

## ***Between Asian Nationalism and Western Internationalism: Shimazaki Tôson's Participation in the International PEN Club in Buenos Aires in 1936***

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### 1.

In 1936, Japan for the first time took part in the International PEN Club Congress, held in Buenos Aires. The the Japan PEN Club was established the previous year, on November 26, 1935, under the mediation and arrangement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Shimazaki Tôson (島崎藤村 1872-1943), the first president of the Nippon PEN Club, expressed his hope that Japanese writers would be liberated from the long isolation in which they had been condemned. Shimazaki, a famous poet and novelist, hoped that Japanese writers would be connected with an international network thanks to the mutual friendship that the PEN Club could promote around the world (13:356). Ironically, however, this was no longer easily realizable, because Japanese diplomacy had already chosen its own isolation from the international community. Four years earlier, in 1932, Japan had created the puppet monarchy of Manchuguo (満洲国 made famous in the film, *Last Emperor*). And Japan requested international recognition of this fake monarchy, which in reality was under Japan's military control. But Japan's request was almost unanimously rejected by the League of Nations in February 1933, which resulted in Japan's immediate departure from it.

The historical circumstances account for the particular geopolitical conditions in which the Nippon PEN Club was born. The club was expected to develop an international network of friendship by virtue of literature and culture. But this was an attempt at compensation for the political isolation that had resulted from uncontrolled military adventures. The Manchuria Incident on September 18, 1931 and the Shanghai Incident in January 1932 had already damaged Japan's position in the world. It is noteworthy that the creation of the PEN Club in Japan was supported by Kokusai Bunka Shinkô Kai, a semigovernmental agency that was closely related to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (and that was to become the Japan Foundation after World War II). The Society for International Cultural Relations itself was inaugurated in 1934, shortly after Japan dropped out of the League of the Nations. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs was desperately trying to improve Japan's image through promotions of cultural politics.

The International PEN Club was established in 1921, and organized its first international congress in 1923. But in the 1930s it had to directly deal with intricate issues in connection with threatening political crises. Shortly after Hitler came to power, the 11<sup>th</sup> congress was held in Dubrovnik, in September 1933, and it protested against Nazis' auto-da-fe of books. At this congress, H. G. Wells succeeded John Galsworthy and became the second President. Under the Nazis' National Socialist regime, all four PEN centers in Germany (in Berlin, Hamburg, Munich, and Köln) closed by the fall of 1933. Germany also left the League of Nations in October 1935, 8 months after Japan's departure. Compared to the German case, the foundation of the Nippon PEN Club looks enigmatic. Why was the Nippon Pen Club established only after (and despite) Japan's departure from the League of Nations? How was this possible?

In fact, when the Nippon PEN Club was established on November 26, 1935, it was not directly affiliated with the London headquarters of the International PEN Club (hence the expression of "friendship" mentioned above). This irregular fact of Nippon PEN's "independence" is stated in a distributed brochure. A small notice was added at the end of the inauguration speech delivered by Shimazaki (PEN 1967:72). The formal affiliation was hindered, presumably by bureaucratic intervention, and there was an obvious political reason for this irregular treatment. The second article of the Principles of the International PEN Club declares that artistic work should not be influenced by any nationalistic sentiment or political passion, even under the war. The phrase was initially written by Galsworthy at the Fifth Congress in Brussels in 1927 and it later became the PEN Club Charter. However, openly accepting this principle was already impossible for the Nippon PEN Club at the very moment of its establishment. As a matter of fact, the so-called kokutai meichô 国体明徴 "clarification of the nation-polity" had been stipulated by the government earlier that year, putting forward the "essentialized conception of Japan's imperial, sacral, and ethical endowment," to use Harry Harootunian's formulation (Harootunian 2000:421). A formal affiliation with the International PEN club would have automatically constituted a flagrant violation of the Principle of National Polity, which was regarded as sacred.

Shimazaki's inaugural discourse in 1935 also refers to the fact that the establishment of the Nippon PEN Club was encouraged by bureaucrats of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs so as to promote "friendship" with the International PEN Club. At the same time, Shimazaki insists upon the "private initiative" of the club. The Nippon PEN as "a small non-governmental association" must be run, he said, "by the will of its own membership." Obviously the pretended outlook of "private initiative" was a necessary camouflage for both the bureaucrats and writers so as to avoid the "misleading" impression of state ownership and administrative sponsorship.

The prescribed "independence" that the Nippon PEN Club claimed vis-à-vis the International PEN Club accounts not only for the "irregularity" it was forced to accept but

also for the fundamental dilemma in which it was caught at its genesis. From the outset, the Nippon PEN club had to search for a compromise between two antagonistic demands. It intended to promote internationalism abroad despite intensifying nationalistic constraints in the domestic political agenda. The club was expected to contribute to “mutual respect and goodwill” (Kabayama 1937:v) among nations at the moment when the international community began to suspect Japan’s goodwill and cast doubt on the possibility of establishing any serious mutual respect with Japan. This dilemma seems to be implicitly articulated in Shimazaki’s inaugural speech. Indeed, he was stating that the isolation that Japanese writers had had to endure for several centuries was finally coming to an end and would be overcome before long (13:356). Judging from the circumstances, this is an astonishing statement. How was it possible to declare the end of isolation when Japan was actually becoming more and more isolated from the world? Clearly Shimazaki was worried about Japan’s recent isolation in international relations. But instead of directly touching upon the political issue and openly criticizing Japan’s foreign policy (which was not allowed for anyone in his position), he tactfully shifted his subject to the cultural isolation from which Japan should be liberated. The task was all the more urgent because “Japan as a nation” was politically “in a critical situation” (13:358). Shimazaki’s compromising rhetoric shows the limit of liberty that was allowed to the Japanese established writers of the period. In fact, the oppression of the “disloyal citizen,” such as Marxist scholars and proletarian novelists, intensified, especially after the failed coup d’état by young military officers that took place on February 26, 1936.

## 2.

It would be a mistake to reduce the Nippon PEN Club to a simple propaganda machine of Japanese military imperialism. Nonetheless, it is undeniable that the Nippon PEN Club assumed the role of a branch office, so to speak, of the Cultural Affairs Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (PEN 1967:65, cf. Shibazaki 1999:ch. 4). Yanagisawa Ken (柳澤健) of the division is known to have been the key bureaucrat of the whole arrangement. Fortunately for the Japanese side, the inauguration of the Nippon PEN club was welcomed by H. G. Wells, who sent a supportive message. In fact, the British encouraged the Japanese to create the Nippon PEN Club so as to maintain the minimum communication with isolated Japan. These circumstances lead Shimazaki to participate in the Buenos Aires Conference in 1936, together with the Vice President, Arishima Ikuma (有島生馬 1882-1974). Novelist and painter, Arishima, in his mid-50s, was famous for his sociability and fluency in Italian and French. Shimazaki is known to have assumed the post of PEN Club president because of Arishima’s assistance. One of the most successful lyrical poets and naturalist novelists of his age, Shimazaki, then aged 65, was also conversant in both French and English and had stayed in Paris for three years before

## World War I.

Shimazaki and Arishima set sail from Kobe on July 16, 1936 and took the western course to South America. Passing through Colombo and Cape Town, they disembarked at the port of Santos on August 29 and arrived in Buenos Aires on September 3, only two days before the inauguration of the congress scheduled for September 5. No fewer than seventy-five representatives from thirty-nine countries gathered at the City Parliament Hall, and the congress was open to the public for the first time in its history. Shimazaki published several detailed accounts of the congress after his return to Japan. Let us examine Shimazaki's opinion during his mission. I will limit my discussion to the following three questions. First, how did Shimazaki understand the current international situation in connection with his diplomatic mission? Second, how was he successful (or not) in formulating his own opinion in front of the foreign delegation? And third, how was his nationalism and/or internationalism articulated in his effort to explain things typically Japanese to the South American public?

Let us examine the first question. The Japanese delegation was expected to have their proposal accepted: an invitation to the Tokyo Congress in 1940, which was to be held alongside the Olympic games and a world's fair, so as to commemorate the 2,600th anniversary of Japan's mythological foundation. According to Serizawa Kôjirô (芹沢光治良 1896/7-1993), the proposal was put forward as an urgent motion by diplomat Ashida Hitoshi 芦田均 at the extraordinary assembly of the Nippon PEN Club for the sendoff of the delegation (Serizawa 1967:239). Shimazaki was skeptical about the probability of acceptance by the Congress participants. "Many sides in Japan had expressed the hope of organizing the International PEN Club Congress in Tokyo in 1940. However, I was wondering how it was possible, as Japan had already left the League of Nations" (13:408). Shimazaki was relieved that the proposal made by Arishima in Italian on the final day of the congress was unanimously accepted (PEN 1937; French: 178-180, English: 194-196). Yet he did not fail to express his deep concern. "Careful reflection is needed for realization. The invitation would not be made possible without the considerable magnanimity of many sectors involved" (ibid. 409). The euphemism alludes to his worry about the crash between "extreme right" ultranationalism and "extreme left" communism, which "was threatening the freedom of speech and writing," as he had closely observed during the PEN Club sessions in Buenos Aires (ibid. 429; cf. Paris 1997).

In the Buenos Aires congress, Jules Romains (1885-1972), a member of the French delegation, openly criticized the Italian delegation for eulogizing the war, and asked for necessary sanctions. Filippo Tomaso Marinetti (1876-1944), founder of Futurismo, who was supported by Giuseppe Ungaretti (1888-1970) and Mario Puttini, vehemently responded to the French delegation and accused it of malicious defamation and differentiated Italian "Fascismo" from "Hitlerista" Dritte Reich, which had repressed free speech and imposed auto-da-fe (ibid. 403-4). "The readers of the report will see

what kind of suffering the congress had to undergo through controversies which occurred during the Argentine congress" (ibid. 409). By referring to this frontal collision and disputes between the French "Front populaire" and the Italian "Fascho," Shimazaki seems to ask Japanese readers to understand the difficulties faced by the Japanese delegation after Japan's departure from the League of Nations (ibid. 409).

Shimazaki also did not fail to mention the fact that after the congress, Georges Duhamel (1884-1966) declared his withdrawal from the PEN Club at his interview in Rio de Janeiro on his way back to France (without specifying the reason). Shimazaki also reported the isolated figure of Stefan Zweig (1881-1942), "probably by far the most popular and widely read author in South America," who remained silent in a corner of the hall during the whole session except for one unique occasion. The Austrian writer in exile spoke "once for all in a fluent and powerful French" to thank H. G. Wells for all his effort as the PEN president and asked for a standing ovation to congratulate his seventieth anniversary (409-10). Zweig thus only implicitly referred to H. G. Wells' effort to confront German Nazism.

### 3.

As for the second question, it must be mentioned that Shimazaki was dissuaded from expressing himself by Arishima. According to Shimazaki, he was carefully listening to the French-Italian debates and thinking that nobody would be against the French voice promoting peace. "The deep affliction of the contemporary world resides, according to Shimazaki, in the fact that the promotion of peace itself cannot solve any of the impending problems" (ibid. 429). At the same time, Shimazaki could not help feeling that the Oriental people were almost completely ignored during the congress. The impression was reinforced by his observations during his voyage in Colombo and South Africa. The Japanese writer had felt strong resentment at the ways the Oriental people were maltreated and discriminated against under the rule of white settlers. Shimazaki seems to have hoped to express his opinion about the "unjustifiable Western ignorance of the Orient" and thought it would be meaningful to explain the Oriental position to the Western participants by insisting upon the necessity of advocating "the humanitarian point of view," as he put it himself (ibid. 430).

The reason Arishima dissuaded Shimazaki from doing so is not clear. Yet several diplomatic calculations may be easily reconstructed. It seems that Arishima worried about the negative effect that such a provocation could have on their proposal of inviting the congress to Tokyo in 1940. The Manchuria Incident of the previous year seems to have inspired among the Western intellectuals irremediable distrust of Japan. "Humanitarian point of view" would no longer be effective. At the same time, it may be also plausible that Arishima wanted to avoid any complications with the British headquarters of the PEN

Club. Any criticism of British colonial rule could easily raise animosities. Indeed, the London headquarters wished to include Japan in the international committee (to which Shimazaki agreed in his speech) (PEN 1937; French: 72-73, English: 79). Under the circumstances, it was simply out of the question to mention the political turmoil in Ceylon or in South Africa. In addition, and as I have already suggested earlier, the British government seems to have encouraged the Japanese embassy in London to create the Nippon PEN Club. Presumably, London considered it best not to completely lose contact with Japanese intellectuals after Japan's departure from the League of Nations (Pen 1967: 116, 131).

#### 4.

Now the third question. Shimazaki's resentment about the Western ignorance of Oriental culture was evident in the lectures he intended to deliver during his stay in Buenos Aires. The Japanese writer had to face an audience who knew almost nothing about Japan. Shimazaki gave two relatively brief lectures. The first was on the development of Japanese modern literature, "Sobre el desarrollo de la literatura japonesa contemporánea," at the auditorium of the Argentine University of letters on September 17. The other was a public lecture with the title "Lo más típico del Japón," which he gave at the Japanese Council in Buenos Aires on September 18. For the purpose of illustrating the second lecture, Shimazaki brought with him two full-scale reproductions of the scroll paintings known as the *Sansui Chôkan* (山水長巻 *Long Scroll of Mountain and Water*, 1486, 40 x 1,570 cm). The scrolls were executed by the fifteenth-century Japanese Zen Buddhist painter, Sesshû (雪舟 1420-1506?), at the age of sixty-seven, almost twenty years after his return from his studies in China. (It is reported that Shimazaki's Japanese speech was reciprocally interpreted by Mr. Haruba of the Kokusai Bunka Shinkô-kai. The Spanish translation of the lectures was done by G. Yoshio Shinya and published in a brochure with a brief introduction on "Tôson's life and work" by Arishima Ikuma [I have not identified nor located the brochure]).

When Shimazaki left Japan, he was not quite sure how the paintings would appeal to South American viewers. The scrolls were not often publicly exhibited, as they were private property, and the originals had never been shown outside Japan in the prewar period. Shimazaki noticed after his talk that among the Argentina audience were Japanese settlers, who appreciated for the first time the late works by Sesshû. By then, the painter was widely recognized as "one of the greatest geniuses that Japan had produced" (412). However, the choice itself is not self-evident. Why did Shimazaki select the Zen Buddhist painter Sesshû to show what he thought to be "the most typically Japanese" in artistic creation? Was Shimazaki's choice nationalistic? To what extent was his choice "internationally" relevant in the context of cultural exchange between Latin America and

Japan?

Before trying to answer these questions, let us summarize Shimazaki's lecture by pointing out the Japanese writer's three main observations.

First, Shimazaki tried to show an equivalent of the Western Renaissance. He proposed a parallel between the Oriental Zen painter and such Italian masters as Leonard da Vinci and Michelangelo. "Just as Michelangelo shows the synthesis of art and religion through his work, so did Sesshû, as a Buddhist monk. As for intensity and purity, he may show more similarity with the case of Giotto" (419). The familiar Western reference certainly offered a guide to the Argentinian understanding of the unfamiliar Oriental history and artistic world. Second, he insisted that the scroll was executed by the painter by taking advantage of his real experience in China. "While the painter was surprised by the devastation that the Mongolian invasion had wrought in Eastern China, Sesshû also saw one new religion (i. e., Zen Buddhism) and new art flourishing in Southern China and digested them." Why did Shimazaki insist on Sesshû's debt to China, when he talks about "typically Japanese" art? We will come back to this question later. Third, Shimazaki noted in Sesshû's stylistic innovation an "iconoclast" and declared that "Japanese modern spirit found its first expression in Sesshu. . . . The aspiration and the potential passion to modern life were there and in him they were searching for the moment to break the bondage of tradition, so as to come into the realm of spiritual freedom" (419). Obviously, Shimazaki saw in Sesshû a modern iconoclast and a free spirit.

In this presentation, Shimazaki quoted from Okakura Tenshin (岡倉天心 1862-1913). Okakura, the pioneer of studies in Japanese and Oriental art, stated that "a great work by Sesshu . . . is not a depiction of nature" (Okakura 1903; 2007:109). ("Depictment" (*sic*) is translated as 複写 "copy" in the Japanese retranslation from Shimazaki's transcribed lecture in Spanish.) "Each stroke has its moment of life and death; all together assist to interpret an idea, which is life within life" (*ibid.*). Both passages are from Okakura's *The Ideals of the East* (1903). Shimazaki's admiration of Okakura is evident. He called Okakura the Japanese Winckelmann (1718-1768) (1936; 13:271). When invited to the Argentina-Japan Cultural Association on September 15, Shimazaki also recommended that Okakura's classic, *The Book of Tea* (1906), be translated into Spanish. However, this alone does not explain why Shimazaki chose Sesshû. In fact, Okakura's first book in English, *The Ideals of the East*, originally published more than thirty years earlier, gave an elementary overview of Japanese art history in Asian context, and did not particularly single out the Zen Buddhist painter.

5.

However, it may be speculated that Shimazaki's attention to Sesshu was overdetermined in the contemporary cultural context in Japan. Not until around 1935 did

Sesshû begin to become the most celebrated painter in Japan. The writer had the rare occasion to appreciate the scrolls in the exhibition of artistic treasures organized by the *Yomiuri* newspaper in 1930 (vol. 13:329-40). Apart from this decisive fact, at least four more factors are also convergent.

First, 1934 saw many seminal publications on Sesshû. The periodical *Tôei* (『塔影』 *Shadow of the Pagoda*, Sept. 1934) published a special issue on the painter, and several representative contemporary painters and calligraphers, like Kawai Gyokudô (河合玉堂 1873-1957) and Shimada Bokusen (島田墨仙 1867-1943), contributed their essays. The novelist Kunieda Shirô (国枝史郎 1888-1943) wrote a fantastic short story about Sesshû, who, as the story goes, in China narrowly escaped from the evil female goblin's trap by virtue of the supernatural protective power of his own painting. Tanaka Isshō (田中一松 1895-1983), a specialist at the Institute of Art Research 美術研究所, gave a meticulous analysis on the delicate problem of attribution and authenticity in Sesshû's paintings of flowers and birds. It is difficult to suppose that the writer could have missed the famous special issue on Sesshû that was published just one year before the birth of the Nippon PEN Club.

Sesshû's genius was highly evaluated even in sixteenth-century China, and it is recorded that he had an imperial commission from the Ming dynasty court. It was flattering for the Japanese to see one of their ancestors being fully recognized not only in Japan, but especially in China, despite his handicap as a foreigner. Ernest Fenollosa had already stated in his posthumous *Epochs of Chinese and Japanese Art* (Japanese translation in 1921) that Sesshû was by far the best painter in his contemporary Chinese cultural sphere, and may be located among the six most prominent painters in world art history. Such international renown was truly a unique case throughout Japanese art history as it was conceived in the premodern period, and it inspired self-respect in the Japanese people in the 1930s. Shimazaki seems to be convinced of Sesshû's value in these terms.

Second, it was during this period that the Japanese scholars began to define and pinpoint the essential Japanese aesthetics in the creations of the Muromachi period 室町時代. Hasumi Shigeyasu (蓮実重康 1904-1979), then a young art historian, published in 1934 an article on "The Idea of Nature in Sesshû" in *Urushi to Kôgei* (『漆と工藝』 *Lacquer and Arts and Crafts*, March 1934). Hasumi saw in Sesshû "a typical and representative Oriental" (Yamashita 2002:302). Hasumi was under the strong influence of Watsuji Tetsurô (和辻哲郎 1889-1960), a famous philosopher, and applied Watsuji's understanding of Zen Buddhism to Sesshû's creations. "A subjective grasping and a practical understanding of the absolute negation of the world" of the Zen spirit was called upon so as to explain the essential character of the Zen painter. Shimazaki highly valued several of Watsuji's philosophical papers that were published in the monthly periodical on philosophy, *Shisô* (『思想』 1935, 13:337, 381). And it was in the same periodical that

systematic reflection on “Japanese-ness” would be pursued shortly after. In his book *Nippon Bungeigaku (Japanese Philology, 1935)*, Okazaki Yoshie (岡崎義恵 1892-1952) emphasized such terms as “Yûgen 幽玄” or “hie-sabi 冷え寂び” as key concepts for understanding the medieval literature. This opinion was supported by Hisamatsu Sen’ichi (久松潜一 1894-1976), representing the mainstream of the study of national literature, while the same terminologies were negatively evaluated as a “feudalistic” retreat from historical reality by Kondô Tadayoshi (近藤忠義 1901-1976) from the Marxist point of view. Soon, Ônishi Katsunori (大西克禮 1888-1959), a scholar in aesthetics, published his phenomenological analysis of the terms in *Yûgen and Aware* (『幽玄とあはれ』 1939) and *On Fuga, A Study of ‘Sabi’* (『風雅論「さび」の研究』 1940) (Inaga 2005). Clearly Shimazaki’s choice of Sesshû was closely related to such scholarly attention on medievalism.

Third, it was around the same period that a series of tentative efforts at constructing an Oriental aesthetics were pursued by several Japanese leading scholars. Kinbara Seigo (金原省吾 1888-1958) published *Oriental Aesthetics 東洋美学* in 1931, boasting that he was the inventor of the notion of Eastern aesthetics. In this book, he quite nationalistically identified Japan as the ultimate incarnation of the Oriental aesthetics. In his view, China, now in decline, could no longer be regarded as the “authentic Oriental” civilization. Clearly the megalomaniac self-aggrandizement in aesthetic ideas and the egocentric self-justification of Japan as the “ultimate point of development” of Oriental ideals were elaborated in parallel with Japan’s military expansion on the continent. Sesshû as an Oriental genius, showing his superiority to the Chinese, was a complacent symbol for the Japanese who had been under the spell of an inferiority complex under the Chinese civilization (Inaga 2006). Whether Shimazaki was fully aware of the hidden arrogance that the figure of Sesshû could easily arouse in Japanese mind is not clear. Anyhow, the international renown of a cultural hero could be easily manipulated for the enhancement of nationalistic and even chauvinistic narrow-sightedness.

Finally, between Shimazaki’s lecture on Sesshu and his previous lecture on modern Japanese literature, there are several points in common. Not only in Sesshu but also in such premodern literary scholars of national studies as Kamo no Mabuchi (賀茂真淵 1697-1769) and Motoori Norinaga (本居宣長 1730-1801), Shimazaki recognized “iconoclasts.” “These fervent classical scholars were champions of modern thought who led to the Meiji Restoration” (417). Although they were physically isolated from the Western world, there was a spiritual affinity that enabled Shimazaki to find a parallel between Motoori’s slogan of “return to Nature” and Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s (1712-1778) message in *La Nouvelle Heroise*. Once again Shimazaki mentions “the potential passion and aspiration to the modern life which was ready to break the yoke of feudalistic social conventions” (416), which he also remarked in the case of Sesshû.

In this context Shimazaki also reminds the audience of the haikai poet Matsuo Bashô,

whose work had been already known in Europe. “It was Bashô who established the poetic form of symbolism that is still alive today” (417). Here, Shimazaki was certainly hinting at the translations and lectures that Yonejirô Noguchi (野口米次郎 1875-1947) had provided both in England and in the United States. Indeed, Yone Noguchi was saying: “What is symbolism if not ‘the affirmation of your temperament in other things,’ the spinning of a strange thread that will bind you and the other phenomena together?” (Noguchi 1914:193). Yone Noguchi’s contribution was vital for the diffusion of Japanese poetics to the English-speaking world. Shimazaki expected to invite Yone Noguchi to the Nippon PEN Club so as to be informed of the current state of Western knowledge of Oriental literature (speech of November 26, 1935; 13:358).

Nothing is more ironic than the fate of Yone Noguchi, father of Isamu Noguchi. The young Yone Noguchi was regarded as the best messenger of the Japanese poetics to the West, and he was no less highly esteemed than Rabindranath Tagore in prewar Japan as the representative Oriental poet in the world. However, he is said to have become ultranationalist during World War II and was indexed as the worst propagandist of Japan’s wartime belligerent fanaticism. Once again, egocentric nationalism was the reverse side of the aspiration to international recognition and fame. Shimazaki’s own promotion of Japanese literature in the international market had to run the same risk as that epitomized by the tragic and infamous destiny of Yone Noguchi.

## 6.

However, to do justice to Shimazaki in his choice of Sesshû and Matsuo Bashô, one more dimension must be taken into account. This will lead to my conclusion.

Matsuo Bashô (松尾芭蕉 1644-1694), a Haikai master and poet of the seventeenth century, was preaching a spiritual genealogy. In his famous passage in *Oi no Kobumi* (『笈の小文』, *Knapsack Notebook*, 1687), we read: “Among *waka* poems of Saigyô [西行 1118-1190], linked verses by Sôgi [宗祇 1421-1502], paintings by Sesshû, and tea ceremony by Rikyû [利休 1522-1591], there is one thing that penetrates them all.” And Bashô claimed to be the authentic successor of this poetic and poietic tradition. Though this was becoming a commonplace in the mid-1930s (Hasumi’s above-mentioned article cites the passage at the beginning), it was only in the 1920s that Bashô was rehabilitated in the framework of Japanese national literary history. In particular, the passage from the medieval “*wabi* 侘び” to the “*sabi* 寂び” poetics of the Bashô school was underlined by Ôta Mizuho (大田水穂 1876-1955), whose *Fundamental Problems of Basho’s Haikai Poetry* (『芭蕉俳諧の根本問題』 1925, rev. ed. 1927, Iwanami Shoten) played a major role in the common recognition of the literary genealogy.

Shimazaki Tôson, born in Shinshû province, in the deep mountain area at the center of the Japanese archipelago, knew personally Ôta Mizuho, who was born in Suwa of the

same province. One of Shimazaki's utmost pleasures upon his arrival in São Paulo was an encounter with Mr. and Mrs. Shiki Fukashi 指旗深志. Mr. Shiki was Ms. Ôta's younger brother, and the couple had settled in Brazil and were running a farm on the outskirts of São Paulo. Shimazaki handed to the Shiki family the souvenir and letters with which the Ôta family had entrusted him. According to Mrs. Shiki, almost 1,000 Japanese Brazilians showed up to attend the public lecture held by Shimazaki and Arishima. From Shinshû 信州 province alone, more than 4,000 Japanese settlers were estimated to have immigrated to Brazil (13:421-24). Thanks to this personal tie with Ôta Mizuho and his relatives in Brazil, the memory of the greatest haikai master was deeply engraved in the writer's mind during his stay in the antipodes of the earth. Indeed, Shimazaki did not hide his hope that "our ancestor Bashô will certainly guide me on the route of my long journey abroad" (13:377-78). With this hope in mind, Shimazaki, shortly before setting sail from Kôbe, paid a respectful and unique visit to a place in Osaka, at the quarter of Hisatarô, where Bashô spent his final days before leaving his last poem. The famous haikai in 17 syllables goes as follows: "Fallen ill on my journey / I see my dream, alone, run around / in the desolated field" (my literary translation) :

Tabi ni yande, yume ha karenô wo kakemeguru (quoted by Tôson 377)	Sick on a journey-- over parched fields dreams wander on. (Stryk 1985:81)	Malade en voyage Mes rêves Par les champs desséchés (Muraoka/El-Etr 1979)
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Enfermo durante el viaje / mis sueños / por los ramos yermos (Francisco F. Villalba 2000)

On his way to South America, Shimazaki was sent along with more than 850 Japanese immigrants to Brazil and Paraguay (8 families were sent to Paraguay for the first time on this mission). Onboard of the cargo-passenger ship *Rio de Janeiro* of the Ôsaka Maritime Company, he witnessed old people in distress and saw several babies and children die of illness before reaching their destination. Bashô's swan song was not a mere melancholic sentimental expression of homesickness but concerned the very reality of the immigrant population (14:172-73). Probably the Brazilian word *saudade* would best express the sentiment shared by the foreign settlers. To encourage these desolate Japanese immigrants and to give them moral support had become no less important a duty for the writer than to participate *ex officio* in the Buenos Aires International PEN Club congress. It is already evident, I hope, that Shimazaki was also superimposing his own mission to Latin America upon the experiences of his great historical ancestors he mentioned himself. Sesshû's foreign trip to China across the East China Sea, and Bashô's interminable journeys as a "traveler of a hundred ages" 百代の過客 overlapped, in Shimazaki's mind, with his own last trip abroad, which he called "*jun'rei*" 巡禮 or "pilgrimage" <sup>1</sup>.

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The outline of Shimazaki's pilgrimage, here analyzed, will serve as an introduction to the more detailed aspects of Shimazaki's trip to South America in 1936. On the one hand, the song of a coconut's travel, which was based on Shimazaki's poem in 1901, must be recast into a new context. The poem lyrically describes the destiny of a tropical coconut seed that came all the way to a Japanese shore from an unknown southern island on the Pacific Ocean. The poem resurfaced in Tôson's mind during his last voyage abroad, and the memory was amplified by his contact with Japanese immigrants in Argentina and Brazil, resulting in the composition of a national popular song in 1936<sup>2</sup>. On the other hand, Shimazaki's promotion of children's literature in his final years can also be closely connected with his encounter with Japanese immigrant children in Argentina and Brazil<sup>3</sup>. His promotion of children's books in Japanese among the Japanese population in Brazil, however, faced unpredictable political and diplomatic obstacles after the inauguration of the Estado Novo by the Brazilian President Vargas after his coup d'état in 1937, which resulted in the interdiction of the usage of foreign languages in education of children under the age of sixteen (Imin 1991:102). Shortly after Tôson's stay in Brazil, literature was interwoven with the relentless real politics during the international crisis and upheaval of nationalism both in Japan and in Brazil.

It is true that Shimazaki's vision had its own limits and could not easily give insights surpassing the binary opposition between nationalism and internationalism, so as to allow

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- 1 Is it ironic that Yone Noguchi's book including his reading of Bashô poetry was also entitled "Pilgrimage." See Noguchi 1909. Also see Hori Madoka 2006.
  - 2 Kenji Toyama, "Shimazaki Tôson as the 'National Poet' in 1936." Paper presented to the International Comparative Literature Congress in Rio de Janeiro, August 3, 2007. It must be added that the local review specializing in *waka*-poetry in Japanese, *Yashi-ju* (*Palm Tree*), was inaugurated in October 1938 in São Paulo, shortly after Tôson's visit there. The title also evokes its connection with Tôson's poem of the coconut seed. The review stopped appearing with the eleventh issue in October 1941, due to the law forbidding publication in foreign languages in Brazil, and it was in 1947, two years after the end of World War II, that the review began to reappear and continued (no. 216 was known to be issued as of July 1988) (for details, see Imin 1991:393).
  - 3 Yuki Meno, "Shimazaki Tôson and the Official Literature for Children in the 1930 and '40s." Paper presented to the International Comparative Literature Congress in Rio de Janeiro, August 3, 2007. The theme of the congress was "Beyond Bilingualisms: Discontinuities and Displacements in Comparative Literature." The congress was held at the Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro.
  - 4 As for the strategic and indiscriminate bombing during World War II, see Maeda 2006. General Ichimaru Rinosuke 市丸利之助, who died at Iwo Jima Island in the final phase of the Pacific War (sporadically depicted in the Clint Eastwood film, *Letters from Iwo Jima*, 2006), left his final message to the American President, Franklin Roosevelt, shortly before his death. Ichimaru was the general who took part in the air raid in China. His uneasiness in military missions and lack of conviction in the diplomatic effort are expressed in his *waka*-poetry. See Hirakawa 1996; 2006:183. Hirakawa's book (2006:197-205) also contains a Japanese translation of the Chinese text by Feng Zikai 豐子愷 narrating the Chinese experience of the Japanese bombing in Chongqing 重慶 in 1939.

us to go beyond that dilemma. Yet the dilemma with which he had to struggle has not lost its relevance even nowadays. The deterioration of the international environment in the following years, aggravated by Japan's military invasion through the bombing of Chengdu 成都, the massacre in Nanjing 南京 in 1937, and the indiscriminate bombing of Chongqing 重慶 in 1939 made simply impossible the realization of the PEN Club convention in Tokyo in 1940<sup>4</sup>. However, Shimazaki's pilgrimage did contribute to the writer's unexpected discovery of the Japanese community overseas, which he observed with deep sympathy. His voyage must be counted among the relevant literary anecdotes in the "history of migration" 移民史 that took place between Japan and Latin America in the troubled twentieth century<sup>5</sup>.

Shigemi Inaga, Washington, D.C., July 10-13, 2007

## Notes

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\* Quotations from Shimazaki Tôson are from the *Complete Works*. 『藤村全集』筑摩書房。Tokyo: Chikuma Shobô. The translations are mine.

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5 For Japanese immigration to Argentina, see Argentina 2002, 2006. For Japanese immigration to Brazil, refer to Imin 1991 and Nippon-Brazil 1995. The Manchuria Incident was in reality closely related to the fate of Japanese settlers in Latin America. As the main destination of the Japanese settlers was reoriented to northeastern China and to the territory of Manchuguo, the sending of Japanese settlers to Latin America ceased by 1942 (Brazil 1953:346). For the popular culture among the Japanese Brazilian settlers and colons, see the pioneering investigations by Hosakawa Shûhei (Hosokawa 1995, 1999).

- \* For both of these two volumes, a Spanish version printed in Buenos Aires is available. Fax. Japan 0466-42-0032 (Spanish title unknown).
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