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REDISCOVERING MUSHA-ISM: THE THEORY OF  
HAPPINESS IN THE EARLY WORKS OF  
MUSHAKÔJI SANEATSU

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE DIVISION OF THE  
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE  
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

IN

EAST ASIAN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES (JAPANESE)

AUGUST 2005

By  
Yoshihiro Mochizuki

Thesis Committee:

Lucy Lower, Chairperson  
Joel Cohn  
Nobuko Ochner

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## Introduction

Art fulfills its mission and loses its value at the same time,  
when it is understood by the masses.<sup>1</sup>  
—Mushakôji Saneatsu, *Jiko no tame no geijutsu*

Mushakôji Saneatsu (1885-1976) is a uniquely elusive writer.<sup>2</sup> Any Japanese adult knows of him as a writer. Many could name one or two of his works, perhaps *Yûjô* (Friendship, 1920) or *Ai to shi* (Love and Death, 1939). But only a very few will actually have read any of his writings. Nevertheless, Mushakôji's works have a definite (and often stereotyped) image among the public as optimistic and uncomplicated. His works go unread, while his popular image is of the old man who wisely remarked, "*Nakayoki koto wa utsukushiki kana*" (How beautiful congeniality is),<sup>3</sup> or the man who painted pumpkins and cucumbers.<sup>4</sup> It is often said that many people know his pumpkin painting, but do not know his literature, and for good or ill, it is probably those paintings of vegetables that keep Mushakôji's name in public consciousness. Also, his longevity (Mushakôji died at the age of ninety) meant a very long presence in public life, though in the postwar period he turned increasingly to painting and his writing drew less attention. His grandly aristocratic surname also gives a strong impression. These many factors and others intertwine to create the current public image of Mushakôji.

Moreover, Mushakôji's writing has attracted little scholarly attention and has been underappreciated in Japan. Research on Mushakôji has been much less active than on his contemporaries, Shiga Naoya (1883-1971) and Arishima Takeo (1878-1923). This neglect is even more marked in Western scholarship. There is scarcely any detailed critical commentary on his literature in English. His name and the titles of his works are

always mentioned in commentary on the White Birch School (*Shirakaba-ha*),<sup>5</sup> but have apparently merited no further discussion or analysis. This stagnation in Mushakôji studies might well be due in part to the image of optimism and uncomplicatedness that has attached itself to his works. For there is a tendency in modern Japanese literature to valorize a darker view of the human condition. Some scholars have neglected his works, because they consider them mere popular literature (*taishû bungaku* 大衆文学). Critical controversy over the merits of *shishôsetsu* (I-novel)<sup>6</sup> has also led to the charge of shallowness in Mushakôji's works, as most are closely based on his personal experiences.

There is, however, a considerable gap between what Mushakôji's works really are and scholarly reaction as well as popular perceptions. For instance, most people consider his most famous work, *Yûjô*, to be about beautiful friendship, as the title suggests. On the contrary, it is a story in which friendship is betrayed without any hesitation for the sake of ego. The true story becomes clear when one actually reads the work closely, yet the false image persists. Problematizing this widespread image of Mushakôji's literature as optimistic and uncomplicated, this thesis will attempt to bridge this "gap" and to commence a reevaluation of Mushakôji's literature, focusing on his early career.

A work of literature has both surface and depth. If the two are too close, the work is criticized as shallow. If the two are far apart, the work is praised for its profundity. In Mushakôji's writings, the surface is what is depicted in the text of his stories. The depth is his philosophy, which is explicitly developed in his essays and which underlies the true themes of his stories. Mushakôji's literature has largely been treated as shallow because people have overlooked that depth. The surface optimism and uncomplicatedness,

which make his works seem to be light reading, acquire more depth, when we examine his essays and stories together and realize how closely they are related. Previous research on Mushakôji has been caught in this trap. Although both surface and depth have been well studied independently, the link between them has been completely neglected.

Mushakôji's *shôsetsu*<sup>7</sup> brings to life his philosophy, Musha-ism. This thesis will define it as the author's theory of happiness, which comprises his own formulation of humanism, individualism, and transcendentalism, and their relation to happiness. Mushakôji develops this philosophy in the process of embodying it in his *shôsetsu*. Both his essays and stories point toward the important concept of happiness, variously rendered as *kôfuku*, *shiwase*, *(o)mdedeta(k)i*, and so forth. The notion of happiness is significant conceptually for the author, often figuring in his titles and appearing very frequently in his writings.<sup>8</sup> Mushakôji consistently sought to elucidate what true happiness is. Eventually, upon completing his early career, he reached what seems a very simple conclusion: to be happy is to be true to oneself.

The first chapter of this thesis will summarize and reflect upon prior research conducted on Mushakôji literature. The focus is on the three Japanese scholars in Mushakôji study, namely, Honda Shûgo, Ôtsuyama Kunio, and Yoneyama Yoshikazu. Honda is the pioneer in studying the White Birch School in Japanese academe. Ôtsuyama is the first scholar who made a comprehensive scholarly analysis of Mushakôji's works. And Yoneyama has most currently published on Mushakôji study. Although all three produced significant achievements in their different ways, none of them delved into the link between Mushakôji's essays and stories.

The second chapter will examine Mushakôji's early essays, in which there are already hints of the Musha-ism. For instance, *Yottsû no e ni arawasaretaru kairaku* (Pleasure As Represented in Four Paintings, 1908) discusses the notion of pleasure, which had previously been suppressed in Mushakôji's embrace of Tolstoian asceticism. *Jibun to tanin* (Myself and Others, 1909) manifests Mushakôji's own rendering of individualism. In "*Sorekara*" *ni tsuite* (On And Then, 1908), Mushakôji analyzes the dichotomy between nature and society. "*Jiko no tame*" *oyobi sonota ni tsuite* (For Myself and Other Matters, 1912) declares the full accomplishment of Musha-ism. These essays are where the author explores the philosophical ideas, which will be embodied by the characters in his *shôsetsu*.

Mushakôji's first literary success, *Omedetaki hito* (Happily in the Dark, 1911) is the main focus of the third chapter. This *shôsetsu* comprises two strata of meaning: what is represented in the text and what lies beneath it. Although the main concern of the work seems to be the complacent love of the protagonist, that is merely the surface. In depth, the author embodies Musha-ism in his extremely self-centered protagonist. All events are filtered through the first-person protagonist's subjectivity, who believes in the absolute supremacy of the self. For him, to realize his self is more important than winning the heart of his beloved and is the way to be happy. This is the story of the self-development of one who tries to complete his self by transcending the values of other people and being true to himself. In reference to the complementary short story, *Futari* (The Two of Us, 1911), this chapter will also challenge the accepted opinion that *Omedetaki hito* is a work of *shishôsetsu*.

The fourth chapter will mainly examine the play *Momoiro no heya* (The Pink Room, 1912) and the semi-autobiographical *shôsetsu*, *Seken shirazu* (Unworldliness, 1912). Despite the difference in genre, these two works share a similar and new dynamic in the presence and prominence of the female character. In *Momoiro no heya*, the female character, who is created as an “immaculate” woman, speaks for Musha-ism and leads the indecisive protagonist to it. In *Seken shirazu*, the protagonist, who is vulnerable to the claims of the public, admires the sense of liberty of the female character. Those two works are also similar in that the male protagonist and the female character become complementary characters. The union of the two complementary characters, representing a component of Musha-ism, the harmony of individualities, makes their subjectivities complete and thus brings them true happiness.

The conclusion will synthesize the various threads from the previous chapters to summarize Musha-ism, Mushakôji’s theory of happiness. To believe in the supremacy of the self and to be true to oneself ultimately leads to happiness. The tendency to conform to the public pressure and convention put one in conflict with one’s own values, and one must transcend the conventionality to be true to oneself. Mushakôji’s essays manifest this theory and his *shôsetsu* to embody it in his protagonists.

Akutagawa Ryûnosuke (1892-1927), despite being one of the “darkest” voices in modern Japanese literature, admired Mushakôji’s literature. When the White Birch School was established, men of letters from other schools mocked its members saying, “What can the spoiled sons of the aristocracy achieve in literary circles?”<sup>9</sup> People even made fun of them by anagramming the name of the school “*Shirakaba*” to “*bakarashi*”

(ridiculous). Moreover, they were famously criticized by Naturalists, the mainstream writers of the time, as “having been born with silver spoons in their mouths.”<sup>10</sup> In such an adverse wind for the White Birch School, Akutagawa was one of the few people who stood up for Mushakôji’s literature. “Mr. Mushakôji flung open a skylight, admitting fresh air into the oppressive atmosphere of the literary circles,”<sup>11</sup> he said. Indeed, Mushakôji’s emphasis on happiness and positive egotism brought a new trend to Taishô literature. And perhaps this was something only those born with silver spoons in their mouths could possibly achieve. Mushakôji was able to reach the “skylight” because of his “high” birth as the son of a duke. Rephrasing Akutagawa’s famous pronouncement, I hope to “fling open a skylight” on the writings of Mushakôji Saneatsu, which have languished in the shadows of scholarly neglect, and reveal Musha-ism, his theory of happiness.

**Chapter I**  
**Self-Realization, New “Naturalism,” and Transcendence:**  
**Review of Mushakôji Studies**

It is not a matter of “What is the question to be resolved?”  
 For all questions remain to be resolved.<sup>12</sup>  
 —Ôtsuyama Kunio, *Mushakôji Saneatsu*

**1. Introduction**

Prior to exploring Mushakôji’s actual writings, this chapter will outline previous research by scholars in Japan. Despite the fact that the works of Mushakôji seem on the whole to have been underappreciated in terms of academic research, there have been at least some influential scholars who conducted serious research on his literature. The work of three scholars—Honda Shûgo, Ôtsuyama Kunio, and Yoneyama Yoshikazu—is of particular interest.

Honda pioneered Mushakôji studies through his research in the mid-1950s on the White Birch School and its literature. Although his academic interest was rather in Mushakôji’s peer Shiga Naoya (1883-1971), Honda showed shrewd insight into the nature of Mushakôji’s view of art and life. The gist of his argument is that the privileged status of writers of the White Birch School freed them to believe in the supremacy of art. In part because they wrote without thought of financial benefit, they were able to live up to their belief that to realize one’s self was life’s highest achievement. And this belief was fully reflected in their literature, especially in Mushakôji’s.

Ôtsuyama, focusing solely on Mushakôji, comprehensively probed not only Mushakôji’s thought and philosophy, but also his personal life. Of great importance was his conversion, which greatly affected his literature, from Tolstoian philosophy, with its

focus on self-discipline and asceticism, to a kind of individualism. Ôtsuyama asserts that this conversion does not necessarily mean that Mushakôji abandoned Tolstoian philosophy, but rather attempted to create his own version of it: Musha-ism, rather than Tolstoism. Mushakôji saw individualism and positive egotism, too, as necessary stages in achieving a higher humanity.

Yoneyama is a contemporary scholar who has blazed a new interpretive trail in the study of Mushakôji's literature. He argues for the concept of what he calls "*chôetsu*" 超越 (transcendence) regarding Mushakôji's birth as well as his philosophy. Indeed, Mushakôji's privileged background allowed him to "transcend" the ordinary. His sense of values also transcended worldly values. Thus Yoneyama labels Mushakôji a Japanese transcendentalist and examines how this notion of transcendence shapes Mushakôji's literature.

## **2. Self-Realization: Honda Shûgo**

In his book, *Shirakaba-ha no bungaku* (Literature of the White Birch School, 1955), Honda Shûgo focuses on the notion of the self (*jiko* 自己) as a characteristic concern for writers of the White Birch School. Three of the twelve chapters have the term *jiko* in their titles.<sup>13</sup> The very first line of the first chapter begins: "Writers of the *Shirakaba* School considered 'realizing one's self' (*jiko o ikasu* 自己を生かす) to be the first principle in their literature as well as their lives."<sup>14</sup> He even asserts that what their literature most pointedly suggests to us is this notion of "realizing one's self." Here, "*jiko o ikasu*" signifies for one to know oneself, to affirm oneself, to value oneself, and ultimately to fulfill oneself.

Perhaps Mushakôji Saneatsu realized his self most successfully among other writers of the White Birch School because of his disdain for convention. The literary journal, *Shirakaba*, first published in 1910, gave birth to the White Birch School. The central figures of the School are, without doubt, Mushakôji and Shiga Naoya. Honda draws an interesting comparison between these two writers regarding their fundamental nature: Shiga is “high-strung” (*shinkeishitsu* 神経質) and fastidious in both art and morality, whereas Mushakôji is “heedless” (*mushinkei* 無神経) to the extent that he does not even notice that he has lost his coat on a walk. The White Birch School itself was unique among literary groups of the time, but Mushakôji’s nonchalance distinguishes him even among his peers.

The most prominent characteristic of the White Birch School was its extreme strength of self-affirmation, optimistic self-affirmation at that. Again, this is most conspicuous in Mushakôji, and is in part attributable to the influence of the philosophy of Maurice Maeterlinck (1862-1949). In *Wisdom and Destiny* (*La Sagesse et la destine*, 1898), Maeterlinck states:

You are told you should love your neighbour as yourself; but if you love yourself meanly, childishly, timidly, even so shall you love your neighbour. Learn therefore to love yourself with a love that is wise and healthy, that is large and complete.<sup>15</sup>

While you should love your neighbor as yourself, it hardly counts unless you know how to love yourself in the first place. Inspired by this idea, Mushakôji wrote a play, *Momoiro no heya* (*The Pink Room*, 1911). In this play, the female character, the Pink Woman (*momoiro no onna*) articulates Mushakôji’s literary rendering of Maeterlinck’s philosophy when encouraging the protagonist:

“You ought to value yourself first. You ought to protect the human life within yourself. You ought to grow [yourself] so much that you have no time to spare for others. You may attend to others after that. It is presumptuous to direct your attention to others before you become a whole man. You must be the defender of your self.”<sup>16</sup>

Honda comments that this passage gives us a glimpse of one cornerstone that defines the character of the White Birch School.

His encounter with the philosophy of Maeterlinck turned Mushakôji toward the goal of realizing his self; in other words, he sought to complete his self, to become a whole man, so that he could proceed to take other people into consideration. And Mushakôji, along with other writers of the White Birch School, sought a sphere in which they could practice this self-realization; for them, that sphere was writing, literature—art in a broad sense.

Writers from the White Birch School, all about the age of twenty-one or twenty-two, did not go to school, had no regular occupation, and did not even earn an income from their writing. On top of that, they had a unique attitude with a sense of superiority over “young and innocent bachelors of laws.” They thought that to realize one’s self was life’s highest achievement, and found the best way to realize their selves in art. Even though it brought them no financial benefit, they lived by this belief.

They served nothing but art purely for the sake of art. They believed in the supremacy of art almost to the point of making it a religion. At the same time, they neither sold their writings for livelihood nor composed out of mere caprice. In the sense that they engaged in literature for maximal fulfillment of their selves, they were men of letters, whose own lives were the most important issue. Perhaps they were the first believers in the supremacy of art in the sense of the development of the whole man.<sup>17</sup>

The young writers from the White Birch School sprang from privileged backgrounds, prompting certain writers of the more plebeian Naturalist school, the literary mainstream

of the time, to famously criticize that they were “born with silver spoons in their mouths.”<sup>18</sup> However, it is not enough simply to mock the *Shirakaba* writers for their privileged background because it is their wealth that enabled them to single-mindedly practice their belief in the goal of self-realization. The journal *Shirakaba* was not expected to bring its contributors profit. It simply provided the *Shirakaba* writers the opportunity to practice their writing. Free from pressure to make a living, they could write whatever they wanted. Their belief in self-realization as life’s highest achievement, their belief in the supremacy of art, and their privileged background—these three attributes of the *Shirakaba* writers are closely intertwined with and indispensable to each other.

In *Shirakaba-ha no bungaku*, Honda elucidates young Mushakôji’s philosophy through his research on the White Birch School and its writers. Honda thinks particularly highly of Mushakôji’s essays, seeing them as directly manifesting Mushakôji’s philosophy in his early career. Citing many passages from the essays written prior to the publication of *Shirakaba*, Honda claims that the fundamental philosophy of Mushakôji’s future works clearly appears in these essays. However, his research merely mentions some works, such as *Momoiro no heya* and *Omedetaki hito*, and fails to probe the link between Mushakôji’s essays and fictional works—how Mushakôji’s philosophy, which is developed in his essays, is depicted in his fiction.

### **3. New “Naturalism”: Ôtsuyama Kunio**

Ôtsuyama Kunio’s *Mushakôji Saneatsu ron* (Treatise on Mushakôji Saneatsu, 1974) is the first comprehensive book-length study of Mushakôji’s writings. As its

subtitle “*Atarashiki Mura made*” (Up to *Atarashiki Mura* [New Village]) indicates, the book delves into the author’s early years, until he founded the “New Village” in 1918.<sup>19</sup> The division into periods is very important for Ôtsuyama, and he dedicates the preface to his version of literary periodization of Mushakôji’s work in comparison with those of other scholars. Mushakôji left his *Atarashiki Mura* in Miyazaki Prefecture and moved to Nara Prefecture in December, 1925. Ôtsuyama considers this the turning point of Mushakôji’s writing career. The *Shirakaba* writer Nagayo Yoshirô (1888-1961) once commented, “As for Mushakôji’s literature, the early years are all that count.”<sup>20</sup> Ôtsuyama basically agrees with Nagayo, clearly declaring that he is not interested in Mushakôji’s later works.

Ôtsuyama further divides the first half of Mushakôji’s literature into four periods. First, he calls the period from 1904 to 1907 “*Torusutoi jidai*” (Tolstoy period), in which Mushakôji was a devoted reader of Tolstoy. Other scholars tend to discount this period as the “pre-history” of Mushakôji, seeing his original creativity bloom around 1910 with publication of the first issue of *Shirakaba*. Ôtsuyama in part agrees with this opinion, but he still insists that this period is worthy of research and cannot be dismissed. Second, he calls the period from 1908 to 1913 “*Shizen’ no jidai*” (“Nature” period), in which Mushakôji was moving away from Tolstoy and was developing his “naturalism.”<sup>21</sup> Other scholars tend to use such terms as positive egocentrism and respect for instinct to describe this period, but Ôtsuyama asserts that these are merely aspects of his “naturalism” and are themselves too weak to be the key to understanding Mushakôji’s literature and philosophy of this period. So he borrows Mushakôji’s own favorite term of the time, admitting that the term *shizen* is a little vague and broad. Third, he calls the

period from 1914 to 1917 “*Jinrui’ no jidai*” (“Humanity” period), in which Mushakôji tried to overcome the power of nature with the love of humanity. Here again, Ôtsuyama dismisses such a frequently used term as humanism (*jindô shugi*), saying that it is all a key a bit too small for the keyhole. Finally, he calls the period from 1918 to 1925 “*Atarashiki Mura’ jidai*” (The “New Village” period), during which Mushakôji founded the New Village and resided there.

In Ôtsuyama’s definition, “*Shizen’ no jidai*” starts with Mushakôji’s disenchantment with the thought of Tolstoy and ends with the establishment of his “naturalism.” The second chapter of *Mushakôji Saneatsu ron* explores this process in detail. Around the time of the first issue of *Shirakaba*, Mushakôji’s “naturalism” gradually becomes substantial and finally becomes established as two pillars—worship of *shizen* and rejection of humanitarianism. The former is resistance against the internal demand of Tolstoian asceticism, “Be immaculate and overcome your instinct.”<sup>22</sup> The latter is deferment of the external demand of Tolstoian utopian socialism, which is to “realize social justice, love, and labor.”<sup>23</sup> In other words, Mushakôji’s “naturalism” aims at the acceptance and affirmation of human nature, as well as individual self-realization as opposed to caring for human kind at large. In addition, although it rejects Tolstoian humanitarianism, Mushakôji’s philosophy never abandons Tolstoian humanism, the fundamental philosophy of the *Shirakaba* writers, as his foundation of *Atarashiki Mura* in his later career suggests.<sup>24</sup>

One of the distinctive features of Ôtsuyama’s argument is that he attaches great importance to Mushakôji’s devotion to Tolstoy. In “*Torusutoi jidai*,” Mushakôji was wholly devoted to the thought of Tolstoy, particularly its ascetic and communalist values.

He tried to overcome his sexual desire and hated his prestigious background. Later on, enlightened by the philosophy of Maeterlinck, Mushakôji realized the significance of self-affirmation. When discussing this transition, or conversion, Ôtsuyama is meticulous in his lexical choice. He describes it as separation from Tolstoy (*Torusutoi rihan* トルストイ離反), instead of graduation or abandonment. Mushakôji's conversion from Tolstoy to Maeterlinck is sometimes criticized as his abandoning the thought of Tolstoy too easily, but Ôtsuyama has a different view. In his diaries of 1908, Mushakôji scarcely mentions Tolstoy, whereas he praises Tolstoy almost every day just two years earlier. It seems that Mushakôji is deliberately minimizing the pressure of Tolstoy in his thought, rather than that his admiration has simply cooled.

Replacing Tolstoy in Mushakôji's diaries of 1908 are Maeterlinck, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832), Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882), Walt Whitman (1819-1892), and Auguste Rodin (1840-1917). The characteristic common to all of these thinkers is the affirmation of human beings and their nature. It is widely believed that Mushakôji first encountered this new view of human nature in Maeterlinck's *Wisdom and Destiny*. Interestingly, however, Ôtsuyama asserts that it is not Maeterlinck and the other thinkers who led Mushakôji away from Tolstoian philosophy. He claims that Mushakôji believed in what he called *shizen* even prior to becoming a devotee of Tolstoy. He once said that forced growth is harmful for both body and soul and that only natural growth can promise success. This idea is the very basis of his "naturalism," that is, to live as we are made by nature. In Ôtsuyama's opinion, although Mushakôji himself did not realize it, he utilized the philosophy of Maeterlinck to clarify the vague idea he had already had earlier.

The affirmation of *shizen*, for Mushakôji, started from the affirmation of instinct, especially the affirmation of sexual desire. Human sexual desire is considered a taboo in Tolstoian philosophy, but Mushakôji first asks himself if sexual desire is really a vice as Tolstoy asserts. It is around this period that new phenomena appear in his writing.

Ôtsuyama divides the heroines of Mushakôji's *shôsetsu* into two types—pure and innocent women like Tsuru in *Omedetaki hito* (Happily in the Dark, 1911) and uninhibited women like C-ko in *Seken shirazu* (Unworldliness, 1912). The latter type of heroine first appears in *Fukô naru koi* (Unhappy Love, 1908). Also, the protagonist in *Omedetaki hito* incessantly uses such suggestive terms as “*niku*” (flesh), and confesses that he is starved for women and that he masturbates. If it is natural to be hungry for sexual affection, one should not feel guilty about it; the responsibility is shifted onto something that creates human beings like that. Mushakôji calls it *shizen*. Almighty nature cannot make a mistake—this is a major difference between Mushakôji's “naturalism” and the literary movement, Naturalism. Naturalist writers reveal what they see as the ugliness of human nature, whereas Mushakôji simply tries to live as he is created by *shizen*. What happens must be affirmed, simply because it *has* happened. This is the fundamental idea of Mushakôji's new “naturalism.”

Quoting a passage from Mushakôji's essay in 1916 where he reevaluates Tolstoy, Ôtsuyama asserts that eight years of struggle did not enable Mushakôji to completely expel the thought of Tolstoy from his mind. He says that the philosophy of Tolstoy is indeed too powerful for Mushakôji to abandon or overcome. All one can do is to embrace it unconditionally, to evade it, or to mitigate it according to one's capacity. Mushakôji chooses the last option. Ôtsuyama concludes that Mushakôji did not intend to abandon

Tolstoian philosophy, but to grope for his own version—Musha-ism (*musha-shugi* 武者主義). In fact, Mushakôji himself declares in his diary of 1908, “If I manage to stay healthy until the age of sixty, I will surely have accomplished something. That is to say, I will have established a Musha-ism.”<sup>25</sup> His Musha-ism is, in other words, a way for Mushakôji to live happily. In his writing, he embodies this theory of happiness in the characters.

#### **4. Transcendence: Yoneyama Yoshikazu**

In his monograph “*Shirakaba*” *seishin no keifu* (Genealogy of “*Shirakaba*” Spirit, 1996), Yoneyama Yoshikazu examines Mushakôji’s literature via the concept of transcendence (*chôetsu* 超越) and labels him a Japanese transcendentalist (*Nihon no chôetsu-shugi-sha* 日本の超越主義者). First, Yoneyama delves into Mushakôji’s birth—how he felt, thought, and acted about it. Interestingly, Mushakôji’s family was not particularly *rich*, in spite of its nobility. Relatively speaking, Mushakôji was one of the poorest among his peers in Gakushûin. He was not born with a silver spoon in his mouth at all. Rather, he was treated almost as if he had been a beggar in this prestigious school. Also, the fact that Mushakôji was physically weaker than other boys in his childhood must have brought him great frustration and feelings of inferiority. Yoneyama asserts that Mushakôji tried to overcome and control these inferiorities spiritually, which is the first phase of his transcendence regarding the circumstances of his birth.

For Mushakôji, the road to literature began in company with his devotion to Tolstoy. Mushakôji first encountered Tolstoy’s works in his uncle’s study about the time he reached puberty, which is around the time he had become conscious of love and

sexuality and started to listen attentively to his own inner voice. Yoneyama claims that Mushakôji's transcendence shifted to a completely different phase after he had encountered the thought of Tolstoy and he had lost his first love. Enlightened by Tolstoy, Mushakôji finally realized that, although he was relatively poor in the aristocratic community, he belonged to a privileged class vis-à-vis society as a whole after all. Since wealth and nobility are something evil in Tolstoian principles, this realization troubled him. So Mushakôji kept exploring what real wealth was in several works around the time he published his maiden book, *Arano* (Wilderness, 1908). He developed the concept of the "natural aristocracy" and valued it over the aristocracy in the mundane world. Then he tried to face his parasitic life—the life of a social criminal in a Tolstoian view—in order to realize social justice. Yoneyama argues that Mushakôji's literature has two aspects at this moment. One is the "literature for himself," in which Mushakôji tries to transcend his birth and save himself from becoming malformed in the irrational system of the aristocracy. The other is the "literature for others," in which he sympathizes with the poor and the unhappy and hopes to become a spiritual mainstay for them through literature.

It was not very easy for Mushakôji to accomplish this second phase of transcendence. Since he was still skeptical of his talent as a professional writer at this time, he was very sensitive to the criticisms of his maiden book. Generally speaking, *Arano* was not praised highly in newspaper reviews and literary magazines. Among those, Tokutomi Roka (1868-1927) made the most incisive criticism of the work. He simply condemned it as "the work of a pampered child" (*obotchama no saku*).<sup>26</sup> Roka also commented on another occasion that only those who know the difficulty of making a

living can write literature. *Arano* was published due to Mushakôji's great sacrifice; he gave up an academic career in the Tokyo Imperial University to be instead a man of letters, and asked his brother for financial support. Such harsh criticism from someone for whom he personally had a deep respect had a very great impact on Mushakôji.<sup>27</sup>

Yoneyama calls this incident "Roka Shock." It rocked Mushakôji's sense of purpose in his literature, the "literature for himself and others," which is almost his purpose of life, to its foundations.

However, with the help of newly acquired ideas from contemporary thinkers such as Maeterlinck, Mushakôji found a way to refute Roka's criticism. In short, he finally accepted his being privileged over ordinary people and abandoned the idea of standing on an equal footing with them. That does not mean, however, that his ideas politically regressed. Rather, he had overcome his sense of inferiority about his birth with his concept of the "natural aristocracy." From that time on, Mushakôji claimed the value of self-affirmation and individualism more strongly.

Next, Yoneyama discusses the other aspect of Mushakôji's transcendence, which is concerned with the morality and ideology of earlier times. It was when he experienced failure in his first love and encountered the thought of Tolstoy that Mushakôji's philosophy reached a point of great change. But until then, the young Mushakôji had had secular ambitions rooted in that same morality and ideology. As a child, he had dreamt of becoming a king of Asia so that he could give lands to the emperor of Japan. In adolescence, he had first aspired to a military career, and then had aspired to becoming a politician, particularly a prime minister. In his autobiographical *shôsetsu*, *Aru otoko* (A Certain Man, 1923), Mushakôji describes himself in his youth as "wanting at any rate to

be nothing less than the number one person in the world, who is superior to all.”<sup>28</sup> Also, other people around Mushakôji had high hopes for him. It is well-known that his father lamented, “If only there was someone to take good care of him, this boy would become the most distinguished person in the world,”<sup>29</sup> before he died when Mushakôji was three years old. In *Aru otoko*, Mushakôji himself admits that his ambition to be a great man was extremely strong: “Had he not been done in by the failure of his first love and had he not been baptized by Tolstoy, he would surely have become a man of strange ambitions.”<sup>30</sup>

Yoneyama analyzes the reasons why Mushakôji was so deeply fascinated by the philosophy of Tolstoy. The most influential factor is the fact that Tolstoy himself was from the aristocracy and contemplated seriously out of his conscience upon the purpose of life, the agony of sexual desire, and the problems of love, just as Mushakôji did. Also, Tolstoian philosophy led Mushakôji to the transcendence of old-fashioned morality and ideology, specifically the national slogan of the time, “loyalty and patriotism” (*chûkun aikoku* 忠君愛国). In his childhood dream, Mushakôji had believed in *chûkun aikoku*, but Mushakôji in his youth detested such formality per se. There is an anecdote in *Aru otoko*: in the military training at Gakushûin, Mushakôji presented his reports with very casual manners and speech, even though he was expected to report with his head up, using the military language. Even in his adolescence when he had aspired to be a member of the military, he disdained formality.

Mushakôji’s disgust for formality stems from his optimism, or borrowing Yoneyama’s term, his happy-go-lucky principle (*nonki shugi* 呑気主義). This unique philosophy, which seemed inherent in Mushakôji’s temperament, enabled him to maintain

a more cosmopolitan perspective than most of his contemporaries had, transcending traditional morality and nationalistic ideology. He describes himself and his peers in *Shirakaba* as being spiritually sons of god. This is where Yoneyama observes the resemblance between Mushakôji's transcendentalism and American Transcendentalism. In fact, Yoneyama borrows the terminology *chôetsu-shugi* from the translation of American Transcendentalism. Moreover, the works of American Transcendentalists, such as Emerson and Whitman, were widely read by the *Shirakaba* writers, and the transcendental traits of Musha-ism are largely influenced by the philosophy of those writers.

Emerson's transcendentalism is a religious philosophy based on the perpetual inspiration of all visible objects as fundamentally linked to one invisible source. He sees human beings as part of God (= nature) and understands that individual consciousness and soul can expand to and include the universe. When such an individual loves nature and all his behavior truthfully follows the command of nature, he, created by nature, can achieve supreme delight. Similarly, Mushakôji defines the self as a son of god and tries to be a "whole" man who finds the universal value that transcends the morality and ideology of a specific time and space. He goes further, though, to dream ultimately of a community where such independent and "whole" people who complete and realize themselves live together. With this ideal, he established *Atarashiki Mura* in his later career.

## **5. Conclusion**

It is indisputable that the three Japanese scholars discussed in this chapter rendered distinguished achievements in Mushakôji studies in their own ways. Honda

reevaluated Mushakôji's essays and attempted to extract the essence of his philosophy out of these essays. Ôtsuyama focused on the period when Mushakôji's philosophy shifted greatly from the thought of Tolstoy to the philosophy of Maeterlinck and defined it as Mushakôji's attempt to establish his own Musha-ism, his version of "naturalism."

Yoneyama posited the concept of transcendence and discussed Mushakôji's philosophy in terms of two aspects of transcendence: transcendence of his birth and the transcendence of traditional morality and ideology.

These scholars' studies are based solely on Mushakôji's essays and the philosophy manifested in them. There are some citations from his *shôsetsu* in their research, but almost all are from his essays. None of them pay much attention to the link between Mushakôji's essays and his *shôsetsu*, in other words how Mushakôji depicts the philosophy he propounds in his essays in his *shôsetsu*. The following chapters will shed light on this link that prior research has neglected.

## Chapter II

### Happiness and A New Philosophy: Dawn of Musha-ism

If I manage to stay healthy until the age of sixty,  
I will surely have accomplished something.  
That is to say, I will have established a Musha-ism.<sup>31</sup>  
—Mushakôji Saneatsu, *Kare no seinen jidai*

#### 1. Introduction

Throughout his long writing career, Mushakôji Saneatsu produced indeed abundant works, many more than included in fifteen-volume *Mushakôji Saneatsu zenshû* (The Collected Works of Mushakôji Saneatsu). From the publication of his maiden collection *Arano* until the publication of his first literary success *Omedetaki hito*, Mushakôji reveals a gradual change in his philosophy through his writing activity in the literary journal *Shirakaba*. The essays Mushakôji prolifically wrote in this period show glimmers of Musha-ism. For instance, in *Kuringeru no "Hinkyû" o mite* (On Klinger's *Misery*, 1908), the author hints at his disenchantment with Tolstoian humanitarianism. *Yottsû no e ni arawasaretaru kairaku* deals with the notion of pleasure. *Jibun to tanin* forms Mushakôji's version of individualism. In "*Sorekara*" *ni tsuite*, Mushakôji delves into the notion of nature. And "*Jiko no tame*" *oyobi sonota ni tsuite* sees the accomplishment of Musha-ism.

These essays are particularly significant in that they bridge the deepest rift in his writing career, that between *Arano* and all that comes after. The essays written prior to 1910 work through Mushakôji's liberation from the thought of Tolstoy, and the essays after 1910 establish the spiritual foundation of *Omedetaki hito*.

## **2. Continuity and Shift: Farewell to Tolstoy**

Mushakôji's maiden collection *Arano* was published privately in April, 1908, preceding the first issue of the journal *Shirakaba* by two years. Mushakôji was twenty-two years old and was already determined to pursue a career as a professional writer after withdrawing from Tokyo Imperial University. *Arano* was acclaimed by his younger peers who felt that the young, aspiring Mushakôji proved that Japan had a true literary man who attempted to truthfully respond to the thought of Tolstoy. However, the author himself did not wish that this work would be included in his *zenshû* for a long time. Mushakôji's philosophy advocated in this collection was, so to speak, an adopted one after all. He was merely captivated by the thought of someone else, and was most unlikely to abstract anything out of it. Besides, it was not as original as Musha-ism—the author's own philosophy. Thus Mushakôji later came to consider *Arano* not truly his own work.

After the publication of *Arano*, Mushakôji was caught in a slump as a writer and struggled to recover direction until the first issue of the journal *Shirakaba*. The author's gradual retreat from Tolstoian ideas and struggle for a new approach to literature was clearly reflected in the essays he wrote during these two years. These essays remained unpublished for a few years, because Mushakôji had no outlet until the founding of *Shirakaba*.

Modern Japanese writers are commonly prolific essayists as well, but essays particularly occupy an important place in Mushakôji's oeuvre. Thus he published his first collection of essays, *Seichô* 生長 (Growth, 1913), at a relatively early stage of his writing career. The essays in *Seichô* were written when Mushakôji was between the ages

of twenty-five and twenty-nine, or between 1908 and 1912. In the preface, he comments on the purpose of this collection:

This is the first book in which I collect my thoughts. What I have in mind now is to continue to collect and publish my essays every four or five years throughout my life.

As a result, the value of these volumes will be attested through my future [success].<sup>32</sup>

Basically, the essays in *Seichô* are sorted chronologically, not by date of first publication, but by date of actual completion. This makes the collection a very useful primary source, as we are able to observe the development and transition of the young Mushakôji's philosophy. As the title suggests, the collection is indeed the record of the author's growth as a writer.

Later, when Geijutsusha compiled the first Mushakôji *zenshû* (complete works) in 1923, the essays from *Seichô* were included in its volume ten. On this occasion, a few new essays were added, and some untitled essays were finally given titles. In the preface of the volume, Mushakôji again discusses the importance of his essays, emphasizing the aspect of his growth:

I wrote the essays collected here when I was between twenty-four and thirty years old (in Western calculation). Some thoughts are different from my thoughts now, but they were true to what I was at that moment. Young trees live in the young world. And they try their best to grow themselves.

Some parts may be reckless and other parts may be dogmatic, but I think what I wrote was true [to myself] *in order to realize myself*. I can still agree with many parts now. I think quite a few parts tell the truth. Similar matters are repeated in some parts, but I think you can trace my growth there. (MSZ 1: 755; my emphasis)

Considering that “to realize oneself”<sup>33</sup> is the key notion which will haunt his early writing, it is significant that Mushakôji in 1923, looking back over his young career, considered that he had written those essays to realize himself. For the protagonist of *Omedetaki hito*, self-realization is the purpose of life, while it is also the purpose of writing for the author himself. The following chapter will discuss this issue further.

Based on the original *Seichô* and the Geijutsusha version, Honda Shûgo compiled another collection, *Wakaki hi no shisaku* (Youthful Speculations, 1952). Honda wrote a commentary in which he defined the purpose of the compilation as an outline of the formative period of Mushakôji’s “self.” He believed that the essays in the collection had greater significance than such major *shôsetsu* as *Omedetaki hito* and *Seken shirazu* and that Mushakôji’s genius was perceived more clearly in them. As this section of the thesis will demonstrate, this period was not a smooth transition: Mushakôji sometimes swayed between newly acquired ideas and his older allegiance, Tolstoy. *Wakaki hi no shisaku* is also important in that Honda “discovered” the essay *Kuringeru no “Hinkyû” o mite* and placed it first in the collection.

In the latest version of Mushakôji *zenshû* published by Shôgakkân, some obscure writings, such as small columns (*zakkan* 雜感) in *Shirakaba*, are newly added to the essays in *Wakaki hi no shisaku*. The compilers of the *zenshû* name this new collection *Shimpen seichô* (Growth: New Edition) and make it the main feature of the first volume. The essays are once again sorted by date of actual completion. *Shimpen seichô* opens with the essay *Kuringeru no “Hinkyû” o mite*. While it is often referred to as the dawn of Mushakôji’s new phase, this essay also discloses that the author has not yet completely escaped from the shadow of Tolstoy. The work of art discussed here, *Hinkyû* (Misery,

1909), is the seventh of a series of etchings by the German symbolist painter and sculptor, Max Klinger (1857-1920), entitled *On Death*, Part II.<sup>34</sup>

In *Kuringeru no "Hinkyū" o mite*, Mushakōji, praising the novelty of the way Klinger's etching depicts laborers, discusses the sacredness of labor. While admitting that labor itself may be sacred, he denies the sacredness of most existing laborers. From ancient times, labor has been portrayed as a sacred object in many works of art. Mushakōji's favorite artists, such as Jean-François Millet (1814-1875) and Constantin Meunier (1831-1905), also portray such sacred labor in their works. As paintings in the realist tradition,<sup>35</sup> their works should depict the laborers realistically, but Mushakōji sees them as idealized by Millet and Meunier and thus separated from reality. Mushakōji's view is that the laborers of his time are not sacred. They merely labor to earn their daily bread because they have neither food nor shelter without doing so. In short, "their labor is not ends, but means."<sup>36</sup> Thus Mushakōji, unable to respect them, pities such laborers. Klinger's *Misery* is introduced as a good example of pitiful labor, in which the true reality of contemporary laborers is well depicted. Excessive labor makes their spirits starve and deprives them of freedom, dignity, and grace. The laborers here do not possess individuality; one can be replaced by another. They are what Tolstoy calls the slavish laborers of modern times.

Mushakōji does not particularly adore this etching just because it realistically represents laborers in the Tolstoian sense of lacking individuality. Klinger's social background is implicated in his etching as well. Both Millet and Meunier identify with laborers: Millet was from a peasant family and Meunier observed miners in his personal life. In contrast, Klinger never knew hunger like Mushakōji himself, having grown up in

a wealthy merchant family. It may have been more difficult for him to grasp the truth about laborers than Millet and Munier. However, the laborers in Klinger's etching are truer to reality than those in the works of Millet and Meunier.

One is reminded of the "Roka Shock," that once discouraged Mushakôji.

Tokutomi Roka had suggested in his harsh criticism of *Arano* that only pain enables an artist to produce a masterpiece. By writing *Kuringeru no "Hinkyû" o mite*, Mushakôji questions Roka's premise:

I think that pain has its value only when you suffer for the sake of your ideal. The higher the ideal is, the more the pain gains its value. There is no value in pain itself. Those who suffer from worthless pain are pitiful. (MSZ 1: 297)

This exchange of opinions has implications for the issue of *shishôsetsu* in its argument for the power of creative imagination to represent reality beyond personal experience. Condemning *Arano* as "the work of a pampered child," Roka doubts the creative ability of Mushakôji. Similarly, Mushakôji's works tend to be recognized as *shishôsetsu* that cannot surpass the limit of his personal experiences. Perhaps Mushakôji has regained his confidence here in his creative imagination from knowing that someone like Klinger who shared a similar background with him was able to create true art.

*Kuringeru no "Hinkyû" o mite* indicates both continuity and shift in the author's philosophy; Mushakôji begins to depart from the thought of Tolstoy. On the one hand, he takes pity on the existing laborers, instead of admiring or worshiping them, assuming that they are the weak of society. On the other hand, his attitude toward those laborers is quite detached. He hopes that "such slaves will disappear off the face of the earth,"<sup>37</sup> but this does not mean that he wishes to relieve them from misery. Rather, he asserts that those

laborers are not even worth relieving, because they lack individuality which he believes is the most valuable quality of human beings. Here, Mushakôji rejects humanistic and communistic sympathy in himself towards miserable laborers.

In the following essay in *Shimpen seichô, Yottsû no e ni arawasaretaru kairaku*, Mushakôji deals with the notion of pleasure in appreciation of four symbolist paintings: *In the Sea* by Arnold Böcklin (1827-1901), *Spring Ensemble* by Hans Thoma (1839-1924), *Procession of Bacchantes* by Franz von Stuck (1863-1928), and *Happiness in Summer* by Max Klinger.<sup>38</sup> The theme of this essay stands in stark contrast to that of the previous essay. The author could not possibly have focused on pleasure without rejecting basic tenets of Tolsoian thought.

In *Yottsû no e ni arawasaretaru kairaku*, Mushakôji defines pleasure as a harmony of individualities:

All the four paintings represent different types of pleasure. The pleasure represented in *In the Sea* is too light to be called pleasure in love, but it is pleasure in the harmony of men and women. The pleasure represented in *Spring Ensemble* is pleasure in the harmony of [a herdboyl] and peaceful nature. The pleasure represented in *Procession of Bacchantes* is pleasure in the ardent harmony of men and women. The pleasure represented in *Happiness in Summer* is pleasure in the harmony of three women's individualities and pure and quiet nature in mid-summer. However, the pleasures represented in these four paintings have something in common. That is, they represent the pleasure which is produced when one's individuality harmonizes with another's individuality.<sup>39</sup>

Mushakôji gives full details of each painting and explains how each painting visualizes a different type of harmony of individualities. *In the Sea* depicts a scene in which some creatures, centaurs, nymphs, and three tritons are playing in the sea. There is pleasure that the individualities of men spiritually harmonize with those of women in this painting.

*Spring Ensemble* depicts a quiet scene in which a herdboys is playing a flute. There is pleasure that the individualities of the nature landscape, birds, a herdboys, and frogs mutually harmonize. *Procession of Bacchantes* vividly depicts a scene in which drunken men and women are marching in procession. There is pleasure that the individualities of men sexually harmonize with those of women. *Happiness in Summer* depicts a scene in which one woman is playing a lute and two other women are listening on a green field. There is pleasure that the individuality of nature harmonized with the individualities of three women.

Mushakôji may be one of the few Japanese writers of the modern era, including Nagai Kafû (1879-1959), who directly addresses “pleasure.” He declares that he “would like to conduct the deepest research on pleasure.”<sup>40</sup> Earlier, Japanese literature abounded in works that dealt with pleasure, notably in the Edo period. For instance, Ihara Saikaku (1642-1693) is renowned for his treatment of pleasure in such works as *Kôshoku ichidai otoko* (The Life of an Amorous Man, 1682), *Shoen ôkagami* (The Great Mirror of Loves, 1684), and *Kôshoku gonin onna* (Five Women Who Loved Love, 1684). In contrast, the entire social mood completely shifted after the Meiji Restoration. The government adopted the new policy of “*fukoku kyôhei*” 富国強兵 (lit. Enrichment of the Nation, Strengthening of the Army) in the belief that “the rapid enlargement of trade and the establishment of foreign colonies were essential for Japan's survival in the modern age.”<sup>41</sup> Under this slogan of nation-building, the entire nation was supposed to strive as one, and thus individual interests and pleasure were repressed and were considered a vice. In the literary context, this phenomenon appeared as a reaction against the frivolous *gesaku* literature of the late Edo and the early Meiji periods. Mushakôji notes in *Yottsû no e ni*

*arawasaretaru kairaku*: “In general, pleasure has not been highly valued in this society thus far. People thought that indulging oneself in pleasure meant corruption.”<sup>42</sup>

Mushakôji’s novelty lies in that he asserts that pleasure is the most valuable experience for human beings after love and beauty: “It is a great blessing for us, who were born as human beings, that pleasure is given to our lives.”<sup>43</sup>

In Mushakôji’s opinion, most people misunderstand how to find pleasure—the kind of pleasure that comes from the harmony of fully developed individualities. But they do experience that harmony without recognizing it, when they are moved by a work of art, such as music or a painting. Mushakôji claims:

He who truly desires pleasure has to make his personality mature. Then he is able to harmonize with everything under the sun. And he who can harmonize with everything is the happiest person in this world. (MSZ 1: 301)

The notion of happiness is what Mushakôji primarily deals with in his early career. In this essay, he argues that happiness is derived from pleasure and that pleasure results from the harmony of fully developed individualities. Indeed, the protagonist in *Omedetaki hito* does not wish to be with his beloved unless her individuality can harmonize with his. Similarly, the protagonist in *Seken shirazu* remains very uncomfortable and unhappy while his individuality cannot harmonize with that of his woman. *Yottsu no e ni arawasaretaru kairaku* is important in that the most important themes of the author’s future career—happiness, pleasure, and individuality—already make their first coherent appearance.

In addition to the ideas discussed above, *Yottsu no e ni arawasaretaru kairaku* suggests much about the relation of Mushakôji to his *shôsetsu*, or his stance as an author.

While adoring the pleasure depicted in the four paintings, the author deplors that people in this modern time cannot fully relish the harmony of individualities.

Individuality hopes to harmonize with [other] individuality but cannot; this is our current state. In the Land of Beauty, individuality harmonizes with [other] individualities, but in this world, individuality and [other] individualities come together and produce only cacophony.<sup>44</sup>

Mushakôji admits that he has the same problem. His consideration of others prevents him from being the centaur in *In the Sea*. His turbid emotions prevent him from being the simple herdboyc in *Spring Ensemble*. His reason prevents him from being the bacchant in *Procession of Bacchantes*. The noise of civilization prevents him from being the woman in *Happiness in Summer*. Mushakôji analyzes the reason:

I wonder why people in this world cannot harmonize with other individualities.

I think that financial pressures, archaic morality, convention, society, and love of indolence prevent people from being [truly] themselves. Thus they are afraid to present themselves as they really are. They present themselves as though they were someone else. (MSZ 1: 301)

Here, Mushakôji clearly expresses his aspiration to an ideal state where his individuality fully harmonizes with other individualities. But he also regrets the discrepancy between his ideal and what people, including himself, are really capable of. Such discrepancy, or self-delusion, is the attitude that the protagonists in Mushakôji's works hate most. It follows naturally that his *shôsetsu* are fictional spaces where Mushakôji can place his ideal characters in an ideal world. His *shôsetsu* is his "Land of Beauty" where he can be the whole man he wants to be, being true to himself. Although they present themselves

quite differently, his essays and *shôsetsu* are complementary: one describing and the other depicting his theory of happiness.

*Jibun to tanin* is thought to be the last essay Mushakôji wrote prior to the first issue of *Shirakaba* in 1910.<sup>45</sup> The idea the author espouses here is in part a repetition of what he has previously claimed in his essays. But in this quite short essay, he digs a bit deeper into the matter of individuality, more specifically, the relationship between himself and others. Mushakôji opens *Jibun to tanin* with these startling remarks: “I am grateful that I am indifferent to others. I am grateful that others are indifferent to me.”<sup>46</sup> The first sentence is concerned with the author’s past philosophy. In the thought of Tolstoy, philanthropy is an essential component; that is to say, endeavoring to love your neighbor as yourself. Under the strong sway of Tolstoian humanitarianism in *Arano*, Mushakôji had once hoped to practice this philanthropy and to save the world in his own way. However, his hope remained no better than compassion toward the poor and denial of his privileged social status. The task he had assigned himself was too heavy.

Now Mushakôji realizes that he cannot do anything about others’ destiny however much he loves and worries about them. So he finds it a blessing to be indifferent to others. Tolstoy once taught him to love his neighbor as himself. But Mushakôji refutes this notion in a humorous way:

If we practice loving our neighbor as ourselves, we will be exhausted with the commotion [that all the people we have to love cause]. We will be also exhausted with concerns and worries. I think that we, imperfect human beings, are made not to be happy until there are gradations of shade in the color of love, from far to near. And I am grateful for that. (MSZ 1: 317)

This passage may sound as if Mushakôji has merely abandoned his goal, but he is rather envisioning a new, more realistic goal, through objective observation of reality, which an imperfect person like himself can at least achieve. The author does not mention Maeterlinck here, but the idea of indifference to others is obviously influenced by Maeterlinck's philosophy.<sup>47</sup> Only a perfect person can practice "to love your neighbor as yourself." One cannot love his neighbor as himself without loving himself in the first place. And there are too many people who do not even know how to love themselves. With the help of Maeterlinck's thought, Mushakôji has finally realized that it is important to set a lesser goal that he can actually achieve. To determine what one can do based on his own reason and conscience and to practice it while expanding his capacity; this is one of the essential characteristics of Musha-ism and Yoneyama Yoshikazu names it "*dekirudake shugi*" (insofar-as-one-can principle) in "*Shirakaba*" *seishin no keifu*.<sup>48</sup> And to struggle in vain to achieve an unrealistic, idealistic goal is, indeed, what Mushakôji calls "worthless pain" in *Kuringeru no "Hinkyû" o mite*. If one devotes himself to this worthless pain, he will place himself alongside the miserable laborers in Klinger's *Misery*.

The second sentence is concerned with the author's future. Mushakôji hates to be interfered with by others, so he finds it a blessing that others are indifferent to him. The characters in Mushakôji's *shôsetsu* hope for such indifference to themselves, too. The protagonist in *Omedetaki hito* hopes that others will not force their values on him. The heroine in *Seken shirazu* finds it annoying that others think that she should conform to social norms. The key term here is *botsu-kôshô* 没交渉 (non-relation):

But I also hate to hate others and to be hated by others. In my relation to others, I would like to be detached rather than to hate others and to be hated by others.

But I do not want to be attached to myself, either. When one is attached to oneself, one cannot love anything. One cannot take an interest in anything. (MSZ 1: 317)

Hatred as well as love is a feeling that entails relation. Mushakôji aspires to detachment rather than hatred in his relation to others. However, this does not signify the author's refusal of any relation with others. Perhaps, when he utters the word *tanin* (others), it does not include the people he loves and the people who share a common ground with him. His *botsu-kôshô* attitude seeks to keep his relations with other people to a minimum, limited to relations with those whose individuality can harmonize with his own individuality: "All I want is to have one lover, a few friends, and many acquaintances with whom I share the same tastes and with whom I feel slight delight only when I associate with them."<sup>49</sup>

In *Jibun to tanin*, he clarifies what he means by the harmony of individualities, discussed in the previous essay, by comparing his relations with others to music and a painting:

In other words, I hope that my lover and I play the main part in the ensemble, my friends accompany us, and those who share my tastes make [the harmony] stronger. In a painting, I want to place my lover and myself as the main figures, my friends as the secondary figures, and those who share my tastes in the background. (MSZ 1: 317)

Mushakôji is very particular about the harmony in this music and painting. He does not want to place someone whose personality does not agree with his personality in his lover's position. He does not want to place someone in his friends' position whose

personality disturbs his ensemble with his lover. And he does not want to put loud color in the background that would throw off the harmony of the whole painting. Here is what the author has called “gradations of shade in the color of love.” For Mushakôji, *tanin* refers to those who disturb the harmony in his painting. The harmony of individualities is, according to his discussion in the previous essay, the way to fully relish pleasure. Only by excluding those disturbing people is Mushakôji able to maintain his painting—his life—peaceful, beautiful, and happy.

The three essays examined in this section are typical of quite a few essays Mushakôji wrote during this transitional phase, as he moved away from Tolstoian thought. *Kuringeru no “Hinkyû” o mite* is still under the influence of Tolstoy, but it clearly hints at the shift in the author’s philosophy in that he abandons humanitarian views and starts to speculate upon the notion of individuality. *Yottsu no e ni arawasaretaru kairaku* marks the development of his philosophy more explicitly in the discussion of pleasure produced by the harmony of individualities. *Jibun to tanin* defines the author’s ideal relation to others as indifference, or *botsu-kôshô*. This attitude may appear dogmatic and selfish, but Mushakôji wants to carry this selfishness through and is just unwilling to flatter others, which will be the typical characteristic of the protagonists in Mushakôji’s *shôsetsu*.

### **3. Dawn of Musha-ism**

The literary journal *Shirakaba* premiered on April 1st, 1910.<sup>50</sup> The year marked Mushakôji’s farewell to Tolstoy. As with other, as yet unrecognized, writers of the White Birch School, *Shirakaba* became almost the only venue for Mushakôji to publish his writings. However, since the journal was privately published and was not required to

succeed commercially, the *Shirakaba* writers were completely free from financial consideration in their writing. Mushakôji himself compared *Shirakaba* to a field where they could plant whatever vegetables they pleased. As Honda Shûgo argues in his book, that freedom, especially, allowed Mushakôji to be uniquely himself.

In the founding statement of this first issue (*Shirakaba sôkan no ji*), Mushakôji dauntlessly showed his confidence in what *Shirakaba* would achieve:

If we were to reveal our deepest feelings, we would be quite vain. We would like to say, “Take a look at us ten years from now.” But [for now] that is a secret.<sup>51</sup>

First, this remark suggests the great ambition of a young writer. Mushakôji was quite confident in his potential despite the fact that his works were not appreciated by his contemporaries from other schools, and here, just as he would later say in the preface to *Seichô*, the value of his writings would be attested by his future success. But the passage also foreshadows a characteristic of those future writings of Mushakôji, who enjoyed this sort of twist: he says it is a secret, when in fact he has just indicated to the reader his great confidence in their potential. In his *shôsetsu*, Mushakôji frequently creates a sense of vacillation or inconclusiveness like this through seemingly contradictory (and often long-winded) constructions. In the commentary to the Shinchôsha edition of *Omedetaki hito*, the essayist Agawa Sawako (1953- ) describes this phenomenon as Mushakôji’s “*gudaguda*” (long-winded) spirit, taking an example from the part where the protagonist talks about Friday:

I hear that Western people detest Friday. So I have made up my mind since a couple of years ago not to go out to see her on Friday if possible, even when I want to see

her. But sometimes I dare to go out, thinking that it is an absurd superstition. Then I feel a little guilty.<sup>52</sup>

The protagonists of Mushakôji's *shôsetsu* often have this *gudaguda* spirit, which may baffle readers, or even irritate them.<sup>53</sup> Even in his essays, Mushakôji's arguments often show this *gudaguda* style. First he sets forth proposition A. Then he quickly withdraws it, saying that the reverse could be true. Then, abruptly, he even set forth proposition B. In part, this style makes the author's argument more elusive, but it may also suggest the difficulty of adhering consistently to a certain philosophy. In the previous essay, Mushakôji states, "I do not want to be attached to myself."<sup>54</sup> In a sense, he is so flexible in thinking that he is free even from his own self, continually modifying his philosophy in search of a better self.

Around this time, Mushakôji's essays came to express his unique philosophy more explicitly, and his *shôsetsu* and essays also showed a closer link to each other. The first issue of *Shirakaba*, for instance, contains the essay titled "*Sorekara*" *ni tsuite*. Today this essay is valued as the best commentary by a contemporary writer on Natsume Sôseki's (1867-1916) *Sorekara* (And Then, 1909), but the content expands not only on Sôseki's literary techniques, but also on Mushakôji's own philosophy in writing. In this process, "*Sorekara*" *ni tsuite* reveals differences between himself and Sôseki in their traits as writers.

As the essay opens, Mushakôji positions himself as a critic. Although he personally admires Sôseki and acknowledges that he is the most prominent literary figure of the time, Mushakôji does not simply praise *Sorekara* as the work of a superior writer; rather, he asserts himself as a peer:

[My] critique is not of one looking up from below, but of one standing at the same level. At times, my critique may look up from below, but at times my critique may look down from above, too.<sup>55</sup>

Again, this statement indicates both Mushakôji's audacity and his *gudaguda* style.

Moreover, despite the fact that he has just begun as a writer, his stance indicates that he already entertains lofty ideals and broad intellectual aspirations.

The two elements in *Sorekara* that Mushakôji admires most are Sôseki's technical ingenuity and his philosophical richness. In his analysis, the essence of Sôseki's technical mastery stems not from instinctive genius, but rather from his critical clarity and scholarly attention to details. In other words, every inch of Sôseki's literary world is precisely constructed, which is judged by Mushakôji as Sôseki's strength and weakness. With this (sometimes too) masterful technique, Sôseki embodies his philosophy in the protagonist, Daisuke. Among the various thoughts represented in *Sorekara*, Mushakôji particularly admires the way Sôseki rejects Japanese social norms, superficial contemporary ideas, and the literary movement Naturalism.

As a part of his discussion on literary technique, Mushakôji analyzes Sôseki's construction of subjectivity in *Sorekara*, which can be interpreted as his own idea on subjective novels, or *shukan shôsetsu* in his word, in general:

It can be said that the greater part of *Sorekara* is a subjective novel. The reader is shown many things through Daisuke's eyes. In general, to write subjectively is an adventurous style. It is a style of writing which is possible only when an author is so egotistical [as to think] that his subjectivity is much superior to the subjectivity of the reader directly perceiving an incident or when he is firmly convinced that his subjectivity is special. (MSZ 1: 328)

Sôseki employs Daisuke's subjectivity to clarify his personality and to express his own thoughts. At the same time, he never fails to excite the reader's interest by highlighting peripheral events that may go unrecognized by the reader without Daisuke's subjectivity. Mushakôji also admires Sôseki's literary mastery in that he never uses such subjectivity when it might hinder the story's suggestiveness, expose the plot, or ruin the reader's interest.

While Mushakôji talks about Sôseki's style here, this notion of subjectivity can also be applied to his own work. Mushakôji's works are often considered *shishôsetsu*, but he might describe them as subjective novels, because Mushakôji as well as Sôseki fully utilizes the protagonist's subjectivity in his work in order to express his own philosophy. According to his own logic, this means that Mushakôji believes that his subjectivity is special and superior to the reader's subjectivity; for he would not choose this "adventurous" style unless he believed so.

In "*Sorekara*" *ni tsuite*, Mushakôji also discusses the description of the characters in terms of their personalities. He finds Daisuke the most vivid personality, followed only by Michiyo, and finds that the other characters lack particular individuality: their personalities are too simple, and thus they merely typify certain sorts of people in real life. On the one hand, Sôseki is so masterly in creating such typical characters that the reader thinks that those types of people should exist in reality. On the other hand, those characters are so typical that the reader cannot help feeling that they are artificially constructed. For instance, Michiyo's husband, Hiraoka, is a typical proponent of "Japanese" populism that the nation should be all socially and economically equal. His sense of equality is, however, very superficial, to the extent that he embezzles the

company's money because his superior does the same thing. It is ironic that Hiraoka is in fact considered elite in society in that he graduated from Tokyo Imperial University and works for a bank. While admitting that it is those typical characters that make the thoughts in *Sorekara* broader and more profound, Mushakôji criticizes the work's lack of vivid impression which comes about precisely as a result of the presence of these meticulously stereotyped characters.

Mushakôji's contention in his critique is that Sôseki's technical mastery is sometimes too artful, too clever for his own good, making *Sorekara* too elaborate and artificial. He compares a natural river and a perfectly designed canal in order to clarify this, the only flaw of this *shôsetsu*. A canal must follow nature's rules, but in the end it is a human construction with every aspect of it shaped by human prerogative. Similarly, *Sorekara* is carefully constructed to lead the reader as the author intends to, but it fails to represent nature as it really is. Mushakôji asserts that a natural river is more appealing than a canal. This is a dichotomy which occasionally haunts Mushakôji's writing: nature versus artifice. It again comes to the argument over *shishôsetsu*. Mushakôji believes in nature's superiority over artifice, but this does not mean that an author's reality, or his personal experience, is superior to the power of creative imagination. He does not consider the way Naturalist writers grotesquely depict reality in a *shishôsetsu* manner natural and beautiful. He believes that it is essential for an author to arrange the development of incidents in his favor for the sake of what he wants to write, because it is his art. But after all, the highest level of performance is achieved when art becomes artless. In a way, Mushakôji succeeds in creating such artless art in that his artifice is so natural that his works are considered *shishôsetsu*.

Mushakôji finds that the literary world of *Sorekara* seems to be artificially constructed, but he also believes that the thoughts revealed in it are real. Of course, the protagonist's thoughts may not be completely identical with the author's; they stem directly from Daisuke's individuality. Although he does not wholeheartedly agree with the protagonist's choices, Mushakôji acknowledges that his thoughts are quite appropriate to someone in Daisuke's circumstances and who has Daisuke's personality. Mushakôji analyzes that Sôseki is able to create such a coherent character because he fully understands the protagonist's individuality.

Mushakôji considers the thoughts represented in *Sorekara* as a kind of nature worship, and considers Daisuke a worshipper of nature who reaches the stage of *nil admirari*, or to be astonished at nothing. Daisuke does not, nor does Sôseki himself, ascribe his sin to the fact that he attempted to take someone's wife, but rather that he gave up his woman to Hiraoka against nature's command:

"I was not the person then that I am now. When I heard your story, I thought that even if it meant sacrificing my own future, it was my duty as a friend to try to help you fulfill your wishes. That's where I was wrong. If only my mind had been as ripe as it is now, there might have been another solution, but unfortunately, I was young, and so I was much too scornful of nature. Thinking back to that time, I've been overwhelmed with regret. [...] What I apologize to you for from the bottom of my heart is not so much what's happened now but for my thoughtless chivalry of three years ago. Please, Hiraoka, forgive me. As you can see, nature has taken its revenge on me and I bow my head before you in apology."<sup>56</sup>

Here he came upon a certain dilemma: was he to allow his relationship with Michiyo to develop in a straight line, as nature commanded, or, on the contrary, ought he to return to the innocent past? Unless he chose one or the other, his existence would as good as lose all meaning, he thought. All other intermediate courses began in fraud and would inevitably end in fraud. They were safe as far as society was concerned, and ineffectual as far as he was concerned.<sup>57</sup>

Mushakôji recognizes the essence of *Sorekara*'s argument in these passages. For Daisuke, nothing is more sinful than being unnatural; nothing is meaner than deception. However, there is scarcely a thing that is not false in this world; hence Daisuke has more problems with society than anyone else does.

Mushakôji concludes that *Sorekara* manifests Sôseki's thoughts on the power of nature, the power of society, and the influence of these two types of power on an individual. In Sôseki's idea, one who runs counter to the will of society will perish. Society has the power to repress an individual with financial pressure and conventional morality, and the power to deprive one who is contrary to its will of a comfortable existence. If one goes against nature's command, one has no internal solace; if one goes against the will of society, one has no material comfort. One must obey nature's command, but one who betrays the rules of society will perish. In most cases, one who follows nature is oppressed externally by society, and one who follows society is oppressed internally by one's own nature. It is an endless dilemma. *Sorekara* starts where the protagonist goes against his own nature and ends where he goes against society in order to follow his own nature. Daisuke's tragedy in the end is that he follows nature's command and ignores the convention of society, which causes him social insecurity and mental breakdown.

It is this notion of "nature" (*shizen* 自然) that makes Mushakôji particularly fond of Sôseki's *Sorekara*. We see the resemblance between Daisuke and the protagonists in Mushakôji's own works in that Daisuke, while torn by his dilemma, at least attempts to follow his own heart in order not to delude himself. However, there is also a significant difference between what Sôseki means and what Mushakôji means by the term *shizen*.

For Sôseki, *shizen* is more similar to nature in the Western sense in that it is beyond human beings' control. There is active confrontation between "nature" (*shizen*) and "society" (*shakai*). Although both confrontation and solace occur internally, *shizen* and *shakai* command an individual externally. For Mushakôji, on the other hand, *shizen* is virtually synonymous with *jiko* (or his heart, human nature). His *shizen* commands an individual internally. The relationship between the "self" (*jiko* 自己) and the "public" (*seken* 世間) is more passive. It is not one of confrontation, but rather grows out of the attitude of *botsu-kôshô*, in which an individual seeks to avoid active relationship with *seken*.

To Mushakôji's displeasure, not a single character in *Sorekara* is strong enough to act in accordance with nature's command and ultimately to find internal solace. Daisuke and Michiyo show promise once in a while, but they can only sustain that sense of solace temporarily. For instance, Michiyo, after Daisuke's confession of love to her, finds a way to internal solace in elopement, or in her word, *hyôhaku* 漂泊 (drifting away). Besides, their solace is not what they find "by transcending society's oppression and by following nature's command."<sup>58</sup> In contrast, Mushakôji attempts to create his ideal character in his ideal world, the protagonists in his *shôsetsu* who are completely free from the conventions of society (or *seken*) and thus true to themselves, their "nature." In the first place, the term "solace" connotes the premise that one should find common ground between nature and society. Mushakôji's characters are more transcendent over society, and thus they find happiness, rather than solace, in their accordance with nature's command.

Honda Shûgo says, in the commentary to the *Shôgakkan zenshû*, that there are three turning points in Mushakôji's essays compiled in *Shimpen seishô*. The first is *Jibun to tanin*, the second is a set of three essays entitled *Mittsu* (Three Essays, 1910), and the essay examined here, "*Jiko no tame*" *oyobi sonota ni tsuite*, is the last one, in which Mushakôji accomplishes his positive egotism. He originally wrote this essay as a reply to Kinoshita Mokutarô's (1885-1945) work, *Kôshû to yo to* (The Masses and Myself, 1911), but it represents a summary of his thought on the issue of the self which had been his greatest concern for the previous several years. Thus this essay is a very useful resource for understanding Mushakôji's philosophy as it is embodied in his *shôsetsu* of the time.

As the title suggests, Mushakôji's main concern in "*Jiko no tame*" *oyobi sonota ni tsuite* is "for myself" (*jiko no tame*), or to be true to one's own self. Mushakôji explains how he defines the "self" (*jiko*), how he first confronted this notion, how he first interpreted it, and how his belief in the self became solid. His definition of the term "*jiko*" is taken in the broad sense:

What I call "*jiko*" includes all the components which can be named *jiko*. For me, [the meaning of] the word "*jiko*" is as self-evident as [the meaning of] the word "human," and it is as ambiguous as that word [as well]. For *jiko* is as incomprehensible for me as human is [incomprehensible]. But I do think I understand it to a certain degree.<sup>59</sup>

Mushakôji again employs his usual *gudaguda* style of argument here, but this passage also suggests that we should question even a notion which may appear to be obvious.

Mushakôji does not consider this self-centered principle to be unique to himself. Rather, he believes that it is the most appropriate principle for anyone. At the same time, he admits that to be true to one's self is not as easy as it may appear to be. Citing the

passage from Maeterlinck's *Wisdom and Destiny*, Mushakôji states that Maeterlinck's works struck him like a divine revelation when he had first encountered them a few years earlier:

You are told you should love your neighbour as yourself; but if you love yourself meanly, childishly, timidly, even so shall you love your neighbour. Learn therefore to love yourself with a love that is wise and healthy, that is large and complete.<sup>60</sup>

Mushakôji comments that he started to react against Tolstoian thought after this encounter with Maeterlinck. After that time, he acted with this “for myself” in his mind and interpreted his behavior in terms of “for myself.” As a result, Mushakôji came to pride himself on knowing something he felt his countrymen did not know—the way to the true life (*seimei e yuku michi* 生命へ行く道).

It is important to know that Mushakôji acknowledges that his former devotion to Tolstoy was a necessary part of his path to a belief in the self. He states:

If I had not been tormented by Tolstoian thought and if I were not Japanese (that is, if I had not been influenced by Buddhism and *Bushido* [or the code of the *samurai*]), or if our [privileged] class was not afraid of the masses as it is now, I would not insist on [the notion of] “for myself” as firmly as I do now. (MSZ 1: 428)

When he was deeply devoted in the thought of Tolstoy, Mushakôji despised “for myself,” because he comprehended it only in the shallow sense. He recognized the idea merely as selfishness and egoism, just as do the villains in *Momoiro no heya*. Along with Tolstoian asceticism, Mushakôji believed that egoistic actions were all sinful and that nothing was more beautiful than self-sacrifice. While he maintains that he values the thought of Tolstoy, in this essay, in that it taught him the value and power of reason, Mushakôji yet

criticizes Tolstoy for lacking consideration of the power of the self. The writings of Tolstoy had made him think that even a mere consideration of the power of the self was a base action, and he had been tormented by a thought that he was a sinner.

It was Maeterlinck's novel philosophy that saved Mushakôji from his torment. It taught him that he had to act within the scope of his own power and that he also had to develop that power. Mushakôji came to believe in the power of the self, but at the same time, he knew that the notion of the self is so profound that he could not possibly fully understand it. While he avoided going beyond a subjectivity structured by his own experience, he tried to broaden and deepen his subjectivity as well so that he could go further. Mushakôji began to work toward becoming a whole man. Mushakôji was probably in this phase when he completed *Omedetaki hito*, where the protagonist indeed acts within his subjectivity and does not try to go beyond it.

The argument here illustrates Mushakôji's belief in his intuition and subjectivity. His disputant, Kinoshita Mokutarô, despises intuition and subjectivity as irrational and self-indulgent. Mushakôji believes that the people of his time are not capable of objectivity in the true sense yet; it is not until the self becomes completely in accordance with nature's command that one can attain true objectivity. He claims that the works of Naturalist writers of the time, such as Kinoshita, prove only that human beings have limited capacity for objectivity. So Mushakôji has come to trust his self most. He believes that nothing has greater authority than *jiko*.

Admitting that he cannot systematically explain what he thinks about the self, Mushakôji states that he has reached a certain point, has attained a certain perception of the self. Then finally, Mushakôji declares that he will devote himself completely to the

notion “for myself.” He says, “In short, I, for now, blindly devote myself to ‘for myself.’ The vision of a destination is haunting me.”<sup>61</sup> This statement clearly indicates that Mushakôji has a further, or ultimate, destination, toward which he journeys. Also, it foretells that his philosophy may change flexibly as he progresses on his journey toward that destination.

#### **4. Conclusion**

In his diary entry of May 28th, 1908, Mushakôji wrote, “Lately, I have become a little [more] confident. If I manage to stay healthy until the age of sixty, I will surely have accomplished something. That is to say, I will have established a Musha-ism.”<sup>62</sup> It is noteworthy that he wrote this statement just one month after publishing *Arano*. Even in the very early stages of his writing career, Mushakôji was conscious that he would depart from his adopted philosophy of Tolstoy and had to develop something of his own. His early works, especially his essays discussed above, already show glimmers of Musha-ism. Although the works compiled in *Arano* are still under the influence of Tolstoian ideology, the author’s philosophy gradually shifts during the following two years. And the year 1910 marks his farewell to Tolstoy, as he develops his views of literature and his sense of a positive rift between *jiko* and *seken*. The *shôsetsu* examined in the following chapters stand as the embodiment of the personal philosophy he had explored in these essays, his theory of happiness.

### Chapter III

## Happiness and Transcendence: Supremacy of the Self

I want to find out what modern people revile in their minds  
and yet really want in their hearts.<sup>63</sup>  
—Mushakôji Saneatsu, *Omedetaki hito*

### 1. Introduction

Thus far, examining his early essays, we have seen how the young Mushakôji manifests and develops his unique philosophy. The three Japanese scholars discussed in chapter one attempted to formulate a system for his philosophy. Honda summarizes it as “to realize one’s self,” Ôtsuyama calls it his “naturalism,” and Yoneyama names it his “transcendentalism.” This thesis uses Mushakôji’s own term, Musha-ism, and defines it as his theory of happiness. His essays are in themselves significant in elucidating his philosophy, and Honda attaches great importance to them. But their significance increases when linked to Mushakôji’s *shôsetsu*. True comprehension of his essays is essential for true appreciation of his literature and vice versa. His essay and *shôsetsu* are, for Mushakôji, complementary in that one describes and the other depicts his theory of happiness.

His first major work, *Omedetaki hito* (Happily in the Dark, 1911), comprises two strata of meaning: what is represented in the text and what lies beneath it. The former concerns the complacent love of the protagonist and the latter is the author’s philosophical stance, Musha-ism, which champions the absolute supremacy of the self. One might interpret this *shôsetsu*, upon cursory examination, as a story of complacent love. Indeed, everything starts, progresses, and ends within the sphere of the protagonist’s

subjectivity; he merely fabricates an image of the ideal woman in his beloved Tsuru and fails to see her true self. If one sees this as all *Omedetaki hito* discusses, however, one appreciates only one aspect of the work. This *shōsetsu* is not merely a story of the futile love of a complacent man, as it is generally interpreted.

*Omedetaki hito* is a story of the protagonist's self-realization. The first-person protagonist, Jibun, clearly states in the text that he has an objective more important than winning the heart of his beloved, that is, to develop and complete his individuality. Jibun sees a different reality and possesses a different standard of values from other people, hence he stands out among them. But he does not even try to conform himself to worldly values. Instead, he simply affirms everything that stems from his true heart. Jibun is unwilling to sacrifice his individuality for Tsuru, based on his belief that the self should be transcendentally predominant over everything. This supremacy of the self is the core of Musha-ism. For Jibun, to be true to himself and to transcend social norms (*seken*) is the way to complete himself—the way to his happiness.

## **2. Surface: Complacent Love**

On the surface, *Omedetaki hito* depicts the protagonist's complacent love. The first-person protagonist, Jibun, falls in love or, more precisely, decides to fall in love with a woman named Tsuru. Although he has known who she is since her childhood, the protagonist has never talked to her; he just catches a glimpse of her once in a while. Nevertheless, he has no doubt that she will reciprocate his affection in the future. Jibun wants to marry her, seeing her as his ideal wife. This is how his love fantasy starts.

The protagonist's love is, indeed, all too imaginary. It starts, progresses, and ends within his subjectivity; Mushakôji meticulously constructs the image of such an unrealistic hero. Throughout the story, Jibun imagines the future course of the relationship, even though he has not actually seen her in the entire past year. He dreams about the day they will date, the day they will confess their hearts to each other, their first kiss, and so forth. His imaginative faculty is so strong that he sometimes creates in his mind particular situations and even dialogues. For instance, upon visiting his friend, Jibun passes by the area where Tsuru commutes to her school. He murmurs, "Run!"<sup>64</sup> recalling that he saw Tsuru running toward her friends there one year before. At that time, she broke her wooden clogs (*geta*) because of the bad condition of the road. "Run!" is the phrase Jibun uses in his fantasy to make fun of Tsuru after they have wed. He knows how hard it is for her to walk in *geta*. This episode is quite funny, but at the same time, a little pathetic in its excess. A man might commonly dream about the day he will marry his sweetheart, but Mushakôji's protagonist takes such sentimental anticipation to an extreme.

It is obvious that the protagonist's love is completely separated from reality. The only relationship Jibun has with reality is through his correspondence with the man who serves as the go-between for him and Tsuru. He also goes out to see Tsuru sometimes, but never intending to actually meet her. He just loiters where she might appear, and of course, she almost never does. Such behavior is very passive for a man in love, but it is actually relatively active for Jibun, because all this inactive man does otherwise is to indulge himself more deeply in his fantasy. Mushakôji's description of the protagonist's obsessive pursuit of Tsuru (or his ideal of her) is thus thoroughgoing. Whatever he does,

wherever he is, his thoughts move in circles and never fail to return to one point—his imaginary beloved. After visiting his dying uncle in the hospital, for example, Jibun thinks about how he wants Tsuru to nurse him when he dies.<sup>65</sup>

The protagonist's dreams about the future of his love also defy logic. In spite of his persistent proposals, Tsuru's parents never give him a favorable reply, saying that she is still too young to marry. Nevertheless, Jibun remains confident that everything will turn out fine someday. He believes, without any evidence, that Tsuru loves him just as he loves her and that she is destined to be his wife. In fact, Jibun himself admits that he does not even know why he is so confident in Tsuru's destiny to be his wife, as he confesses: "If asked 'Why?' I can only reply 'Why not?'"<sup>66</sup> Such illogicality of the protagonist may remind us of the author's earlier fatalism. But it suggests the superiority of the heart over the brain (or emotion over reason), because his irrational way of thinking is not depicted negatively. For Mushakōji, fate is synonymous with nature (*shizen*); *shizen* is synonymous with the self (*jiko*). The heart is, in a sense, the seat of the self.

Jibun may seem to be completely illogical, but in fact, he is quite rational about his irrationality. He says, "I have a sensible brain, but I believe this unreasonable thing for some reason."<sup>67</sup> Since he is in other aspects of his life more logical,<sup>68</sup> his complacency about the progress of his imaginary relationship is conspicuous. In the first place, it is unclear why Jibun loves Tsuru. He feels "starved for a woman"<sup>69</sup> or, more precisely, hungry for women's affection, and there just happens to be a woman named Tsuru nearby. No reason is given why the protagonist loves specifically and exclusively Tsuru. Indeed, love per se is not depicted in the story because the putative love-object, Tsuru, is not the protagonist's main concern. When he first comes to care for Tsuru, Jibun states, "Starved

for a woman, I have found my object here.”<sup>70</sup> He simply needs a person, an object, on whom to project his imaginary love; anyone could be that object.

Jibun remains persistent in his complacent love until the very end of his story. One day, he happens to glimpse Tsuru in the train and he becomes all the more convinced that she loves him, again without any reason. A few months later, however, he learns that Tsuru has married someone else. His imaginary love should end here. Nevertheless, Jibun refuses to abandon the idea that she loves him:

After a while, I came to think, without any reason, that Tsuru did love me but became someone else’s wife against her will on the advice of her parents and siblings. [...] Even if Tsuru said to me, “I have never been in love with you,” I would certainly think that she did not mean what she said, and that only her mind, and not her heart, made her say so at least. (MSZ 1: 107)

This is how Mushakôji ends his story of his protagonist’s complacent and misguided love, again emphasizing the supremacy of the heart over the mind.

Most of the prior research on *Omedetaki hito* has a tendency to focus on the surface of the *shôsetsu* exclusively and does not even entertain speculation on the philosophy which underlies it. Ôtsuyama, for instance, concludes in *Mushakôji Saneatsu ron* that “the *objective* of this *shôsetsu* is to create a character who is oblivious to the fact that he has lost his love, even though he has. To accomplish this purpose, the character’s unrequited love should be absolute, and his courting should be persistent.”<sup>71</sup> His analysis of the complacency and futility of the protagonist’s love is quite to the point, but it is questionable that this aspect is the “objective” of the work. This extremely unrealistic love story is merely the plotted surface, through which the author manifests the absolute supremacy of the self. In the essays discussed in the previous chapter, Mushakôji had

repeatedly emphasized the power of the self and his need to develop his self. The objective of *Omedetaki hito* is, rather, to create a character who embodies the author's Musha-ism. Jibun strives for the same goal—self-realization—as Mushakôji himself strived for at the time of writing.

### **3. Depth: Supremacy of the Self**

However casual it may seem, the opening of *Omedetaki hito* shows us an important attribute of the protagonist: he never fails to follow his heart as a principle of his behavior. The story opens on Jibun's leaving a bookstore after purchasing a book. Reflecting upon which way to go at a crossroads, he takes a glance to the right. He notices two women there and turns onto that street. The only reason he decides to go in that direction is because there are two women there. He behaves as if he were walking aimlessly, though he is actually on his way home. Observing how these women look, Jibun confesses that he is "starved for a woman."<sup>72</sup> Just as a hungry man is drawn to food, his feet, urged on by his sexual desire, spontaneously move toward the women.

It is significant that Jibun obsessively repeats this confession—no less than seven times—in the early part of the work. This reveals the drastic change in the author's principles. As discussed in the previous chapter, Mushakôji had been an ardent reader of Leo Tolstoy's works, until he encountered the philosophy of Maurice Maeterlinck. Tolstoian humanitarianism includes personal asceticism, and so the pursuit of individual pleasure, especially human sexual desire, is considered sinful. In Mushakôji's essays of 1908-1910, however, we have seen the result of his conversion to a celebration of pleasure and happiness through positive egotism, supremacy of the self.

This conversion is most crucial for the birth of *Omedetaki hito* in that only the rejection of sexual suppression as “unnatural” enables the author to make the protagonist confess his sexual desire. This affirmation of human nature is reflected in the characteristics of Jibun. He never flinches from confessing his sexual desire as long as it derives from his true nature. Moreover, the fact that the protagonist is able to “confess” his sexual desire does not mean that he considers human sexual desire to be evil. Rather, he affirms everything that occurs in his heart and faithfully follows where his true heart leads.

Mushakôji’s lexical choice in describing Jibun’s sexual desire makes his affirmation of human nature more vivid. For instance, the plain expression, “I am starved for a woman,” is startling because of its directness. The description of his sexual desire intensifies in explicitness as the story unfolds. Jibun frankly reveals his sexual experience, stating that he “has not yet known a ‘woman.’”<sup>73</sup> He also says that he “adores the ideal woman,”<sup>74</sup> both “her flesh and spirit,”<sup>75</sup> because he has not yet known a woman. He suggestively mentions that he admires a woman’s “soft and roundish body”<sup>76</sup> and “captivating scent,”<sup>77</sup> as well as her “gentle heart.”<sup>78</sup> Those expressions are in themselves straightforward; the lexical choices are explicit as well.

The most striking confession of his sexual desire is Jibun’s acknowledgement that he masturbates:

While I remain unmarried, I will escape the temptation of my sexual desire with masturbation. No doubt there are men who live righteously, without masturbation or sexual intercourse. I, too, believe that a person can live such a righteous life. I know the power of human will and human reason. In consequence of my very violent struggle, however, I have come to believe that masturbation is righteous.  
(MSZ 1: 90)

The author's lexical choice is once again concerned here. Ôtsuyama, in *Mushakôji Saneatsu ron*, compares how Mushakôji's contemporary writers deal with masturbation in their works.<sup>79</sup> Mori Ôgai (1862-1922) substitutes *kore* (this) for masturbation, and thus has to spend a few lines for the explanation of it in his autobiographical novel, *Vita Sexualis* (1909). One of the *Shirakaba* writers, Nagayo Yoshirô (1888-1961), inspired by *Omedetaki hito*, mentions masturbation in his *shôsetsu Mutsu Naojirô* (1918). But his lexical choice is *jii* 自慰 (lit. consoling oneself), which is much less explicit than Mushakôji's, *shuin* 手淫 (lit. hand sex). Considering that *Mutsu Naojirô* was written a couple of years after *Omedetaki hito*, we can infer how bold Mushakôji was in describing this sexual fact of life. Yet, Mushakôji's explicitness is not exhibitionistic, as is sometimes the case with the *shishôsetsu* writers of Naturalist School. While those writers display their disgraceful conduct to the public in their works, Mushakôji rather claims that what the public considers a disgrace is not a disgrace at all.

Although this might suggest that Jibun is exempt from all mundane taboos or rules, such is not really the case. He does indeed follow rules, but those are his own rules which proceed from his heart. Jibun simply affirms all of his conduct as long as it derives from his heart. Another example of this is seen in an argument between Jibun and a friend over dissipation in the pleasure quarters (*geisha asobi*).<sup>80</sup> Jibun strongly disagrees with his friend, who does not consider it evil for men to indulge themselves in *geisha asobi*. If he obeyed no taboo, of course, Jibun would be able wholeheartedly to approve of prostitution: he does not deny his own sexual desires, so why would he deny prostitution? If all of the urgings of "human nature" should be affirmed, Jibun should affirm *geisha asobi*, too. His friend, in fact, resorts to the logic Jibun is elsewhere likely to employ: "I

think that you have no right to condemn a healthy man for having some fun in complying with a demand of nature.”<sup>81</sup> Their disagreement drives from their different interpretation of “nature” (*shizen*). It is widely considered that nature commands a person externally, as Natsume Soseki’s view of *shizen* in *Sorekara*, but for Mushakoji, ultimately for his protagonist, nature is synonymous with the self (*jiko*) and it commands a person internally. Jibun rejects instant pleasure with *geisha* because it is not a command of *his* nature. Jibun believes that relations with a woman should follow only from the harmonization of her individuality with his individuality.

Jibun claims that what he really pursues in his love for Tsuru is the harmony of individualities, believing that he can marry her without compromising his individuality. However, there is a serious contradiction in his notion that he can harmonize his individuality with Tsuru’s individuality, as Jibun has absolutely no acquaintance with her personality. He has never even spoken to her. Seiji Lippit points out, in *Topographies of Japanese Modernism*, that Tsuru remains “nothing more than an imaginary projection of the narrator’s fantasies and desires.”<sup>82</sup> Since he does not know Tsuru’s personality, all Jibun can do in his love is to idealize her, in fact, to “create” her as the image of his ideal woman. However, the ideal woman Jibun envisions does not exist in the real world and is alive only in his imaginative sphere. Thus Jibun certainly needs an actual person in his reality on which to project his ideal. He chooses Tsuru only because she “happens to be there.” But his creation of the ideal woman differs from the Pygmalion effect in that it does not change Tsuru’s reality at all. Jibun has merely found an object and his reality retreats ultimately inward into his subjectivity

What makes *Omedetaki hito* quite different from other love stories is that the world of the story exists completely within the protagonist's subjectivity. It does not merely signify that Jibun's complacent love is narrated through his perspective in the *shishôsetsu* style. Rather his single subjectivity dominates all events; other characters remain thus undeveloped and marginal, even when ostensibly "important." Tsuru and other characters do exist in the story but do not exist in Jibun's reality. Some characters appear only in the protagonist's narration, while others actually show themselves on the stage. But they become active only through their interactions with Jibun or, more precisely, in their discordance—the conflict of different values—with Jibun's individuality.<sup>83</sup> In that sense, they are not independent, fully-realized characters. That is all the more true for the heroine, Tsuru; she never displays any agency of her own throughout the work. Jibun himself admits this, saying that "such a woman has no self."<sup>84</sup>

Throughout the story, Jibun is depicted as an iconoclastic protagonist who holds his own standard of values. However, being iconoclastic is not in itself his ultimate end. Since his values are quite different from those of society, or *seken*, his iconoclasm often sounds a note of discord against worldly values. For example, when his friends talk about their views on marriage at a class reunion, Jibun finds it unpleasant that their views are completely different from his. After the reunion, he sighs: "In this sort of situation, I cannot hold myself aloof."<sup>85</sup> Later in the story, Jibun proudly makes a clearer declaration of the same idea: "I ought to hold myself aloof from everything."<sup>86</sup> This is, in Yoneyama's definition, Mushakôji's transcendentalism.<sup>87</sup>

This notion of transcendence is also related to the title, *Omedetaki hito*. There is a definite gap between the protagonist's perception of reality and truth and that of others

in the story, which is reflected in the title. The adjective *(o)medeta(k)i* has two senses: one is “happy,” and the other is, sarcastically, “excessively happy-natured.” One would have expected Mushakôji to make use of both senses, the former in the protagonist’s reference to himself, and the latter in others’ opinions of Jibun. However, since nothing takes place outside the protagonist’s imaginative sphere and no one except he possesses any autonomy, the other characters are in no position to judge the protagonist’s disposition. All fifteen usages of the term *(o)medeta(k)i* are by the protagonist in reference to himself.<sup>88</sup> And the twist is that Jibun does not refer to himself sarcastically as a happy-natured person, rather he considers himself genuinely a happy man who believes in his own philosophy and makes an effort to attain his ideal state.

This *(o)medeta(k)i* gap also opens between the philosophical thrust of the work, and the conventional reading, *Omedetaki hito* as Jibun’s complacent love. Is it going too far to say that Mushakôji himself, or the work itself, seem to enjoy this gap? At least, he is aware of the gap, as he claims in *Jiko no tame no geijutsu* (Art for Myself, 1909) that “art fulfills its mission and loses its value at the same time, when it is understood by the masses.”<sup>89</sup> Moreover, Mushakoji’s Musha-ism too forthright to be described as what lies “beneath” the text. If we return to the story’s preface, we will find the author’s philosophy stated clearly and without hesitation:

I believe in the existence of something like a selfish literature, or a literature for one’s own sake. It is because of this belief that I intend to be a man of letters. Therefore, the true value of what I write is determined only when my personality can harmonize with readers’ personalities. (MSZ 1: 87)

This is Mushakôji's *botsu-kôshô* aesthetic of art; he wishes that only those who appreciate his literature can appreciate it. So perhaps Mushakôji is, just like his protagonist, transcendently unconcerned about this gap. In any case, the gap may suggest that Mushakôji's literature has achieved the highest level of performance—artless art—in that readers do not detect the author's fictional maneuver in his fiction.

It is noteworthy that Jibun's sense of transcendence does not entail value judgment; he does not believe his values are superior to others', but that one should neither conform to the rules and standards of society, nor repel them, nor despise them. From the beginning of the story, Jibun regularly reveals his belief that the heart is superior to the brain. He asserts: "One can lie with the mouth. One can lie to the ears. But one's true heart can never lie. One cannot lie to one's own true heart."<sup>90</sup> In "*Sorekara*" *ni tsuite*, Mushakôji had discussed the power of nature and the power of society. One's nature commands him internally, whereas society (*seken*) commands him externally. Mushakôji's protagonist in *Omedetaki hito* is heedless of the claims of society and devotes himself to following his heart. These two notions, to transcend social convention and to be true to oneself, are in fact the same idea observed from the opposite points of view.

Thus the real meaning of *Omedetaki hito* is in its inward direction to the protagonist's inner self. Jibun clearly declares, "No matter how starved for a woman I may be, no matter how much I may love Tsuru, I will not sacrifice my work in order to win her. I love my 'self' more than Tsuru."<sup>91</sup> Indeed, what is most important for him is not that he marry Tsuru; he is more concerned about his own self—to develop and

complete it. Thus he does not wish to compromise his individuality in an effort to win Tsuru's heart. Lippit's analysis illuminates this view of the supremacy of the self:

For Mushakôji, the self served as the ultimate "authority" (*ken'i*), the source of all value in art and literature. In his writings, the expansive and universal world implodes into a bounded and enclosed world of the self.<sup>92</sup>

For his protagonist, too, the self should always be predominant. His remark, "I shall proceed to my objective,"<sup>93</sup> indicates that Jibun is resolute in pursuing his object, self-realization. He rephrases this self-realization as being a "whole man" (*hôru no ningen* 全人間).<sup>94</sup> This is where the protagonist's complacent love finds association with his objective; Jibun believes that it is only when he is with Tsuru that he can become "a whole man," that is to say, to attain a morally invulnerable self. In order to accomplish it, Jibun consciously attempts to live his philosophy—the author's Musha-ism.

For the protagonist of *Omedetaki hito*, to transcend worldly values and to be true to himself is the way to his ultimate goal, self-realization. But he has not yet perfectly attained his ideal state of transcendence. Sometimes Jibun is still swayed by convention, by the expectations of society. One example is seen in the episode about his uncle's death. Jibun calls on his uncle who is hospitalized for cancer and his heart tells him that he should not make superficial remarks of consolation, although the social norm dictates that he should do so. Pricked by his conscience, however, all he can do is make consoling remarks to ease his uncle's mind. He himself feels relieved after leaving the sickroom. This episode clearly illustrates that Jibun is, so to speak, still on the way to his ideal. He wants to behave just as he pleases and single-mindedly tries to be free from all other consideration, but he is not able to do that fully yet.

*Omedetaki hito* is a story of the protagonist's self-development, contrary to its surface appearance, which is of a story of his self-complacent and imaginary love. Jibun, who believes in the power of the self, attempts to live in accordance with his heart in order to realize his ideal self. He falls in love with Tsuru. Yet however much he loves her, his individuality is much more important to him than actually being together with her. Jibun believes that marrying her will not cause him to sacrifice his individuality, which after all has enabled him to love her. He also believes that to love her means to complete his "self"; as he says, "In order to develop myself, I need Tsuru."<sup>95</sup> In fact, of course, any relationship involves some sacrifice of one's individuality. Thus, if Jibun adheres to the idea that he should be only with someone whose individuality harmonizes with his own individuality without compromising either, his love is indeed destined not to be fulfilled, after all. Just as his love is destined not to be fulfilled, he fails to fully realize his ideal.

#### **4. Shishôsetsu**

The notion of *shishôsetsu* is an issue that should not be neglected when interpreting Mushakôji's *Omedetaki hito*. As is generally known, this work is based on the author's personal experience, namely, the third love in his life. The characters in the story correspond to individuals in real life.<sup>96</sup> When he published *Omedetaki hito*, Mushakôji was twenty-six years old, the same age as Jibun. Moreover, almost all the events in the story actually occurred. In that narrow sense, *Omedetaki hito* is *shishôsetsu*, and in fact, it is often considered one of the first *shishôsetsu*.<sup>97</sup> On the other hand, it is also true that the story of *Omedetaki hito* does not altogether faithfully portray the author's experience. For instance, the time frame in the work is not quite consistent with

that of the author's own life. The most significant difference is that Mushakôji himself continued to love until he married, despite the end of Jibun's love.

As Edward Fowler concedes in his book, *The Rhetoric of Confession*, nobody has yet come up with an appropriate definition of *shishôsetsu*.<sup>98</sup> Perhaps the *shishôsetsu* writer's act of confessing his own experience is meaningful in and of itself; the content and the method of confession are less important than the act of confession. On the other hand, any narrative coalesces around a theme or themes reflecting the author's philosophy in the depth of the story. What is related in a story and how it is related manifest those themes. Even though *Omedetaki hito* is based on Mushakôji's personal experience, the act of confessing in itself is not of concern to the author, nor do his revelations amount to "confession," because his self-acceptance means he does not consider his thoughts and desires, including his sexual desire, to be evil.

Around the time he published *Omedetaki hito*, Mushakôji had already produced a number of works that centered on his third experience of love. The middle-length *shôsetsu Seinaru koi* (Sacred love, 1908) is noteworthy among those works in that it exhibits quite complex intertextuality. This work was originally published in 1908 in his *Arano*. It was re-published as one of the supplements (*furoku* 附録) to *Omedetaki hito* with the title changed to *Futari* (The Two of Us). Mushakôji delivers a puzzling message to readers in the preface to *furoku*: "Please regard this as written by the protagonist of *Omedetaki hito*."<sup>99</sup> This one terse sentence raises many questions. Readers might possibly see the protagonist of *Futari* as the doubling of Jibun in *Omedetaki hito*, as if this story represented another possible chapter in the story of Jibun and Tsuru. Or they might understand this story as merely creating a fiction within a fiction. Considering that the

profession of Jibun in *Omedetaki hito* is novelist and that the two stories are quite different, the latter interpretation seems more valid. In either reading, the appending of *Futari* to *Omedetaki hito* suggests that the author himself does not consider that *Omedetaki hito* is *shishôsetsu*. Were *Omedetaki hito* to be *shishôsetsu* and limit itself to the realm of personal experience, there could be no other “true” episode. In the latter “a fiction within a fiction” reading, it is quite natural that the protagonist of *shishôsetsu* writes a story and that story becomes a corollary of the primary work, for the boundary between the content of *shishôsetsu* and the author’s life is not absolute. My interpretation is that *Futari* is the author’s clue given to the readers to truly comprehending *Omedetaki hito*. Mushakôji selected this short piece among many past works, changed the title, and explicitly linked it to *Omedetaki hito* in his preface. It makes labeling *Omedetaki hito* as *shishôsetsu*, in any case, problematic.

It is even easier to determine that *Futari* is not *shishôsetsu*. The plot is quite simple; it is a strange but sad love story between a man and a woman. They have never spoken to each other. They do not know each other. They do not even know that each other exists. Nevertheless, their hearts produce a resonance while they do not realize. When the man feels lonely, the woman feels the same. When the woman feels happy, the man feels the same. One day, they encounter each other on the street and fall in love. They try to deny their emotions, though their true hearts need each other. The man is not sure if the woman loves him, and vice versa. Meanwhile, a few years pass, and both marry other people. Although they truly love their spouses, their hearts still resonate together once in a while. In this short work, Mushakôji universalizes one type of relationship between a man and a woman by keeping plot and characterization to a

minimum. There are few “events.” The characters do have names, but the narrator tells us that these names are improvised: “There is a man and a woman. [...] For the time being, I’ll call the man Ichirô, and the woman Shizu.”<sup>100</sup> Minimal characterization allows more attention to be paid to the relationship between them, rather than to their personalities. In his representation of an archetypal relationship between a man and a woman, Mushakôji emphasizes the supremacy of the heart over the mind, as the ending suggests.<sup>101</sup>

Mushakôji employs the same technique in *Omedetaki hito*. However trifling it may seem, every event that occurs in this work is indispensable. For instance, consider the opening: the scene where the protagonist sees two women after leaving a book store. Although it does not seem directly related to the main theme of the *shôsetsu*, it leads to the protagonist’s startling declaration: “I am starved for a woman.”<sup>102</sup> The two episodes discussed above, namely, the discussion of *geisha asobi* and the protagonist’s visit to his dying uncle, seem to be irrelevant to the main plot of the work, too, at least at first glance. If *Omedetaki hito* is *shishôsetsu* that is totally based on the author’s personal experience, the two episodes are random inclusions, and thus their significance in the story radically decreases. The *geisha asobi* event indicates that Jibun follows his nature’s command and believes in a harmony of individualities. The dying uncle event suggests that Jibun has not yet reached his ideal state of transcendence.

I do not consider *Omedetaki hito* *shishôsetsu* merely because it is based on Mushakôji’s personal experiences. His personal experiences are the raw material that Mushakôji arranges in the text to embody Musha-ism, his theory of happiness. The selfless heroine, Tsuru, could be anybody, just like the “nameless” characters in *Futari*. In

addition, the theme of the predominance of the truth of the heart, rather than the mind in *Omedetaki hito*, also seen in *Futari*, is a fundamental tenet of Musha-ism.

## **5. Conclusion**

*Omedetaki hito* is a story of self-development in which the protagonist speaks for the author's Musha-ism. Although most readers tend to consider this *shōsetsu* the story of Jibun's complacent love, this perception is not totally true. On the surface, Jibun pathologically pursues his imaginary significant other. He has neither spoken to her nor known her personality. Thus, he merely creates the idealized woman in Tsuru and does not see her true self. Mushakōji asserts that the predominance of one's own self is absolute since it is the only thing that regulates the protagonist's behavior. The protagonist follows only one rule: to follow his true heart and behave as it commands. His own standards of value are not necessarily those of other people. Thus, if he adheres to his values, he immediately becomes conspicuous among others. However, the protagonist never tries to conform to others' values. Rather, he wholeheartedly accepts and affirms what he is.

Also, the protagonist's goal is to be a "whole man" who transcends everything. He believes that that is why he wants to marry Tsuru. Neither conforming himself to other people's standards of values nor despising them, he tries to realize his ideal state of transcendence. Despite his ideal, however, the protagonist has not yet reached the zenith of a transcendent state. Just as his love was destined to be futile, he failed in being totally transcendent. In a sense, the protagonist and the audience of *Omedetaki hito* bear resemblance: the former complacently creates the ideal image of the woman in his

beloved, but does not know her true self; the latter is convinced that he fully appreciates the work, but does not grasp its substance.

**Chapter IV**  
**Happiness and Freedom:**  
**The Rise of the Liberated Woman**

It is just that I've never known a woman as liberated as you.  
 It is that liberty that I need now.<sup>103</sup>  
 — Mushakôji Saneatsu, *Seken shirazu*.

**1. Introduction**

In *Omedetaki hito*, Mushakôji demonstrates his Musha-ism in the first-person protagonist, a limning of his ideal man—an embodiment of his theory of happiness. In the years immediately following, Mushakôji continued to create ideal characters in his works, but these works differ in approach in that female characters play more active roles. In the play *Momoiro no heya* (The Pink Room, 1911), the female protagonist, the Pink Woman, heroically protects her husband from attacks of the Gray People.<sup>104</sup> The husband is vulnerable to their attacks and vacillates indecisively between two opposing ideologies. The Gray People represent the public, or *seken*, whereas the Pink Woman speaks for the author's Musha-ism. The husband is prone to yield to public convention. But the play illustrates how he finally, with the encouragement of the Pink Woman, transcends *seken* and determines to stay in the Pink Room, the symbolic representation of Musha-ism.

The next year, Mushakôji published his third work independent of his writings in *Shirakaba*, a semi-autobiographical *shôsetsu*, entitled *Seken shirazu* (Unworldliness, 1912). The preface links this *shôsetsu* to the previous one: “Having published *Omedetaki hito*, I feel obliged to publish this small book as well.”<sup>105</sup> Indeed, *Seken shirazu* may be read as a counterpart of *Omedetaki hito* in that both deal with the same theme, the protagonists' self-realization, and embody Mushakôji's theory of happiness in the

protagonists. However, the prominence of the female character marks the biggest difference between these two works. The female character in *Omedetaki hito*, the protagonist's beloved Tsuru, has no autonomy: all incidents in the story are filtered through Jibun's subjectivity. The centrality of an autonomous male character and his relationship with a largely absent (and largely imaginary) female character are reversed in *Seken shirazu*, where the male character, Jibun, is overshadowed by the liberated female character, C-ko. Jibun observes C-ko as the most liberated woman, who defies worldly values and is absolutely true to herself. Moreover, in the exchange of letters between the two which forms the core of the *shōsetsu*, we see a dialogue between two subjectivities, which initially clash but move toward harmony in the end.

The artistic success of *Seken shirazu* is attributable to this shift toward elucidating Musha-ism in the relation between the two characters, rather than confining it to a single subjectivity. Jibun in *Omedetaki hito* is the only independent character, and thus his attempt to harmonize his individuality with Tsuru's individuality fails in the end. Jibun in *Seken shirazu*, in contrast, ultimately succeeds in harmonizing his individuality with C-ko's individuality. In fact, Jibun and C-ko are complementary characters. The dissonance in the relation between them in the beginning reflects the pain of this schism. C-ko is the extreme of the heedless, unconventional part of the protagonist of *Omedetaki hito*, and Jibun in *Seken shirazu* is the extreme of the irresolute part. Jibun sees C-ko as the most liberated woman and seeks a way to be happy in her sense of liberty. C-ko believes that she will be happy only by joining Jibun—to be Mushakōji's "whole" person. In the end of the story, where Jibun and C-ko decide to marry, the two

complementary characters become as one and find their happiness in the harmony of their individualities.

## **2. The Beginning of Schism: *Momoiro no heya***

In *Omedetaki hito*, the first-person protagonist, Jibun, is created as an ideal person, the embodiment of the author's Musha-ism. The work reflects the influence of Maeterlinck's self-affirming philosophy. In his earlier devotion to the thought of Tolstoy, Mushakôji had been ashamed of his own aristocratic background and tried to situate himself amidst the masses. In a sense, Mushakôji at that period violated what would become his own philosophy in two aspects. First, he denied his own self. Second, he was not true to himself. As his dismissal of his maiden collection suggests, Mushakôji detected a hint of inauthenticity in it. The thoughts manifested in *Arano* were merely adopted from someone else and did not stem from his own heart. Reading Maeterlinck's *Wisdom and Destiny* (*La Sagesse et la destine*, 1898), however, enlightened Mushakôji, and he was finally able to accept and affirm himself. This affirmation of the self is essential to his literary identity and the completion of his first literary success.

In the play *Momoiro no heya*, published in the same year as *Omedetaki hito*, the conflict between those two different philosophies is represented as a dispute between two opposing characters, the Pink Woman (*momoiro no onna*) and the Gray Woman (*haiiro no onna*). Some Japanese scholars, including Honda Shûgo, argue that Mushakôji wrote *Momoiro no heya* inspired by the High Treason Incident (*Taigyaku jiken* 大逆事件, 1910-1911), as an expression of liberal concern about lower-class disenfranchisement and class struggle.<sup>106</sup> As Mushakôji himself denied this in his later writing, however, the play

elucidates his developing philosophy through a main character who eventually overcomes his ambivalence about the two opposing ideologies. Mushakôji was seeking to articulate his notion of self-realization in the play, rather than concerning himself with the social insecurity and agitation of the time.

Mushakôji had previously published a short story, *Namanurui heya* (Lukewarm Room, 1909), in *Shirakaba*. Despite the difference in genre, *Namanurui heya* and *Momoiro no heya* are very similar not only in title but also in content. In a sense, *Namanurui heya* forms a prologue to *Momoiro no heya*, where the conflict does not exist as an obvious conflict, in part because Mushakôji had not yet formulated his Musha-ism. In the story, a young man is in a lukewarm room (*namanurui heya*). A wintry blast is wailing outside. He wants to leave the room, but the mere thought of the cold wind outside prevents him from doing so. Having grown up in a lukewarm room, the young man has become used to lukewarmness. But he does hate a lukewarm attitude, so he feels distressed, realizing that his heart has become lukewarm lately.

*Namanurui heya* was written around the time Mushakôji was still struggling to detach himself from the thought of Tolstoy, and clearly the work is largely under his influence. The cold wind blowing outside symbolically represents society, whereas the lukewarm room suggests Mushakôji's privileged background. The young man, as well as the author, wishes to forsake his social class and approach people from the lower classes. However, he is also afraid of losing his high status, so he does not dare. *Namanurui heya* illustrates Mushakôji's self-contradiction through the young man's agony. It may seem that the theme of the work regresses compared to that of his preceding essay, *Yottsuo no e ni arawasaretaru kairaku* (1909), where the author discusses pleasure and harmony of

individualities. Yet *Namanurui heya* is significant for Mushakôji in that it marks a fictional expressing of divergence from Tolstoian thought toward his own Musha-ism.

The young man's agony implies the author's transitional phase where he has not yet reached his ideal state as an individualist, that is, an attitude of *botsu-kôshô*, or detachment from "others," as he will define in the essay *Jibun to tanin* (1909). The room is not described as a warm room, but a lukewarm room, though a "warm" room may sound more appropriate for the opposed concept of the "cold" wind outside. It implies that Mushakôji was quite conscious of his self-contradiction and tried to resolve it. The room is lukewarm, not because it is mild to belong to a high social class, but because the author is uncomfortable with his problem. The room is lukewarm now, but it will be warm and rosy as he develops his Musha-ism. Figuratively speaking, Mushakôji will go on to paint it pink and create the Pink Room—the edifice of his ideal, instead of abandoning the lukewarm room and mingling with people. The young man had to learn to stay in the room in order for Mushakôji to overcome his self-contradiction.

The stage setting of *Momoiro no heya* is almost identical with the description of *Namanurui heya*. There are more characters, but again they are kept to a minimum in order to elucidate the author's philosophy clearly. The Pink Woman is the inhabitant of the Pink Room, which is described as Western-style where everything—the wall, the ceiling, the door, the furniture, and so forth—is painted harmoniously in pink. There is a fireplace which keeps the room warm. This is the symbolic space of Musha-ism, the only place where the Pink Woman's husband, the Young Man (*wakaki otoko*), can be completely free from the masses, conventional society, *seken*. The Pink Woman believes that the Young Man can be happy as long as he stays there. Even the Gray Woman admits

that the couple are happy together in the Pink Room and that anyone could be happy there. The Gray Woman and the other Gray People (*haiiro no hitobito*) are the inhabitants of the outer world which is observed through the windows of the Pink Room. A wintry wind blows outside among withered trees under the gray sky. The Gray People represent *seken* and the Gray Woman is the representative of them. They try to persuade the Young Man to leave the Pink Room and join them.

The Young Man is described as a somewhat gloomy person who irresolutely sways between the two opposing ideologies. He often goes out to see the outer world, but returns quickly, beaten back by the wintry wind. Nevertheless, after warming himself in the Pink Room, the Young Man is tempted to go out again. Mushakôji fully employs his favorite *gudaguda* style in depicting such an indecisive character. Upon the Gray People's visit, the Young Man resolutely orders the Pink woman to open the door, while she tries to ignore them. Reacting to the Pink Woman's reluctance, he even says, "Open the door. If you don't open it, I will."<sup>107</sup> After several clashes, however, the Young Man is easily persuaded by the Pink Woman. All of a sudden, he changes his mind: "Shut the door tight. Guard the door so well that we don't hear their voices through it at all."<sup>108</sup> His irresolution implies that the Young Man has not yet reached his ideal, just as Jibun in *Omedetaki hito* has not completely realized himself.

The prominence of the female character in *Momoiro no heya*, as opposed to the irresolute Young Man, is a novelty in Mushakôji's work. In contrast to Tsuru in *Omedetaki hito*, the Pink Woman plays a principal role. She not only protects her husband from attacks by the Gray People, but also speaks for the author's Musha-ism. In fact, Mushakôji changed the title *Momoiro no heya* to *Momoiro no onna* when he published

the work in a later collection, *Kokoro to kokoro* (Heart and Heart, 1913), indicating the Pink Woman's centrality in this play.

At the same time, the Pink Woman is not an independent character in the same sense as Jibun is in *Omedetaki hito*. She never leaves the Pink Room; she merely waits for her husband during his absences. In a sense, the Pink Woman *is* the Pink Room. As the room is the symbolic representation of Musha-ism, she is its spokesperson and defender. She is thus less a flesh-and-blood character than a concept, a belief the Young Man eventually espouses. The presence of the Pink Woman is the beginning of a schism in the unified subjectivity of Jibun: the Young Man and his wife are complementary characters. While vacillating between his Pink Woman and the Gray People, the Young Man knows that the Pink Room, his ideal place, is the right place for him to be, even before his wife tells him so. Nevertheless, he is still inclined to leave the Pink Room. To compensate for this unbearable indecision, the Pink Woman—a kind of superego—separates out as a distinctive “voice” from the Young Man's subjectivity. Accordingly, his ego becomes somewhat weak; the Gray Woman teases that she is a tyrannical wife and he a submissive husband. The two complementary characters remain incomplete until the very end of the story where the Young Man finally repels the Gray People and decides to stay in the Pink Room, which is the moment the protagonist and his wife affirm their complementarity.

It is symbolic that the battle between the Pink Woman and the Gray People starts when the Young Man is sleeping, when he is effectively “absent.” They try to break into the Pink Room to take the Young Man away from the Pink Woman by force. The Pink Woman tries to repel them, thinking that if she lets them enter the room, “the public and

daily life will defeat human life.”<sup>109</sup> Again, their battle is waged along the dichotomy Mushakôji frequently employs in his work: the public (*seken*) versus the self (*jiko*). After breaking into the Pink Room, the Gray people start to criticize the Pink Room and its inhabitants. As representatives of *seken*, they deride the Young Man as a spoiled child (*obotchama*), a naïf (*seken shirazu*), a fool (*manuke*), and so forth. This, too, is exactly how others in the story saw Jibun in *Omedetaki hito*.

The Young Man and the Pink Woman believe in the power of the self and the importance of self-realization. The Pink Woman says, “It is the sole duty of a human being to make one’s self as happy as one’s destiny allows.”<sup>110</sup> However, the Gray People consider attention to one’s self merely selfishness. The Pink Woman retorts, “Nature commands us so.”<sup>111</sup> For the Young Man and the Pink woman, to be true to themselves is the way to be happy, as Mushakôji finds the term *shizen* to be synonymous with the term *jiko*. The confrontation ends in a stalemate. The Gray People regard the couple as sinners, whereas the Pink Woman thinks that the Gray People cannot truly understand human life as long as they believe it sinful to develop one’s self. At last, bored by the futility of the argument and unable to persuade the Young Man, the Gray People leave the Pink Room, singing in mocking chorus. The Pink Woman, too, gives up refuting them, and iterates the principle of *botsu-kôshô*: “Others are concerned with themselves. I am concerned with myself. This is the only morality in this world.”<sup>112</sup>

The last few dialogues between the Pink Woman and the Young Man summarize the theme of this play—the importance of self-realization. Even after expelling the Gray People from the Pink Room, the Young Man does not wholeheartedly enjoy his victory.

While determined to stay in the Pink Room, the Young Man still empathizes with the people of the outer world:

“Who wants to be with those fellows? I will never abandon my special prerogative. I will never abandon what Heaven has given me. But I feel sorry for those fellows. They cannot help being the Gray Woman’s slaves. I want to save them somehow. I feel sorry that we alone will stay in this room.” (MSZ 2: 31)

This passage is elusive because of the phrase “special prerogative” (*tokken* 特権). Some commentators interpret the phrase to mean Mushakôji’s aristocratic background. For instance, in his commentary of the current *Mushakôji Saneatsu zenshû*, Sekiguchi Yaekichi asserts that the Young Man’s resolution is a hopeless hope, or almost an empty boast. He argues that the Pink Room is the symbolic image which includes young Mushakôji’s agony, skepticism, and sense of guilt about his ability to live without laboring. Such comments, however, are more applicable to *namanurui heya* in which the protagonist clearly agonizes over his indecision. The special prerogative of the Young Man in *Momoiro no heya* is that he can remain in the Pink Room. The Pink Room is the edifice of Musha-ism, where he can transcend public pressure and be true to himself. And to be an inhabitant of the Pink Room is, as the Pink Woman maintains in her earlier monologue, the way to be happy. Thus the phrase “special prerogative” does not suggest Mushakôji’s class-based prerogative, but that one is entitled to pursue happiness through self-realization.

In her response to the Young Man’s empathy toward the Gray People, the Pink Woman argues that he should realize himself first and become the defender of the self (*jiko no shugosha* 自我の守護者):

“But that is what you will do after you have become a whole man, after you have fully grown. You ought to value yourself first. You ought to protect the human life within yourself. You ought to grow [yourself] so much that you have no time to spare for others. You may attend to others after that. It is presumptuous to direct your attention to others before you become a whole man. You must be the defender of your self.” (MSZ 2: 31)

As Honda comments in *Shirakaba-ha no bungaku*, this passage allows a glimpse at one cornerstone that defines the character of the White Birch School. Indeed, the Pink Woman’s position is Mushakôji’s literary articulation of Maeterlinck’s philosophy. One should love one’s neighbor as oneself; this may be the ideal attitude of a perfect man. But it hardly counts unless you know how to love yourself in the first place. The Young Man, is not, nor is Mushakôji himself, a perfect man who can practice “loving one’s neighbor as oneself” yet. That may well be impossible for anybody. Thus, for the time being, as he had argued in his earlier *Jibun to tanin*, Mushakôji maintains an attitude of *botsu-kôshô* detachment in order to realize himself first.

Even after the Pink Woman’s encouragement, however, the Young Man cannot act with resolution by himself. He experiences anxiety in living away from the masses, and more specifically in the solitude of *botsu-kôshô*. He says, “Ah, I am unbearably lonely. Kiss me.”<sup>113</sup> Since they are complementary characters, the Young Man can be the defender of the self only with the Pink Woman’s support. The Pink Woman dramatically approaches him, holds his hands, and gazes into his eyes. Then the Young Man stands up and declares his determination:

“Fine. Even if everybody is to be my enemy, I will be the defender of the self. I will be the admirer of love and beauty. I will make the hearts of those who sympathize with me pink.” (MSZ 2: 31)

This, finally, is the moment the Young Man transcends the claims of *seken* and is determined to live up to his ideal. In her great joy at persuading the Young Man, the Pink Woman shouts, “*Banzai!*” (Hurrah!). The cold wind is still blowing outside. The couple hold hands and gaze at each other: the two complementary characters become one as a whole person.

This finale also foretells the direction of Mushakôji’s future career. Sekiguchi builds his argument on the notion that Mushakôji must and will abandon the Pink Room. He cites Mushakôji in a letter to a friend where he says, “I want to leave the Pink Room some day. Although I do think of leaving it, however, I may die before being able to. I think this very likely.”<sup>114</sup> It is true that Mushakôji eventually left the Pink Room and embarked on the foundation of *Atarashiki Mura* (New Village, 1918-) in his later career, but this shift is not the rejection of the Pink Room Sekiguchi considers it to be. The Young Man does not want to leave the Pink Room and become a gray person himself. He wants to turn gray hearts into pink hearts. Likewise, Mushakôji did not “abandon” the Pink Room because he succumbed to the temptation of the Gray People. Rather, after he completed his first task—to realize himself and become a whole man—Mushakôji was ready to move on to the next level. His next level is to make the hearts of people pink, in other words, to share his Musha-ism with people. Needless to say, this “people” does not include all the Gray People outside the Pink Room. Mushakôji’s “people” are only those whose individuality can harmonize with his individuality.

### **3. Liberated Woman: *Seken shirazu***

In 1912, Mushakôji published *Seken shirazu*, his third work independent of his writings in *Shirakaba*. The author himself regarded it as a counterpart of *Omedetaki hito* in that both embody Musha-ism—his theory of happiness—in the protagonists. He comments in the preface:

Having published *Omedetaki hito*, I feel obliged to publish this small book as well. However, this sense of obligation is not the only reason I published this small book. Perhaps I would have published this story even had I not published *Omedetaki hito*. I feel that this story is in a sense the first chapter of what I will write in the future. (MSZ 1: 119)

Advertisements for the book, too, feature Mushakôji's description of this work as the sister volume (*shimai hen*) of *Omedetaki hito*.<sup>115</sup>

The story of *Seken shirazu* unfolds mostly as an exchange of letters between the first-person male protagonist, Jibun, and the female character, C-ko. This exchange of letters signals a significant difference between *Omedetaki hito* and *Seken shirazu*. *Omedetaki hito* is narrated exclusively through Jibun's subjectivity, while in *Seken shirazu*, by contrast, two subjectivities engage in dialogue. C-ko describes herself in her letters, and Jibun judges her personality by what she says about herself. Moreover, the character that embodies the author's Musha-ism is the protagonist Jibun in the earlier work, whereas it is C-ko in the latter one.

C-ko's character and behavior are seen by Jibun as extremely outrageous. Jibun receives his first letter from C-ko on May 15th, in which she announces her hope of visiting him. This forwardness gives Jibun the impression that C-ko is an "impudent" (*zûzûshii*) woman; he has never known a woman who, though a total stranger, wanted to

visit him. C-ko also freely addresses a variety of issues in the letter: what she likes, what she dislikes, what kind of person other people consider her, what kind of person she really is, and so forth. Perhaps, to talk about herself honestly as she does was in itself outrageous for a woman at the time. At their first meeting, C-ko asks for some paintings Jibun owns, which, again, would normally be considered quite ill-mannered for someone of such preliminary acquaintance. In fact, after the visit, Jibun's mother tells him that the housemaids were gossiping negatively about C-ko. The mother herself says, "The parents must be very troubled having such a daughter. I wonder who would have such a girl as wife."<sup>116</sup> But Jibun admires her outrageousness as her sense of liberty. He becomes interested in C-ko, observing her as a woman who "is unreserved, lacks common sense, and remains indifferent to the [negative] attention she attracts from other people."<sup>117</sup> Her liberty, however, is the only admirable trait he sees in C-ko in the beginning of the story. Indeed, he feels "strangely extreme displeasure"<sup>118</sup> during most of his first meeting with C-ko. Far from Mushakôji's ideal relationship—a harmony of individualities—their two subjectivities bring only a note of discord at first.

After gaining acquaintance with Jibun, C-ko becomes even more outspoken and her outrageousness increases. In the letter Jibun receives the day after her first visit, for instance, she tells him that she was not embarrassed by the presence of the two other men who had been with him when they met. She even tells him what she thought of him, which would seem incredibly forward for a Taishô-era woman:

"I tell you this without any reserve. When I saw your face, I was near tears. I don't know why, but I felt sad. I really felt like crying, because you looked lonely."  
(MSZ 1: 123)

C-ko's outspokenness is not merely outrageous but reveals her wish to be true to herself. Also, C-ko is quite aware of what people think of her, though of course she does not care. When her age comes up in this letter, C-ko confesses that she feels uncomfortable when someone asks her age. For she does not like to lie, but she also knows that were they to know her age, people would think that she looks younger and more immature.

Jibun feels ambivalent toward this outrageous female character. On the one hand, he wholeheartedly praises her. He is pleased to be acquainted with someone so confident in her individuality and feels that C-ko is a rare gift his destiny has given him. He likes the fact that he can say anything to C-ko honestly, just as she says anything to him. On the other hand, he often feels irritated at what she says. The first conflict between them appears when they argue about loneliness. C-ko admits that she is a lonely woman because of her outrageousness, as well as observing Jibun to be a lonely man:

“I haven't yet known a man I can depend on. I haven't yet met a man I can respect. I only know that there are innumerable men who find life worth living because of me.

I think that a man can be proud of having an unequalled treasure when he has me. Then I think of myself being lonely. I can have any man I love. And I know many men who respect and love me the way I am. But I don't know of any man who can accept me in my entirety.” (MSZ 1: 124)

Here C-ko talks about the same loneliness that the Young Man of *Momoiro no heya* has. To be true to oneself and to be detached from others entail loneliness. But it is a necessary stage on the path of self-realization. Also, C-ko holds the same philosophy as Jibun in *Omedetaki hito*. Observing that the protagonist also has the same problem, C-ko wants to help him. She believes that Jibun can find happiness with her. But at the same time, she cannot help him, because she does not wish to compromise her individuality for

the sake of someone else. Taking offense at her honest opinion, Jibun attempts to refute her:

“I may look lonely and may really be lonely. But being lonely does me no harm; it is beneficial to me, because I know how to gain power from this loneliness.”  
(MSZ 1: 124-125)

Basically, they argue identical points from their respective points of view. Jibun is as proud as C-ko in that he does not believe that he would find life worth living because of her. Instead, he thinks that C-ko would find life worth living because of him.

Their initial conflict suggests that Jibun and C-ko are in fact complementary characters. The dissonance in their relationship is the pain of difference between them. The loneliness that each detects in the other stems from the fact that neither is a “complete” person; each is lonely without his/her other half. C-ko hopes to meet someone who can entirely contain her, a hope which has remained unfulfilled—until she meets her complement, Jibun. C-ko, such an invincibly outrageous woman, shows her frailty only to Jibun. In an express mail reply to Jibun’s angry letter, she apologizes for offending him:

“When you think ill of me, I know that I am a worthless woman. I cannot bear it.

You are cruel. I only know how to be selfish. In spite of what I have done, I bear a grudge against you. If you were here with me, I would surely snarl at you.

Please, for mercy’s sake, go back to thinking of me as a good girl. Please tear that letter up and send me a reply right away saying, ‘you are a good girl, C-ko.’ [...]

I tell you this honestly. I am a little girl knowing nothing but guilelessness, self-centeredness, and frankness.” (MSZ 1: 126)

Since C-ko is depicted as a liberated woman, heedless of what others think of her, it seems strange that she is so sensitive to Jibun's response to her. This can be explained only by C-ko's need for her complement, Jibun, to complete herself.

The discord between Jibun and C-ko resurfaces several times throughout the story, but it is especially conspicuous when they are actually together. Jibun likes C-ko when they exchange letters, but he has to work at liking her, indeed almost hates her, when they are together. These discordant scenes give the reader the strangely uneasy impression that their happiness, the harmony of their individualities, is completely absent. This phenomenon arises from Jibun's self-consciousness, which conflicts with C-ko's sense of liberty. For instance, waiting with C-ko for a train to Fujisawa at Shimbashi station, he worries about what people are thinking of the two of them. At a Japanese style restaurant, he becomes fed up with her audacious behavior, worrying about what the waitresses think of her attitude. Jibun does admire C-ko's sense of liberty, but he is, after all, not as carefree as she. The protagonist in *Omedetaki hito* believes that he should transcend any concern for what the public (*seken*) thinks, but he has not yet reached his ideal. He is thus always acting *gudaguda*, or irresolutely and inconclusively. Jibun in *Seken shirazu* is the extreme of this *gudaguda* part of Jibun in *Omedetaki hito*; C-ko is the extreme of the transcendent part.

This recalls the Young Man and the Pink Woman in *Momoiro no heya*, who are likewise complementary characters. The schism, which first appears in the play, exists as the dissonance between the two main characters in this work. However, Jibun and C-ko are complementary characters in a different way from the two complementary characters in *Momoiro no heya*. The Pink Woman is the incarnation of Mushakôji's theory of

happiness, and thus lacks a human dimension. She is created as an “immaculate” woman, who defends her vulnerable husband. The world of the play is quite conceptual and abstract. In contrast, C-ko is a more fully realized character, more emotionally volatile, and thus *Seken shirazu* is the more realistic work. It is also significant that her humanity is fully revealed only in her relationship with Jibun; otherwise, she remains completely detached from other people.

The dissonance between Jibun and C-ko, or more specifically Jibun’s reaction toward C-ko’s unworldliness, is also the paradoxical presentation of Musha-ism. Mushakōji’s complacent protagonist in *Omedetaki hito* illustrates the pleasure and happiness of being completely free from worldly values; C-ko consciously practices this philosophy in a bolder way than he. She says that she “has grown up without the [influence] of universal rules,”<sup>119</sup> which, her brother retorts, accounts for her “decadent state.”<sup>120</sup> Her aunt says that she is appalled at C-ko’s outrageousness: “You neither care about *seken* nor lose your ingenuousness in society. You are horrifying because you are not horrified at *seken*.”<sup>121</sup> C-ko is fully aware of such reactions of others to her outrageousness, as she says, “Something trifling to me may be a shocking event to others, and may [even] sometimes be called [by them] a sin.”<sup>122</sup>

On the other hand, although he aspires to Musha-ism, Jibun is still vulnerable to what people think of him. For instance, in the train to Fujisawa, he is afraid that they may look suspicious to other passengers and that people may gossip about and deride them. Jibun even emphasizes that C-ko is ugly in his letter to a friend, only hoping that he will disagree: “No, you’re wrong. She is rather pretty.”<sup>123</sup> Jibun’s criterion is not what *he* judges a phenomenon, but what *people* judge it. C-ko is shrewd enough to detect his

obsequiousness to the judgment of others. She says, “Your letters do not reveal what you really are.”<sup>124</sup> Jibun is indeed not true to himself and tries to be someone else, which we have previously seen defined as a tragedy in Mushakôji’s essay *Yottsu no e ni arawasaretaru kairaku*. Far from the harmony of individualities in the “Land of Beauty,” however, Jibun and C-ko produce only cacophony, in part because of his self-consciousness and concern for *seken*. When they are together, Jibun is irritated, sometimes by C-ko’s presence, sometimes by nothing. C-ko is disgusted with Jibun’s attitude, too, and says, “You often say, ‘How unpleasant. How unpleasant.’ It’s not my fault.”<sup>125</sup> It almost seems that this *Seken shirazu* is concerned with unhappiness rather than happiness. And indeed, Jibun’s unhappiness, as opposed to the sense of liberation and happiness of C-ko, illustrates what Mushakôji believes happiness to consist in.

Although they are complementary characters, C-ko is still dominant in the story and somewhat overshadows Jibun. Mushakôji’s contemporary and friend, Shiga Naoya, describes this semi-autobiographical *shôsetsu* as “extremely realistic; rather, creating a vivid impression (*namanamashii kanji*), and containing novel and superb aspects.”<sup>126</sup> This vividness is largely attributable to the presence and prominence of the female character, C-ko. Jibun’s role is the prism through whose subjectivity the reader can see all the colors of C-ko’s liberation. It is true that C-ko describes herself, but it is Jibun who assesses the significance of her personality. When he is irritated, Jibun always has the impression that C-ko recognizes his sensitivity to *seken* as the source of that irritation. But at the same time, he also admires her being detached.

Jibun’s ambivalence is not only characteristic of the author’s *gudaguda* style, but also enables the transition toward the end of the story in which Jibun’s subjectivity

gradually approaches C-ko's. At first, he only *wants* to be proud of being with C-ko. Then he begins to confess his jealousy, the obverse of his admiration, about her sense of liberty: "I wish I could always speak as frankly as she does."<sup>127</sup> As their relationship becomes more intimate, Jibun shows more understanding and tolerance of her outrageous behavior: "'There you go again,' I laughed."<sup>128</sup> "How very C-ko."<sup>129</sup> Realizing that C-ko begins to rely on him, Jibun's irresoluteness gradually fades. At last, Jibun does not "really feel regret or anxiety"<sup>130</sup> anymore about his involvement in the affair with C-ko, believing that their relationship will lead to his self-realization: "I thought, 'whatever may happen, it will merely help me realize my self.'"<sup>131</sup> Jibun thus shifts to praising her wholeheartedly: "No woman is more interesting than C-ko."<sup>132</sup> "I thought that for the first time I had finally found in C-ko what I had secretly adored since I was seven or eight years old."<sup>133</sup> Earlier in the story, Jibun understands Musha-ism intellectually, but he cannot practice it as C-ko does, because he does not understand it in his heart. Through his interaction with C-ko, however, Jibun finally understands it in both brain and the fullness of his heart. Echoing Jibun in *Omedetaki hito*, C-ko confirms this superiority of emotion over reason: "Understanding based only on words is worthless."<sup>134</sup>

By the time the couple come to consider marriage, the frailty that C-ko has previously shown to Jibun takes on new meaning. She recognizes that only their union will bring her true happiness, affirming her incompleteness which can be made complete only by joining Jibun. The discrepancy between C-ko and her father in their views of marriage reveals this new meaning:

"I really don't think that there is anyone who rejected marriage more obstinately than I. My father can't understand at all why I rejected it. He thinks that nothing

would make me happier than to marry into a family where I could behave freely and selfishly.” (MSZ 1: 163)

Her father misunderstands C-ko’s unworldliness and nonchalance as the essence of her happiness, but there is something more essential to her happiness. C-ko rejects other marriage proposals; Jibun is the only person she wants to marry, because she can complete her incomplete individuality in her harmony with Jibun’s individuality. She realizes that she “can rely on no one else at all” other than Jibun.<sup>135</sup>

In an earlier scene, their complementarity and harmony are symbolically depicted, as Jibun reflects:

The two of us held hands firmly when we came to a dark, almost empty street on the way [home]. I had the feeling of freedom that I had sought but until now had not been able to obtain. (MSZ 1: 141)

This scene reminds us of the ending of *Momoiro no heya*, where the Young Man and the Pink Woman, holding hands, gaze at each other. The harmony of individualities, generally invisible and intangible, is affirmed as physical contact. Moreover, the Young Man and the Pink Woman, excluding the Gray People from the Pink Room, ultimately retreat inwardly to their subjectivities. Likewise, this deliberate detachment from the outer world and dependence only on each other is the only way for the two complementary characters, Jibun and C-ko, to be happy. C-ko expresses her concern about the outer world: “I’m sure I will spend my whole life gazing at your face. I will have to see the unhappy world if I look back.”<sup>136</sup> But she also confirms that their union will release her from the insecurity of incompleteness: “I will be fine if you are with me. I really, really feel happy.”<sup>137</sup>

Through their decision to marry, the two complementary characters are unified as a complete subjectivity. Accordingly, C-ko's subjectivity becomes completely liberated, and thus she starts to speak for Musha-ism more eloquently than ever:

“I would like to be the most beautiful woman. Day after day I am approaching the woman I imagine.

I don't think that my figure and face are beautiful or fine. [...] There are many women who are born more beautiful than I, but I don't think that such a woman looks more beautiful than I when she comes before me. I would like to be a woman who is more than a human being.” (MSZ 1: 157)

C-ko's aspiration again recalls the Pink Woman. While her character is more human than the Pink Woman's, here she utters her desire to be the Pink Woman, the embodiment of the author's Musha-ism. Also, Jibun, who had previously been vulnerable to public opinion, now articulates Musha-ism, in response to his mother's disapproval of the marriage:

“Mother, you're wrong. Please tell me that you don't like her if you don't. I feel disgusted when you say that other people will laugh. We don't care about what other people may say, do we? They say all sorts of things without giving it any thought. You worry about one thing and another, and there's no end to it. There is no point in worrying about such trivial matters. (MSZ 1: 167)

This is the moment the protagonist of *Seiken shirazu* proudly declares the victory of *jiko* over *seken*. Jibun, of course, could not possibly have said this before his subjectivity was made whole through its union with C-ko's subjectivity. Now that they have fully attained their harmony and wholeness, the story closes with “Happily ever after.”<sup>138</sup>

#### **4. Conclusion**

The two works examined above, *Momoiro no heya* and *Seken shirazu*, resemble each other in that both illustrate Mushakôji's theory of happiness through two complementary subjectivities and that female characters play a principal role. The philosophy underpinning these two works expands on what the author had already begun in his previous works. Jibun in *Omedetaki hito* attempts to transcend the public (*seken*) in order to realize his self (*jiko*). Likewise, the Young Man in *Momoiro no heya* decides to confine himself in the Pink Room, excluding the Gray People, representatives of *seken*. Jibun in *Seken shirazu*, too, adores the liberated woman who is completely heedless of claims of *seken* and finally finds a way to be happy in her sense of liberty. This is a continuing theme for Mushakôji, yet quite an original philosophy in the context of the times. Just as C-ko does, Mushakôji has merely accomplished what he believes is natural, only to surprise people.

*Seken shirazu* marks the culmination of Mushakôji's early career where he extensively champions the supremacy of the self. The literary success of the work owes its further development of Musha-ism in the creation of two different subjectivities and the prominence of the liberated female characters. The ambivalence of Jibun in *Omedetaki hito* is captured in single subjectivity with Mushakôji's *gudaguda* style of writing. In *Seken shirazu*, the author divides this independent character into the two complementary characters—one extremely heedless of *seken*, the other extremely vulnerable—in order to make the dichotomy more apparent. This differentiation produces only dissonance at first, but at the end of the story, these two complementary

characters become one whole and attain the harmony of individualities, whereas it remained partial in the previous work.

## Conclusion

### The Theory of Happiness

I do not want art to give me the feeling that everyday life gives me.  
 However, I want everyday life to give me the feeling that art gives me.<sup>139</sup>  
 —Mushakôji Saneatsu, *Jiko no tame no geijutsu*

French philosopher Emile Chartier (1868-1951), under the pseudonym Alain, published a collection of articles dealing with the general theme of happiness, *Propos sur le bonheur* (On Happiness) in 1928. Alain asserts that he aims “to change philosophy into literature and literature into philosophy” in his writing.<sup>140</sup> So it is with Mushakôji Saneatsu, whose prolific output of essays and *shôsetsu* constitute a complex exploration of his theory of happiness. The link between the writer’s essays and his “creative” works, however, has been neglected in precious scholarly work on Mushakôji. Honda Shûgo valued Mushakôji’s early essays highly and compiled *Wakaki hi no shisaku* to elucidate the young Mushakôji’s quite complex transition in philosophy. Ôtsuyama systematically examined Mushakôji’s creative works through analysis of their relation to his personal life. Yoneyama analyzed Mushakôji’s novels in terms of the notion of transcendence. In each case, their research overlooked the important link between Mushakôji’s essays and *shôsetsu*.

In his early essays, Mushakôji unreservedly articulates his philosophy—his own humanism, individualism, and transcendentalism—which already shows glimmers of Musha-ism. The later essay, “*Jiko no tame*” *oyobi sonota ni tsuite*, sees the accomplishment of Musha-ism, a coherent philosophy on the meaning and attainment of “happiness.” The philosophical evolution in the essays is parallel to a thematic evolution

in the *shōsetsu*; the essays describe his philosophy and the *shōsetsu* depict it. The philosophical thrust of his writing results in a certain abstraction and idealism in his *shōsetsu*, which has generally been read as “simple,” “optimistic,” or “uncomplicated,” even “superficial.” But Mushakōji was deeply committed to developing and illustrating his Musha-ism in his writing with the goal of attaining the happiness of becoming the “whole man” in his own life, and of sharing his vision with others—at least those whose individualities are capable of sharing it.

Mushakōji knows that he is not yet a “whole man” capable of fully practicing Musha-ism. Indeed, he would agree with Alain, who says in *Comments on the Art of Knowing Others and Oneself*, “Certainly we do not become what we want to become, but we do not become anything at all if first we do not exercise our will.”<sup>141</sup> Thus Mushakōji makes every effort to realize his self, to accomplish his Musha-ism, in his own life. And he depicts it in the ideal characters of his protagonists who embody Musha-ism in the ideal world of his *shōsetsu*.

The main characters of both *Omedetaki hito* and *Seken shirazu* represent the ideal characters of Musha-ism. Jibun in *Omedetaki hito*, although he is on his way to an ideal state, insatiably attempts to follow his heart and to transcend the public in order to reach his objective of self-realization and wholeness. C-ko in *Seken shirazu*, as the protagonist sees her as the most liberated woman, is completely heedless of claims of public opinion. This ideal state of transcendence is epitomized in the titles of these *shōsetsu* as well; Mushakōji loves verbal twist. Both terms, *(o)medeta(k)i* and *seken shirazu*, often connote a negative attribute, but in Mushakōji’s context, these terms describe his protagonists to praise them. Although readers may label Jibun *omedetaki hito*

as an oblivious person, Jibun *is* a happy person as an embodiment of the author's theory of happiness. Likewise, readers may think that C-ko behaves childishly because she does not know the expectations of *seken*. But the protagonist highly values such unworldliness as her sense of liberty, because Musha-ism dictates that one should keep himself aloof from *seken*. In that sense, C-ko is created as an ideal person and, again, the embodiment of the Mushakôji's theory of happiness.

I use Mushakôji's own term, Musha-ism, to identify his philosophy as his theory of happiness. Ultimately, Musha-ism requires simply that one be true to oneself. In his work, the dichotomy between the command of nature (*shizen*) and the pressure of public opinion and convention (*seken*) appears repeatedly. Mushakôji asserts the superiority of *shizen* over *seken*; one must transcend public opinion in order to follow nature's command. Moreover, for Mushakôji, *shizen* is synonymous with the self (*jiko*) in the sense of one's own inner nature or true self, true heart; *shizen* commands him internally, not externally. Thus, Mushakôji's notion of being true to oneself and his sense of transcendence are simultaneous. Being true to oneself is the only way one can fully realize one's self, realize the absolute supremacy of the self, and be happy.

This is the philosophy of "for myself" (*jiko no tame*) that Mushakôji repeatedly insists upon in his essays, the philosophy he develops after turning Tolstoian humanitarianism toward Maeterlinck's idea of loving and realizing his self first. It is a positive egotism which he joins to the notion of *botsu-kôshô*, in which he minimizes his relation to others and associates only with those whose individualities can harmonize with his individuality. The goal of "being true to oneself" is something of a cliché in philosophical writing, but it is, all the same, notoriously difficult to achieve. Mushakôji's

protagonists often show their irresolution or inconclusiveness in the author's *gudaguda* style, which suggests this difficulty of truly being true to one's self and of maintaining transcendence.

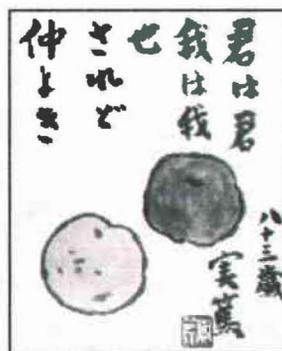
With the completion of *Seken shirazu*, Mushakôji reaches the climax of his early career. The creation of two different subjectivities and the prominence of the liberated female character mark the literary evolution from his previous work where the protagonist's ambivalence is confined in single subjectivity. The two complementary individualities become united and whole in the end, and thus the story champions the harmony of individualities which Jibun in *Omedetaki hito* could not attain. Musha-ism continues to evolve afterward; achieving a "whole person" enables Mushakôji to leave the Pink Room which he created as his ideal world, the edifice of Musha-ism. And he starts to work on the establishment of a utopian community, *Atarashiki Mura* (New Village).

## Notes

1. Mushakôji Saneatsu, *Jiko no tame no geijutsu* (Art for Myself), in *Mushakôji Saneatsu Zenshû*, edited by Inagaki Tatsuo, et al., vol. 1. (Tokyo: Shôgakkan, 1987), p. 402. Hereafter abbreviated as MSZ. All the translation of the titles and the works of Mushakôji Saneatsu cited in this paper, unless otherwise noted, are my own.
2. This paper will present Japanese names in Japanese order, with the surname first, except in those cases where the reference in question was written in English. There are two alternate readings for his surname (武者小路): Mushanokôji and Mushakôji. Although the former reading is definitely dominant among the public, the latter is technically correct. Especially in current Japanese academic discourse, the trend is to use the reading Mushakôji; this paper will follow this trend.
3. The original text reads: 仲よき事は美しくき哉 (fig. 1). Atarashiki Mura Mushakôji Saneatsu Kinen Bijutsukan (New Village Mushakôji Saneatsu Memorial Museum): [http://www2u.biglobe.ne.jp/~sin\\_mura/](http://www2u.biglobe.ne.jp/~sin_mura/).
4. An example of his paintings is shown below (fig. 2).



(Fig. 1)



(Fig. 2)

5. In April 1910, Mushakôji, Shiga, and other young writers at Gakushûin founded the nonprofessional literary journal *Shirakaba*. The writers who published their works in this journal are generally called the White Birch School, or the *Shirakaba* School (白樺派). “Although they differed in their personalities and literary tastes, the dislike they shared for Naturalism influenced the content of their writings, and an admiration for modern Western art affected their manner of expression. Their favorite writers are Tolstoy and Maeterlinck, [adopting] from the former his humanism and from the latter a realization that mankind must come to a better appreciation of the human condition.” Donald Keene, *Dawn to the West: Japanese Literature in Modern Era*, vol. 1, *Fiction* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1984), p. 441.
6. *Shishôsetsu*, or more formally *watakushi shôsetsu*, is an autobiographical style of novel and a distinguishing feature of modern Japanese literature. There appear many works in the Taishô era that are based on the author’s personal experience, in which the first-person pronoun, *watakushi*, is employed. “It is generally expected that an ‘I novel’ will not merely recount events that have occurred in the author’s life, but will expose them mercilessly in the manner

- of a confession.” Keene, p. 506. Although *shishōsetsu* is commonly translated as I-novel, this thesis refers to it as *shishōsetsu*, conforming to the idea that *shōsetsu* is peculiar to modern Japanese literature and is distinguished from the Western novel. Masao Miyoshi, *Off Center: Power and Culture Relations Between Japan and the United States* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991).
7. Based on the same view above, this thesis will utilize the term *shōsetsu* instead of the term novel for Mushakōji’s work.
  8. For instance, Mushakōji wrote *Kōfuku mono* (A Happy Man, 1919), *Kōfuku na kazoku* (Happy Family, 1940), *Kōfuku na onna* (A Happy Woman, 1952), and so forth.
  9. Honda Shūgo, *Shirakaba-ha no bungaku* (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1955), p. 18.
  10. In the original: 銀のサジしか持ったことのない人達. Honda, p. 81.
  11. Keene, p. 449.
  12. Ôtsuyama Kunio, “Mushakōji Saneatsu,” in *Shin gendai bungaku kenkyū hikkei*, eds. Takemori Ten’yū, Yoshida Kōki, and Noyama Yoshimasa, (Tokyo: Gakutōsha, 1993), p. 104.
  13. The original chapter titles read as follow: Chapter 1: *Jiko o ikasu* (自己を生かす); Chapter 2: “*Jiko*” to wa nani ka (「自己」とは何か?); and Chapter 3: “*Jiko*” to muishiki (「自己」と無意識). Honda, p. 8.
  14. *Ibid.*, p. 40.
  15. Maurice Maeterlinck, *Wisdom and Destiny*, translated by Alfred Sutro (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1901), p. 173.
  16. Mushakōji Saneatsu, *Momoiro no onna*, MSZ 2: 31.
  17. Honda, pp. 36-37.
  18. There is also a famous anecdote about Shiga which reveals how financially privileged they were: when he ran short of money, Shiga would go to used book shops in Kanda to ask which books fetched the highest prices. Then he would go to Maruzen bookstore, the principal vendor of works of western culture at that time, purchase those titles, and sell them to the dealers in Kanda. One might wonder how such a transaction could be profitable, but Shiga did not have to worry about paying for the books, for Maruzen would bill his family’s account. Shiga proudly used the term “*uchi*” (my household) with a special connotation; all he had to say at Maruzen was, “Put it on my *uchi*’s account.” Honda, pp. 33-34.
  19. *Atarashiki Mura* (1916- ) is the utopian community Mushakōji established in Miyazaki Prefecture as embodiment of his social ideals.
  20. Ôtsuyama Kunio, *Mushakōji Saneatsu ron* (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 1976), p. 1.
  21. Ôtsuyama brackets his term, “*shizen*” *shugi* 「自然」主義 (“Nature” ism). In this thesis, the

term is put in quotation marks, in order to avoid likely confusion with another literary movement in Japan, Naturalism. This distinction is particularly important, for the *Shirakaba* writers are commonly considered anti-Naturalists. They embrace a positive view of human nature and seek to express the aesthetic and ideal of the self, unlike the Naturalist writers who strive for unadorned realism. Kubota Jun et al., eds., *Nihon bungaku-shi* (Tokyo: Ôfû, 1997), p. 321.

22. Ôtsuyama, p. 141.
23. Ibid., p. 141.
24. The *Shirakaba* School's humanism is not associated with any specific political philosophy. It is rather the notion of world brotherhood. The idea in itself may not be particularly novel, but the *Shirakaba* writers' seriousness in expressing their moral concern marks the characteristics of their humanism. Mushakôji writes about the guiding philosophy of *Atarashiki Mura*, "Of course it is not capitalism, nor is it socialism. We have a third way, humanism, world brotherhood." Keene, p. 445. Quoted by Fukuda Kiyoto and Matsumoto Takeo, *Mushakôji Saneatsu: Hito to sakuhin* (Tokyo: Shimizu Shoin, 1969), p.104.
25. The original text reads: 六十迄健全でみたなら必ず何かして見せる。何かして見せると云ふのは、一つの武者主義をつくって見せると云ふ事である。Mushakôji Saneatsu, *Kare no seinen jidai*, MSZ 1: 246.
26. Ibid., 1: 236.
27. It is hard to imagine, given his usual optimism, but Mushakôji shows his deep despair in his diary: "I hate to write already." Ibid., 1: 239.
28. Mushakôji Saneatsu, *Aru otoko*, MSZ 5: 110.
29. Ibid., 5: 66.
30. Ibid., 5: 101.
31. Mushakôji Saneatsu, *Kare no seinen jidai*, MSZ 1: 246.
32. Quoted in *Kaidai* (a bibliographical introduction), MSZ 1: 754.
33. In the original text, it says: 自分を生かす. In *Omedetaki hito* and other essays, this frequently used expression is rephrased as "jiko o ikasu" (自己を生かす).
34. The original German title is *Vom Tode II*. In the essay, Mushakôji mentions that *Misery* is the sixth etching, but this must be the author's misunderstanding.
35. Mushakoji uses the term *shajitsu* (写真).
36. Mushakôji Saneatsu, *Kuringeru no "Hinkyû" o mite*, MSZ 1: 295.
37. Ibid., 1: 297.

38. The English titles of the paintings cited here are my own, except *In the Sea* by Böcklin (fig. 3). Due to lack of reliable resources, I could not find the image and the titles of the paintings.
39. Mushakôji Saneatsu, *Yottsu no e ni arawasaretaru kairaku*, MSZ 1: 299.
40. *Ibid.*, 1: 301.
41. Hisayo Klotz, liner notes for *Shurayuki hime: Urami renka* (Lady Snowblood: Love Song of Vengeance), directed by Fujita Toshiya (Tokyo: Tokyo Eiga Shinsha, 1974): <http://www.animeigo.com/samliner/lb2.pdf>.
42. *Yottsu no e ni arawasaretaru kairaku*, MSZ 1: 301.
43. *Ibid.*, 1: 301.
44. *Ibid.*, 1: 300. The original text for “the Land of Beauty” reads: 美の国. My translation renders it literally, assuming that Mushakôji means a kind of symbolic world of his ideal.
45. In *Shimpen seichô*, there is another essay, *Shi no kyôfu* (Fear of Death, 1909), compiled right after *Jibun to tanin*, but it is inserted here without any particular reason. Neither its date of writing nor first appearance is known. Also, the original title of *Jibun to tanin* on its first appearance is *Kosei to kosei* (Individuality and Individuality), which tells us how deeply the author was immersed in the notion of individuality around this time.
46. The original text reads: 自分は他人に冷淡なことを感謝する。他人の自分に冷淡なことを感謝する. Mushakôji Saneatsu, *Jibun to tanin*, MSZ 1: 317.
47. In the essay “*Jiko no tame*” *oyobi sonota ni tsuite*, Mushakôji states that he had already read Maeterlinck’s *Wisdom and Destiny* five or six years before, which precedes the date he wrote *Jibun to tanin*.
48. Yoneyama, p. 278.
49. *Jibun to tanin*, MSZ 1: 317.
50. Coincidentally, it is the year when Tolstoy, Mushakôji’s former philosophical idol, dies.
51. Mushakôji Saneatsu, *Shirakaba sôkan no ji*, MSZ 1: 324.
52. This essay also gives us useful information in that it typifies how the public audience recognizes Mushakôji’s works and what image it has of the author. Agawa Sawako, “Gudaguda taru hito” in *Omedetaki hito*, by Mushakôji Saneatsu (Tokyo: Shinchôsha, 1990), p. 172.
53. Agawa humorously states that, reading this passage, she was driven by an impulse to scold Jibun: “So what? Don’t be so indecisive!” Agawa, p. 172.
54. *Jibun to tanin*, MSZ 1: 317.



(Fig. 3)

55. Mushakôji Saneatsu, "*Sorekara*" *ni tsuite*, MSZ 1: 326.
56. Natsume Sôseki, *Sorekara*, translated by Norma Moore Field, (Baton Rouge and London: Louisiana State University Press, 1978), p. 247.
57. *Ibid.*, pp. 186-187.
58. The original text reads: 社会の圧迫に超絶して自然の命に従って得た慰安ではない (my emphasis). As Yoneyama chooses the term as the frame work of his argument, the notion of transcendence is the significant attribute of the characters in Mushakôji's *shôsetsu*. The following chapter will discuss this issue further. "*Sorekara*" *ni tsuite*, MSZ 1: 331.
59. Mushakôji Saneatsu, "*Jiko no tame*" *oyobi sonota ni tsuite*, MSZ 1: 427.
60. Maeterlinck, p. 173.
61. "*Jiko no tame*" *oyobi sonota ni tsuite*, MSZ 1: 430.
62. *Kare no seinen jidai*, MSZ 1: 246.
63. Mushakôji Saneatsu, *Omedetaki hito*, MSZ, 1: 82.
64. The original text reads: 走けて御覧なさい. *Ibid.*, 1: 84.
65. *Ibid.*, 1: 96.
66. *Ibid.*, 1: 99.
67. *Ibid.*, 1: 99.
68. For instance, when Jibun first contemplates marriage to Tsuru, he first considers logically who might oppose it. He thinks that his neighbors and friends will laugh at him because of the difference between their social classes. He also thinks that his mother will disapprove of the marriage because she is afraid of nothing so much as what people say about her family. However, he thinks that his firm determination will be able to change her mind because she loves him more than anything else. Thus, he considers that what he must do first is to persuade her so that his father will agree, too. *Ibid.*, 1: 80.
69. The original text reads: 自分は女に餓えてゐる. *Ibid.*, 1: 79.
70. The original text reads: 女に餓えてゐる自分はこゝに対象を得た. *Ibid.*, 1: 80.
71. My emphasis. Ôtsuyama, p. 194.
72. *Omedetaki hito*, MSZ 1: 79.
73. The original text reads: 自分はまだ、所謂女を知らない. *Ibid.*, 1: 81.

74. Ibid., 1: 82.
75. The original text reads: その肉と心. Jibun chooses the term *niku* (flesh) here instead of a neutral term, such as *karada* (body). His lexical choice makes his confession more explicit. Ibid., 1: 82.
76. The original text reads: 柔かき円味のある身体. Ibid., 1: 82.
77. The original text reads: なまめかしき香. Ibid., 1: 82.
78. The original text reads: 優しき心. Ibid., 1: 82.
79. Ôtsuyama, pp. 152-155.
80. *Omedetaki hito*, MSZ 1: 90-91.
81. Ibid., 1: 90.
82. Seiji M. Lippit, *Topographies of Japanese Modernism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), p. 14.
83. For instance, the friend in the previous *geisha asobi* discussion only exists to elucidate Jibun's understanding of nature.
84. The original text reads: かかる女に自我はない. *Omedetaki hito*, MSZ 1: 98.
85. Ibid, 1: 86.
86. The original text reads: 自分はすべてのことに超絶しなければならない. Ibid, 1: 93.
87. In the original: 超越主義. Yoneyama uses the term *chôetsu* (超越) to describe Mushakôji as a Japanese transcendentalist (*Nihon no chôetsu-shugi-sha* 日本の超越主義者), while the protagonist himself uses the term *chôzetsu* (超絶). Although both terms are rendered “transcendence” in English, I prefer the term *chôzen* (超然) to describe the protagonist's transcendence in this paper. The term *chôzetsu* indicates the ideal state of the protagonist, that is, the zenith of absolute transcendence over everything, but he has not yet reached it in this work. Also, the term *chôetsu* entails a connotation that one is up in the air and superior to everyone else. What the protagonist actually tries to do is, however, to hold himself aloof. Thus, there is no value-judgment in terms of superiority.
88. Following excerpts comprise the total number of appearances of the term (*o*)*medetak(i)* in the story: 1. そう考える程には自分は目出度くない (I am not happy-natured enough to think like that). MSZ 1: 86; 2. 自分はお目出たいから鶴の話も大概はうまくゆくと思っている (Since I am so happy-natured, I think that this business with Tsuru will turn out fine for the most part). MSZ 1: 92; 3. お目出たい自分にはどうもその方がほんとのように思える (It seems to me that the latter is true because I am so happy-natured). MSZ 1: 96; 4. かくまで目出たく出来ている自分を憐れまないではいられない (I cannot but have pity on such a good-natured man as myself). MSZ 1: 97; 5. それ程お目出度い男になりたくない (I do

not want to be such a good-natured man). MSZ 1: 97; 6. 目出度しと云う題をつけて次の新体詩を泣ながらかいた (I composed the following new-styled poem in tears entitling it “Happily in the Dark”). MSZ 1: 98; 7. 目出度き哉 / 甚もって目出度き哉 (How happily I live in the dark! Indeed, I am quite happily living in the dark!). MSZ 1: 99; 8. 我は目出たし / 目出たし / 汝の思いおるよりも / 更に目出たし (I live happily in the dark. Happily in the dark. I live more happily in the dark than you realize). MSZ 1: 99; 9. 目出たし目出たし / 目出たき故に他人と自分を苦しめる程 / 目出たし (Happily in the dark, happily in the dark. I live so happily in the dark that both I and others suffer from it). MSZ 1: 99.

89. *Jiko no tame no geijutsu*, MSZ 1: 402.
90. *Omedetaki hito*, MSZ 1: 87.
91. The original text reads: 自分は鶴以上に自我を愛してゐる. Ibid., 1: 82.
92. Lippit, p. 14.
93. The original text reads: 自分は自分の目的に向はう. *Omedetaki hito*, MSZ 1: 92.
94. Ibid., 1: 96.
95. The original text reads: 自分は自我を發展させる為にも鶴を要求するものである. Ibid., 1: 82.
96. For instance, it is generally acknowledged that the model for Tsuru is Hidaka Taka, who was Mushakôji's third love.
97. In Japan, Uno Kôji (1891-1961) considers Mushakôji to be the founder of the Japanese *shishôsetsu* because of his colloquial style in writing. Uno Kôji, *Bungaku no seishun-ki* (Tokyo: Chûsekisha, 1986). In the United States, Tomi Suzuki states that “Tayama Katai's *Futon* (The quilt; 1907), which became closely associated with Japanese Naturalism, and Mushakôji Saneatsu's *Omedetaki hito* (A blessed person; 1911), a product of the Shirakaba group, are usually referred to as the first I-Novels” in her book. Tomi Suzuki, *Narrating the Self: Fictions of Japanese Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), p. 48.
98. “How is one to analyze a form that critics have debated for well over half a century but for which they have failed to come up with a workable definition?” Edward Fowler, *The Rhetoric of Confession* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1988), p. 3.
99. The original text reads: 「お目出たき人」の主人公の書けるものとして見られたし. *Omedetaki hito*, MSZ, 1: 108.
100. Mushakôji Saneatsu, *Seinaru koi*, MSZ 1: 32.
101. “Shizu loves her husband, and Ichirô loves his wife. However, these two couples cannot attain emotional harmony without awareness. [...] Fortunately, they are content with what they are now because they do not believe in the existence of something they are not aware of.

Nevertheless, something in their hearts, which they feel but cannot know, still cries from loneliness. And they miss each other.” *Ibid.*, 1: 37.

102. *Omedetaki hito*, MSZ 1: 79.

103. Mushakôji Saneatsu, *Seken shirazu*, MSZ 1: 125.

104. *Momoiro no heya* appeared in *Shirakaba* in February, 1911, preceding the publication of *Omedetaki hito*. However, *Omedetaki hito* had been written one year earlier. For a fledging writer like Mushakôji, it took a while to find a publisher for the earlier work.

105. *Ibid.*, 1: 119.

106. Kôtoku Shûsui (1871-1911) and other socialists were arrested on suspicion of planning the assassination of Emperor Meiji. The trials were closed to the public, and twelve radicals including Kôtoku were executed the next year.

107. Mushakôji Saneatsu, *Momoiro no heya*, MSZ 2: 25

108. *Ibid.*, 2: 25.

109. The original text reads: 世間と生活が人生に勝つ. *Ibid.*, 2: 25.

110. *Ibid.*, 2: 29.

111. *Ibid.*, 2: 29.

112. The original text reads: 他人は他人です、自分は自分です、今の世には之が唯一の道徳です. *Ibid.*, 2: 30.

113. *Ibid.*, 2: 31

114. Mushakôji Saneatsu, *Takeo-san ni* (To Takeo), MSZ 1: 364.

115. *Kaidai*, MSZ 1: 747.

116. *Seken shirazu*, MSZ 1: 123.

117. *Ibid.*, 1: 121

118. *Ibid.*, 1: 121.

119. *Ibid.*, 1: 128.

120. The original text reads: たいはいした姿. *Ibid.*, 1: 128.

121. *Ibid.*, 1: 130.

122. *Ibid.*, 1: 130.

123. Ibid., 1: 137.
124. Ibid., 1: 128.
125. Ibid., 1: 148.
126. Quoted in *Kaidai*, MSZ 1: 748.
127. *Seiken shirazu*, MSZ 1: 138.
128. Ibid., 1: 138.
129. Ibid., 1: 141.
130. Ibid., 1: 135.
131. Ibid., 1: 135.
132. Ibid., 1: 144.
133. Ibid., 1: 145.
134. Ibid., 1: 125.
135. Ibid., 1: 165.
136. Ibid., 1: 162.
137. Ibid., 1: 164.
138. The original text reads: めでたしめでたし. Ibid., 1: 170.
139. Mushakôji Saneatsu, *Jiko no tame no geijutsu*, MSZ 1: 401.
140. Robert D. Cottrell, Introduction to *Alain on Happiness*. Alain, *Alain on Happiness*, trans. by Robert D. and Jane E. Cottrell (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1973), p. xi.
141. Ibid., p. xv.

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