

CHAPTER 5

THE CONCEPT AND ITS SUPPORTING STRUCTURE

5.1 Meiji Culture, and the Revival of Classical Chinese and Japanese Studies

5.1.1 The Reformulation of Learning and Education

There survives the catalog of a lending library in the Shiba district of Tokyo, dated Meiji 20 (1887).¹ For each book the list gives the rental fee and the sale price. The instruction sheet specifies that academy students without guarantor must pay 80 percent of the rental fee in advance, which suggests that much of the library's clientele consisted of university, preparatory school, and private academy students. Indeed, the diaries and memoirs of many who were students at the time show that young intellectuals were often unable to purchase books as they pleased, and also unable to make do by merely borrowing from their friends, so that they frequently resorted to renting what they needed from lending libraries. One of them wrote:

I began reading novels at the age of five or six. An old-style lending library man would come round to the front entrance where the household retainers gathered, with a great pile of books on his back, and leave some there. I was soon mad about them. I skipped my way through them all, from “hard” ones like *Kanso gundan* 漢楚軍談, *Sangokushi* 三国志, or *Hakkenden* 八犬伝, to “soft” ones like *Umegoyomi* 梅曆 or *Hizakurige* 膝栗毛.²

This passage is from *Omoide no hitobito* 思ひ出の人々 by Tanabe Kaho 田辺花圃 (1868-1943, later married Miyake Setsurei 三宅雪嶺), whose story “Yabu no uguisu” 藪の鶯, modeled on Tsubouchi Shōyō's 坪内逍遙 *Tōsei shosei katagi* 当世書生氣質 (1885-86), appeared in 1888 and made her a pioneer woman writer (*keishū sakka* 閨秀作家). Kaho's father, Tanabe Ta'ichi 田辺太一, was the son of a scholar affiliated with the bakufu's Confucian academy (Shōheikō 昌平黌) and he was active in diplomatic affairs both before and after the Meiji Restoration. The members of his household staff were therefore indeed “retainers.” It is clear that the “Japanese habit” of ranking fiction at “the very bottom,” deplored by Fukuchi Ōchi in his “Nihon bungaku no fushin o tan-zu,” is connected above all with this level of reader.

In comparison with this situation, almost unchanged since Bakumatsu times, the lending library catalogue indicates the emergence in Tokyo of analogous enterprises that operated not only by

1 Now in the Naikaku Bunko collection. I am grateful to Asaoka Kunio 浅岡邦雄 for this reference.

2 Quoted from Ochi 1975, p. 55.

time-honored mercantile methods, but also by opening proper shops that did business by mail. Despite the absence of any information on volume of trade, the catalog affords revealing insight into the reading of educated people in the late 1880s.

Books in Japanese (332 titles, 18 percent of total)

Category	Title	Author, editor, translator	Titles in category
• Formal history	<i>Koshichō</i> 古史徴	Hirata Atsutane 平田篤胤	14
• Informal history	<i>Mizukagami</i> 水鏡		118
• Biography	<i>Jingū Kōgō go-denki</i> 神功皇后御伝記		12
• Government	<i>Rekichō shōshikai</i> 歴朝詔詞解	Motoori Norinaga 本居宣長	17
• Shinto	<i>Gyokai gaigen</i> 馭戎概言	Motoori Norinaga	14
• Confucianism	<i>Hakuran kogen</i> 博覽古言	Sugawara no Michizane 菅原道真	13
• Geography	<i>Edo sunago</i> 江戸砂子	Kikuoka Senryō 菊岡沾涼	17
• Japanese poetry	<i>Kotoba no tama no o</i> 詞之玉緒	Motoori Norinaga	36
• Japanese prose	<i>Genji monogatari</i> 源氏物語	Murasaki Shikibu 紫式部	27
• Classified collections	<i>Moshiogusa</i> 藻塩草	Tamaki Masahide 玉木正英	8
• Fiction (小説)	<i>Fūrai rokurokubu shū</i> 風来六々部集	Hiraga Gennai 平賀源内	17
• Miscellaneous	<i>Okinagusa</i> 翁草	Kanzawa Teikan 神沢貞幹	39

Books in Chinese (379 titles, 20 percent of total)

• Formal history	<i>Kojiki</i> 古事記	Murayama Chūjun 村山忠順	50
• Informal history	<i>Hyōchū tsūgo</i> 標註通語	Nakai Riken 中井履軒	39
• Biography	<i>Akō shijūshichi shi den</i> 赤穂四十七士伝	Aoyama Nobumitsu 青山延光	20
• Government	<i>Ryō no gige</i> 令義解	Kiyohara no Mahito et al. 清原真人等	20
• Classics	<i>Shunjū sashi den kōhon</i> 春秋左氏伝校本	Hata Kanae 秦鼎	24
• Confucianism	<i>Ryūshi shinron</i> 柳子新論	Yamagata Masasada 山県昌貞	18
• Military authorities	<i>Chōchū Sonshi</i> 趙註孫子	Kubota Kiyone 窪田清音	3
• Philosophers	<i>Kanshi zensho</i> 管子全書	Karafusa Genrei 唐房玄齡	16
• Poetry	<i>Buntenshō shinan roku</i> 文天祥指南録	Buntenshō 文天祥	49
• Letters	<i>Kanbun ki</i> 韓文起	Qin Shixuan 秦士鉉	70
• Geography	<i>Sairan igen</i> 采覽異言	Arai Kinmi 新井君美	8
• Classified collections	<i>Fusō mōkyū</i> 扶桑蒙求	Kishi Hōshitsu 岸鳳質	9
• Fiction	<i>Jakujaku shunjū</i> 昔々春秋	Nakai Riken 中井履軒	30
• Miscellaneous	<i>Shishien manpitsu</i> 紫芝園漫筆	Dazai Jun 太宰純	23

Translations (1163 titles, 62 percent)

• Philosophy	<i>Jinken shinsetsu</i> 人權新説	Katō Hiroyuki 加藤弘之	60
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• Government	<i>Kokken hanron</i> 国憲汎論	Ono Azusa 小野梓	117
• Law	<i>Eibei keiyakuhō kōgi</i> 英米契約法講義	Aikawa Masamichi 合川正道	118
• Economics	<i>Rizai ron</i> 理財論	Nakayama Shin'ichi 中山真一	71
• Commerce and Banking	<i>Kodai shōgyō shi</i> 古代商業史	Kanaya Akira 金谷昭	24
• History	<i>Bunmei tōzen shi</i> 文明東漸史	Fujita Mokichi 藤田茂吉	67
• Biography	<i>Shinbun kisha retsuden</i> 新聞記者列伝	Sasaki Hidejirō 佐々木秀二郎	32
• Geography	<i>Chiriron ryaku</i> 地理論略	Arai Ikunosuke 荒井郁之助	17
• Education	<i>Kosodate-gusa</i> 育幼草	Julia E. Duddley タツレー	33
• Hygiene	<i>Fujin eisei ron</i> 婦人衛生論	Ōi Kenkichi 大井鎌吉	22
• Medicine	<i>Jintai soshiki ranyō</i> 人体組織攬要	Taguchi Kazuyoshi 田口和美	92
• Chemistry	<i>Kagaku senyō</i> 化学闡要	Toki Raitoku 土岐頼徳	18
• Physical science, Zoology, Botany	<i>Butsuri zenshi</i> 物理全志	Udagawa Jun'ichi 宇田川準一	15
• Mathematics	<i>Yōsan dokugaku</i> 洋算独学	Kotani Kentarō 小谷健太郎	47
• Speech and Debate	<i>Yūben hō</i> 雄弁法	Baba Tatsui 馬場辰猪	14
• Fiction	<i>Keikoku bidan</i> 経国美談	Yano Fumio 矢野文雄	344
• Miscellaneous	<i>Yakusho dokuhō</i> 訳書読法	Yano Fumio	72

Books in English (722 titles)

• Biography	<i>Abbott's American Pioneers and Patriots</i>	49
• Commerce and Banking	<i>Mongredien: A History of the Free Trade Movement in England</i>	16
• Rhetoric and Composition	<i>Beeton's Complete Letter-Writer for Gentlemen</i>	9
• Education	<i>Muller's Public School Education</i>	9
• Speech	Bright, G.: <i>Speeches on Questions of Public Policy</i>	15
• Geography	Cornell, S.S.: <i>First Steps in Geography</i>	27
• History	Acton, R.: <i>Our Colonial Empire</i>	108
• Linguistics	Brown, G.: <i>First Lines of English Grammar</i>	18
• Law	<i>Blackstone Economized: Being A Compendium of the Laws of England</i>	34
• Literature, Fiction	<i>Agnes and Katie in Service</i>	134
• Natural History	Huxley, T.H.: <i>Introductory (sic)</i>	13
• Philosophy	Jevons: <i>Elementary Lessons in Logic</i>	50
• Government	Amos, S.A.: <i>Primer of the English Constitution and Government</i>	81
• Economics	Bastia, F.: <i>Essay on Political Economy</i>	63
• Readers	<i>Chambers Standard Reading Books</i>	45
• Miscellaneous	<i>A Collection of Difficult Construction Maxims</i>	24
• Direct translations	Cocks (Richard) and others	27

Figure 10 Catalog of Books in Chinese and Japanese and Books in English Available from the Kyōeki Lending Library

The catalog is broadly divided into books in Chinese or Japanese on the one hand, and works in English on the other. In Chinese or Japanese it lists 1,871 titles, and in English (including translations into English) 722, for a total of 2,563.³ Works in English constitute 28 percent of the total, which suggests where the intellectuals of the time felt the source of culture lay. For example, the “Natural History” category of English works includes two volumes by Thomas Henry Huxley (1825-1895), known for having supported Darwin’s theory of evolution and established human descent from apes, as well as six volumes of Darwin’s own works. Meanwhile, the category of “Philosophy” includes twelve volumes by the Social Darwinist thinker Herbert Spencer (1820-1903), four more of whose works are listed under the heading of “Government.” Such indications convey the interests pursued by the readers of the time.

The lending library’s idiosyncratic classification of books in Chinese and Japanese divides these into three sections: “Japanese books” (*washo* 和書), i.e., books written in the Japanese language (*kana-majiri* 仮名交じり), in such categories as history, biography, Confucian studies, waka poetry, monogatari fiction, etc.; “Chinese books” (*kansho* 漢書), i.e., books written in Chinese in either China or Japan, from *Kojiki* to Meiji-period fiction); and “Translations” (*yakusho* 訳書). This last term covers not only translations proper, but also any book aimed at popular enlightenment published in the Meiji period, in such fields as government, economics, general culture, medicine, natural sciences like physics or chemistry; and, in addition, Tokugawa-period fiction of all kinds, republished in movable-type Meiji editions. “English books” and “Translations” together comprise more than 70 percent of the total. This suggests the thirst for knowledge characteristic of readers in general, particularly young intellectuals, in the so-called “Rokumeikan period” of the late 1880s,

when interest in learning from the West, and especially in the government policy of westernization, was at its peak.

It is noteworthy that this third “Translations” section includes movable-type editions of Tokugawa-period *yomihon*, *gesaku*, and *yomimono* works in the category of “fiction” (*shōsetsu*). These, together with translated or original fiction of the Meiji period, total 344 titles, that is to say, just under 20 percent of “Books in Chinese and Japanese.” Perhaps fiction was not then ranked as low as Fukuchi Ōchi had complained it was in 1875. Or perhaps its standing had risen once more. Of course, the figure just cited also includes *Shimizu Jirōchō den* 清水次郎長伝 (a

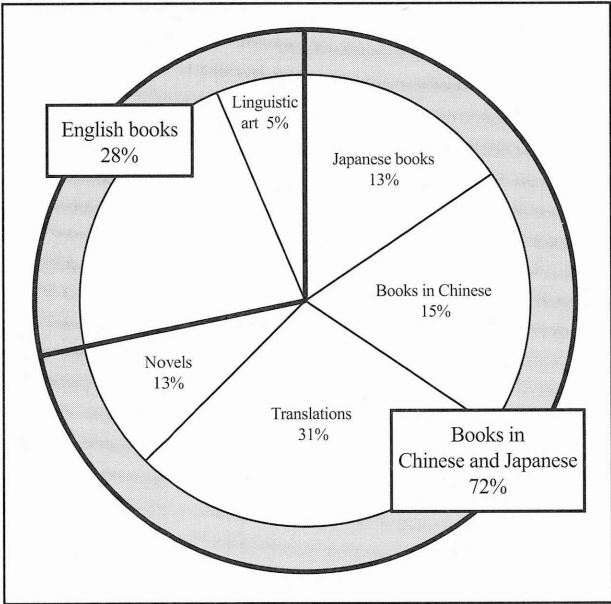


Figure 11 Catalog of Kyōeki Book Lending Library

3 Since some multi-volume works are listed under a single title, while in other cases a separate title represents each volume, the titles appear in Figure 10 as they do in the original catalog.

biography of a *yakuza* boss) by the Meiji *gesaku* writer Kochōen Wakana 胡蝶園若菜. The works of Takizawa Bakin figure on the list in prominent numbers, as do those of Ryūtei Tanehiko; and, among translations proper, the plays of Shakespeare. As for early Meiji fiction, *Keikoku bidan* 経国美談, by Yano Ryūkei 矢野龍溪 (Fumio), heads a considerable group of political novels. In 1887, Tsubouchi Shōyō's *Tōsei shosei katagi* and *Shōsetsu shinzui* were arousing widespread interest, and the catalog also lists many other original works and translations by him. It naturally does not include Futabatei Shimei's 二葉亭四迷 *Ukigumo* 浮雲, first published in the same month as the catalog itself.

What, then, is one to think of the 332 "Japanese books" and the 379 "Chinese books," each category amounting to roughly 20 percent of the whole, and the two together to approximately 40 percent? As already noted, the catalog classifies movable-type reprints of Tokugawa fiction under the "fiction" subheading of "Translations," thus excluding them from the category of "Japanese books."

For example, while discussing in *Kaki no heta* 柿の蒂 (1933) the labor Futabatei Shimei had devoted to elaborating a new written style, Tsubouchi Shōyō described the knowledge of Chinese studies and Japanese poetry achieved by early Meiji intellectuals as representing "the inertia of tradition" (*dentō no daryoku* 伝統の惰力). He wrote, "These people seem to have believed that when translating a foreign text or expressing new ideas one was to manage entirely within the confines of traditional kanbun style and vocabulary."

This remark, which follows the "tradition" versus "innovation" pattern, passes judgment on the style and lexicon of Meiji times. Such was Shōyō's position. Shōyō also wrote that "this inertia of tradition lasted until about 1884."⁴ Seen from his perspective, the fact that 40 percent of the lending library's catalog is devoted to works in Chinese and Japanese might well seem signal the "inertia of tradition." But will that view really do?

First of all, movable-type publication of such works as those listed in these two sections of the catalog continued to accelerate. It is therefore impossible to dismiss the phenomenon as the "inertia of tradition." Yanagida Izumi, who saw it was Chinese "practical studies" that encouraged Japan to accept their Western counterpart, pointed out that the movement to "establish truly Japanese scholarship," which arose at Tokyo University in 1881-82, became a call to reconsider Eastern and Western learning and thus, in effect, to revive Chinese poetry and prose. He then went on to outline how, through the officially sponsored westernization period of the late 1880s, "the balance of Eastern learning and of the newly introduced learning from the West tended more and more in the minds of the Japanese people to become centered on Japan."⁵

However, this outline makes too much of an opposition between "Western" and "Japanese" (or of the underlying notion of "East" and "West") and clearly oversimplifies the trend of thought in the first half of the Meiji period. For example, Fukuchi Ōchi decried the early Meiji decline in Chinese studies, in his "Nihon bungaku no fushin o tan-zu," because he knew the education received by European intellectuals, who revered the Greek and Latin classics. Fukuchi's attitude differed from

4 *Bungakuteki kaisō shū* 文学的回想集, in *Gendai Nihon bungaku zenshū* 現代日本文学全集, vol. 97, Chikuma Shobō, 1958, p. 11.

5 Yanagida 1965, vol. 1, pp. 20-21.

that of Fukuzawa Yukichi, who advocated accepting Western written and material culture and rejecting the Japanese and Chinese classics; but his was one way of reflecting, against the standard of “the West,” on what Japan should be. Considering “Japan” from the perspective of “the West” is what inspired an emphasis on “tradition.” One cannot explain the thought of this period, or the trend of its culture, by referring to a schematic opposition between “westernization” and “tradition.” Thus Fukuchi Ōchi’s sense of crisis in the early Meiji period was actually unjustified.

Fukuchi was certainly not the only one to feel this crisis and to lament the decline of Chinese studies. Mishima Chūshū 三島中州 (1830-1919), a Confucian scholar from Matsuyama domain 松山藩 in Bitchū 備中 province (present-day Okayama prefecture) entered the service of the new Meiji government and, in 1877, invested his own funds to found in Tokyo the Nishō Gakusha 二松学舎 (the predecessor of the present Nishō Gakusha Daigaku) as a Chinese studies academy, for the purpose of educating able men for careers in government, law, and the academic world. This academy’s first students numbered only twelve, but the following year they were two hundred, and the school became one of the most prominent of its kind in the city.⁶ In order to explain this phenomenon, it is not enough to observe that Mishima Chūshū, who would later take part in drafting the Civil Code, held a respected position in legal circles.

The Meiji government, which abolished the Tokugawa custom of using *sōrōbun* 候文 for official proclamations and so on, and which aimed to “restore imperial rule” (*ōsei fukko* 王政復古)—i.e., revive the ancient *ritsuryō* system—chose for its official documents the style in which Chinese was read out as Japanese (*kanbun yomikudashi tai* 漢文読み下し体). Properly, the approved style should have been pure *kanbun* (Chinese), but circumstances seem not to have allowed this. Starting with the elementary school reader issued in 1873, even elementary school education relied in its later stages on this style. The pages of the “major newspapers,” which emphasized political reporting and editorials, were covered with text written in this solemnly formal style. In contrast the “minor newspapers,” whose reporters were often popular fiction writers, employed the colloquial style (with sentences ending in such verbs as *gozaimasu* or *arimashita*) to present their human-interest stories and demimonde gossip. They even supplied phonetic readings for Chinese characters (*furigana*). (In their back pages the “major newspapers” often actually did the same thing.)⁷ All this clearly signaled a new way written style.

On the whole, the so-called “common Meiji style” (*Meiji futsū bun* 明治普通文) ranged from *kanbun* read out almost unmodified in Japanese pronunciation, to a softer, far more flexibly Japanized version of the same. In either case, the tone was that of a translation from Chinese. The standard remained pure *kanbun*. Under this new system, government officials, educators, and journalists could not hope to succeed in their careers without studying written Chinese. In that sense, the Meiji government’s official adoption of *kanbun yomikudashi tai* could hardly have failed to stimulate a revival of Chinese studies. The debate over language and written style raged throughout the Meiji period, but it is probably fair to say that the Meiji government’s choice in the matter had sufficient influence to determine the character of Meiji education.

6 Murakami Tetsumi 1994, p. 27.

7 Oral communication from Asaoka Kunio.

5.1.2 English Studies and Chinese Studies

In the *Chōya shinbun* 朝野新聞 of April 17, 1879, Suehiro Tetchō 末広鉄腸 (1849-1896) published a piece entitled “Bungaku ron” 文学論, in which he wrote: “In the last year or two the prominence of Western studies has declined in the bungaku world, and Chinese studies are on the rise again. Why is this?”⁸ By “bungaku world” he meant that of scholarship and education. This trend was not one of which Suehiro Tetchō approved, since he was a westernizer, but he recognized that the practice of combining Western and Chinese studies (*yōkan kenshū* 洋漢兼修) was increasingly common.

Perhaps it is the 1879 promulgation of *Kyōgaku Seishi* 教学聖旨, an imperially sanctioned statement on the principles of education, that definitively established the role of Confucian ethics in edifying the people. This document clearly posited loyalty and patriotism (*chūkun aikoku* 忠君愛國) as the pillar of this endeavor, but the governing principles behind it sprang less from Tokugawa Neo-Confucianism than from a Confucianism directly centered on the classics. Its chief architect was Motoda Eifu 元田永孚 (1818-1891), a Confucian scholar from Kumamoto domain. Also in 1879, the Faculty of Letters of Tokyo University made kanbun composition a compulsory subject and required that all graduation theses (*sotsugyō ronbun* 卒業論文) be written in either kanbun or English. In 1886, kanbun reading, dictation, and composition were made mandatory in middle schools as well.⁹ Thus during this period Chinese studies recovered their strength.

For example, Natsume Sōseki 夏目漱石 withdrew from middle school in 1881 and went to study for a time at the Nishō Gakusha. He had begun studying kanbun very early since his adoptive family favored it, and his fundamental mastery of it allowed him to enter the school at the middle level.¹⁰ Sōseki withdrew from the academy a year later in order to study English at another, the Seiritu Gakusha 成立学舎, so as to prepare for entering university. Many others like Sōseki, born in the Bakumatsu or early Meiji periods, seem thus in the course of receiving a good education to have progressed from kanbun to English, or to have studied both at the same time.

Another example is that of Yamaji Aizan 山路愛山 (1864-1917), who in his memoirs recalled giving up Parley’s *Universal History* in order to study *Monjō kihan* 文章規範 and *Tōsō hakka bun* 唐宗八家文.¹¹ It appears that in 1887 or so there was a veritable boom in Chinese as well as in English studies. Not only men were involved.

Osei, the heroine of the first chapter of Futabatei Shimei’s *Ukigumo*, attends an academy that teaches kanbun and then adds English to the curriculum as well.¹² This nicely captures the trend of the time. Apparently born in 1868 (Meiji 1), Osei has until recently been studying Kiyomoto balladry and attending a regular elementary school. According to the novel, her mother encourages her to do so because of her own taste for Kiyomoto, but in the late Tokugawa period it was in fact routinely accepted by townsman and peasant families in the Edo area that a girl should take lessons

8 Quoted from Yanagida 1965, vol. 1, p. 375.

9 Regarding Tokyo University, see *Tōkyō Teikoku Daigaku gojūnen shi*, pp. 692-96. Regarding middle schools, see “Kōtō Chūgakkō Rei,” dated April 1, 1886.

10 Murakami Tetsumi 1994, p. 26.

11 Yamaji Aizan, *Kiritsutokyō hyōron* 基督教評論, cited by Yanagida 1965, vol. 1.

12 *Tsubouchi Shōyō, Futabatei Shimei shū*, p. 156.

in sewing and in playing the shamisen. Daimyo, hatamoto, and so on were so addicted to various arts that skill on the shamisen was an advantage when a girl went into service. The government official living in the house next door to Osei's was probably first a Confucian scholar and taught in some domain school. No doubt the example of this government official's daughter attending a private academy is what causes Osei to give up the shamisen. Futabatei Shimei satirizes the principal of the academy as a strong woman driven by pride to rise above her former humble occupation, but in fact she confirms that the social renewal of Meiji times gave women, too, a thirst for study and learning.

To take a historical example, Ishizaka Minako 石坂美那子 (1865-1942), a wealthy farmer's daughter and the future wife of Kitamura Tōkoku 北村透谷 (1868-1894), entered at the age of nine the well known private academy run by Hio Naoko 日尾直子, a prosperous establishment with nearly one hundred students. She did so well that from 1880 to 1884 she taught Japanese studies, Chinese studies, and calligraphy there as an assistant professor. Then, from 1886 to 1889, she continued in this position as a professor, while studying at Kyōritsu Women's College 共立女学校. After her husband's death she traveled alone to America, then taught English until late in life at a prefectural Higher Women's College 高等女学校.¹³

It is not surprising that westernizing activists should have attributed this vogue for studying kanbun to the "inertia of tradition." Indeed, for Fukuzawa Yukichi it represented reaction itself. In an 1883 *Jiji shinpō* 時事新報 article entitled "Kangaku no shugi sono mukō naru o shirazaru ya" 漢学の主義其無効なるを知らざる乎 Fukuzawa wrote, "They consider works in Western languages to be practically useless, or they recruit ancient Confucian scholars to teach in their schools," and he condemned the vogue for "Japanese and Chinese studies" as inimical to the progress of civilization.¹⁴

This vogue reached even Keiō Daigaku, the university Fukuzawa had founded. In August 1883, a student group calling itself the Bungakukai 文学会 (Bungaku Society) published a magazine entitled *Bungakukai zasshi*. The "bungaku" in question referred to kanbun studies, the society apparently being partial to poetry in Chinese. Fukuzawa bought up all copies of the magazine and made sure no second issue ever appeared. He wrote in his declaration "Bungakukaiin ni tsugu" 文学会員ニ告グ,

Reflection on the current situation in our country suggests that there has arisen a tendency to look up to a Chinese-style bungaku that can properly be called artful [*gijutsu* 技術, skill, technique] and to prize its paraphernalia; while similarly, in France, people are making much of the crudest of old Japanese *art*. This is exceedingly strange.

By *gijutsu* Fukuzawa appears to have meant "bungaku" lying outside the humanistic sciences. One gathers from his words that the younger generation was taking growing pleasure in brushes and inkstones. He even singled out for criticism the French taste for ukiyo-e, which he treated as

13 Irokawa 1994, pp. 110, 313.

14 Fukuzawa Yukichi *zenshū*, vol. 8, p. 571.

a passing fad, and went so far as to describe sinophile pursuits as “the enemy of civilization.”¹⁵ His words warned against “reaction” from the standpoint of an advocate of practical studies and westernization.

The popularity of Chinese studies naturally encouraged a vogue for kanshi. Older kanshi poets from the pre-Meiji era were of course active in this trend, but there appeared others, such as the immensely popular Kokubu Seigai 国分青厓 (1857-1944), who published verses satirizing the government in the “Hyōrin” 評林 column of *Nihon shinbun* 日本新聞, run by Kuga Katsunan 陸羯南 (1857-1907); or Mori Kainan 森槐南 (1863-1911), an Imperial Household Ministry official who also opened new possibilities for kanshi and enjoyed high regard in the kanshi world.¹⁶ Scholars of kanshi agree that the genre flourished more vigorously in Meiji than in Tokugawa times.

Meiji kanshi works also differed in style from their earlier counterparts. Tokugawa kanshi included the completely free poems, oblivious of all the rules of kanshi composition, composed by Ryōkan 良寛 (1758-1831); and also such works as Yosa Buson’s 与謝蕪村 “Shunpū batei no kyoku” 春風馬堤曲 (1777), which mixed *hokku* 発句 and *gafu*-style 楽府体 passages with others written in the *kanbun kundoku* 漢文訓読 style. Many of the Bakumatsu-period *shishi* 志士 patriots’ kanshi poems are all but unintelligible. In the Meiji period, however, renewed contact with people from China helped kanshi poets to master more successfully the conventions of Chinese rhyme. There also appeared a strong tendency to disapprove in kanshi of characteristically Japanese ideas or vocabulary—a fault known as *washū* 和習 (or 和臭, a “Japanesque” quality). The poetic manual *Peiwen yunfu* 佩文韻府, commissioned by the Kangxi 康熙 Emperor (1654-1722), appeared in a copper-plate edition in 1883 and thereafter made it easier to acquire classical Chinese poetic diction.¹⁷ Also in 1883, Kishida Ginkō 岸田吟香 (1833-1905) published the massive *Tōei shisen* 東瀛詩選 (A Selection of Poems from Across the Eastern Sea), an anthology of the Tokugawa kanshi poems most apt to gain Chinese approval and sent it, with a request for a preface, to the Chinese poet Yu Yue 俞樾.¹⁸ At the same time, however, the above-mentioned Kokubu Seigai continued to champion Japanese kanshi and had nothing against so-called *washū*.

5.1.3 The Concurrent Revival of the Classics

An explosion of interest in the Japanese classics occurred in conjunction with the vogue for kanbun studies. One aspect of it was the sudden rediscovery of Ihara Saikaku 井原西鶴. It is perhaps ironic that the initiator of this trend was Awashima Kangetsu 淡島寒月 (1859-1926), in whom the writings of Fukuzawa Yukichi had inspired so great a longing for the West that he dreamed of becoming a naturalized American citizen. Awashima prepared himself for the questions he might be asked in America by undertaking to study the Japanese classics. He became enthusiastic about Saikaku in about 1880, and he conveyed his enthusiasm to Kōda Rohan 幸田露伴 (1867-1947) and Ozaki Kōyō 尾崎紅葉 (1867-1903). Tayama Katai 田山花袋 (1871-1930), whom Rohan and Kōyō inspired to become a novelist, described his memories of 1889-90 in *Tōkyō no sanjūnen* 東

15 Quoted from Yanagida 1965, vol. 1, pp. 444-47.

16 See Iritani 1989, chapters 1 and 2.

17 Iritani 1989, p. 36.

18 Inokuchi 1972, p. 50.

京の三十年 (1917), as follows:

In conjunction with the revival of Chikamatsu and Saikaku, such little *ten-sen* 錢 books as *Kōshoku ichidai onna* 好色一代女 and *Kōshoku ichidai otoko* 好色一代男 came out one after the other from publishers like Musashiya and Maruzen. With my meager pocket money I had previously purchased *San'yō shishō* 山陽詩鈔, *Sotōba zenshū* 卒塔婆全集, and so on, but I no longer had any use for them. I took them off to a used book dealer and bought Chikamatsu and Saikaku instead.¹⁹

Thus Tayama Katai tells of giving up being a student of Chinese poetry and prose. However, he did so because he aspired to take part in a “new Japanese bungaku.” Students of Chinese poetry and prose went on growing in number nonetheless.

Fukuzawa Yukichi, who in 1881 had disbanded the group of kanshi fans at Keiō Daigaku and condemned such pursuits in *Jiji shinpō*, a decade or so later wrote the following in a *Jiji shinpō* article entitled “Kyōiku no hōshin henka no kekka” 教育の方針変化の結果 and published on November 30, 1892.

Since 1881 the government has committed not a few blunders, but in my humble opinion the worst of them all is its mistaken education policy... What can possibly have moved government officials suddenly to change the direction of education policy; to revive an antiquarianism that was at last about to die out after being threatened by the Restoration; to appoint ancient, so-called great Confucian scholars as teachers in the schools; to compile new manuals of ethics and give them to students as textbooks; or, in extreme cases, to dismiss professors of foreign languages? They do nothing but trumpet antique ethics and attempt to force the education of the entire realm into the narrow confines of loyalty and patriotism. Indeed they seem not to be content in this regard with education alone, for they seek by means of secret monies similarly to suborn to their purposes newspapers, lecturers, and others who should in principle have nothing to do with such aims, and so to halt the progress of civilization. None of this is forgotten... The education policy shift of ten years ago has gradually spread its poison and even now promises a steadily worsening situation. One may proclaim how to correct its faults and restore it to health, but how many years will it take, even then, before it becomes possible to discern any good effect?²⁰

Fukuzawa attributed this disastrous shift to the political upheaval of 1881, when Ōkuma Shigenobu 大隈重信 and his faction were expelled from the government. As explained above, however, it would be more accurate to trace the revival of Chinese and Japanese studies back to the Kyōgaku Seishi declaration of 1879. Fukuzawa avoided mentioning the Kyōiku Chokugo 教育勅語 of 1890, but its combined insistence on the unbroken character of the imperial line, together with

¹⁹ Usui 1980, p. 16.

²⁰ Fukuzawa Yukichi *zenshū*, vol. 13, pp. 575-76.

the ethics of “loyalty and patriotism,” undoubtedly added impetus to the revival of the Japanese classics and of kanbun studies.

In *Hakubunkan gojūnen shi* 博文館五十年史, Tsuboya Zenshirō 坪谷善四郎 cited “the slight decline in the fortunes of Japanese bungaku and the relative rise in kanbun studies” as a reason for initiating the publication of *Shina bungaku zensho* 支那文学全書 in June 1891.²¹ This judgment presumably reflects the sales of Hakubunkan’s *Nihon koten zensho* 日本古典全書 (24 vols.) and *Nihon kagaku zensho* 日本歌学全書 (10 vols.), initiated in 1880. *Shina bungaku zensho* begins with “*Shisho* (Ch. *Sishu*) kōgi” 四書講義 and continues with “*Jūhachishiryaku* (Ch. *Shibashilu*) kōgi” 十八史略講義, “*Shikyō* (Ch. *Shijing*) kōgi” 詩經講義, and so on. As these titles show, the texts are accompanied by commentary.

Kanshi enjoyed very high esteem in the Meiji period. For example, in 1893 Itō Hirobumi’s 伊藤博文 En’yūkai 園遊会 group held a kanshi gathering, and a record of it was published in the inaugural issue (January 1894) of the magazine *Taiyō* 太陽. According to official figures lodged with the Police Ministry, for at least its first ten years of publication *Taiyō* printed no fewer than 100,000 copies of each issue and thus enjoyed by far the largest circulation of any magazine in Japan. Its “Literary Column” (Bun’enran 文苑欄) normally began with kanshi and then went on to waka and haikai. The inaugural issue included nearly sixty contemporary kanshi verses, including examples from the work not only of Yoda Gakkai 依田学海 (1833-1909) and Ishikawa Kōsai 石川鴻齋 (1833-1918), but also of Iwaya Sazanami 巖谷小波 (1870-1933) and Nogi Maresuke 乃木希典 (1849-1912). The succeeding issues, too, gave generous space to kanshi, with contributions from distinguished poets like Mori Kainan.

This wave of popularity probably reached its peak about 1894—a plausible date because it is then that the Ministry of Education, while still stressing the importance of the Japanese classics and kanbun in the middle school curriculum, and increasing the classroom hours devoted to them, somewhat contradictorily removed kanbun memorization and composition from the list of compulsory subjects.²² Perhaps a sudden rise in the tendency to look down on China, one connected with the Sino-Japanese War, had something to do with this development. Fukuzawa Yukichi did not hide his contempt, writing in *Jiji shinpō* (January 8, 1896), “The victor in war will also be the victor in commerce.” Noting that China “not only has no paper currency, but does not even understand the use of coins,” he declared, “It is no exaggeration to call this barbarian stupidity.”²³ After the war was won, varied expressions of self-confidence for having mastered the ways of the West came to fill *Taiyō*’s pages. *Taiyō* included kanshi even in the period following the Russo-Japanese War. However, while *Chūō kōron* 中央公論 (renamed from the former *Hanseikai zasshi* 反省会雜誌) placed a kanshi poem at the head of its inaugural issue in 1899, it never did so again. One has the impression that henceforth kanshi was relegated to serving only on particularly formal occasions.

This drop in the enthusiasm for kanshi seems also connected to changes in writing style within the world of Meiji journalism, then known as the *bundan* 文壇. Apart from such formal contexts as political criticism, or the pages of newspapers that insisted on maintaining the *yomi kudashi* style even into the Taishō period (by agreement with each publisher, the *genbun itchi* 言文一致,

21 Tsuboya 1937, p. 61.

22 Ministry of Education Directive no. 7 (文部省令七号), March 1894.

23 Fukuzawa Yukichi *zenshū*, vol. 15, p. 15.

or “unity of spoken and written language” style became universal in 1924), writers for the general-coverage magazine *Taiyō* were able to choose their own style. (The magazine *Kokumin no tomo* 国民の友 meanwhile unified its style to *yomi kudashi*.) After the Sino-Japanese War, the sentence-final verb changed gradually from *nari/tari* to *da/de aru* (the *genbun itchi* style) or *desu/masu*; while after the Russo-Japanese War (1904-05) *da/de aru* swept the field, and *desu/masu* all but disappeared.²⁴ It is impossible to define the motive force behind this change. The phenomenon had something to do with the many *genbun itchi* essays that advocated bringing the written language closer to the spoken; with the spread of attempts to achieve that goal; with the tendency for articles based on transcribed conversation to adopt that style; and with the increasing number of such articles published. In addition, the tide of interest in kanbun studies gradually withdrew, and the *yomi kudashi* style seems little by little to have faded away. (See Figure 12.)

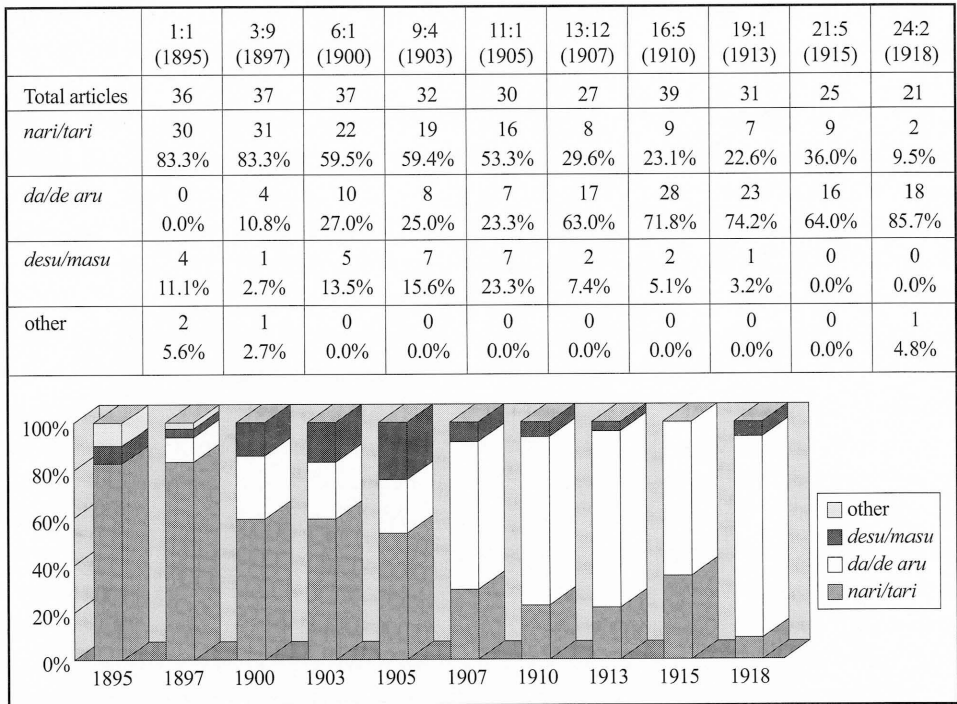


Figure 12 The Style of Signed Articles in *Taiyō*

At the beginning of the twentieth century the linguist Ueda Kazutoshi 上田万年 (1867-1937), who upheld the modern European conception of “national language,” came to play a central role in the Ministry of Education’s Japanese language education policy, and the weight given to kanbun in middle-school education was further reduced. However, the study of kanbun remained undiminished at elite middle and higher schools. The practice of beginning with Rai San’yō’s 頼山

²⁴ Suzuki Sadami 1996c. In the period immediately following the Russo-Japanese War, the *genbun itchi* style is particularly prominent in transcriptions of conversation. In the period just before the same war, the *desu/masu* style appeared in about 20-30 percent of all general coverage magazine articles.

陽 *Nihon gaishi* 日本外史 and with *Jūhasshishiryaku* 十八史略, then going on to *Tōshisen* 唐詩選, *Santaishi* 三体詩, *Mōshi* 孟子, *Shiki* 史記, *Monjō kihan* 文章規範, and *Rongo* 論語 continued until the period preceding World War II. Kanbun's place in education kept the term *kanbungaku* (kanbun studies, Chinese studies) alive. Furthermore, for those who received an elite education, it seems also to have preserved the concept of “bungaku” in the so-called median sense: one largely superimposed on the idea of the “humanities,” which combined the notion of “bungaku” attached to Tokugawa-period Confucian and kanshi studies with that of higher culture centered on Latin and belles lettres (“polite literature”).

I have dwelled on the Meiji vogue for writing in Chinese—one generally ignored by all except Japanese kanshi specialists—because attributing it to the “inertia” or “vestiges of tradition,” and attributing the revival of interest in the Japanese and Chinese classics to “reaction” against westernization, betray a westernizing or modernizing perspective and therefore represent a complete misunderstanding of the cultural and intellectual climate of Meiji times. This issue is closely linked to the concept of “bungaku” and its evolution.

Furthermore, one seems to discern in this phenomenon the emergence of a notion of “bungaku” different from that elaborated by the westernizing scholars of the early Meiji period. Thanks to the exclusion of the popular literary arts, the Tokugawa word “bungaku,” confined as it was in meaning to Confucian and Chinese studies, was no doubt easily seen as synonymous with “literature,” which was based on the notion of “polite literature.” This forced correspondence seems then to have obscured the fact that the center of “literature” had once been poetry and to have encouraged associating the term above all with a superior body of written learning, especially in the area of the humanities. Perhaps that is where the seed of contempt for Tokugawa *gesaku* fiction is to be found. Seen in this light, Kobori Keiichirō's contention in “‘Bungaku’ to iu meishō” that the word's contemporary meaning is based not on the current notion of linguistic art, but on that of a superior body of written learning, derived from belles lettres, seems to show the influence of an elite pre-war education. This idea was no doubt passed on by Shimada Kinji 島田謹二 (1901-1993) and others of his generation who taught comparative literature at Tokyo University. Consequently, “bungaku” in this sort of median sense is no doubt closely linked to the curriculum at Tokyo Imperial University, the foremost among Japan's elite educational institutions, and also to the terms used to designate academic faculties and departments. I will therefore turn next to the connection between “bungaku” and the structure of studies at Tokyo Imperial University.

5.2 “Literature” and Tokyo University

5.2.1 The Founding of the Faculty of Letters

The shape of Japan's higher education system first appears in the Daigaku Kisoku 大学規則 regulations promulgated in 1870. These provided for five “departments” (*ka* 科): Doctrine (*kyōka* 教科), Law (*hōka* 法科), Science (*rika* 理科), Medicine (*ika* 医科), and Humanities (*bunka* 文科). These follow the European, especially the nineteenth-century German four-faculty model (theology, law, medicine, philosophy), with the addition of science, and they were no doubt seen as an ideal for a new university. “Doctrine,” which replaced the German “Theology,” was

intended to cover Japanese (*kokugaku* 国学) and Confucian (*jugaku* 儒学) studies. “Humanities” was envisioned as including *kidengaku* 紀伝学 (the study of “biographical records”), *bunshōgaku* 文章学 (the study of “letters”), and *seirigaku* 性理学 (the study of “human sciences”).²⁵ Roughly speaking, *kidengaku* presumably refers to history, *bunshōgaku* to language and literary art, and *seirigaku* to various human sciences, especially psychology; or perhaps the intention was to bring the pre-existing “humanities” (imperial 皇学 and Chinese 漢学 studies) of the university’s main campus together with their counterpart on the south campus, which specialized in Western studies: rhetoric, logic, Latin, philosophy, and the history of other countries.²⁶ However, this intention was never realized.

In 1872, the newly-opened south campus assumed the function of teaching English, French, and German studies. The timetable for English included in the humanities line, together with history, geography, and ethics, a subject entitled “bungaku.” In the case of French and German, the counterpart term was *bunten* 文典.²⁷ These subjects were taught by foreign lecturers. As a topic of instruction, “bungaku” seems to have meant the content of the category “history of literature” (*bungaku shi* 文学史), that is to say, “polite literature” centered on the high-class linguistic arts. This rubric seems to represent the earliest occurrence in Japan of “bungaku” as a translation term.

However, the division of such subjects country by country changed in 1873, when the south campus resumed its earlier name and was reopened as Kaisei Gakkō 開成学校. Henceforth the institution was divided into schools of Law, Chemistry (originally, Science), and Engineering, all of which were taught in English; Arts (*shogei* 諸芸), taught in French; and Mining, taught in German.²⁸ Instruction in German, Russian, and Chinese was moved to the School of Foreign Languages.

The Schools of Arts and of Mines were abolished in 1875, but the institution’s student total nonetheless increased, making expansion of its facilities an urgent necessity. Its third annual report (*Tōkyō Kaisei Gakkō daisan nenpō* 東京開成学校第三年報, March 1876), which announced these developments, spoke of constructing, in parallel with departments in the natural sciences, departments of *bungaku*, human sciences, history, and so on.²⁹ The “bungaku” in question presumably carried the same meaning as in the document referred to above.

Tokyo University, inaugurated in 1877 after meeting this demand for expansion and merging with the earlier School of Medicine, was composed of four faculties (Law, Science, Medicine, and Letters [*bungaku*]). The “Department of Doctrine” provided for by the Daigaku Kisoku of 1870 had been dropped. The Faculty of Letters was divided into two sections, or departments, covering (1) history, philosophy, and political science, and (2) Japanese and Chinese *bungaku*. In other words, the first was devoted to Western, and the second to Japanese and Chinese studies. Subjects taught included English, French, and German; the history of Europe and the United States; philosophy;

25 *Tōkyō Teikoku Daigaku gojūnen shi*, p. 64.

26 *Tōkyō Teikoku Daigaku gojūnen shi*, p. 142.

27 *Tōkyō Teikoku Daigaku gojūnen shi*, pp. 214-32.

28 *Tōkyō Teikoku Daigaku gojūnen shi*, pp. 257-66. See also Ōkubo Toshiaki 1943, pp. 222-25.

29 Ōkubo Toshiaki 1943, p. 229. In “‘Bungaku’ no yakugo no tanjō to Nitchū bungaku” (p. 334), Suzuki Shūji noted the appearance of the term “bungaku,” glossed as “literature” in *furigana*, in a table of the curriculum of Kaisei Gakkō printed in *Monbushō hōkoku* 文部省報告 (Ministry of Education Report) no. 21. He concluded that public use of “bungaku” to translate “literature” began with the adoption of this practice by the Ministry of Education in 1875.

political science; economics, English literature; Japanese bungaku; Chinese bungaku; and so on.³⁰

The first section (department) of the Faculty of Letters seems to have been patterned after the German “Philosophische Fakultät,” which covered, under the rubric of “philosophy,” such fields as political science, history, aesthetics, and literary art. However, the word “philosophy” did not appear either in its name or in the name of the larger faculty to which it belonged. In the light of Nishi Amane’s example 3, above (Chapter 4), it seems likely that learning was connected with “letters” and documents bearing on the area of the humanities.

Naturally, the “bungaku” of “English bungaku” as a teaching subject was a direct translation of “literature,” as already mentioned. At this point in time Tokyo University had three separate elements associated by their title with “bungaku”: the Faculty of Letters (Bungakubu), the English literature (*Ei bungaku*) curriculum, and the Department of Japanese and Chinese Literature (Wakan Bungakuka).

The Department of Japanese and Chinese Literature combined the Departments of Doctrine (*kyōka* 教科) and Humanities (*bunka* 文科) stipulated in the Daigaku Kisoku of 1870. It covered “Japanese” (*wagaku* 和学) or “Imperial Studies” (*kōgaku* 皇学) on the one hand, and Confucian studies on the other. The “bungaku” in the department’s title therefore seems to carry the sort of meaning that had become traditional in Chinese and Japanese. In other words, Tokyo University’s Faculty of Letters can be said to have embraced, or even reconciled, the median meaning of “literature” in Europe with the time-honored concept of “bungaku” in Japan and China.

It is worth noting in this context the appearance of a new term, “Japanese bungaku,” as a topic of instruction. It is under this rubric that, for the first time in the Japanese higher education system, the list of reading required by the former Department of Doctrine (*Kojiki*, *Nihon shoki*, *Man’yōshū*, *Kogo shūi* 古語拾遺, *Norito* 祝詞, *Senmyō* 宣命) was combined with that required by the former Department of Humanities (*Ōkagami* 大鏡, *Masukagami* 増鏡, *Imakagami* 今鏡, *Makura no sōshi* 枕草子, *Genji monogatari* 源氏物語, and so on).³¹

This emergence into general use of the term “Japanese literature,” as a counterpart to “English literature,” “French literature,” etc., follows its appearance in the 1873 Shinbunshi Jōrei 新聞紙条例 rules for newspaper usage, in the sense of “science, art, and poetry” (*gakugei shiika* 学芸詩歌). The latter meaning certainly embraces the full range in which the word was then accepted in Japan, but in the Tokyo University case that meaning has been extended to include even the classics, and has in addition been prefaced by the words “Chinese” or “Japanese.” Elsewhere, as already noted, Fukuzawa Yukichi in *Bunmeiron no gairyaku* referred to *kōgaku* (imperial studies) as *wagaku* (Japanese studies); while Fukuchi Ōchi and Taguchi Ukichi, each from his own standpoint, wrote of *Nihon bungaku* (Japanese bungaku).

The notion embodied in the title of the “Department of Japanese Bungaku” corresponds to the European idea of “humanities,” belles lettres, or “polite literature”: that is to say, to “literature” in its median sense. Thus the term “bungaku,” which referred to Confucian studies and the practice of Chinese poetry and prose, acquired this European meaning and so gave rise to the concept of “Japanese bungaku” as well. At this stage “Japanese bungaku” was no doubt strongly associated

30 *Tōkyō Daigaku hyakunen shi: Bukyoku shi ichi*, p. 414.

31 *Tōkyō Teikoku Daigaku gojūnen shi*, p. 70.

with the notions of belles lettres or “polite literature” and therefore excluded such popular literary genres as *yomihon* or *gesaku* fiction, or kabuki and jōruri scripts. If so, then the idea of “Nihon bungaku” that appears in Fukuchi Ōchi’s “Nihon bungaku no fushin o tan-zu” corresponds to that of Taguchi Ukichi in *Nihon kaika shōshi*, in which Taguchi used the term to cover everything from Confucian studies to *gesaku* fiction. In addition, the influence of the so-called “imperial view of history” (*kōkoku shikan*) encouraged including within the same idea the domain of myth (exemplified by *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki*), which the European conception of the humanities would have excluded. Thus there was created at this juncture a conception different from the European idea of the humanities, belles lettres, etc., which stood in opposition to that of theology.

Among the academic departments mentioned above, that of history was dropped in 1879 for lack of students. Then, in 1881, the Faculty of Letters was restructured into three departments: that of Philosophy, that of Political Science and Economics (*rizaigaku* 理財学, later *keizaigaku* 経済学), and that of Japanese and Chinese Bungaku. Thus political science and economics achieved independence from philosophy. Finally, Tokyo University President Katō Hiroyuki 加藤弘之 (1836-1916), whose aim was to reform scholarship in Japan, achieved his goal with the establishment in 1882 of a Department of Classics (Koten Kōshūka 古典講習科) that offered three-year training in the classical works of China and Japan.³²

The establishment of this department is an extreme expression of the movement to reconstruct Japanese “tradition,” and it represents the high point of what Fukuzawa Yukichi mocked ten years later, in his “Kyōiku no hōshin henka no kekka,” when he wrote of “ancient, so-called great Confucian scholars” being appointed to teach in schools. Katō Hiroyuki’s proposals are said to have been carried out from late 1879 on.³³ This was also the year in which Nishimura Shigeki 西村茂樹, an official of the Ministry of Education, proposed compiling *Koji ruien* 古事類苑. Perhaps both initiatives were influenced by Kyōgaku Seishi, which was promulgated in the same year. Or perhaps Kyōgaku Seishi itself was promulgated in response to a tide of reaction against excessive westernization. The goal of Katō’s initiative, fostering the development of scholars thoroughly grounded in classical texts, complemented that of Nishimura Shigeki, which was to present vital classical materials in an orderly fashion. Both aimed to make the Japanese people’s cultural “tradition” the core of national pride and to lay the vital foundation for forming, through the process of education, a national cultural identity.

In 1882, Katō Hiroyuki published *Jinken shinsetsu* 人權新説, an essay on human rights, in which he criticized the Christian idea of natural human rights and introduced a Spencerian view of social evolution: selection based on untrammelled competition between living creatures, at the level of instinct, that propels human society toward an ideal state. (Note, however, that in Spencer’s later years, when his debate with T.H. Huxley deepened his doubts about material civilization, he stressed the importance of what he called “savage survival” and advocated a gradualistic

32 *Tōkyō Daigaku hyakunen shi: Bukyoku shi ichi*, pp. 415-16.

33 *Tōkyō Teikoku Daigaku gojūnen shi*, p. 721.

anarchism.)³⁴ Katō's essay provoked Christian thinkers to vigorous debate.³⁵ His progressive view of history seems at first glance to contradict the emphasis on tradition in his policy toward education and learning. However, this is mere appearance. He knew full well that the Western powers promoted the development of their national might by tirelessly strengthening their peoples' cultural identity, and he considered scholars well versed in the classics to be indispensable to this enterprise, for which no schematic opposition between modernization and traditionalism could account. The Western powers themselves inspired his traditionalism, the purpose of which was to form a modern nation-state able to resist them.

However, the attempt to realize this project in Meiji Japan brought about a situation unlike the one prevailing in Western Europe. There, the aim was to break down the Latin-based body of learning shared by medieval intellectuals and to form a cultural identity based on a "national literature" in each country's vernacular language. Germany—the country where, in the 1770s, the concept of "national literature" first arose—nurtured a strong feeling of resistance against the French idea of *civilisation* and favored the notion of *kultur*, which emphasized ethnic and spiritual values. (In mid-Meiji Japan, newspapers and magazines frequently used the word *bunmei* 文明 as the counterpart of *civilisation*, and apart from pronouncements by intellectuals familiar with German philosophy, examples of the use of the word *bunka* 文化 (culture) are extremely rare.³⁶ It seems to occur somewhat more frequently after about the mid-1890s.) However, the very conflict between the two conceptions presupposed both European superiority over other regions of the world, and a thoroughly eurocentric view.

In Japan, which was being forced to form a nation-state under pressure from the Western powers, there were frequent conflicts over the proper path to take toward the goal of forming a national culture. Even earlier, of course, in the late Tokugawa period, there had occurred the clash between partisans of "opening the country" (*kaikoku* 開国) and "expelling the barbarians" (*jōi* 攘夷). However, the conflict over national culture was more complex. There was, first of all, the clash between the champions of westernization, who hoped to derive a national culture from the cultural achievement imported from the West, and those who preferred to preserve and nurture tradition. Next, there were two views on "tradition" itself. The first, inspired by the modern nationalism of Western Europe, urged pursuit of what one might call a pure nation-state, while the second saw as fundamental the opposition between "Eastern civilization" and "Western civilization." The latter opposed eurocentrism with asiacentrism. In extreme cases this view gave rise to debates over how properly to evaluate the legacy of "Chinese civilization," the opposition then being between asianism and pure japanism. Perhaps the partisans of pure japanism can be said to have

34 On Spencer's debate with T.H. Huxley see Watt 1979. On the influence Spencer's gradualistic anarchism exerted on Japanese political figures, see Kaneko Kentarō's 金子堅太郎 (1853-1942) eulogy of Spencer in *Taiyō* 太陽, vol. 10, no. 4.

35 On the changes in Katō's thought and his reception of evolutionism, see Suzuki Sadami 2002b.

36 According to Nishikawa Nagao's *Chikyū jidai no minzoku=bunka riron*, *bunka* as a translation of *kultur* first came into use in the late 1880s, but it did not become widespread until the Taishō period (p. 84). "As far as I know," he wrote, "the first Japanese correctly to grasp the German concept of *bunka* and to incorporate it accurately into an intellectual program was Kuga Katsunan 陸羯南"; and he cited an example from Kuga's essay "Nihon bunmei shinpo no kiro" 日本文明進歩の岐路 dated June 1888 (pp. 96-97).

espoused modern European state nationalism. (However, Meiji asianism also shared a great deal with nationalism and commonly upheld human universality as an ideal.) Katō Hiroyuki's initial proposal was for a department devoted to the study of Japanese works only, and study of Chinese works was added only later.³⁷

Katō's Department of Classics had only two chances to admit students before it was abolished, for reasons that remain unclear. Nonetheless, among its graduates were such men as Konakamura Gishō 小中村義象 (1861-1923), Hagino Yoshiyuki 萩野由之 (1860-1924), and Ochiai Naobumi 落合直文 (1861-1903), who later on were active in the academic field of *kokubungaku* 国文学 (Japanese *bungaku*) and in the movement to reform *tanka* poetry.

Tsubouchi Shōyō, who in September 1878 had entered the first of two departments included in the Faculty of Letters (the one devoted to Western studies), moved in 1883, as a consequence of the restructuring just described, to the new Department of Political Science and Economics, from which he graduated. Fifty years later he quoted as follows a passage from his diary of the time, to which he appended a comment.

30th. We graduating students had our party at Kamekiyo in Yanagibashi. There were over thirty of us. (Note: We were all from the Faculty of Letters, including the Departments of Philosophy and History. I was in the Department of Political Science and Economics. At the time there was no department of pure *bungaku*.)³⁸

He had apparently forgotten the Department of Japanese and Chinese *Bungaku*, although that department's curriculum was indeed, no doubt, far removed from his notion "pure literature." He had in mind such later departments as those of English Literature or Japanese *Bungaku*.

The restructuring of Tokyo University continued. In 1885 the department from which Shōyō had graduated was moved to the Faculty of Law, the Department of Japanese and Chinese *Bungaku* was divided into two, and the Faculty of Letters thus came to cover Philosophy, Japanese *Bungaku*, and Chinese *Bungaku*.³⁹ Thus the structure of the German Philosophische Fakultät vanished completely. (The Faculty of Economics became independent of the Faculty of Law in 1919.)

5.2.2 The Imperial University and Its "College of Letters"

In 1886 a decree (Teikoku Daigaku Rei 帝国大学令) renamed Tokyo University The Imperial University. It also redefined the institution as a composite of "Colleges" (Bunka Daigaku 分科大学) covering the fields of Law (Hōka Daigaku 法科大学), Medicine, Science, and Engineering. In addition, a "College of Letters" (Bunka Daigaku 文科大学) corresponded to the former Faculty of Letters.⁴⁰ It included four departments: Philosophy, Japanese *Bungaku*, Chinese *Bungaku*,

37 *Tōkyō Teikoku Daigaku gojūnen shi*, p. 722.

38 Tsubouchi 1967, p. 16.

39 *Tōkyō Daigaku hyakumen shi: Bukyoku shi ichi*, p. 416.

40 In 1890 the Imperial University absorbed the Tokyo School of Agriculture and Forestry (Tōkyō Nōrin Gakkō 東京農林学校). The old Kaisei Gakkō had already included a Department of Engineering (the future University of Engineering [Kōka Daigaku 工科大学]). This inclusion of faculties

and Philology (Hakugengakuka 博言学科), to which History, English Literature, and German Literature were added in September of the following year. In 1888 Japanese History, hitherto taught in the Department of Chinese and Japanese Bungaku, was moved to the Department of History, and in 1889 it achieved independence under the title “Department of National History” (Kokushika 国史科). The Department of Japanese Bungaku (Wabungakuka 和文学科) was renamed Department of National Bungaku (Kokubunka 国文科), while the Department of Chinese Bungaku (Kanbungakuka 漢文学科) was renamed Kangakuka 漢学科.⁴¹ Thus Japanese “bungaku” and “history” became institutionally distinct. In England this new “College of Letters” would have been identified with “Language and Literature” and in France with “Lettres et Humanité.” In 1890 it acquired a new Department of French Literature.⁴²

This restructuring prompted Isoda Kōichi to date the origins of “bungaku” in its modern meaning to about 1887. Certainly, this is when everyone at the Imperial University (except those associated with Chinese studies) came to accept this modern, Western sense of the word as a matter of course. What they meant, however, was the “polite literature” adopted as a standard for the word by Kobori Keiichirō. Meanwhile, the intellectuals and critics of the time used “bungaku” in yet another sense.

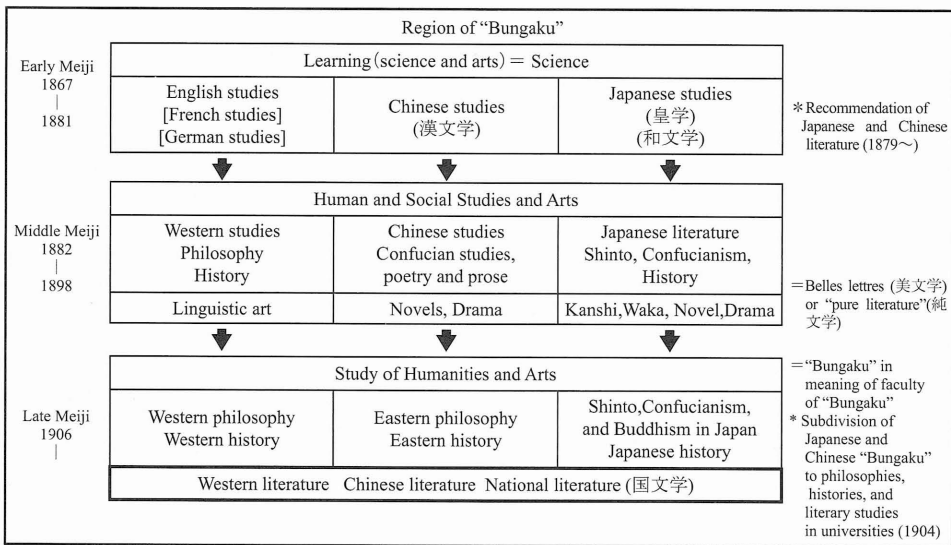


Figure 13 The Transition of the Concept of “Bungaku” (Meiji Period)

Before discussing that issue, however, it will be worthwhile to outline the evolution of the “College of Letters” in later years. In 1893 the Imperial University adopted the lecture (*kōza* 講座) system current at universities in Europe and the United States. The College of Letters offered the following twenty-six courses of lectures:

associated with the technology of production was not to be found in the general coverage universities of Europe or the United States, for in the West science and technology were widely separated, technology being entrusted to more specialized institutions.

41 *Tōkyō Daigaku hyakunen shi: Bukyoku shi ichi*, pp. 418-19.

42 *Tōkyō Daigaku hyakunen shi: Bukyoku shi ichi*, p. 419.

Japanese language (*kokugogaku* 国語学), Japanese bungaku (*kokubungaku*), Japanese history (*kokushi* 国史) (4 courses); Chinese studies, Chinese language (*Shinagogaku* 支那語学) (3 courses); History, Geography (2 courses); Philosophy, History of Philosophy (2 courses); Psychology, Ethics, Logic (2 courses); Sociology, Education, Aesthetics, Philology, English, English literature, German, German literature, French, French literature (1 course each).⁴³

The founding of Kyoto Imperial University in 1887 made it necessary to add “Tokyo” to the name of the first Imperial University. Then, in 1904, the latter’s College of Letters was restructured again into the following three departments:

Department of Philosophy (philosophy, Chinese philosophy, Indian philosophy, psychology, ethics, religion, aesthetics, education, sociology)
Department of History (Japanese history, East Asian history, Western history)
Department of Bungaku (Japanese, Chinese, Sanskrit, English, German, French literature, and linguistics)

This restructuring broke up Chinese studies into the separate fields of philosophy, history, and literature. It seems also to have been highly significant with respect to the designation “bungaku,” since distinguished in this way from *tetsugaku* (philosophy) and *shigaku* (history), the term no doubt encouraged a similar, more widespread acceptance later on.

The College of Letters of Tokyo Imperial University went through many subsequent changes. In 1919 it was renamed the Faculty of Letters; the Departments of Philosophy, History, and Bungaku were abolished; and in their place nineteen new departments gained their autonomy.⁴⁴ However, after World War II the earlier three-department structure was revived. Then, in 1963, the faculty was restructured again into four groups (*rui* 類): Group One (Cultural Studies [*Bunkagaku* 文化学]), Group Two (History), Group Three (Languages, Bungaku), and Group Four (Psychology, Sociology).⁴⁵ My impression is that, even after that, the old tripartite division into philosophy, history, and bungaku persisted for a considerable period of time among teaching staff and students.

5.2.3 Two Levels of “Bungaku”

The introduction of the Western classification of learning into Japanese universities, and its acceptance there, transformed “Confucian studies” (*jugaku* 儒学) into “Chinese studies” (*kangaku* 漢学) and thence into “Chinese bungaku” (*kanbungaku* 漢文学), and established also the new notion of “Japanese bungaku” (*wabungaku* 和文学). It also established the idea of “bungaku” as a field distinct from philosophy and history. However, the process did not go smoothly. In particular, the traditional classification survived for quite a long time before the field of Chinese bungaku was

43 *Tōkyō Daigaku hyakunen shi: Bukyoku shi ichi*, p. 420.

44 *Tōkyō Daigaku hyakunen shi: Bukyoku shi ichi*, pp. 423-24.

45 *Tōkyō Daigaku hyakunen shi: Bukyoku shi ichi*, pp. 460-64.

broken down at last into philosophy, history, and literature, perhaps because of the popular revival of Chinese studies after 1877.

This survival of the traditional classification was due not to the “inertia of tradition,” of which Tsubouchi Shōyō complained, but to a rally or recovery of tradition. In fact, it is attributable less to this apparent rally than to a policy designed to shape and establish a cultural identity for the modern nation-state. The historical view according to which a “drop Asia and embrace Europe” (*datsua nyūō* 脱亜入欧) policy was pursued throughout the Meiji period is fundamentally in error, at least with respect to the history of thought and culture.

The language used for the university structure also reveals the terminology used by teaching staff and students, who in Meiji times came exclusively from the elite. The diffusion of their writings brought their ideas and concepts into general use. Major changes in ideas and concepts also accompanied the restructurings mentioned, and meanwhile the worlds of critics and journalists employed terminology of their own. Generally speaking, “bungaku” was current throughout the Meiji period in multiple meanings, the diversity of which cannot be grasped by examining university structure alone.

The term “bungaku,” which in the Tokugawa period had meant learning in general as well as “letters” (*bunshō*), came after the introduction of Western learning to cover above all, in addition to “letters” as before, the humanistic learning of the West. Nishi Amane’s *Hyakugaku renkan* and Fukuchi Ōchi’s “Nihon bungaku no fushin o tan-zu” make this clear. This usage seems to have become fairly widespread. For example, one reads the following in Suehiro Tetchō’s 末広鉄腸 *Setchūbai* 雪中梅, an example of many political novels supporting the Freedom and Human Rights Movement, and set in the Japan of a century hence: “It is when education pervades the whole country and bungaku flourishes that a nation surpasses all others.”⁴⁶ It is unclear whether this use of “bungaku” extends to include science and technology, but at least it is not the same as the “bungaku” of Tokyo University’s “Faculty of Letters.” However, it is also true that this use of “bungaku” to refer to elementary and middle school education as a whole was gradually abandoned.

As the practice of including fields like physics, chemistry, biology, and engineering under the rubric *rigaku* 理学 (physical science) spread, the general field of “bungaku” came to stand in opposition to it. This is the “bungaku” that appears in Nishi Amane’s “Nihon Bungaku Kaisha sōshi no hōhō,” and it remained in use until a relatively late date. An example appears in *Ren’ ai mondō* 恋愛問答 (A Dialogue on Love, ca. 1897), written down by Gotō Chūgai 後藤宙外 (1866-1938) from talks by Ozaki Kōyō.

I would like to say concerning women that they can do without pastime accomplishments and sewing; what they *must* have is education.... What I mean by education, though, is neither *rigaku* nor *bungaku*, but instead homemaker education (*katei kyōiku* 家庭教育). They should be able to write a decent letter in not too unfortunate a hand and to be able to read a newspaper without *furigana*.⁴⁷

46 *Meiji bungaku zenshū* 明治文学全集, vol. 6 (*Meiji seiji shōsetsu shū*, vol. 2), Chikuma Shobō, 1967, p. 113.

47 Gotō Chūgai and Ihara 1958, p. 60.

Needless to say, *rigaku* and *bungaku* in this passage differ in meaning from the same words as they occur in the title of a university faculty. It may be fair to say that the contemporary terms *bunka* 文科 and *rika* 理科 represent a survival of this earlier usage.

A more restricted notion of “bungaku” than the one just discussed refers to the field of learning and to the teaching curriculum covered by a university Faculty of Letters, to the exclusion of Law and Economics. For example *Kokumin no tomo* 国民之友, the magazine founded by Tokutomi Sohō 徳富蘇峰 (1863-1957) in 1887 as an organ of his new publishing house, Min’yūsha 民友社, described itself on the cover as offering “comment on politics, society, the economy, and bungaku.” “Bungaku” refers in this case to research, criticism, education, and so on in such humanities fields as philosophy, intellectual history, religion, history, the linguistic arts, and languages. The “bungaku” in the titles of *Dōshisha bungaku zasshi* 同志社文学雜誌 (founded in 1887) and *Waseda bungaku* 早稲田文学 (founded in 1891) covers roughly the same area.

“Bungaku” in the narrow sense (as distinguished from philosophy, religion, history, etc.) also has a place in this schema, naturally under the influence of the modern view of literature current in Europe. It presupposes an idea of “polite literature” centered on the linguistic arts, the flower of the civilization of the nation-state, which then gives rise to “bungaku” as an academic field involving teaching and study of each country’s vernacular literature. However, it is worth noting that this latter conception of “bungaku” is fairly vague. It is supported by the notions of belles lettres, of high-class literature centered on poetry, and of the humanities. In particular, it underlies the concept of each country’s “history of literature” (*bungaku shi* 文学史), the material for which is the totality of written works (*bunshō* 文章) deemed worthy of study as the pride of that country’s people. For example, that is roughly the meaning of “literature” in the case of “English literature” or “French literature.” This meaning of “bungaku” does not appear clearly in Japanese dictionaries, but it continues nonetheless to play a strikingly important role.

In contrast, Isoda Kōichi used the modern concept of “bungaku” to refer to all the linguistic arts devoted above all to fiction. He suggested that this usage gained acceptance with the founding of such departments as those of English literature. In reality, however, the content of instruction in the Department of English Literature, while centered on the linguistic arts, frequently also covered works agreed to be of outstanding intellectual value or of particular historical importance. Discussions of the rise and acceptance of the modern concept of “bungaku” have consistently ignored this issue.

Needless to say, the idea of linguistic art that arises from belles lettres narrowly defined (i.e., of “literature” in the narrowest sense) presupposes the notion of “art” (*geijutsu* 芸術). In short, it amounts to situating “bungaku” as one field of “art,” among others that include painting, sculpture, music, dance, and drama. (In this regard the status of the crafts and of architecture remains for the time being unclear.) This signifies a complete transformation of the Tokugawa-period “bungaku,” intimately linked as it was to Confucianism and thus to learning as the idea was then understood, to a field of “art” as a concept parallel to that of learning. This major change, which can be said to have begun roughly in the late 1870s, is the subject of the following chapter. It certainly did not occur all at once. As we have seen, the concept of “bungaku” implicit in the title “Faculty of Letters” (Bungakubu) held sway for a long time, supported by the university structure itself and

by the revival of “bungaku” in its traditional sense. Under these circumstances, “bungaku” in the narrow sense of linguistic art could only acquire respectability, and the strength finally to win out, only as the outcome of a fairly tortuous process.

Failure to follow through on the process leading from the first appearance of “bungaku” in this narrow sense to its final acceptance would make it impossible to account for the Meiji usage of “bungaku,” for all the varying positions taken in the struggle over the concept, and for all the works to which this struggle gave rise. Chapters Six and Seven, below, as well as the opening section of Chapter Eight, will examine and analyze this process. As has already been noted, however, at the stage by which anyone with an education at all beyond middle school had come to accept this modern, narrow meaning of “bungaku,” the usage of the word still retained its many layered character. Thus questions concerning the fundamental meaning of “bungaku” continued to emerge in a great variety of forms.

5.3 The Meiji View of Language and Literacy

5.3.1 Conceptions of “the National Language” and “Unification of the Spoken and Written Language”

In parallel with the European notion of “polite literature,” the Meiji concept of “bungaku” had a broader meaning that more or less covered the humanities as a whole, including philosophy, history, and a narrower one centered on the linguistic arts. Thus it had different levels. Relevant in this connection were three factors: the reception of Western civilization and culture, the central medium of which was English; the revival of “Chinese learning”; and the reappraisal of the tradition of “Japanese bungaku.” What, then, can be said of the way the “national language,” fundamental to all of these, was actually conceived at the time?

To begin with, ideas about this language were inevitably diverse, and they often conflicted. They can be grouped under four positions. (1) The call for uncompromising modernization and westernization, represented by such men as Mori Arinori 森有礼 (1847-1889), who advocated abolishing Japanese completely. (2) The call for the creation of a new national language. Ueda Kazutoshi 上田万年 (1867-1937), who returned to Japan in 1895 after studying philology in Germany, argued from the standpoint of modern linguistics for the adoption of popular colloquial as the national language and rejected the *kanbun yomikudashi* 漢文読み下し written style, derived directly from Chinese. It is worth noting, however, that Ueda developed his arguments in that very style, in accordance with contemporary practice for intellectual essays. The call to abolish the use of Chinese characters and to write entirely in kana is somewhat similar, in the sense that it comes close to advocating sole reliance on the Roman alphabet (*rōmaji*). Perhaps the call for exclusive use of *rōmaji*, too, therefore belongs under this heading. Positions one and two are excessively idealistic, considering that everyday, colloquial Japanese, too, included a great many “Chinese words” (*kango* 漢語). (3) Insistence on the greater age of the tradition of the Japanese “national language” (*kokugo* 国語), compared to that of the languages of Europe. Representative expressions of this position can be found in *Nihon bungaku shi* 日本文学史 (1890) by Mikami Sanji 三上参次 and Takatsu Kuwasaburō 高津楯三郎, and *Wabungaku shi* 和文学史 (1892) by Ōwada

Takeki 大和田建樹. However, these works attribute a high value to kanbun. Positions one to three present many problems for the project of catching up quickly with the intellectual level of Western Europe. Moreover, as already noted, the preponderance of English language study in the early Meiji period gave way in mid-Meiji to the greater popularity of studying kanbun. (4) Insistence on the tradition of East Asian civilization. A representative example is that of Miyake Setsurei 三宅雪嶺 (1860-1945), who argued in the inaugural issue of *Taiyō* (1895) that instead of abolishing the use of Chinese characters, it would be preferable to require study of their changing readings. At the time, Miyake was the head of Seikyōsha 政教社, which advocated “preservation of the national essence” (*kokusui hozon shugi* 国粹保存主義)—a position of veneration for the tradition of East Asian civilization that can be fairly said to contain the seeds of an asianism squarely opposed to the influence of the West. These four positions on improvement of the national language can be summarized as advocating, respectively, “westernization,” “modernization,” “traditionalism,” and “anti-modernization.” (These four fundamental orientations are far more useful for analyzing Meiji culture than previously proposed bipolar oppositions between “modernization,” i.e. “westernization” and “conservatism,” i.e. “traditionalism.” For example, although Rokumeikan culture may represent “westernization,” i.e. “modernization,” the modern emperor system can be called a compromise between “westernization” (constitutionalism) and “traditionalism” (the view of Japanese history as governed by a single line of emperors, unbroken and eternal); Meiji romanticism as a combination of “westernization” and “anti-modernization”; and “preservation of the national essence” as a fusion of “traditionalism” with “anti-modernization.”)

Apart from this debate over the proper direction for the national language, a powerful movement in favor of unifying spoken and written Japanese (*genbun itchi* 言文一致) arose in Bakumatsu times and continued throughout the Meiji period. It has long been seen as analogous to the creation of a standard written language on the basis of each country’s vernacular in the course of the European vernacular revolution. However, Japanese had been written since early times with Chinese characters used for phonetic value rather than for meaning, and the *kanbun yomikudashi* style was very old as well. Of course, this corresponds to what linguists call a “social dialect” (*shakai hōgen* 社会方言) and does not deserve the name of “vernacular revolution.” If the standard is to be a written language based on the vernacular, then that language is the one that came into widespread use in the late middle ages and after. At a somewhat lower level, examples of direct transcription of vernacular conversation appear from the late seventeenth century on. The popular culture that flowered in the Tokugawa period favored parallel use of several styles. In other words, a *genbun itchi* movement to unify spoken and written Japanese had already occurred, although without relegating kanbun merely to one sector of the culture, and in that sense one can say that no “vernacular revolution” ever occurred in Japan.

Advocacy of *genbun itchi*, which began in Bakumatsu times and lasted through the Meiji period, emphasized various issues. The first was the need to use a plain and simple style in government regulations and official reports. (This opinion existed within the Tokugawa government itself. Official proclamations of the time were couched in a bureaucratic style of Japanese known as *sōrōbun* 候文, which employed a large number of Chinese characters; the counterpart documents of the Meiji government adopted the easier *kanbun yomikudashi* style. (Perhaps it was Meiji government policy to encourage, in a restorationist mood, a written style closer to that employed

under the ancient *ritsuryō* system, which was, at the same time, easier to read.) The second was the need to adopt for editorials and similar materials the style of an orally delivered lecture. (This position was taken by the members of Meirokusha 明六社. In actual fact, diverse examples of this style appear here and there in *Taiyō* and elsewhere.) Then there was a majority in favor of removing *kanbun*-like expressions and difficult Chinese words from ordinary writing, supplemented by calls to pursue this theme in national language policy and education (Ueda Kazutoshi, Haga Yaichi), and to avoid using the highly ornamented “elegant style” (*gabun* 雅文) in fiction (Yamada Bimyō 山田美妙). The debate on the issue was therefore complex and difficult to reduce to a single theme. The introduction of a new writing system and of Western rhetoric complicated matters even further.

5.3.2 Literacy and Style in the Meiji Era

The penetration of standard Japanese (*hyōjungo* 標準語) as a matter of national language policy and the parallel development of a simplified written language—*genbun itchi*, if that is what this process is to be called—began in the Meiji period and reached completion roughly in the early postwar Shōwa period. An Army Ministry survey of twenty-year old recruits, undertaken in early Shōwa, tested them for reading ability at four levels: early years of ordinary elementary school (*jinjō shōgakkō* 尋常小学校), ordinary elementary school graduate, advanced elementary school (*kōtō* 高等 *shōgakkō*) graduate, and middle school graduate. In later years the levels of high school graduate and university graduate were added as well. Broadly speaking, the object of the survey was to determine ability or inability to read normal Japanese, as well as reading knowledge, if any, of Chinese. No doubt the writing style favored by the new Meiji government, and the post-1877 revival of Chinese studies, exerted a considerable influence on the choice of these criteria.

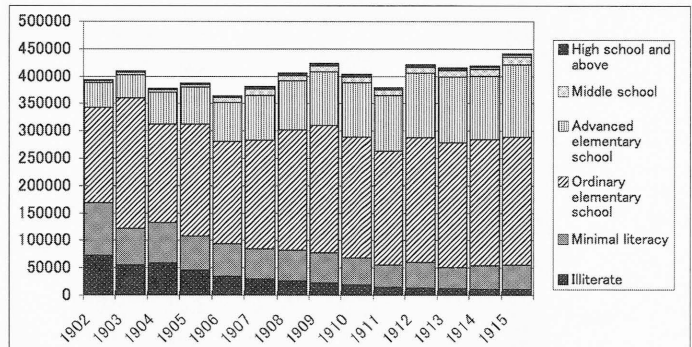


Figure 14 Literacy of Adults in Japan, 1902-1915
(from a survey of the Ministry of War)

*These statistics include people who graduated from school or those who were self-educated at each level. Omitted are those who entered elite military units. The data may have been slightly manipulated in response to pressure from the Ministry of Education.

According to the survey (see Figure 14), the number of recruits with a knowledge level corresponding to that of an ordinary elementary school graduate reached 60-80 percent in 1915. From roughly this time on, the majority of the population apparently achieved a respectable level of literacy. It is therefore possible to surmise that this is also the time when the population came to share a certain general level of education.

However, middle school graduates and above had received training in reading *kanbun*, and the dual-language character of school instruction therefore continued as before, as an extension of the mid-Meiji enthusiasm for teaching *kanbun* as well as English. In short, Meiji intellectuals had reading and writing knowledge of three languages: English (or German or French), Chinese

(kanbun), and Japanese.

Among persons with a higher level of education there is a visible tendency to employ more and more Chinese terms (*kango* 漢語). However, this is not a criterion of written style. A given text approaches plain Japanese style as the number of lexical, grammatical, and rhetorical features peculiar to kanbun is reduced. This sort of change (for example, the transition from the sentence-final *nari* or *tari* verbs typical of *yomikudashi* to the plain Japanese *da* or *de aru*) progressed gradually, in a process that can fairly be called one of simplification. Above, I discussed this phenomenon in the case of the general coverage magazines. With respect to newspapers, in the early Taishō period *nari/tari* and *da/de aru* both occurred, but in mid- and late Taishō the format was unified to *da/de aru*.

However, the people at large used neither. In about 1900, Masaoka Shiki's 正岡子規 haiku magazine *Hototogisu* ホトトギス solicited "diary" (*nikki* 日記) essays from readers. The responses, which came from people in all walks of life, were printed almost verbatim. An examination of them shows that contributors with roughly an elementary school education employed above all *suru* or *shita* (see Figure 15), while the more educated ones mixed in the *nari* and *tari* typical of *kanbun yomikudashi*.

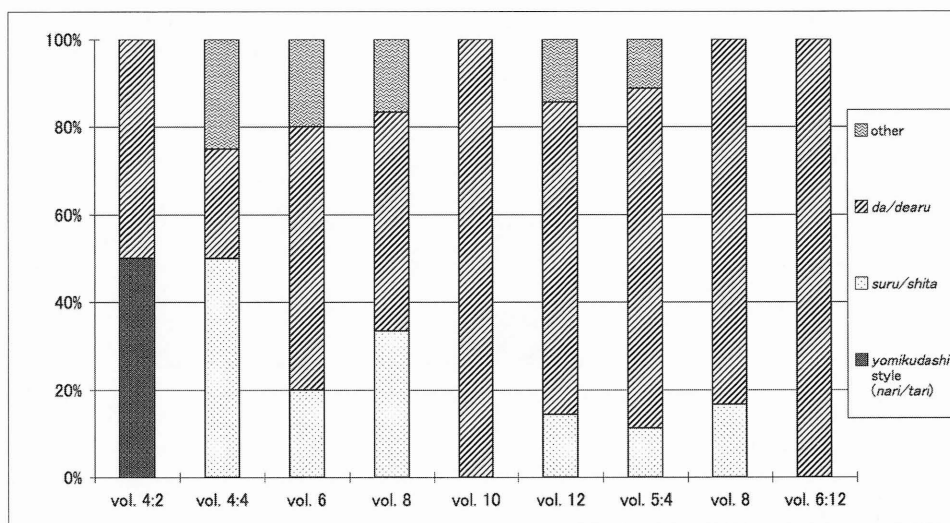


Figure 15 Literary Style Appearing in "Weekly Diaries" in *Hototogisu*, 1900-1901

In sum, the *kanbun yomikudashi* style, which had been normal for editorials and other such material in the mid-Meiji period, was standardized in late Meiji and Taishō times to the plain style (*jōtai* 常体) current today. However, this change represented only one sector of the Japanese language. Sentence-final verb forms differed widely from one regional dialect to another, and despite the encroachment of standard Japanese, ordinary people used neither *da* nor *de aru* in the course of their daily lives. It is likely that most spoke in sentences from which *suru*, *shita*, etc. had been dropped. Moreover, although the tendency to adopt normal Japanese in informal essays (*zuihitsu* 随筆類) was strong, and the use of the *desu/masu* style in letters increased, the *sōrō* 候 mentioned above survived for a long time.

Discussions of this nature seldom take up the survival of dialectal forms. This survival is not

the real issue, however. Rather, the simplification of the national language can hardly be said to have been achieved as long as the written language remained broken up into separate domains, for instance that of letter-writing. Thanks to the spread of this phenomenon (one resisted in Tokugawa times by the gradual centralization of bakufu power and by each feudal domain's policy of fostering the strength of its own people), the literacy level of the population certainly rose, although it is thought to have declined toward the end of the period. However, the language never became unified or consistent. Instead, each genre of writing became distinct from all the others, leading to such compartmentalization that despite this high level of literacy, simplification of the language as a whole seems to have made little progress. The phenomenon is surely peculiar to the evolution of the modern Japanese written language.

With respect to differences in writing style, there probably were relatively few among the people at large. However, women brought up to appreciate waka poetry studied the women's literature of the Heian period, and many of them therefore used a pure Japanese style (*wabun tai* 和文体). The stylistic requirements of each written genre remained quite sharply defined, and when women began to progress in the early Taishō period, most of them, like Yosano Akiko 与謝野晶子 (1878-1942), wrote their opinion pieces in the *da/de aru* style. One might add that approaches to spelling (*hyōki* 表記) seem to have become extremely diverse in the time period centered roughly on 1920. Notes and diaries by higher school students from around that time include some written with new characters and new kana spellings very close to those prescribed by the post-World War II spelling reform, including the use of the small *tsu* つ, suggesting that many found it natural simply to transcribe actual pronunciation. If published, however, such materials were printed using the old characters and the old kana spelling. Thus, as long as more such manuscripts remain undiscovered and unanalyzed, it will be impossible to determine from print alone how people then conceived the matter of spelling. Moreover, the rapid increase in number and diversity of magazines led to lapses in copy editing, with the result that one finds many instances of incorrect use of old characters and old kana. The decisive shift to the new kana spelling occurred after World War II, but the custom of printing phonetically transcribed words using the normal-sized *tsu* つ character to indicate a doubled consonant sound (rather than the smaller one adopted for the purpose in recent times) lingered on, and modern spelling did not become fully accepted until about 1955.⁴⁸

48 See Suzuki Sadami 2005a and 2005b.