ch'ang, in seeking the mastery of archery, finds his own perfection. He is no longer concerned with proving or displaying his skill, but is content simply with being, or existing.

Many of the episodes in “Meijinden” are present in *Lieh Tzu*, but in scattered and brief sketches, under names of different characters. Nakajima, who is discerning, sees the essence of these short stories, and adapts these scenarios to retell a vivid tale with rich details. Nakajima further elevates Taoist perfection by inserting events such as Kang Ying's ability to shoot a hawk without using an actual bow and arrow, Chi Ch'ang's speech regarding inaction, and the legend about the town artisans' reluctance to display their arts. Nakajima repeatedly conveys the principle of “inaction,” which is expounded by Lao Tzu: “Tao invariably takes no action, and yet there is nothing left undone.”¹⁰

Hikami expresses regret over the fact that a writer as talented as Nakajima died young, and did not have the opportunity to write more stories like the well-crafted Taoist

⁹ Liezi. *Ch'ung-hu-ch'ien-ching or The Treatise of the Transcendent Master of the Void*, trans. Leon Wieger and Derek Bryce (Felinfach, UK: Llanerch Publishers, 1992), 56.

¹⁰ Chan, *The Way of Lao Tzu*, chapter 37, 166.

allegory as seen in “Meijinden,” which he viewed as one of the best stories written.¹¹ At the same time, critic Arai Michio cautions that readers who are unfamiliar with the original ideas of *Lieh Tzu* may not understand the allegory.¹² The Taoist ideas expressed in “Meijinden” reflect the ideas of Lao Tzu very well, particularly regarding the use of weapons: “Even if there are arrows and weapons, none will display them.”¹³ The significant change occurs in “Meijinden” when Chi Ch’ang loses his eagerness to demonstrate his talent, and no longer needs to prove that he is the best archer in the world. When Chi Ch’ang attains the stage of “no shooting,” he does not use the bow and arrow as a weapon to dominate over others. Dissuasion from the use of weapons is further expounded in the *Tao Te Ching*:

Fine weapons are instruments of evil. They are hated by men. Therefore those who possess Tao turn away from them. The good ruler when at home honors the left. When at war he honors the right. Weapons are instruments of evil, not the instruments of a good ruler. When he uses them unavoidably, he regards calm restraint as the best principle. Even when he is victorious, he does not regard it as praiseworthy, for to praise victory is to delight in the slaughter of men.¹⁴

Perhaps Nakajima wrote “Meijinden” to hint at the unbridled Western domination of Asia through civilization. Weapons, symbolic of civilization, become destructive when man uses them for selfish gain. With advanced maritime technology, arms, and weapons, the European nations expanded territories and gained control of various colonies. The West, anxious to trade and obtain resources from the colonies, used technology to conquer other nations in their search for wealth. Europeans controlled their colonies, including

¹¹ Hikami Hidehiro, “Kaisetsu” [Commentary] (Showa 31), in *Nakajima Atsushi kenkyū* [Studies of Nakajima Atsushi], ed. Nakamura Mitsuo, Hikami Hidehiro, and Gunji Katsuyoshi (Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 1978), 200.

¹² Arai Michio, “The Structure of Nakajima Atsushi’s Meijinden,” *Journal of Nisho-Gakusha University Humanities Association* 70 (2003): 112.

¹³ Chan, *The Way of Lao Tzu*, chapter 80, 238.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, chapter 31, 154. Left is symbolic of *yang* which represents life, while right is symbolic of *ying*, which represents death.

territories in the South Seas, with force. European nations competed with each other to see which country could secure more colonies and trading access, and could therefore claim to be the most powerful country in the world, similar to Chi Ch'ang, who wants to be regarded as the best archer. By depicting the transformation of Chi Ch'ang from a fame seeker to a Taoist sage, Nakajima shows that external fame is not an absolute measure of personal fulfillment. Applying the same logic to the competition among nations, domination over foreign countries and people is not a true reflection of a nation's supremacy. According to Taoist philosophy, there is no need to demonstrate greatness:

Those who possessed in highest degree the attributes of the Tao did not seek to show them, and therefore they possessed them in fullest measure. Those who possessed in a lower degree those attributes sought how not to lose them, and therefore they did not possess them in fullest measure. Those who possessed in the highest degree those attributes did nothing with a purpose, and had no need to do anything. Those who possessed them in a lower degree were always doing, and had need to be so doing.¹⁵

When Chi Ch'ang understood the concept of *wu wei* and “no-shooting,” he stopped seeking external recognition. Nakajima's analogy suggests that, if Western nations had followed the Taoist philosophy, they would not have used civilization as a means to exploit countries of more primitive customs and social structures. If the Japanese had understood this Taoist precept, they would not have rushed to claim colonies to prove their strength after modernization. “Meijinden” may have been Nakajima's silent objection to imperialism and colonization.

Did Nakajima invalidate civilization altogether, then? What purpose does civilization serve and how can it sustain itself without being used by people as a weapon for domination? If mankind cannot revert to a primitive state of content and happiness in

¹⁵ James Legge, *The Tao Te Ching: Teaching the Way to Wisdom* (Rochester, UK: Axiom Publishing, 2001), chapter 38.

nature, what can harbor man from the conflicts that accompany progress by mankind? If Lao Tzu's ideal depiction of small countries which remain distant from each other and therefore free of disputes is no longer possible, how should nations conduct themselves without inflicting war? Nakajima looked back to the traditional Chinese Confucian teachings for answers.

“Deshi” (The Disciple)

In “Deshi,” Nakajima focuses on the development of Tzu Lu (542-480 BC), a student of Confucius (551-479 BC), to reflect on Confucian values and the role of education. Nakajima's “Deshi,” which glorifies Confucian ideals through anecdotes in the lives of Tzu Lu and Confucius, portrays virtue and righteousness as compasses which can safeguard mankind from self-destruction. Similarly, the Romantics believe in man's propensity to virtue and eternal truth, which would guide him to a path of salvation. As Rousseau states in *Émile*, there are two distinct principles in human nature:

...one of them raised him to the study of the eternal truths, to the love of justice, and of true morality, to the regions of the world of thought, which the wise delight to contemplate; the other led him downwards to himself, made him the slave of his senses, of the passions which are their instruments, and thus opposed everything suggested to him by the former principle.¹⁶

These two internal forces of elevation and destruction are described as the principle and the energy in Neo-Confucian terms. Given Nakajima's background in Chinese studies, it is only natural that he would go back to Confucian philosophy in his search for truths which would guide mankind's progress and curb its selfish desires.

Literary critic Sasaki Mitsuru mentions that there are few psychological descriptions of Tzu Lu in Chinese historical sources, thus Nakajima crafted many of the

¹⁶ Rousseau, *Émile*, 289.

fictional psychological profiles of Tzu Lu.¹⁷ Shinoda Hazime, also a literary critic, praises Nakajima for reinterpreting historical characters in the context of modern psychological views.¹⁸ By piecing together the various records of Tzu Lu in chronological order from the *Analects*, *K'ung Tzu Chia Yu*, *Shih Chi*, and *Tso Chuan*, Nakajima describes the changing progression of Tzu Lu in “Deshi” from a brute, to a maturing student, to a learned governor. Through fictional psychological descriptions in various episodes, Nakajima seamlessly recreates Tzu Lu as a man of action who is true to his beliefs.

Nakajima introduces “Deshi” with the initial meeting between Tzu Lu and Confucius, during which Confucius asks Tzu Lu what he likes, and Tzu Lu answers that he likes the sword.¹⁹ When Confucius questions Tzu Lu about education, Tzu Lu retorts that learning is of no use, but as Confucius explains the benefits of studying, Tzu Lu becomes embarrassed at his own arrogance and decides to become a disciple of Confucius. Nakajima depicts the importance of education through Tzu Lu’s voluntary decision to learn, but does not encourage that education be imposed on those who do not seek it, as in the case of colonies.

Tzu Lu admires Confucius for his “keen psychological insight” and “undefiled idealism.”²⁰ Tzu Lu’s reverence toward his teacher makes him a loyal and faithful follower of Confucius. Tzu Lu’s personality is also described through Confucius’ eyes. Tzu Lu is adverse to grand titles for etiquette and musical training; he wants to take

¹⁷ Sasaki, *Nakajima Atsushi no bungaku*, 314.

¹⁸ Shinoda Hazime, “Deshi wo megutte” [Regarding the disciple], in *Nakajima Atsushi kenkyū* [Studies of Nakajima Atsushi], ed. Nakamura Mitsuo, Hikami Hidehiro, and Gunji Katsuyoshi (Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 1978), 152.

¹⁹ Yang Chunqiu, *Xin yi Kongzi Jia Yu* [The school sayings of Confucius] (Taipei: San min shu ju, 1996), 292-93.

²⁰ Nobuko Ochner, “The Disciple,” *Southern Humanities Review* 32, no. 2 (1998): 142.

things only as they are, without pretension. Confucius alone recognizes the virtue of simplicity and disinterestedness in Tzu Lu. In the portrayal of Confucius and Tzu Lu, Nakajima emphasizes the positive elements of human nature that elevate the spirit and promote the intrinsic goodness of mankind.

A conflict between Tzu Lu and Confucius arises from Confucius' visit to Nan-tzu, the consort to Duke Ling of Wei. Tzu Lu shows his strict adherence to propriety and righteousness when he expresses disapproval over Confucius' visit to Nan-tzu, when summoned by her.²¹ Tzu Lu thinks that Confucius, who is honorable and righteous, should not have to bow down to Nan-tzu, who is lewd and immoral.²² Tzu Lu's disagreement with Confucius reflects his personal growth, and his departure from the image of a reliant student who depends on Confucius for all moral judgments. Tzu Lu's uncompromising rectitude surfaces again when he resolves himself to become a man of action and to face the dangers of correcting the declining morals of the world: "We also know the danger of preaching the way in this society. But, all the more because the right way does not exist in present society, there is a need to preach the way even at the risk of our safety, don't you think?"²³ Tzu Lu's undaunted aspiration to reform society echoes Nitobe's description of a samurai's power of resolution: "Rectitude is the power of deciding upon a certain course of conduct in accordance with reason, without wavering;—to die when it is right to die, to strike when to strike is right."²⁴ Thus, Nakajima delineates Tzu Lu as an absolute moralist who would not be corrupted by his senses and passions, but would always uphold righteousness.

²¹ James Legge, *Confucius: Confucian Analects, the Great Learning and the Doctrine of the Mean* (New York: Dover Publications, 1971), Book 6, chapter 26, 193.

²² Kanno Domei, *Hochu rongo shuchū* [Annotated analects] (Tokyo: Meiji shoin, 1990), 48.

²³ *NAZ*, vol. 1, 471-72. Translated excerpt taken from Ochner, "The Disciple," 162.

²⁴ Nitobe, *Bushidō*, 59.

Another major dissent occurs between Tzu Lu and Confucius regarding righteous conduct. Tzu Kung, also a disciple, asks Confucius whether the officer Hsieh Ye, who was executed for admonishing Duke Ling of Ch'en (unknown-599 BC) for committing adultery, died the same honorable death as the famed loyal minister Pi Kan (1092-1029 BC), who admonished King Chou (1075-1046 BC) for the same sin.²⁵ Confucius answers that Hsieh Ye had died in vain due to his poor judgment because his position was merely an officer of the state, whereas Pi Kan not only held the high office of Junior Tutor, but also was a relative of King Chou. Pi Kan sacrificed his life in the hope that King Chou would repent his sin, so his death was virtuous and honorable. Hsieh Ye was an insignificant person in terms of influence, thus his death would not cause Duke Ling any remorse.

However, Tzu Lu is dissatisfied with Confucius' answer, for he believes that the action to correct wrong behavior is itself sufficiently virtuous. Confucius further explains that gentlemen retire from politics in a chaotic world, but Tzu Lu still values righteousness and believes that sacrificing oneself for trying to right a wrong is more important than retreating from politics, no matter what the outcome may be. He asks Confucius, "Does importance not exist in accomplishing just deeds by sacrificing oneself? ... even if he dies in protest of his master's wrongdoing, won't his act be much more meaningful in terms of its influence on the morale of his people?"²⁶ Confucius is concerned over Tzu Lu's adamant rectitude, and observes, "When there is the right way in the realm, he is straight as an arrow. Even when the right way does not exist, he is also as straight as an arrow. That man is just like Shih Yu of Wei [534-493 BC]. He probably

²⁵ Yang, *Xin yi Kongzi Jia Yu*, 299-300. Cf. Yu Xianhao, Zhou Fuchang, and Yao Manbo, *Xin yi Zuo zhuan du ben* [New annotated Chronicle of Zuo] (Taipei: San min shu ju, 2002), 649.

²⁶ *NAZ*, vol. 1, 474. Translated excerpt taken from Ochner, "The Disciple," 164.

will not die a natural death.”²⁷ Confucius’ prescience regarding Tzu Lu’s unnatural death is based on his knowledge of Tzu Lu’s upright character and strong sense of justice.

Tzu Lu realizes that perhaps it is the fate of Confucius to travel from country to country, serving as a warning bell to the world. No matter how unkind or hopeless the situation is, Confucius always is able to act wisely, never losing hope, as if to demonstrate optimism to future generations. Confucius is not to be limited to one country, or to one time period, but will be a timeless and boundless teacher, as Tzu Lu comes to understand. Through Tzu Lu’s appreciation of Confucius, Nakajima reveals his optimism about Confucian philosophy, which would bring wisdom to people and teach them proper conduct.

After spending three years governing Pu, a city that belongs to Wei, Tzu Lu is praised by Confucius for his success.²⁸ The positive appraisal of Tzu Lu by Confucius is rather significant because it demonstrates that Tzu Lu has attained the ideal of a Confucian official who is able to govern his people well and create a stable, content society. Under the teachings of Confucius, Tzu Lu has grown beyond a man known only for his valor, and into a man who is a cultured, wise, capable governor.

When the young Duke Ch’u of Wei (unknown-456BC) is captured and threatened by the exiled Prince Kuai Kuei and Kung Li, son of Kung Shu-yu, who are plotting to take over Wei, Tzu Lu returns to save his master, but dies while fighting the enemy. Tzu Lu is not in the city when the uprising occurs; before he re-enters the city gates, Tzu Kao tries to convince Tzu Lu to escape and avoid the danger. However, out of loyalty, Tzu Lu goes back into the city, insisting that, “Since I received their stipend, I will not run away

²⁷ *NAZ*, vol. I, 474-75. Translated excerpt taken from Ochner, “The Disciple,” 165.

²⁸ Yang, *Xinyi Kongzi Jia Yu*, 216-17.

from peril.”²⁹ Li Exian points out that Japanese critic Honda Komei considers Tzu Lu’s death a negation of Confucian belief regarding self-preservation.³⁰ However, Tzu Lu’s courage and indifference toward death actually conform to the Taoist outlook that death is a natural consequence, and a normal part of life. Lieh-tzu states in section 5 of chapter 1 (Tien jei):

He and I know that to cling to life and fear death is unreasonable, life and death being only two successive phases. Everything passes according to time or circumstance, through successive states, without changing essentially.³¹

Tzu Lu consciously chooses to return to the city under siege to fulfill his duty and obligation to his superiors, without apprehension over the possibility of death.

Although Tzu Lu’s disregard for self-preservation has been criticized as foolish, a deviation from the Confucian way, Tzu Lu nevertheless exhibits Confucian traits in his attention to formality, his sense of duty and loyalty, and his affirmation of the moral relationship between the servant and master. When Tzu Lu’s hat falls during the fight, he pauses to put his hat on, and says that “the true gentleman—dies—with his hat on—correctly.”³² Although he had not cared for formality before, Tzu Lu’s change is sincere, out of his respect for Confucian rituals. At the time of his death, Tzu Lu is a Confucian gentleman in action and true to his ideals. Confucius had tried to explain to Tzu Lu that one must use wisdom when faced with a life-and-death situation, noting, “even when one throws away one’s life, there is a time and a place to do it. To use one’s wisdom in discerning such a time and place is not particularly an act of self-interest. Hurrying to die

²⁹ Yu, Zhou, and Yao, *Xinyi Zuo zhuan du ben*, 1843. This event also is described in Sima Qian, *Shi Ji* [Records of the grand historian], vol. 7 (Beijing: Zhong hua shu ju, 1959), 2193.

³⁰ Li Exian, “Ribei wen xue zhong Tzu Lu xing xiang de bian yi yu Shi ji” [Transmutation of the image of Tzu Lu in Japanese literature and *The Records of the Grand Historian*] *Wai Guo Wen Xue Yan Jiu* [Foreign Literature Studies] 28, no. 121 (2006): 126.

³¹ Liezi, *The Treatise of the Transcendent Master of the Void*, 12.

³² *NAZ*, vol. 1, 482. Translated excerpt taken from Ochner, “The Disciple,” 172.

is not everything.”³³ Although Tzu Lu’s actions seem to contradict this warning, his righteousness and fealty nonetheless lead him to an honorable death. Critic Hamakawa Katsuhiko notes that the final ending of Nakajima’s account of Tzu Lu’s death, stating that his body is salted thereafter, was a deliberate emphasis on Tzu Lu’s tragic fate.³⁴

Nakajima illustrates the development of Tzu Lu from an uneducated, reckless man whose only merit is his valor and propensity toward virtue, to a capable Confucian retainer who governs well and is not afraid to face his fate in fulfilling his duty and loyalty to his superior. The careful treatment of historical events, intertwined with fictional psychological profiles to show the different stages of Tzu Lu’s development, help readers trace Tzu Lu’s journey. This course takes him from an initial tendency to rely on Confucius for proper moral judgments, through emerging doubts about what constitutes righteous conduct, to his finally attaining the self-knowledge and strength to act on his moral beliefs.

Although there are mixed opinions regarding Tzu Lu’s death, Nakajima’s portrayal allows readers to understand Tzu Lu’s righteousness as well as courage, and to therefore sympathize with his fate. Moreover, Tzu Lu is appreciated not only for his braveness, but also for his simple and uncalculating character that disregards profit and personal gain. Nakajima’s imaginative rendering of Tzu Lu’s life, based on historical sources, invigorates traditional Confucian ideals and values. Was the Confucian philosophy the only value system that Nakajima considered as a proper model for guiding mankind’s progress? Nakajima’s masterpiece, “Riryō,” reveals more Taoist characteristics in the struggle of mankind.

³³ *NAZ*, vol. 1, 474. Translated excerpt taken from Ochner, “The Disciple,” 164.

³⁴ Hamakawa Katsuhiko, *Nakajima Atsushi no sakuhin kenkyū* [A study of Nakajima Atsushi’s works] (Tokyo: Meiji shoin, 1976), 278.

“Riryō” (Li Ling)

“Riryō” depicts the defeat of General Li Ling by the Hsiung-nu, a nomadic tribe that resided in northern central Asia, during the Han dynasty (206 BC-220 AD) under Emperor Wu (156-87 BC). The events surrounding Li Ling’s surrender are recorded in the *Records of the Grand Historian* and *Book of Han*. Nakajima sets up the story in three parts, contrasting the different life circumstances of the three main characters, Li Ling (unknown-72 BC), Ssu-ma Ch’ien (145-86 BC), and Su Wu (140-60 BC). General Li Ling is a proud, fearless fighter, and agrees to lead an army of five thousand men north to fight the enemy, without cavalry. His army suffers severe casualties in the Gobi Desert after a prolonged fight and eventually surrenders. Emperor Wu becomes outraged when he discovers that Li Ling has surrendered to the Hsiung-nu, and his ministers charge Li Ling with the crime of treason.

Ssu-ma Ch’ien is the only person who speaks up for Li Ling out of his sense of justice. He commends Li Ling for having fought bravely, and defends him by saying that, even though he has been taken captive, he would have secret plans to retaliate. “At that time, this man praised Li Ling.... he had always fought for the country bravely without thinking of himself.... Although he is in the hands of the enemy, we can expect him to do something for Han.”³⁵ Ssu-ma Ch’ien speaks up for Li Ling, but this action angers Emperor Wu, and as a result, he receives the corporal punishment of castration. Although Ssu-ma Ch’ien suffers tremendously from the punishment, his determination to complete the writing of historical records remains steadfast. By writing about and reliving the lives of the brave and courageous men in the past, Ssu-ma Ch’ien finds hope in living. When

³⁵ *NAZ*, vol. 1, 497.

he finally completes the *Records of the Grand Historian*, it is as if he had suddenly aged, and he soon passes away.

The Hsiung-nu treat Li Ling kindly after his surrender because they regard Li Ling as the most worthy opponent and respect Li Ling's courage. They speak of his grandfather, Li Kwang, with admiration and praise his gallantry in the past battles. Li Ling is gradually assimilated into the Hsiung-nu culture in his manners of food and clothing, but he remains impassive, waiting for the chance to kill the Shan Yu and take his head. The Hsiung-nu continue to treat Li Ling as an honored guest. Two years later, in another battle in which another Han army is defeated, the Han general attributes his loss to the fact that General Li has been coaching the Hsiung-nu in military strategy. The enraged emperor sentences Li Ling's entire extended family to death by execution, even though it was another general with the same surname who was coaching the Hsiung-nu. Li Ling becomes infuriated at the emperor's unjust treatment of his family, and regrets not having carried out his plans of retaliation. But he eventually yields to his fate, and surrenders to the Hsiung-nu completely.

Su Wu had been sent to the North as an emissary of peace a year prior to Li Ling's expedition to conquer the Hsiung-nu, but he was captured by the Hsiung-nu when one of the emissaries became involved in internal disputes among the Hsiung-nu. Su Wu was the only emissary who refused to surrender. He attempted suicide, but was rescued and recovered from his injury. Although the Hsiung-nu try both forcing and cajoling Su Wu to surrender, he never gave in. When he continually refused to surrender, he was sent as a shepherd to the remote area of Lake Baikal in the northern frontier and now was living in poverty with bare subsistence. The Hsiung-nu ridicule Su Wu by stipulating that

if he could milk a ram, he would be released. Li Ling is sent to locate Su Wu, and finds him covered with hair and animal skin, appearing like a bear, and living in a nearby shack. Li Ling wonders what sustained Su Wu in an impoverished life.

Critic Ara Masahito argues that the tragic elements in “Riryō” are the result of the struggle between the Han and the Hsiung-nu people, thus between an agricultural society and a nomadic race, which takes place in the contrasted locales of the Yellow River region and the Gobi desert. The tragedy arises out of opposing political and economic views found in the Han and the Hsiung-nu.³⁶ Nakajima skillfully contrasts the different lifestyles and values through Li Ling’s gradual adoption and acceptance of life among the Hsiung-nu.

While Su Wu is usually referenced to as an exemplar of patriotism, loyalty, and honor, in contrast to Li Ling’s disloyalty in surrender, the depiction of Su Wu as a shepherd, the hardship of his survival in the wilderness, and the internal peace that he maintains, all reveal characteristics similar to the Taoist sage. The ideal man in the Taoist philosophy lives in nature, with minimal comfort, and perpetuates a sense of tranquility without seeking reward or recognition. This very image of the shepherd is also a manifestation of the Romantic pastoral tradition, as echoed in Leopardi’s poem, “Night-Song of a Wandering Shepherd of Asia,” in the following passage:

O how the shepherd’s life resembles yours.
 He rises with the dawn
 To move his flock among the fields, he looks
 Upon the grasses, fountains, other flocks,
 And in the tired evening takes his rest —
 He hopes toward nothing more.
 Tell me, O moon, what worth
 Is this life to the shepherd, or yours to you?
 Where doest this, my brief roaming, tend? And where

³⁶ Ara, “Nakajima Atsushi ron,” 171.

Your everlasting course?

A white-haired, weak old man —
 Barefoot and half naked
 With a ponderous load upon his back,
 Through valleys, over mountains and sharp rocks,
 Across deep sands and chasms,
 In wind and seething storm,
 In burning or in freezing weather — runs,
 Runs panting on, plunging through bogs and torrents,
 Falls down, gets up, and hurries, hurries on
 Without a stop or rest,
 His body cut and bleeding, till he arrives
 There where his path and so much labor aimed—
 The abyss, horrid, immense,
 Wherein, in falling, he unremembers all.³⁷

The portrayal of loneliness and hardship in the life of a shepherd in Leopardi's poem reads like a tribute to the nineteen years Su Wu spent shepherding in the remote area of Lake Baikal

The Chinese Han Empire was a formidable power whose people viewed their civilization as more advanced than that of other races, and sought to expand in territory by conquering the Hsiung-nu. After Li Ling surrenders to the Hsiung-nu, and spends three years living with them, he begins to understand their values and standards, and to think that they live genuinely without deceit. Li Ling begins to have doubts regarding Han's self-proclaimed supremacy as he recalls the words of the former Shan Yu:

Chinese Han claim that their country is one of propriety, and look down on Hsiung-nu behavior as something close to that of savages, Shan Yu said. What did the Han people mean by propriety? Didn't they just cover up the ugly things with beautiful decorations on the surface superficially? They are jealous of people who are wealthy. What's so different between the Han and Hsiung-nu? They lust after women and greed after money. What's so different there? After you remove the surface, there is no difference at all. It's only that the Chinese Han try to deceive and embellish whereas we don't. When a list of examples of family feud over power and deceptions and conflicts among officials since the beginning of

³⁷ Leopardi, *A Leopardi Reader*, 174.

the Han dynasty was given, Li Ling was at a loss for words. Actually, for a military man like him, Li Ling has always held doubts for the complicated courtesy for the sake of courtesy. Certainly, there were many occasions when he thought that the straightforwardness in the barbaric ways of Hsiung-nu was much preferable than the double-dealing masquerading under the shadow of the good name of Han. Gradually, Li Ling began to realize that the propriety of the customs of the Chinese and the inferiority of the customs of Hsiung-nu were just preconceived prejudice of the Chinese Han.³⁸

Literary critic Sasaki Mitsuru points out that, while the plot adheres to history, the descriptions about Li Ling's interaction with the Hsiung-nu are fictional.³⁹ In fact, in the letter to Su Wu, who returned to China after receiving amnesty from Emperor Chao (94-74B C), Li Ling reveals a sense of loss because he is forever alienated from the civilized Han Empire and remains in exile in the barbaric territory.⁴⁰ Therefore, Li Ling's ambivalence toward the Han is a projection of Nakajima's own Taoist belief that plainness is preferable to civility. Nakajima's portrayal of Li Ling's acceptance and preference for the straightforward yet barbaric ways of the Hsiung-nu over the deceptive sophistication of the Chinese Han is reflective of Nakajima's prior experience in Micronesia, where he became fond of the natives and preferred their honest simplicity over the polite yet aggressive Japanese.

In depicting the fallacious view of Chinese superiority through the words of the Hsiung-nu, Nakajima is hinting that perhaps the West had been just as arrogant in bringing advanced civilization to the East through the process of colonization, and that modernized Japan had ironically joined in this effort by starting its own colonizing endeavor through military expansion. Nakajima takes on the same critical stand as Chuang Tzu in that his description of the Han Chinese as double-dealing resonates with

³⁸ *NAZ*, vol.1, 515.

³⁹ Sasaki, *Nakajima Atsushi no bungaku*, 342.

⁴⁰ Xie Bingying et al., *Xin yi Gu wen guan zhi* (Taipei: San min shu ju, 2007), 404.

Chuang Tzu's criticism of the hypocritical aspects of Confucian ideology. Chuang Tzu lists the untold facts behind the revered Chinese sage kings and nobles in the parable "Robber Chih":

"Yao killed his eldest son, Shun exiled his [younger half] brother by the same mother—does this indicate any ethical ties between near and distant kin? T'ang banished his sovereign Chieh, King Wu killed his sovereign Chou—does this indicate any fitting distinctions between noble and humble? King Chi received the inheritance, the Duke of Chou killed his elder brother—does this indicate any proper order between elder and younger? The Confucians with their hypocritical speeches, the Mo-ists with their talk of universal love—do these indicate any attempt to maintain the distinctions decreed by the five moral principles and the six social relationships?"⁴¹

The Chinese were proud of their Confucian values based on morality and propriety, yet beneath their honor-bound ideologies and praise for the great deeds of the ancients laid cruelty, manipulation, and schemes. Yao and Shun are praised as the exemplary sage kings of ancient China who passed their reign to capable, virtuous men instead of establishing a blood lineage, yet even they had violated the Confucian morals by banishing their own kin. The straightforwardness of the Hsiung-nu people represents the simplicity and honesty of a barbaric society uncorrupted by civilization. Nakajima is mindful of the gap that exists between ideals and reality. Civilization, then, would seem to merely offer more elaborate disguises over the appalling reality that pervaded history.

Similarly, the Japanese expansion into the South Pacific under the guise of bringing emancipation to natives of the tropical islands had ironically brought misery to these peaceful innocent inhabitants who used to lead a contented life in harmony with nature. Nakajima's depiction of deceptive practices by advanced civilizations echoes what Chuang Tzu describes as the ideology of deceptions that arise from using machinery

⁴¹ Watson, *The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu*, 333. See also Legge, *The Texts of Taoism*, 618, and Zhuangzi and Zhang, *Zhuangzi*, 638.

developed by civilization. In a parable in “Heaven and Earth,” Tzu Kung sees a farmer watering his fields. The farmer draws water from a well with a bucket rather laboriously and waters only a small area. Tzu Kung suggests that he use a wooden scoop device that functions through torque and can transfer water out of the well quickly. The farmer becomes furious at Tzu Kung’s advice, and retorts with a laugh:

“I’ve heard from my teacher that, where there are ingenious contrivances, there are sure to be matters of contraptions and tricks; and that, where there are contraptions and tricks, there is sure to be a manipulative heart. When a manipulative heart is contained in the chest, its pure simplicity is impaired; when this pure simplicity is impaired, then the mind drifts; those whose minds drift, the Tao cannot fulfill their heart. It’s not that I don’t know of such gadget, it’s that I should be ashamed to use it.”⁴²

As people invent devices to improve efficiency and ease manual labor, people become restless and forever seek ways to obtain fruit without toil. Nakajima, leaning toward Taoist beliefs, was against the disturbance and avarice brought about by civilization. The case against the use of machinery and civilization because of their corruptive effects on the heart is also found in Leopardi’s parody “The Story of the Human Race,” which contains sentiments of Romanticism:

The decline from this relatively happy human condition was due to various causes ..., but the total revolution of fortune and the final fall from that state we now usually call ancient came chiefly from one cause, which was this. Among the prized phantasms of the ancients, there was one called Wisdom, who, universally honored and especially pursued by many men, had done her part for the recent prosperous centuries.... By familiarity with her, humans would achieve such excellence of knowledge, institution, and customs that their happy life would compare with that of the gods.... Yet their frequent idleness made them crave anything new.... Their minds and manners had become so degraded.... [Jove] was sickened ... with the restless, insatiable, excessive nature of humans.⁴³

⁴² Legge, *The Texts of Taoism*, 368. See also Zhuangzi and Zhang, *Zhuangzi*, 232-33.

⁴³ Leopardi, *A Leopardi Reader*, 96-97.

As people accumulated wisdom and developed complex civilizations, the welfare of the people had improved, yet the energy diverted from facing the hardship of survival had been wasted due to mankind's greed and materialism. The Han Chinese had established the Confucian morals and were proud of their educated manners, yet they waged war on the Hsiung-nu for the sake of territory.

If the Han Chinese were unable to uphold the righteous and sincere Confucian doctrines they preached, what values can one hold onto? Nakajima seems to have attributed hope to the historian Ssu-ma Ch'ien. While all other government officials are concerned about self-preservation, Ssu-ma Ch'ien is the only person who dared to speak the truth.

At the behest of his father, Ssu-ma Ch'ien has taken up the post of imperial court historian to complete the historical records of China. He is very careful to make sure that his writing only recounts and does not fabricate history. Although Ssu-ma Ch'ien is not sociable with other government officials, he is righteous and honorable. Because Ssu-ma Ch'ien speaks up for Li Ling, however, he is sentenced to be castrated by Emperor Wu. Ssu-ma Ch'ien had expected a death sentence originally; yet, his actual punishment brings much more humiliation, despair, and indignation.

After days of resentment, desperation, and thoughts about suicide, Ssu-ma Ch'ien yields to his fate, but he does not give up his assignment. In fact, it is the act of writing the historical records that gives him the hope to live. Five months after his punishment, Ssu-ma Ch'ien begins writing the historical records once again. Thus, Ssu-ma Ch'ien chooses to continue living out of his duty to his father, in order to complete the historical records. The goal of fulfilling his father's wish and the act of writing restores his

optimism. The importance of creating a complete historical account for future generations sustains Ssu-ma Ch'ien's will to live.

Scholar Cheng Ching-mao interprets the castration of Ssu-ma Ch'ien as a metaphor for the impotence of intellectuals.⁴⁴ Indeed, Ssu-ma Ch'ien as an intellectual is at the mercy of Emperor Wu. As a writer, however, he is able to compile history, an activity which keeps him alive, and serves as his defense against the cruel reality. In this way, Ssu-ma Ch'ien's relationship to his writing is similar to what Foucault describes about the storyteller of *Arabian Nights*, who forestalls her death by her narrative:

The hero accepted an early death because his life, consecrated and magnified by death, passed into immortality; and the narrative redeemed his acceptance of death.... Storytellers continued their narratives late into the night to forestall death and to delay the inevitable moment when everyone must fall silent.⁴⁵

Humiliated by the punishment, Ssu-ma Ch'ien contemplates death, but his father's unfulfilled wish prevents Ssu-ma Ch'ien from killing himself. Ssu-ma Ch'ien realizes that he must complete the historical account by all means before his death. Ssu-ma Ch'ien delays his death, not out of fear, but out of his mission to write. Nakajima, who suffered chronic asthma, had a premonition that he would die young. In his intense desire to write, Nakajima may have sustained his health during his illness. Nakajima's last words on his death bed supposedly were, "I want to write, I want to write, I want to put down in words, everything that's in my head."⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Ching-mao Cheng, "Chinese History in the Writings of Nakajima Atsushi," *Journal of the Association of Teachers of Japanese* 8, no. 1 (1972): 56.

⁴⁵ Foucault, *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice*, 117.

⁴⁶ Katsumata, *Spirit Nakajima Atsushi*, 41.

Completion of Man

Although Nakajima's experience in the South Seas had made him wary of the presence of civilization and the domination of advanced countries, he still turned to the accumulated knowledge and wisdom in the Confucian doctrines, Taoist philosophies, and Romanticism. As did Tzu Lu in "Deshi," Nakajima believed in Confucian values of righteousness, propriety, and disinterestedness, as described by his friend Kugimoto.⁴⁷ He also realized, however, that Confucian philosophy was not the absolute ideal. He was attracted as well to the concepts of *wu wei* and affinity toward nature in the Taoist philosophy. Further, Nakajima remained optimistic, in the same way as Rousseau about man's innate virtue and morality. The characters in "Meijinden," "Deshi," and "Riryō" represent Nakajima's image of possible ways to live so that individuals would be able to rise above selfish desires, even when faced with adversity.

⁴⁷ Kugimoto, "Ton no koto," 192-193.

Chapter 6. Conclusion

Nakajima Atsushi was a unique writer who had a strong background in Chinese studies but also familiarity with European literature, much like Mori Ōgai, for whom Nakajima held high admiration. He received education under a reformed curriculum after the Meiji Restoration. Nakajima also experienced life in Korea, Manchuria, and Micronesia, as Japan expanded its territory and obtained colonies. Nakajima's contact with people of different races and ethnicities made him aware of the many cultures and modes of civilization. In his short stories, Nakajima experiments with different subject matters and settings, but continues to articulate his views about the negative effects of civilization from the Romantic and Taoist perspectives, both of which long for a simple, natural existence.

While Nakajima is best known for his Chinese-style writing in "Tiger Poet" and "Riryō," his other stories contain allusions to many European authors and works, with Romanticism as a dominant theme. Although Confucian elements are more frequently referenced in regard to Chinese influences on Nakajima, Taoist philosophy also had a major impact on his writing. Nakajima longed for a simple way of living, which was disappearing as advanced nations sought to colonize primitive peoples. As man cannot revert to a pristine state of natural innocence, Nakajima looked to history to see how man lived and fulfilled his destiny by his own choosing.

Nakajima's decision to write many of his short stories in the form of parables may have been influenced by Chuang Tzu, Lieh Tzu, France, and Leopardi, who had written parables to illustrate the fall of man from his natural state. Nakajima often adopts existing stories and spins off new ideas on the original plot, which results in a more sophisticated

tale beyond its original didactic purpose. Nakajima's stories reveal his nostalgia toward man's primitive and simple existence in nature. In particular, "Mojika" and "Gojō Tan'i" depict the inadequacy of words and argue for first-hand direct experience. The autobiographical short story, "Tonan sensei," reveals a wistful longing for the vanishing Confucian morals and Eastern insights. These stories also cast doubts on the effects of technological advancement and the pursuit of utilitarianism.

Nakajima's distrust of civilization and longing for simplicity creates a dilemma for the intellectual who is caught in between two states of existence and yet unable to see nature without pretense, as presented in "Mahiru." The incongruity between a pristine state and civilization is further discussed in "Mariyan," where the protagonist is a colonized woman who received Japanese education and harbors a feeling of humiliation about her native culture. "Kohoku" illustrates the lives of natives on an island already changed by Western imperialists. Nakajima's idyllic vision of the South Seas, based on Robert Louis Stevenson's depiction of Samoa, evaporates as he sees the cruel treatment of the Micronesian natives by the Japanese. In his writing, Nakajima also reveals his distress over the Japanese expansionist policy, which is modeled after Western imperialism.

Nakajima returned to Japan after the United States became involved in the Pacific War. He may have written the Taoist allegory, "Meijinden," as his silent disapproval of Japanese imperialism and the colonization of Micronesia. Nakajima also began writing historical fiction in the solemn atmosphere of war. He affirms Confucian values of honor, duty, and loyalty in "Deshi," by focusing on the courageous and righteous traits of Tzu Lu. In his final story "Riryō," Nakajima depicts his optimism in man, asserting that he

can sustain hope based on his innate virtue, despite crushing adversity. Nakajima also consistently portrays the Taoist indifference to ritual and death in his historical fiction.

In the Romantic and Taoist affinity to nature that Nakajima portrays through his short stories, he illustrates a reverence for the power of nature: a respect for the beauty of nature in the pristine islands, a surprise at the wonders of life, and submission to the minute existence of man in comparison to the vast universe. Literary critic Hino Keizō points out that in Nakajima's debut collection "Kotan" (Old Stories), there are no traces of Japanese elements, and that Nakajima has taken on the characteristic of a Eurasian writer.¹ Nakajima depicts the struggles of mankind through short stories that transcend regional entities. His writings remain pertinent with enduring subject matters drawn from Chinese history and ancient civilization.

In synthesizing the influences of Europe and China, Nakajima incorporates Romanticism and Taoism into stories that express admiration for a natural, direct, and simple way of life. He embraced Confucian doctrines but was also captivated by the Taoist and Romantic philosophies. As Hikami describes in his commentary, Nakajima's style was one of a kind, with a clear and concise Chinese writing style that stemmed from a long history of Japanese absorption of Chinese literature, yet was influenced by contemporary European techniques, and as a result revealed a particular Eastern ethos.² While many modern Japanese writers at the turn of the twentieth century eagerly adopted Western literary styles and techniques and parted with Japanese traditions, Nakajima

¹ Hino Keizo, "Nakajima Atsushi: bungaku to iu onchō" [Nakajima Atsushi: The grace called literature] in *Nakajima Atsushi: seitai hyakunen, eien ni ekkyō suru bungaku* [Nakajima Atsushi: One hundred years after birth, literature that crosses the borders of eternity] (Tokyo: Kawade, 2009), 117.

² Hikami Hidehiro, "Kaisetsu" [Commentary] (Showa 28), in *Nakajima Atsushi kenkyū* [Studies of Nakajima Atsushi], ed. Nakamura Mitsuo, Hikami Hidehiro, and Gunji Katsuyoshi (Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 1978), 192.

skillfully combined them and wrote in Japanese vernacular with Chinese style and Western methods. Nakajima did not see the need to compromise or to choose one dominant form of literature, but instead integrated the literary and philosophical traditions of the East and West.

In celebration of the one-hundredth-anniversary of Nakajima's birthday, critic Kawamura Minato, in the new anthology published by Kawade, praises Nakajima as a writer who displayed the strength to resist imperialism.³ Nakajima's anti-imperial and anti-colonial sentiments are rooted in his belief in egalitarianism as man's natural state of existence. In the early twenty-first century, there is growing financial and ecological distress due to rampant capitalism and industrialization as a result of man's unwarranted faith in progress and science. Perhaps Nakajima's writings that contain Romantic and Taoist ideals can help his readers rediscover alternative philosophies and directions to the prevailing capitalist paradigm, and find renewed appreciation for his nostalgia for the pristine past.

³ Kawamura Minato, "Teikoku ni kō suru chikara wo hyōgen shita sakka" [A writer who exhibits the strength to resist imperialism], in *Nakajima Atsushi: seitai hyakunen, eien ni ekkyō suru bungaku* (Tokyo: Kawade, 2009), 8.

Appendix 1. Translation of Chameleon Diary

Chameleon Diary

There is a worm called the maw-worm.
It has two mouths, which bite one another in the fight for food.
As the two mouths compete, they consume themselves, thus the worm kills itself.
— Han Fei Tzu¹

1

As I headed toward the teacher's room from the Natural History² classroom, someone behind me called out "teacher" in the hallway.

When I turned to look, a student — whom I knew by sight, but whose name I couldn't quite remember — came toward me saying something I couldn't really hear, and held out something like a five-inch, uncovered candy box. The inside of the box was lined with cotton, and on top of that lay a strange bluish-black lizard-like thing.

"What is that? A chameleon? Is it alive? It is a chameleon, isn't it?"

Completely surprised by the creature's unexpected appearance, I asked without pause, to which the student nodded "yes," and explained as her face blushed. Her relative who is a sailor got it from somewhere like Cairo, and since he told her to bring it to school because it was something rare, she brought it to me, the Natural History teacher.

"Oh, well, okay then." Without saying thanks, I accepted the box, and stared at the small monster that looked like a dragon. It seemed far more three-dimensional than a lizard, with its big head and curled long tail. It seemed listless because of the cold, but still, propped up on its dark blue forearm, the chameleon planted itself solemnly on the cotton.

¹ Han Fei, *Xin yi Han Feizi* (Taipei: San min shuju, 1997), 281.

² Natural History class in the 1930s Japan was equivalent to today's science class.

After the student handed the chameleon to me, as though she were too embarrassed to stand in front of me any longer, she gave a quick bow and walked away.

After I brought the chameleon to the teacher's room, I began to realize the difficulties of keeping it. There was no greenhouse in the school. For the time being, I let the chameleon perch on a branch of potted elm next to the brazier. It didn't move at all at first, but in the course of time, in the warmth of the fire, the chameleon seemed to have gained energy and began to move little by little. Its eye sockets were rather large, but the eyeholes through which the eyes see outside were extremely small. Through the depths of those small openings, the chameleon rolled its eyes in every direction, as if exploring the unfamiliar landscape. It crept from the elm branch toward a leaf, seemed to slip from the weight of its body, and tried to support itself by grabbing the edge of the leaf with its toes, but fell eventually. Time after time the chameleon fell onto the dirt inside the pot and the floor. Every time it fell, the chameleon got up with a serious face, like a child who was angry for being ridiculed for his mistakes (the decorative serrated edge standing on its back gave it a stately, grave appearance), and began to walk haphazardly.

The whole faculty came to see the novelty. "What is it?" most of them asked in wonder. The old Japanese and Chinese classics teacher, who somehow misunderstood, said, "Isn't that the thing that can be medicine for syphilis, if you dry it and decoct it?"

Someone caught flies from somewhere, twisted off the wings partially, and held them out on his palm in front of the chameleon. A vermilion rod of meat immediately speared the flies. At the instant the flies stuck to the tip of the tongue, its mouth closed.

I eventually consulted other Natural History teachers on how to handle this living creature. Since the chameleon wouldn't live long anyway, we decided to make something

like a canary box, put it in a place as warm as possible, and try to raise it in the school. It was decided that if we could have students, and the like, look for flies for its food, even though they were out of season, that it would somehow work out. However, until such basic accommodations could be arranged, I would take care of the chameleon and keep it in my apartment, out of concern for the nighttime cold and attacks from cats and such.

That night, I put more coal than usual into my apartment's small stove. I took out the round cage that belonged to my parrot that had died recently, spread cotton inside, and put in the chameleon. I didn't know whether chameleons drank water, but anyway, I placed the water holder inside too.

It's funny, but I was a bit delighted and excited by the presence of the chameleon. I was saddened only by the thought that it would soon die of something like the cold. In any case, if we couldn't keep the chameleon for long, I thought that I'd like to keep it at my own place instead of keeping it in the school. I also thought about giving the chameleon to the zoo, but for some reason parting with it would be sad. I felt just as though the chameleon were my own personal possession.

The exoticism that had been sleeping within me for some time had been awakened once again by the unexpected appearance of this small, extraordinary animal. The color of the ocean when I enjoyed myself in Ogasawara. The luster of a tropical tree's thick leaf. The blistering heat under a dazzling sky. The brilliant primary colors, and the blazing light and heat. A youthful pleasure in the rare and exotic suddenly became animated and started moving. Though outside the sky showed signs of sleet, for the first time in a long time, I was filled with exuberant memories that swelled my chest.

I put the cage near the stove, and next to it, arranged the rubber tree and the pot of Bird's Nest Fern³ that were in the corner of the room. I left the cage door open. I thought the chameleon might learn to rest on the tree occasionally, since there was no worry that it would leave the room.

2

When I got up in the morning, I saw that the chameleon wasn't standing on the rubber plant or someplace like that, but had gotten onto books that had slid under the desk, and was looking in my direction through its small eyeholes. It seemed to be in better spirits than I had anticipated. Since I'd warmed up the room considerably last night, perhaps the air became too dry and my throat was a bit sore. The book that the chameleon had mounted on was Schopenhauer's *Parerga und Paralipomena*.⁴

It was not a workday, but I went to school in the afternoon because of the chameleon situation. As I had considered the matter last night, since the school didn't have the facilities, and my circumstances were the same, I wanted to get permission to keep the chameleon at my place. The school certainly wouldn't go through the trouble of building a greenhouse for the sake of one chameleon.

When I went to school to ask for permission to keep the chameleon, the principal and the other staff members spoke as though they had already all but forgotten what occurred yesterday. "Ah, the creature from yesterday!" they said. It seemed that I was the only one who had become ecstatic over the small reptile's arrival.

³ A tropical plant which is grown as a houseplant.

⁴ Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860), German philosopher.

I went to the students to get the flies that I'd asked them for yesterday. There were more flies surviving in the winter than I had expected. The matchbox was stuffed. It was probably enough food for two or three days.

When I took the flies and was about to leave, Yoshida, the National Language teacher, ran after me, and as he himself was about to leave too, we began to walk together. It seemed that there was something pressing that he wanted to talk about. We stopped by the M bakery and talked for about an hour over tea.

He is the same age as I, but I don't know any human being so full of energy, utterly determined, pragmatic, shamelessly materialistic, or as far from feelings of self-doubt or embarrassment as Yoshida. He's a worker who is ignorant of fatigue. He's a competent administrator. He's an expert in methodology (the fundamental discourses might as well have been eaten by the devil). Yoshida is a man who is always full of bold, high-spirited views, and strives forth on all matters. By himself, he handles field days, exhibitions, conferences, alumni magazine editing, and many other things. Abstraction is meaningless to him. At a class gathering sometime this January, three or four students went out to buy tangerines and rice crackers. When the students, dangling their cloth-wrapped parcels, had climbed about half-way up the downward hill in front of the school, one student's cloth came untied, and tangerines fell out. Two, three, four ... seven, eight, the vivid-colored tangerines poured out one after another down the fairly steep hill. The student's face turned bright red over the unexpected accident. She re-tied the wrapping-cloth, but did not chase the tangerines. Since there were quite a few people other than those from the school coming and going, she was probably embarrassed. Just at that moment, Yoshida, who happened to be standing on the hill, saw this, and began running

downhill at breakneck speed. He sent pebbles flying, slid on the gravel, almost fell forward, shoved students standing along the way, and, being short in stature, he hunched his back and ran after the tangerines. He fell once but recovered, and without wiping off the dirt, broke into a run and finally picked up all of the fifteen or sixteen tangerines that came to a stop when they tumbled into a ditch on one side of the hill. Both the students and the pedestrians passing by stopped in amazement, fascinated by the intensity of his momentum. Holding tangerines in his hands and putting them in his pockets too, Yoshida climbed back up the hill yelling at the students, "Don't just stand there staring, everyone!" That his face turned red was simply because he had been running, and certainly not because he was embarrassed. At the time, I seriously thought that this very man should certainly be my role-model. This man had always lived that way, and taught me that human beings — or living creatures — should live like that. Someone criticized him as being a higher-elementary school⁵ type of student. The higher-elementary school students don't have the impertinence of the middle school students, and they actually work hard. It is said that they are much more useful than the middle-school students. I also think that the fresh and lively higher-elementary school students are far more impressive than the unremarkable university students.

While we were talking, Yoshida took a piece of paper out of his pocket and spread it in front of me. Today was the second time that I had been shown that page. It was a salary list of all the school's employees (at a private school, that information is not stated on employee records). He had gotten the information from somewhere and had painstakingly drawn up the list. He had even gone as far as making entries for last year's estimated bonuses. He was very good at digging up such things, and he was proud of his

⁵ Under old Japanese education system.

own skill. He had conducted a detective-agency-like background check on all the people with whom he associated. He investigated them tenaciously and thoroughly, finding out their faults, especially the people for whom he had ill feelings. With a red pencil, Yoshida had drawn a line next to the names of the numerous teachers on the chart with salaries unfairly larger than his. He indicated who they were, and in his Kansai accent, enumerated his grievances in detail.

“The Cooking teacher T gets more than I, even though she’s a woman. There’s no fixed criterion, any at all, not a single method, for the initial negotiation. It’s completely absurd!”

The last time he showed me this list he had said the same thing about the Cooking teacher T, in the same words. Looking at it now, only above her name, there were also several dark lines drawn in blue pencil that had been added to those in red pencil.

“Because it’s so absurd, I naturally went to talk to the principal. You might say that I’m a bit nervy, but, especially since I’ve received more years of education, I said that any amount would do, but please make my salary higher than Ms. T’s. Then the principal said, ‘Indeed, you’re quite right, so, I’ll make yours more than Ms. T’s by just three yen.’ By three yen. That was it. But even that’s better than my present salary.”

Yoshida spread that salary chart out in front of me, and continuing, began to discuss one by one the employees’ work histories and family situations. Who among the female teachers professed to have graduated from a teachers’ prep high school for girls, but who in fact had graduated from a temporary training school for teachers. N, who heads the National Language Section, had been advanced two months’ salary. The old drawing instructor H was making an extreme markup on the students from places such as

the frame and art supply shops. There was a rumor that the English teacher S had been walking together with the female music instructor a lot lately. By his way of talking, it seemed that to Yoshida there was no higher satisfaction than knowing other people's secrets. Today, according to his account, he argued over something with the head teacher N, and also had words with the gym teacher. This was related to something about the sequence of the program for the field day that was held last month. At the time, there was a clash of opinions between Yoshida and the gym teachers, and that's the reason why their relationship is still inflamed. If he's not kept busy, Yoshida is a man who is prone to conflict with other people, just like the stomach with excess gastric acid without food to digest.

My mood wasn't too cheerful after listening to his conversation for an hour, and I took the matchbox full of flies and went home.

When I went out in the evening and casually looked up at the eastern sky, I unconsciously let out an "Ahhh." It had been half a year since spring that I had seen Orion rising in the sky, through the bare branches of the big hackberry tree. The childhood memories of my grandmother often saying that you can see the three stars when the small green tangerines start to appear came back. Above Orion, the shapes of Capella, red Aldebaran,⁶ and the Pleiades, like drops of water frozen in a glass vessel, clearly appeared. It wasn't just the usual stars. High in the southern sky, Saturn, Jupiter and Mars were lined up equally spaced from the left. The especially blazing-white radiance of Jupiter's luminosity was truly about to overwhelm its surroundings.

⁶ Taurus, the brightest star in the constellation.

It was fairly cold, but it was a quiet, windless night. Looking up at the three planets, I remembered the opening of Goethe's *From My Life: Poetry and Truth*.⁷ In that passage, with a pen brimming with confidence in his own greatness, an account is given of the constellations auspiciously aligned on the day the poet was born. I remember it clearly, since that book was used as a second foreign language textbook when I was in my third year of high school majoring in science, and the translation of that part was assigned to me. Suddenly, things like the textbook's green cover, the title embossed in gold, the smell of the printing-ink the first time I held it in my hands, and the German teacher's appearance, that voice of his, and even my classmates at the time, all vividly came to mind.

I went back to my room as the thoughts of my youth nostalgically burned in my heart. I turned the bookshelves and bookcases upside down, tried searching for the *Poetry and Truth* that I'd used long ago that should have been there, but couldn't find it. For some time, longing for youth, hungry for friendship among the scattered books, I had a restless, inexpressibly, gloomy feeling.

And two or three days ago there was this: I was flipping through the pages of an English-Japanese dictionary looking up a particular word, when I happened to see the word "opera" on a page that opened accidentally; in that instant, I felt as though some bright, magnificent, youthful quality passed before me. I felt as though a fragment of a splendid dream that I'd completely forgotten until then came from a far-off world and passed by in front of me in a glimpse, as if I were gazing from a dark lane through rice fields in the countryside at window after window of a well-lit night train passing over the causeway. When I was still a student, around March of every year, opera troupes from

⁷ Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1739-1832), German poet and writer.

Russia and Italy would perform in the Imperial Theater, which in those days was not a movie theater.⁸ Within the limits of my finances, I went to see operas such as *Carmen*, *Rigoletto*, *La Boheme*, and *Boris Godunov*. The actresses' voluptuous shoulders and the fine hair on their white arms glistening in the bright lights, their golden hair swaying, their cheeks blushing, and their fresh, sensual voices gracefully trembling enchanted me. The five letters of the word "opera" that I coincidentally caught sight of let me catch a scent of the fragrant air of a lost, far-off, magnificent world, and left me temporarily disoriented. I had forgotten the word I was looking for, and stared at the word "opera" absent-mindedly.

People say that when one becomes reminiscent, that it's likely because one is getting feeble. I think so, too. But whatever they say, there can be no doubt that the biggest reason is the fact that I don't have a job (or a lifestyle) that can completely absorb me.

Actually, my own recent way of life has been wretchedness, misery. Hesitant, pent-up, smoldering with discontent, self-destructive, and timid. And so, only superficial cynicism is left. It shouldn't be like this, but since when, and why and how on earth could things have wound up like this? At any rate, when I realized it, my life had already ended up being strange this way. It's not a matter of good or bad. Seriously speaking, it's problematic. In any case, I'm not the same as the healthy people around me. Naturally, I'm not saying this out of pride. It's just the opposite. I'm saying it with uneasiness and anxiety. The way I perceive things, the direction of my heart, they are somehow different. Everyone lives in the present reality. I don't. Like the frog's eggs wrapped in the

⁸The Imperial Theater opened in 1911 as a Western theater for operas, but was closed during World War II.

diaphanous gelatin. A gelatinous object that distorts vision separates the space between reality and me. I can't touch or feel the outside objects directly. I had considered it to be an adornment of intelligence at first, and I was proud of it though also troubled by it at the same time. But, that wasn't exactly it. More fundamentally and innately, it's as though I lacked certain ability. Not just one ability, but deficient in several abilities. For example, as for the most universal meaning for an individual to distinguish himself, utilitarianism, is lacking in me. Moreover, I don't have the ability to comprehend how things are placed in series — listed in methodical order to suit a certain purpose. I take up things one by one respectively, treating each as an independent object. I can't consider a day as some future plan's sake, only one day at a time. Even with regard to my own individual worth, I can't fathom its value beyond a day's length. Furthermore, I am unable to get to the heart of matters directly (including myself,) and try to measure the relative positions from the outside first. I get frustrated from estimating the value in comparison to a large object, of a position in relation to its entirety, so that I am unable to get to the heart of matters directly. I'm not trying to sound like a philosopher in saying it seems like *sub specie aeternitatis*.⁹ That outlook is to see the world with the most ordinary view of transience — in other words, no matter what it is (even if I didn't know my ability), in order to consider the matter in comparison to eternity, I'd end up realizing its meaninglessness first. Before I can come up with a practical method of handling an issue, I'd think of its ultimate meaninglessness (I really feel it. Illogical, ah, how nugatory, I can feel it from the bottom of my heart), and end up throwing away all my efforts.

Looking back, the way I have lived up to now has generally been a meaningless existence. I might as well say that I have wasted half of my life dealing with things that

⁹ Baruch Spinoza (1632-1677), Dutch philosopher.

have interfered with my mental concentration. In any case, I have put myself to sleep, and consumed all my energy in denying everything that I had possessed.

There was once a time when I more or less had a keen sense of perceptivity, but I was afraid it would run wild, which had not been my desire, so I tried to dull my senses by thinking about hardened insipid notions. Then when I realized that all concepts were gray in the end, when I had succeeded in removing my perceptivity as the result of my hard labor, and when I finally understood that what I had was the green [wheat field] that had the potential of turning to gold, I already had lost the ability to recover it. When I had fairly accurate memory once, I had despised it. I had tried to extinguish my good memory because it is said that people who have nothing but good memory are the same as people who can only do addition. This was nearly impossible. Consequently, I tried to avoid using my ability to the very least. Well, I have now realized from personal experience that the most fundamental meaning of many precious parts of human life is owed to this mental ability, but I have already lost it (from things like excessive inhalation and intake of medicine.)

In the past and still the same now, I can't fall sleep easily after going to bed at night. This was primarily due to the fact that for the past ten years I'd be sorry if I didn't take an asthma tranquilizer for even just one night, but as a result I could only sleep for two or three hours, and I become lightheaded during the day instead. Though my eyes became clear when I laid on my bed, I'd still think that I must sleep no matter how impossible it was; the few hours when I am most clearheaded in a day are probably wasted in vain by my stupid passive efforts to make myself fall asleep. It's exactly during such times that all kinds of ideas begin to germinate in my head, and I feel as though

thoughts flow and flow. However, I tell myself that asthma will attack the next day if I am unable to sleep from being excited for the entire night by concentrating on such thoughts; I become restless and try to extinguish those fragment-like sprouts of thoughts. Truly, to what extent had my many seeds of thoughts been easily trampled and crushed in the darkness of the bed? Of course, I am neither a philosopher nor a scientist, so I'm not trying to say that the ideas that lightly float out or the fragments of thoughts are all excellent or such. But even if some had been really boring in the beginning, they can become surprisingly interesting depending on their later development, as seen in many instances of ideas in material and also spiritual contexts. Am I overly proud of myself when I think that such types of ideas were more or less mixed in the countless ideas that had been murdered by me in the dark (like the countless dandelion seeds that fly high in the wind, they dance and disperse in the dark, never to return again)?

Well, I have spent several years like this, attempting to dampen my spirits when they come alive and trying to put them to work just as they become drowsy and indistinct. Actually, I tried not to work my spirit at all. (What for? For my health. Then did my health improve? Why, why? It didn't even improve in the slightest bit.) I only succeeded in this foolish attempt. I have lost literal sleep and true consciousness. My spirit has fallen asleep completely, become stagnant, decayed, and lost the ability of ever working again. A canned mind, a decaying can, a mummy, a fossil.

Is there any success more complete and illustrious than this?

3

Though there was some piercing chest pain when I was about to sleep, I got up in the middle of the night when an asthma attack occurred just as I had expected. I injected one shot of epinephrine¹⁰ and sat on my bed until morning. My difficulty in breathing was slightly relieved, but I had a severe headache. I still felt uneasy when morning came so I took eight tablets of ephedrine.¹¹ I didn't eat breakfast. I couldn't lie down sideways because it was painful to breathe. I sat in the chair and leaned into the desk for the whole day, while resting my chin in my hands, in front of the chameleon's cage, I watched it intently.

The chameleon was also languid. Resting on the bird's perch, it stared my way through its small eyeholes. It didn't move. It had the comportment of someone deep in meditation. It curled its tail in an interesting manner. It put three fingers in the front and two in the rear to grab onto the perch. The color of its body didn't seem to change much. Perhaps it was not equipped with the color pigment to adapt to this completely different environment into which it's been brought?

As I gazed at it, things gradually began to appear to look like *sub specie chameleonis*.¹² One by one, things which had once been common sense to mankind had now become mysteriously dubious. My headache still hadn't stopped. The dulling chest pain would become intense now and then.

Fragments of thought came to my mind intermittently as my head ached.

¹⁰ Asthma tranquilizer.

¹¹ Medicine for treating asthma.

¹² Below the form of chameleon.

The more I thought about it, the more uncertain I became of the object called "I." My existence had been controlled by the workings of customs and environments instead of by myself. When I realized that this, like heredity, is a common disposition to creatures called mankind, I inevitably lost my individual identity. Needless to say, however, no one would be aware of such things when he is absorbed in his usual activities. Yet, for someone like me who doesn't have a job that requires complete devotion, I couldn't help but be constantly aware of it. At last, everything became incomprehensible to me.

I couldn't help but think that the physical components (made by various tools) essential to create and the devices to control my individual existence were like those of a finished mechanical puppet. When I was yawning and stretching the other day, I suddenly felt that this action was also manipulated by a controlling hand, and I dropped my extended hand in shock.

About a month ago, with my eyes closed I imagined the size, shape, color, wetness, and softness of the various organs inside my body one by one (while recalling the body model illustration and events from animal dissection) by pressing on the approximate location of the organs. It wasn't that I didn't experience this before, but so to speak, it was done in a rather abstract conceptual manner in which I only tried to visualize the supposed locations of the internal organs, stomach, and intestines in general. This time however, in a way, I tried to imagine directly my stomach, my intestines, my lungs, (organs with personalities in a way) that constitute me as an individual by thinking about their exact colors, moisture, and feel, as well as their appearance while functioning. (Parts such as a flabby gray loose sack, an ugly tube, and a grotesque pump.) Even now I

have continued for quite a long time — almost half a day. Then gradually, as I continue to pay attention to the various body components, I no longer understand the whereabouts of human existence. Where exactly am I located? I pose such a childish question not because I am unfamiliar with the cerebral physiology, or uninformed about investigations on consciousness. By far, this is a physical (relating to the whole body) doubt.

I had been lost in such imaginations since that day, and it became a habit that when I wanted to escape or divert attention from something, I became vividly aware of the coexistence of the organs inside my body. Although I thought it was an unhealthy habit, I couldn't do anything about it. I wondered if doctors ever had such an experience. If they thought about their own bodies in the same way that they regarded their patients' bodies, it wouldn't be unreasonable to think that they'd be constantly aware of what's beneath their skin and the formation of their personalities from the influences of their own stomachs, lungs, and various organs, would it?

I started to feel as though I had become a worm whose cut parts fight against each other soon after the body is cut into two halves. Or rather, some divisions have begun fighting within my uncut body. I hurt and torture myself when there is no external target; regrettably I could not help it.

Whenever I anticipate things, I always think of the worst case scenario. Then I feel relieved with a slight delight if the result is better than my anticipation; there's no such thing as overly timid planning after all. When I go visit someone, I first consider the scenario with him being absent and tell myself not to be discouraged even if he isn't home. Then, if he's home but preoccupied with some business, has other guests, or for

some reason (no matter how inconceivable), that he couldn't receive me amicably, I'd consider various other negative cases and assume the more probable condition rather than good case scenarios, and I set out to leave when I am convinced that I would not be discouraged no matter what the situation turns out to be.

For everything in the same way, eventually I decide not to have any hope from the beginning in order to avoid disappointment. In order to avoid discouragement, I neither desire nor anticipate to succeed from the start, so I don't even try; I leave the crowd to avoid the awkwardness of facing shame, I make a big deal of the inconvenience when my help is requested, likewise I end up not able to ask others for help at all. I close all my outward receptive organs, as though I were the winter's bulb just dug out of the ground. In the process of touching it, no matter what kind of love had been on the outside, it turns into a cold water drop and freezes, just like that, I thought I would turn into a stone.

I shall turn into a stone, become a stone, and be sunken into the cold sea

Ice sleet falling, will-o'-the-wisp, in the night of winter, I imagine myself
turning into the stone of black pebble

When I close my eyes, wind howls above the ice, I turn into a stone,
rolling and moving

In the eye of the rotten fish, there is no light, there is only me, awaiting for
the day when I turn into a stone

The soul lingers, observing the lonesomeness of life, alone on the cold star.

Though I have never written *waka* until now, by scribbling this peculiar poem, I am smiling at my own bulb's song.

A goldfish inside the goldfish bowl. A hopeless goldfish that knows all too well its own position and the smallness and trivialness of itself and its world.

While hopeless, the goldfish cannot help but to love itself and its small confined world.

When I was little, I had suspected that everyone is a fox disguised as a human being except for me. Hadn't everything in the world, including my father and mother, been created for the purpose of fooling me? And then I wondered when, in the middle of what, would this magic be unraveled?

Even now, I haven't stopped thinking that way altogether. People usually don't think that way, namely, because of things like common sense and customs. But, for someone as withdrawn from the world as I am, they no longer possess that kind of power. Like how the feel of the stage transforms with changes in lighting, the world can become such a happy (?) place in the twist of a switch, but can also become a cold, deserted, and hopeless place in the same twist. To me, the switch is sometimes whether I have trouble breathing, the effectiveness of drugs like cocaine hydrochloride¹³ and diuretin,¹⁴ sunshine or rain, and things such as whether letters from old friends have arrived or not.

The ease of calmly existing inside a large — sometimes incomprehensible — entity (organization, customs, social order).

¹³ Has anesthetic affect.

¹⁴ Also used as asthma medicine.

And the angst of the free individuals who are completely disassociated from such entities.

Those free individuals have the urge to look back again on the history of human development within themselves. Ordinary people follow customs blindly. The unique free individuals examine the customs, and they do not follow it as long as they have not ascertained the inevitability of its formation. In other words, a free individual would not feel satisfied until he could simulate the experience psychologically within himself, the formation of customs and traditions over the course of hundreds of years.

My personal temperament has some quality similar to that, at least in tendency. Only that I lack the outstanding original reasoning often seen in those special people.

One of my friends has criticized one of my tendencies as “the plan to befriend the distant and attack the near.” I had studied the map of Paris with all my might to the point that I know the uncharted Paris like the back of my hand, yet I can’t get around by myself to the famous horse race arena in this harbor city where I’ve lived for two years. I hardly know any natural history in spite of being a natural history teacher, yet I try to read old languages and search for things closer to philosophy. So continued the hodgepodge, while none of it is truly my own. After all, even when I give my own viewpoint, to what extent is it really my own? There was a vain jackdaw in Aesop’s fable; A little bit of Giacomo Leopardi’s feather;¹⁵ A little bit of Arthur Schopenhauer’s feather; A little bit of Titus Lucretius Carus’s feather;¹⁶ A little bit of Chuang Tzu and Lieh Tzu’s feather; A little bit of Montaigne’s feather; What a ugly and strange bird.

¹⁵ Giacomo Leopardi (1798-1837), Italian poet who was influenced by Rousseau’s Romanticism.

¹⁶ Lucretius Carus (97 BC-55 AD), a Roman philosopher and poet.

(Come to think of it, a person wouldn't take up a misanthropic attitude if he hadn't been so naïve about the world originally, and a person has no reason to constantly repeat "self-examination" and "self-criticism" if he hadn't been so conceited and indulgent toward himself. Therefore, someone like me who is always absorbed in this bad habit would be an example of a spoiled egomaniac. In fact, there is no mistake about it. Truly, I, I, how great I am. That's how I thought about myself constantly.)

4

Today is also not a workday. Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, the break continues for three days. Last night I was able to sleep for a little bit. My worry about a possible asthma attack (which can be described as very terrifying) has diminished for now. It seems that the slightly increased dosage of the common Chinese medicine, ephedra almond gypsum soup, worked. My dulling headache still hasn't gone away. I feel a bit like throwing up in the morning.

Since the day before yesterday, the chameleon has eaten only twelve or thirteen flies. It has come down from the perch and is crouching on the cotton. Maybe it's the cold. I don't think it will live much longer. If there's no alternative at last, I shall bring it to the zoo. Near the joint of its hind leg there is a small blackish brown wound. Maybe it injured itself from falling on the floor in school. Its jagged back looks like the zippers used in a handbag's slit.

Today I also sat in front of the chameleon for the entire morning, resting my chin in my hands obliviously. I was a bit sleepy. Having slept partially for one or two hours

the night before actually makes me sleepier the next day than if I had had no sleep at all in the previous night. In the moment when I woke with a start from dozing off, I suddenly realized that the face of the chameleon in front of me was like the amoral medieval monk that Louis Jouvet¹⁷ had played. I wanted to try writing a conversation between a chameleon and a bagworm in Leopardi's style. The bagworm's metaphysical skepticism and the paradox of the chameleon's dilettantism.... so on and so on But of course, I wouldn't really write it. The act of writing is rather difficult for me. The time it takes to string words one by one is circuitous. Meanwhile, the thoughts floating now have almost all disappeared, leaving on paper only the most trifling dregs of thought that had flashed through my mind.

In the afternoon, I found a description explaining my psychological profile quite appropriately on an attached page inside a book.

— Refusal to acknowledge the classification system among people. The demoralization that accompanies it. Nostalgia toward despondent ideals. Despaired self-esteem. You don't take yourself or things seriously because you try to compare them against the glimpses and dreams of the infinite.... The realization of your own helplessness. You have neither the strength to defeat the things around you, nor the ability to compel or to arrange, you withdraw your hands when things don't turn out to be the way you desired. You think it's impossible or absurd to set one goal, carry hope, and go forth and fight for it. —

I closed the book. What a dreadful book. The fact that it read me with such clarity!

¹⁷ Louis Jouvet (1887-1951), French actor.

I must do something. Nothing can be done if I continue like this. If I stay like this, I will disappear while living. My identity will become diluted gradually, my individuality will disappear, and I will return to an ordinary man in the end. It's not a joke. I must hold onto my pertinacity! My desires! My only hope lies in being engrossed in one single goal exclusively. I shall not become Henri Amiel's¹⁸ dried fish. I should stop the impudent imitations against nature in things such as viewing myself objectively. I should just follow life's will blindly without self-reflection, assuredly (out of obedience to nature), and value rudimentary common sense.

In the evening, Yoshida came to visit me. He seemed to have been enraged. The gymnastic teacher who had never-ending conflicts with him from before called Yoshida into the waiting room in the indoor gymnasium, "You've got a minute?" and rebuked him using harsh words in a threatening attitude. The resentful Yoshida immediately went to report the matter to the principal, who naturally criticized the gymnastic teacher's violent behavior but nevertheless discreetly implied that "It takes two to make a quarrel," so Yoshida was extremely dissatisfied. "I might as well quit," he said repeatedly. If I remember correctly, he had railed about quitting two or three times before, but he did not quit in the end, though he had mentioned the matter to the entire staff. Afterwards, he acted as if nothing had happened. Only when something upsets him, he goes to everyone to complain and make them listen to his grumbles over and over, and isn't satisfied until he receives acknowledgements from others that he is right and his opposition is wrong. However, he never does anything that would damage himself (like getting into a fist fight

¹⁸ Henri Amiel (1821-1881), Swiss philosopher.

or being determined to quit his job), no matter how mad he is. As for today, he only stopped by because my apartment is close to school, even though I am not very close to him, since he wanted to receive the acknowledgement that his action was right from more people, even if it's just one more person. There is definitely no worry that he might quit. There is also no worry at all that he would become withdrawn and unable to work, or feel embarrassed after the fiasco. He doesn't know a thing like embarrassment. It's just that his instinct tells him not to cause any obvious harm, no matter the situation.

After his resentment subdued, he appeared satisfied and this time he began talking about yesterday's meeting with the prefecture's academic director to whom his senior classmate had introduced him. The director was very cordial, invited him to come again, and gave a pat on his shoulder, so he thought that he could visit him again; he spoke in an unbearably reverent tone about how Mr. Academic Director (he used the prefix, for he couldn't imagine the existence of anyone who wouldn't sincerely embrace respect for this kind of high official) was of Royal Order X with an imperial medal X, bound to have even greater success because he was still young, and his wife's father was a high official in the cabinet of the ministry, and such. He appeared to have completely forgotten his previous resentment and looked full of happiness.

After Yoshida left, I started thinking about the meaning of happiness for a while. Perhaps for Yoshida, happiness is to become jumpy, cause a disturbance, make other people acknowledge his viewpoint, and approaching officials is his biggest joy. I have no right to make a ridicule of such things. Even if I sneered, what kind of happiness would that mean to me? "The multitude are merry, as though feasting on a day of sacrifice, as

though ascending a tower in the springtime. I alone am impassive, like the infant who has not yet smiled; weary, without a place to call home. While common folks are brilliant, I alone am confused. While common folks are discerning, I alone am obtuse....”¹⁹ Suddenly, without sarcasm or irony, I began to think that there is nothing more envious than the image of Yoshida shedding tears of joy regarding the academic director.

After I got into bed in the evening, I remembered Yoshida’s earlier threatening words; as I tried to imagine what kind of attitude he had taken at the time, it became absurd to me, for Yoshida had a fierce temperament but no physical strength. I began to contemplate what I would have done.

Though it’s truly cowardly talk, I don’t know how to respond at all when it comes to violence — physical power. I don’t want to give in and concede to the opponent’s demand, of course, but if I were beaten, for example, what kind of attitude should I show? It’s not as though I can fight back, since I don’t have the arm strength. Should I utter out the fault of others? I hate the pitiable gibbering in a woman-like way and the wretchedness of the situation I am put in at such moments. If that were the case, it would be better to ignore the opponent by detachment. But even in that situation, my conscience doesn’t think it’s respectable for a sore loser to make excuses (even if observers can’t see any difference.) Or I should rather say that just the act of falling into a violent involvement with others is enough to cause an unavoidable terrible disturbance and agitation in my heart. That fear toward violence which is an animal instinct, the meaninglessness of actual violence, and the contempt toward the abusers of violence are

¹⁹ Chan, *The Way of Lao Tzu*, chapter 20, 134. See also Philip J. Ivanhoe, *The Daodejing of Laozi* (New York: Seven Bridges Press, 2002), 20, and Ku-ying Chen, *Lao Tzu: Text, Notes, and Comments*, trans. Rhett Y. W. Young and Roger T. Ames (Taipei: Chinese Materials Center, 1981), 124.

discussions that are not even worth three cents in this situation, as my whole body starts to tremble and my heart sobs without reason. Those who prepare to counter the invasion of violence (not just the physical strength, but the unthinkable savage viciousness, and misunderstanding and such, might as well be included) with force are not so different, but if there are people who can counter not with force or power (or they don't use it even if they have it) but only with their mental strength and can manage with ease in a noble manner, I think they should be respected. Though I can't imagine what kind of method that would be. I considered various famous people, but couldn't seem to think of anyone who could manage nobly when exposed to violence, if his social background had been stripped away.

5

The chameleon had become weaker, and maybe I was imagining things but the wound on its hind leg's joint seemed to have expanded since yesterday. Its trunk was thinner than the body of a crucian carp, its thin rib bones could be seen from the outside and it would sometimes inflate the area of its throat as though it were hurting from the cold. I made up my mind to bring it to the zoo after all. The zoo is a place I like, but when it comes to the matter of donating or entrusting the chameleon to the zoo, I thought an officer would come from Tokyo City and make me fill out the paper-work sooner or later. There is nothing as never-ending as dealing with officers and government proceedings. Though some people say it's actually simple, when it comes to dealing with registrations and procedures at the government office, I feel it's so troublesome just to think about it that I don't even have the desire to consider it. Since I had no choice, I

thought about asking the geography teacher Y, who commutes from Tokyo, to bring the chameleon to Ueno. The school seemed to have forgotten about this creature, so it couldn't possibly object. I put it back into the box covered with cotton like the way it was, opened the breathing air holes on the cover, and brought it to school. It was a workday on Friday.

I met with Y, explained the reason and made the request. I obtained his acknowledgement. He said he would go directly to Ueno on his way home.

During the lunch break, after I had finished lunch, I was in the teacher's room for a while; some students began making a clamor in the hallway, finally the door opened, and the music teacher who had quit last spring to be married came in, while holding an infant. "Wow," the female teachers who saw this all exclaimed at once. She had been married off to the Kansai area, but accompanied her husband on his Tokyo trip, and had the chance to stop by the school. Now, regarding this visitor from afar, the female teachers' — especially the unmarried old maids' behavior, expression, in brief, their externally visible mental agitations, were really interesting. Even if the author of *The Red and the Black*²⁰ were to write, perhaps it still would be considered difficult to write such a description. Envy, jealousy, insecurity toward one's own future, a sorrowful pride of sour grapes, in short, everything equal to this vaguely troubles their hearts. While praising the baby's cuteness unanimously (perfectly white skin, cute and cherubic), they looked with longing eyes, that men could never imagine, at the happy young mother, who had a hair style completely different from a year ago, who was beyond recognition in colorful clothes (it had been Western clothes when she was working in the school, but today it's

²⁰Written by Stendhal; includes many psychological descriptions of the main characters.

kimono) — and from everything they searched hungrily for the supposedly readable secret of living. While holding and pacifying the baby, the eyes that gazed at the baby's face sparkled fiercely with something completely different from a woman's typical love for children; it was like an artist's eye trying to imagine the original masterpiece through a replicate, but the intensity couldn't be matched after all.

The young mother and her baby boy with creamy skin departed after having conversed for thirty minutes, but seemed to have left an incredible effect on the old ladies, as though they had seen a random killer. The single female teachers were restless throughout the afternoon, even someone as slow to perceive as I am could see it clearly. If psychological disturbances in people could have some sort of effect on the atmosphere, the fog in the teacher's room in the afternoon would surely cause a big change on the barometer without a doubt. The old ladies have sat at the same desks in the same office since some years back, and lectured to students on the same subjects in the same classrooms. Next year and the year after next, probably the following year too, they will repeat one of the attributes of the gods, "the absolute constancy." Before long, the few precious things within themselves gradually ossify, in the end, they have characteristics that neither men nor women have — they become monsters who have bad traits of both men and women, moreover, they become proud monsters who think that they have good traits of both men and women.

The young mother who visited the teacher's room today — the former music teacher — had quit her job about one month after I came to the school. In comparison to when she worked as a teacher back then and today as a mother — it seems that a music

teacher is very different from teachers in other disciplines in being free and colorful and not stern or rigid — but even so, how happiness has made her appear more cheerful and younger today than a year ago.

The profession of a teacher hardens the body before one knows it. A servile logic is borne out of the habit of believing it's best not to show one's weakness. It is an insensitivity toward progress. Things like that accumulate imperceptibly like water residues. Charles Lamb²¹ said, "When a school teacher talks to an adult who is not a student, it's like Gulliver who has returned from Lilliput, converting the comprehension level is painful." There would be nothing more fortunate if comprehension were the only ability involved.

6

There is no longer a chameleon in the chameleon's cage. The cotton was spread like before, and the perch was hanging like the way it was.

Since last spring, in the length of just a year and half, three kinds of animals lived in this cage. At first, there was a pair of small sun parakeets which had mischievous looking white rims around their black eyes. After almost a year, one parakeet died, and the remaining one was given away. Next was a large parrot with blue wings and a red chest. It was quite splendid; it would fall half asleep while perching on the wooden stick, it had a rather calm composure like a philosopher wearing the clothes of a prostitute, and it was cheerful, but died in the end because I forgot to feed it. The last was the chameleon, which had only been here for hardly five days before it left for the zoo. It wasn't exactly lonely but I wasn't feeling cheerful.

²¹ Charles Lamb (1775-1834), English writer and critic.

It was a day without classes, but I went to school to ask Y about what happened yesterday. According to Y, the zoo accepted it with great joy. "This is a very large chameleon. The one at the zoo now is only half as large as this one," a comment was made. However, in the event that the chameleon dies, the zoo promised to return it to the school to make a stuffed specimen. I said thanks to Y, and was told as I was about to leave, "There is a celebration gathering for K at Nankinmachi,²² would you like to come?" I replied that I'd go and left school.

K had passed the advanced teacher certification exam for English about two weeks ago. When I had received the chameleon the other day, two or three students from K's class had nosily told me the following matter. They said that a few days ago K had gone to his class during lunch break and asked, "I want to see something in yesterday's XX newspaper's Kanagawa edition. If anyone of you has it at home, can you bring it?" Then several students brought in that day's Kanagawa edition, and when they looked at the paper, there was published in small print, "K teacher of Y Girl's High School passed advanced certification exam." One of the students said in an impudent tone, "He purposely made us bring the paper in order to show it to us. What an annoying fellow, really!" I thought K's ecstatic manner was, even for someone as young as he, foolish to the extent of imitable ridicule (he proudly showed the examination around to everyone, and suddenly went as far as saying that girls' high-school teachers were somewhat boring).

I think that people don't ever really become adults no matter how much time has passed. Or rather that childishness always remains like that of a child even with mustaches growing or wrinkles appearing. The only difference is that one puts on a

²² Yokohama's current Chinatown.

solemn face, acts with dignity, and make up grand reasons for childish motivations, and learns only those things in the end. Sobbing when nobody praises, pulling meaningless pranks on friends, being caught when one tries to be cunning; everything that can be translated into children's words. Thus, even K's narcissistic self-advertising seemed rather proper instead.

On the way home, I strolled around the hill of Yamate.

It was still ten o'clock. There was an extremely thin fog enveloping so that even if I stared at the sun hanging in the sky, it was not overly dazzling. At the bottom of the ground-glass-like bright fog, the scenery in all directions was whitish and stagnant. Since last night and persisting, there was no wind at all. The white bottom all around gave some kind of slight warm feeling.

The pocket felt heavy so I checked it and found a book inside. I took it out and saw that it was Lucretius. Because I haven't worn the jacket in a while, I don't remember when I put the book in the pocket to carry about.

The Christian church's ivy leaves have mostly fallen, and the vines alone looked like veins floating on the surface of the wall. There were two cosmos blossoms blooming in their late stage while curled up along the fence. The sea was not clear because of the mist, but one could quickly discern the shadows of the large steam ships. Now and then the whistles would sound out "toot toot."

From the bottom of Daikansaka, there was a Catholic sister in a black cloak climbing uphill slowly. When I got a closer look, I saw that she was an ugly woman with glasses and an excessively large nose.

I stopped by the foreigners' cemetery. Across from the slope where the white crosses and the tombstones clustered, I could see Zōtoku Temple's two ginkgo trees. During winter time, the bare branches stood in purplish brown color, like the old French man Hugo's²³ beard, but now there are still some leaves remaining on the tree, so you can't see that quaint effect.

I bowed slightly to the Indian gatekeeper at the entrance and entered the cemetery. I strolled down the path that I knew well and sat down in front of the tombstone of George Suidomore.²⁴ I took out Lucretius's book from the pocket. I wasn't going to read it, just left it in my lap, and looked down toward the streets and harbor in the expanding thin fog.

Around this time last year it had also been a misty foggy morning, I had sat down at the same place looking downward at the streets and harbor. I just remembered that now. Somehow it felt like only two, three days ago. Or rather, I had a strange feeling that the scenery I am looking at now was a continuation of the same scenery from last year. An imagination that would sometimes float in my heart — a feeling that one surely faces at the end of life, the briefness and transience of one's life (physically indeed, that feeling) that I have the habit of imagining directly — again robs my heart. Isn't the feeling that a year ago is indistinguishable from now somewhat similar to what you feel upon death? Like the people descending the hill path, who would fall down if they stopped suddenly so they have no choice but to keep on running, such is said to be the life of mankind, whose words had it been?

²³ Victor Hugo (1802-1885).

²⁴ American ambassador during the early Meiji period.

Not far away, there was a very small cross with a pot of geraniums in front. Under the cross, there was a white tombstone in the shape of an open book carved with the words "TAKE THY REST," and the name of a child who had only been five months old. The geranium still had bright red flowers with the warmth of the southern slope attached.

The cemetery was so pretty that it's hard to think about the gloom of death. Tombstones, inscriptions, bouquets of flowers, prayers, elegies, etc., are only partial formalities of death, like events surfacing above on the beautifully sorrowful stage.

A chapter in one of Euripides' plays. Hippolytus's stepmother Phaedra, tormented by her illicit affair, had been lying down, and next to her the nurse who did not yet know the reason of her distress was comforting her.

"The life of a human being is full of suffering. The misery has no stop or ending. However, even if there's something more pleasant than people's lives, darkness would envelope it so that it becomes hidden to our eyes. Besides, because the very existence on earth looks sparkly, maniacs like us are obsessed over it. If one asks why, it's because we don't know any other way to live, just as we do not know what happens underground."

As I thought about those words and looked around at the cemetery surroundings, the sad clinging of the dead — "there is wish but not hope," their breaths have risen from hundreds of unknown spots in the cemetery, and become the veiling white mist.

I left Lucretius unopened in the end and got up. From the gray smoke above the sea, the steam whistle sound could be heard. Slowly, I began descending the small inclined path.

Appendix 2. Glossary

Aki shima	秋島
Akutagawa Ryūnosuke	芥川龍之介
Amano Sōfu	天野宗歩
Ara Masahito	荒正人
Arai Michio	新井通郎
Aru seikatsu	ある生活
bakuhu	幕府
<i>Bungakkai</i>	文学界
bungakusha	文学者
<i>Bunmeiron no gairyaku</i>	文明論の概略
bushidō	武士道
Chang Wu-tzu	長梧子
Ch'eng I	程頤
chi	氣
Chi Ch'ang	紀昌
Chiba Prefecture	千葉県
Chieh	桀
Chou	紂
Chou dynasty	周朝
Chu Hsi	朱熹
Chuang Tzu	莊子
Chung-ni	仲尼
<i>Chūō Kōron</i>	中央公論
Confucius	孔子
D-shi shichigatsu jokei	D 市七月叙景
Daimyō	大名
Dairen	大連
danpen	断片
Deshi	弟子
Duke Ch'u of Wei	衛出公
Duke Chou	周公
Duke Huan	桓公
Duke Ling of Ch'en	陳靈公
Duke Ling of Wei	衛靈公

Edo	江戸
Emperor Chao of Han	漢昭帝
Emperor Wu of Han	漢武帝
Fei Wei	飛衛
Fūdo	風土
Fujiwara Seika	藤原惺窩
Fukuzawa Yukichi	福沢諭吉
Futabatei Shimei	二葉亭四迷
Fuyushima	冬島
<i>Gakumon no susume</i>	学問のすすめ
<i>gembun-icchi</i>	言文一致
Getsuyō shima	月曜島
Gojō Shusse	悟浄出世
Gojō Tan'i	悟浄嘆異
haihan chicken	廢藩置県
Hamakawa Katsuhiko	濱川勝彦
Hamamatsu	浜松
Han Fei Tzu	韓非子
Hasegawa Tatsunosuke	長谷川辰之助
Hashimoto Taka	橋本タカ
Hayashi Razan	林羅山
Hijkata Hisakatsu	土方久功
Hikami Hidehiro	氷上英広
Hikari to kaze to yume	光と風と夢
Hino Keizō	日野啓三
Honda Komei	本田孔明
Honda Toshiaki	本多利明
Hsi Yu Chi	西遊記
Hsieh Ye	泄冶
Hsiung-nu	匈奴
Hsun Tzu	荀子
Huang ti	黄帝
Ishida Baigan	石田梅岩
Jen hu chan	人虎傳
Junsa no iru fūkei	巡査の居る風景

kabayaki	蒲燒
Kabuki	歌舞伎
Kameda Hōsai	龜田鵬齋
Kameda Yōrai	龜田綾瀨
Kan Ying	甘蠅
kanbun	漢文
kangaku	漢學
kangaku jyuku	漢學塾
Kanshi	漢詩
Kantō	關東
Katsumata Hiroshi	勝又浩
Kawamura Minato	川村湊
Keijō	京城
Kenka	喧嘩
kenyaku	儉約
Kimura Kazuaki	木村一信
King Chi	王季
King Chou	紂王
King Mu of Chou	周穆王
King Wu	武王
kō	工
Kobe	神戸
Kōda Rohan	幸田露伴
Kōhuku	幸福
Kokugo henshū shoki	國語編集書記
kokutei kyōkasho	國定教科書
kōminka seisaku	皇民化政策
Kōyūkai zasshi	校友會雜誌
Kōzoku	古俗
Kuai Kuei	蒯瞶
Kugimoto Hisaharu	釘本久春
Kuki	久喜
Kung Li	孔悝
Kung Shu-yu	孔叔圉
<i>K'ung Tzu Chia Yu</i>	孔子家語
Lao Tzu	老子
Li Exian	李俄宪
Li Ling	李陵
Li Kwang	李廣
LiehTzu	列子

Mahiru	真昼
Meiji	明治
Meiji ishin	明治維新
Meijinden	名人傳
Mencius	孟子
Miyoshi Siro	三好四郎
Mo Tzu	墨子
Mojika	文字禍
Mori Ōgai	森鷗外
Nagai Kafū	永井荷風
Nakajima Atsushi	中島敦
Nakajima Busan	中島撫山
Nakajima Noboru	中島格
Nakajima Sumiko	中島澄子
Nakajima Tabito	中島田人
Nakajima Takeshi	中島桓
Nakajima Tanzō	中島端藏
Nakajima Yasushi	中島靖
Nakamura Mitsuo	中村光夫
Nakano Yoshio	中野好夫
Nan-tzu	南子
Nan-yueh	南越
Nan'yōchō	南洋庁
Nantōtan	南島譚
Nara	奈良
Natsu shima	夏島
nin	仁
Nitobe Inazō	新渡戸稲造
nō	農
Ōkakura Kakuzō	岡倉覚三
Ōkubo Yasuo	大久保康雄
Parao Maru	パラオ丸
Parao no shinwa densetsu	パラオの神話伝説
Pi Kan	比干
Pu	浦
rei	礼
ri	理
Riryo	李陵

Rōshitsuki	狼疾記
Ryūboku	流木
Ryūsan	龍山
Saitama Prefecture	埼玉県
Sakitama kyōsha	幸魂教舎
Sangetsuki	山月記
Sasaki Kiichi	佐々木基一
Sasaki Mitsuru	佐々木充
Seisetsu sogi	性説疎義
seiyoōka	西洋化
shi	士
<i>Shih Chi</i>	史記
Shih Yu	史魚
Shimizu Masahiro	清水雅洋
Shimoda no onna	下田の女
shin	信
Shina bunkatsu no unmei	支那分割の運命
Shinbashi	新橋
Shinoda Hajime	篠田一士
Shinran	親鸞
shō	商
shōgakkō	小学校
shōjiki	正直
Shun	舜
Ssu-ma Ch'ien	司馬遷
Su Wu	蘇武
Suiyō shima	水曜島
Sun Tzu	孫子
Takashima Toshio	高島俊男
Tako no ki no shita de	章魚の木の下で
Tanabe Hideho	田辺秀穂
Tanbiha no kenkyū	耽美派の研究
T'ang	湯
T'ang wen	湯問
Tanizaki Junichirō	谷崎潤一郎
<i>Tannishō</i>	歎異抄
Tanzō	端藏
Tao	道
Tao Te Ching	道德經

Tienjei	天瑞
Tokyo First High School	第一高等学校
toku	徳
Tokugawa	徳川
Tokugawa Ieyasu	徳川家康
Tonan Sensei	斗南先生
Toragari	虎刈
<i>Tso Chuan</i>	左傳
Tzu Kao	子羔
TzuKung	子貢
TzuLu	子路
Ueda Bin	上田敏
Unmei	運命
Usui Yoshimi	臼井吉見
waka	和歌
Warabi, take, rōjin	蕨・竹・老人
Watsuji Tetsuo	和辻哲郎
Wei	衛
Wu-ching	悟淨
Wu-kung	悟空
Wu-neng	悟能
wu wei	無為
Yamaga Sokō	山鹿素行
Yanaihara Tadao	矢内原忠雄
Yao	堯
Yasuda Toshiaki	安田敏朗
Yin	尹
Yoshimura Nobukatsu	吉村睦勝
Yotsuya, Tokyo	東京市四谷区
zensoku	喘息

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