

THE STATIC AND THE DYNAMIC:
A STUDY OF THE HIDDEN WORLD OF IBUSE MASUJI

by

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B.A., The University of British Columbia, 1977

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS

91

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
(Department of Asian Studies)

We accept this thesis as conforming
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THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

August 1979

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines certain selected works of Ibuse Masuji in an attempt to gain an insight into the nature of this author's literary genius. Exhibiting several unique characteristics, such as the combination of symbolism and humour, realism and fantasy, Ibuse's works are seen to comprise a world that is vital and complex yet at times enigmatic and mysterious. An analysis of four principal works will attempt to show how Ibuse gradually reveals this hidden world and comes to integrate its various aspects into a harmonious whole through certain modifications and shifts of emphasis throughout his career. Although Ibuse's literary vision alters, its central focus remains virtually unchanged and throughout his literary life, Ibuse continues to concern himself with the contrast between the static and the dynamic, two principal elements in his work which both conceal and reveal meaning and emotion.

Chapter 1 deals with "Sanshōuo", Ibuse's first work, which represents the early years of his career 1923-1930. Exploring life's hidden depths in terms of allegory and fantasy, "Sanshōuo" shows these depths to be an ambivalent area in which static and dynamic elements meet and mingle.

In contrast to "Sanshōuo" and the early years is Sazanami gunki which is examined in Chapter 2. A work which characterizes the pre-war period of Ibuse's career (1930-1939), Sazanami gunki represents a major change in direction for the author as Ibuse leaves behind the static world of "Sanshōuo" and finds inspiration in the flow and movement of life.

Chapter 3 deals with "Yōhai taichō", a work which is representative of the post-war years (1946-1953) and shows Ibuse's return to static concerns and themes. At the same time, however, "Yōhai taichō" represents a re-integration of earlier techniques and perspectives and thus a greater sophistication.

In Chapter 4 both static and dynamic elements are brought into full play in Ibuse's masterpiece, Kuroi ame, a work which characterizes the later years of his career (1954-present). Here Ibuse is at his zenith as he creates a work of remarkable depth and scope, stressing the wholeness of life and nature more surely and more expertly than in the past.

It is hoped that an examination of these four works will help to provide some insight into the nature of this author's genius as well as into the essence of his art.

_____, Supervisor

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my supervisor, Professor Kinya Tsuruta, for his valuable help and guidance in the preparation of this thesis. I am also indebted to Mr. Yim Tse of the Asian Studies Library, U.B.C. for the writing of the Chinese characters herein.

Introduction

Although the works of Ibuse Masuji 井伏鱒二 (1898-) have been fairly well-known in the West for nearly two decades,¹ there is as yet almost no interpretative criticism or analyses of this writer in English or other European languages. While Western critics may acclaim Ibuse's talents, they seem somewhat hesitant to come to terms with his creations.² This general hesitancy on the part of most Western scholars to deal critically with Ibuse's work is a bit puzzling, but may in fact be partly related to the deceptively simple, matter-of-fact tone with which Ibuse masks the complexities of mood and emotion which characterize his works. A writer of great subtlety, Ibuse may entertain and intrigue the reader, yet he may also mystify the critic. At the same time, Ibuse is a writer who is not easily categorized even in Japan. Thus, although most scholars and critics in Japan agree that Ibuse Masuji is 'unique' among modern authors, they are often hard-pressed to explain this uniqueness in terms which will account for the many distinctive elements which appear in Ibuse's work and as yet no single volume study of this author has appeared. Nevertheless, the work that has been done by the Japanese critics provides the Western researcher with a valuable source of biographical, historical and literary information while the best of these pieces offer perceptive and original insights into certain aspects of the author's work.

One of the best critical works of this type to appear on Ibuse in Japanese is an essay by Kobayashi Hideo 小林秀雄 (1902-) written in 1931-32 in which Kobayashi deals exclusively with the essence of Ibuse's art.³ The first critic to do so, others soon followed suit. Today scholars and critics who are primarily interested in Ibuse as creative

artist include such writers as Kawakami Tetsutarō 河上徹太郎 (1902-), Kamei Katsuichirō 龜井勝一郎 (1907-1966), Isogai Hideo 磯貝英夫 (1924-) and Kawamori Yoshizō 河盛好藏 (1902-). Other critics, however, such as Terada Tōru 寺田透 (1915-), interpret Ibuse's work primarily in terms of 'humanism' and other related concepts while others who also appreciate the earthy and rustic qualities of Ibuse's writings see Ibuse's work as essentially a kind of literature of the common people or shomin bungaku 庶民文学. Other critics are pre-occupied with more Western-style philosophical interpretations and, like Nakamura Mitsuo 中村光夫 (1911-), view Ibuse as a major literary "thinker"⁴ whose contributions to Japanese literature have yet to be fully recognized.

It can be seen from the above that Ibuse Masuji is a writer of many facets whose art is subject, at least in Japan, to a great variety of interpretations and critical appraisals. This thesis will deal with Ibuse's writings as works of art rather than as humanistic or philosophical statements. By examining certain aspects (i.e., theme, imagery, form and technique), it will attempt to shed some light upon the works of an author too long neglected in the West and at the same time will attempt to provide some insight into the nature of Ibuse's uniqueness as an artist. Four works have been selected as representative of four significant stages of development in Ibuse's career, i.e., "Sanshōuo" 山椒魚 ("Salamander", 1923): the early years 1923-1930; Sazanami gunki さざなみ軍記 (1930): the pre-war period 1930-1939; "Yōhai taichō" 遙拝隊長 ("Lieutenant Lookeast", 1950): the post-war period 1946-1953 and Kuroi ame 黒い雨 (Black Rain, 1965): the later years 1954-present. Although such stages as these have not been proposed by other critics so far as is known, these divisions suggest themselves upon a close reading of a selection of Ibuse's works and a study of some

of the available critical material. That is not to say that other categorizations are not possible nor that other types of studies, such as those which deal only with the historical works or with some other aspect of Ibuse's work, would not be equally rewarding. Simply, these four pieces when considered against the others which have been read stand out as works which in one way or another mark new and original directions for this author. Thus, a careful study of these works may offer a glimpse into the formation and evolution of Ibuse Masuji's singular and highly innovative literary consciousness.

Although this thesis will deal primarily with the fictional works of Ibuse Masuji rather than with the events of his life or his place in Japanese literary history, there are many points at which these various lines of approach to the man and his work intersect. Consequently, Ibuse's life and literary career will be examined briefly with regard to certain of these points of intersection in the hopes that such a drawing together will provide a suitable background against which the works themselves may be considered.

Ibuse Masuji was born in Kamo village in the Fukayasu district of Hiroshima prefecture on 15 February 1898, the second son of a local landowner. Both his father and younger brother died before Ibuse was six years old and as a child Ibuse himself was not particularly strong. In order to strengthen his constitution, the young Ibuse was sent to spend summers with his grandfather on an island in the Inland Sea. It seems that this Inland Sea region early came to be identified with the restorative and invigorating qualities of nature that Ibuse was later to associate with this area in his work. Both the Inland Sea and the countryside around Hiroshima figure prominently in Ibuse's writings and perhaps the peculiar vividness with which Ibuse evokes the natural beauty of these regions may be partially related to a childhood spent amidst their surroundings. That Ibuse continued to view the Inland

Sea as a place of renewal and regeneration can be seen in his comment in later years upon the suicide of his good friends and colleague, Dazai Osamu 太宰治 (1909-1948): "If Dazai had seen the Inland Sea, perhaps he would not have died."⁵

Just as the world of nature and the countryside played a significant role in the early life of Ibuse, so, too, did the environs of town and city. In 1912 Ibuse went to board as a student at Fukuyama Middle School near Hiroshima for the next five years. Here, it seems Ibuse first began to acquire a taste for history as well as for assuming a fictional identity. As a fifth year student, Ibuse wrote a now famous letter to Mori Ōgai 森鷗外 (1862-1922) in which he pretended to be one Kuchige Sansuke 朽木三助 and pointed out a certain historical detail concerning the piece that Ōgai was then serializing in the Osaka Mainichi newspaper.⁶ Although Ibuse later revealed his identity, Ōgai noted that the brush strokes of this letter were very "like(those of) an old man."⁷ That Ibuse's chosen fictional identity in these early years already reflected the image of a knowledgeable old man seems to presage his later literary works in which such old men play significant roles and sometimes, as in Kuroi ame, assume the narrative voice. The association with Ōgai, too, proved to be a lasting one, at least in the minds of most critics who even today consider Ibuse's historical works to have something of the flavour of the great scholar-historian.

From about the age of sixteen Ibuse determined to become an artist, being particularly attracted to the Japanese style of painting. During his years at middle school and later at the university in Tokyo, Ibuse made numerous journeys around Japan, drawing and sketching, no doubt sharpening his sensitivity to the finer details of both city and country settings. Upon leaving middle school in 1917,

Ibuse submitted a series of sketches to the Kyoto artist Hashimoto Kansetsu 橋本関雪 (1883-1945) in the hopes that he would be admitted as a pupil, but fortunately or unfortunately he was refused. Due primarily to the urging of his elder brother, Ibuse turned his attention elsewhere and entered the literature department of Waseda University in Tokyo. Here Ibuse pursued his studies for nearly six years, eventually specializing in French literature. Ibuse was also fond of the works of Russian writers such as Chekhov, Dostoevsky and Tolstoy which he read during this time. In 1921 in his second year in the French literature course Ibuse enrolled in a special course at the Japan Fine Arts Academy. By March of 1923, however, he had dropped the university course as well as the art school and in August of that year Ibuse began his literary career with the publication of a short story entitled "Sanshōuo".⁸

"Sanshōuo", an allegorical fantasy, was to cause quite a stir in the literary world of the day. The story of a salamander trapped in a cave at the bottom of a pool, "Sanshōuo" was acclaimed by some critics and assailed by others. Today it is still one of the most often mentioned and discussed of Ibuse's works; it is also the most translated. Included as a reading piece in a reader used in Japanese middle schools,⁹ its place in literary history seems fairly well assured.

Although "Sanshōuo" is a rather well-crafted little tale, the work barely hints at the author's potential which gradually began to reveal itself in the works which followed, e.g., "Koi" 鯉 ("Carp", 1927), "Yo fuke to ume no hana" 夜ふけと梅の花 ("Plum Blossom by Night", 1926), "Kuchisuke no iru tanima" 朽助のいる谷間 ("Kuchisuke's Valley", 1929) and "Yane no ue no Sawan" 屋根の上のサワシ ("Sawan on the Roof", 1929).¹⁰ Due in part to the seeming 'simplicity' or 'artlessness' of these early works as well as to their so-called

eccentricity and lack of concern with social and political causes, Ibuse, together with other writers such as Nakamura Masatsune 中村正常 (1901-) for example, was labelled by his detractors as a writer of "nonsense literature" (ナンセンス文学).¹¹ Coming to Ibuse's defense, Kobayashi Hideo scorns such "so-called theories"¹² in his famous essay and points out that Ibuse's works are far from simple or nonsensical; rather they are "complex and consciously constructed in every detail."¹³ Kobayashi's praise is primarily for such works as "Koi" and "Tange shi tei" 丹下氏邸 ("Life at Mr. Tange's", 1931) and although it seems fairly obvious that such pieces are much more artistically successful than the debut story "Sanshōuo", it is in "Sanshōuo" that we can most easily observe the early workings of the Ibuse techniques. At the same time "Sanshōuo" represents a kind of literary manifesto in which the young author sets out certain themes and images which continue to occupy him throughout his career. An analysis of these fundamental components and concepts will provide not only an insight into the later works, it will also serve as a touchstone whereby these later works may be judged and the author's growth and development ascertained.

It seems somehow ironic (perhaps in the best Ibuse fashion) that "Sanshōuo" should mark the 'coming out' of an author when the story is concerned primarily with a salamander trapped in a cave at the bottom of a pool. The use of irony and allegory as well as of such a hidden and recondite setting suggests at once that the author would rather conceal than reveal his emotions and intentions and indeed this is a tendency that can be observed to a greater or lesser degree throughout all the works of Ibuse's long career. In "Sanshōuo", however, this attempt at concealment is at its most rudimentary and, as a result, we are able to examine

in some detail the various elements and images which comprise this hidden world with a view to understanding its essence and thus in turn the nature of the author's artistic vision. As close analysis will show this vision is based primarily upon a series of contrasts and juxtapositions which stress the vitality of the natural world, in particular that vitality which results from the continual contrast and interplay between the forces of stasis and movement. Ibuse's fascination with both the static and the dynamic areas of life is a fundamental aspect of his work which seems to provide a key to its interpretation. This aspect of Ibuse's work has already been briefly explored by A.V. Liman in connection with the use of mythopoeic imagery in Kuroi ame.

If we are to look at the works of Ibuse Masuji in terms of hidden contrasts and concealed meanings, then we should begin by taking a close look at the author's name, itself a partial nom de plume which, taken in its entirety, calls up a particular kind of image. Although Ibuse's given name was Masuji 満寿二, he later changed the characters to Masuji 鱒二 which has the meaning of two salmon trout (salmon trout, masu, 鱒; two, ji, 二). The full name Ibuse Masuji 井伏鱒二 thus evokes the image of two trout swimming about at the bottom of a covered well: well, i, 井; to cover, fu(seru), 伏. Thus static elements (the well) as well as dynamic elements (the two trout) are combined along with the suggestion of concealment (the covered well). The author's literary name, then, presents a complex image which suggests that Ibuse's particular way of looking at the world does indeed derive its inspiration from contrasting images of stasis and movement, the hidden forces of life.

This penchant for concealment and camouflage seems closely related to the author's dislike of excessive emotional display. In order to control excessive emotion, the author

only partly reveals matters to the reader or, in other cases, makes him laugh. Being "a very sentimental person... I make (matters) humorous in order to extinguish sentimentality" Ibuse has remarked.¹⁴ Emotion and feeling are concealed from direct expression, yet at the same time they are revealed through the use of such techniques as symbolism, humour, fantasy etc. Thus it is the symbolic, humorous and fantastic elements in Ibuse's works which convey the deepest emotion and, as a result, these elements must be closely examined in order to properly understand this writer's work. By disguising emotion, the author is able to remain detached, relatively uninvolved, the objective yet sympathetic observer par excellence. This desire to maintain objectivity seems to have extended into other areas of Ibuse's literary life, hence his avoidance of literary movements and cliques.

Although Ibuse was associated with several literary coterie magazines (dōjin zasshi 同人雜誌) early in his career¹⁵ and with the New Aesthetic School or Shinkō geijutsuha 新興芸術派, a group of authors who were "homogeneous only in (their) opposition to Marxism,"¹⁶ Ibuse remained outside the aesthetic and literary disputes and rivalries of the day to a very great extent. Somewhat like the salamander in the cave, Ibuse seems to have secluded himself from direct involvement in any such controversial matters. This continued stance of non-involvement in the affairs of the times can be seen further in Sazanami gunki, a work which Ibuse began to serialize in 1930. A military chronicle based upon the Heike monogatari 平家物語 (The Tale of the Heike), Sazanami gunki purports to be the diary of a young Heike nobleman and his wanderings throughout the beautiful Inland Sea area. The first of Ibuse's historical novels, Sazanami gunki marks a major change in direction for Ibuse and yet at the same time re-affirms Ibuse's basic stance of detachment, objectivity and the concealment of deep emotion. Thus, Tōgo Katsumi

in perhaps the most thorough study of Sazanami gunki to date, points out that the historical novel, similar to the allegorical salamander in "Sanshōuo", is a kind of "mask"¹⁷ for the author, Ibuse wishing to avoid involvement in the literary, political and social issues of the times. Nevertheless, even though Ibuse avoids politics and issues in Sazanami gunki, he addresses himself to a far more difficult task, i.e., the creation of a work of art which conveys the impression of light and life despite the fact that it is based upon one of the most tragic and intensely moving works of Japanese literature, the Heike monogatari. The manner in which Ibuse accomplishes this is both fascinating and revealing as we see the author experimenting with various techniques which seem to best capture the flow and movement of life.

Ibuse's great interest in and attraction to the dynamic aspects of life and nature seem to come to the fore for the first time in Sazanami gunki and remain from then on a constant and distinguishing feature of his work. So pervasive is this dynamic spirit that one critic has called it "the key image of Ibuse's poetic vision."¹⁸ And in fact those works which tend to emphasize life's dynamic qualities are also those which have received the greatest critical acclaim as for example, Jon Manjirō hyōryūki ジョ:萬次郎漂流記 (John Manjirō: the cast-away, his life and adventures, 1938) for which Ibuse was awarded the Naoki Prize for Literature in 1938; Hyōmin Usaburō 漂民宇三郎 (The Cast-away Usaburō, 1954) which received the Japan Art Academy Prize in 1954 and Kuroi ame which received both the Noma Literary Prize and the Cultural Medal in 1966. Sazanami gunki thus marks the beginning of a new phase in Ibuse's career both as an historical novel and as a work concerned primarily with the sweep and movement of life. This particular phase, marked not only by the appearance of Sazanami gunki but also by such works as "Kawa" 川 ("The River", 1931); Shūkin ryokō

集金旅行

(The Money-collecting Trip, 1935) and

"Aogashima Taigaiki" 青ヶ島大槪記 ("Records of Aogashima", 1934)¹⁹ which also stress life's movement, appears to culminate in 1938 with the publication of Jon Manjirō as well as with the final installment of Sazanami gunki and, by and large, works which emphasize the scope and variety of life do not re-appear until several years after the end of the war.

The war years seem to mark a kind of hiatus in Ibuse's career much in the same way as they do for most Japanese authors²⁰ and yet during this time Ibuse has a kind of adventure of his own which later provides the background for one of his best post-war works, "Yōhai taichō". Drafted in 1941 as a war correspondent Ibuse travelled along with the Japanese army through Thailand and Malaya to Singapore where he spent one year before being released from the draft and allowed to return to Japan. In "Yōhai taichō" Ibuse skillfully juxtaposes events in war-time Malaya with those in a Japanese village, creating a complex work of several levels which emphasizes the static and restricting qualities of life. Although "Yōhai taichō" is generally acclaimed as one of Ibuse's best pieces, there is as yet no detailed critical evaluation of this work and for this reason as well as for its significance in terms of Ibuse's development, this work will be given particular attention in this thesis.

The return to life's static areas which were only tentatively explored in the early works is not peculiar to "Yōhai taichō", but is a tendency which can be observed to some extent as early as the publication of Tajinko mura 多基古村 (Tajinko Village, 1939). Although Tajinko mura deals with the activities and events of everyday life, this work exhibits a shift in emphasis away from the dynamic and expansive elements which characterize much of Ibuse's work in the 1930's and focuses instead upon matters which are much more static and confining.

This emphasis upon confining circumstances or even imprisonment can be seen in many of the works which appear during and immediately after the war, e.g., "Henro yado" へんろの宿 ("Pilgrim's Inn", 1940), "Fukikoshi no shiro" 吹越の城 ("Fukikoshi Castle", 1943), "Wabisuke" 侘助 (1946) and "In no shima" 国ノ島 ("In Island", 1948) and throughout the early part of the 1950's in such works as Honjitsu Kyushin 本日休診 (No Consultations Today, 1949) for which Ibuse was awarded the Yomiuri Literary Prize in 1950; in "Nōriai jidosha" 乗合自動車 ("The Charcoal Bus", 1952) and of course in "Yōhai taichō".²¹

For Ibuse as for many other writers the years immediately following World War II served as a period of re-adjustment and search for new directions. Not only did Ibuse face the task of responding to the "new era in Japanese letters"²² brought about by the defeat and occupation, he also experienced a great personal loss when in June 1948 his close friend and fellow writer Dazai Osamu drowned himself with his mistress. Dazai, ten years Ibuse's junior, was a great admirer of Ibuse's work and during the 1930's came under Ibuse's influence and guidance.²³ Ibuse's reminiscences of Dazai can be seen in such works as "Onnagokoro" おんなごころ ("A Woman's Heart", 1949), "Koto no ki" 琴の記 ("Record of a Koto". 1960) and "Dazai Osamu no koto" 太宰治のこと ("About Dazai Osamu", 1953).²⁴ It is during this period after the war and after Dazai's death that Ibuse wrote some of his most scathing satirical pieces (in particular "Nōriai jidosha" and "Yōhai taichō") which stand out as perhaps the most forceful and incisive of all his works.

By his middle fifties, then, Ibuse could look back over a long and fruitful literary career. No longer accused of writing 'nonsense literature', Ibuse was beginning to win much critical praise and acclaim. Nevertheless Ibuse's most productive years still lay ahead. During the next eleven

years from 1954 and the publication of Hyōmin Usaburō to the appearance of Kuroi ame in 1965, Ibuse wrote profusely, both long novels and shorter novellas; a few historical pieces such as "Kaikon mura no Yosaku" 開墾村の興作 ("Yosaku the Settler", 1955) and Hyōmin Usaburō; city stories such as Ekimae ryokan 駅前旅館 (The Inn in front of the Station, 1956) and Chimpindō shujin 珍品堂主人 (The Curio Shop Proprietor, 1959); country tales about fishing (Ibuse's favourite pastime) such as Tsurishi Tsuriba 釣師・釣場 (Fisherman, Fishing Place, 1959) and "Kotatsubana" コタツ花 ("Kotatsu Flower", 1963) as well as numerous essays.²⁵ Although this output has slowed somewhat in recent years, Ibuse at the age of 81 is still writing.

Thus the relatively non-productive war years were followed by a period of intense creative activity which produced powerful and well-crafted works that in many ways emphasized the restrictions of fate and circumstances. As time passed, however, this tenseness began to mellow and in the late 1950's and early 1960's we see the development of the mature Ibuse. Still a keen observer of human foibles, the author's observations and emotions are now tempered with a deep awareness of life's constantly changing patterns. Although the hidden depths of life and its static mysteries still intrigue the author, he now enters a period of growth and expansiveness which in many ways can be compared to the expansive pre-war period of the 1930's and the writing of such works as Sazanami gunki. Once again Ibuse is obviously fascinated by the possibilities and permutations of life's flow and movement while revelation of emotion although still restrained finds an easier and more natural expression. Compared to the youthful and engaging qualities of the early pre-war works, however, there is now a new tone of understanding and mature acceptance as Ibuse strives to integrate

the demands of his artistic vision with the realities of experience. That he succeeds in this can be seen in many of the works of this later period but perhaps to the greatest degree in Kuroi ame the work which has brought Ibuse international renown and recognition.

In Kuroi ame, a novel about the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, we see Ibuse at the height of his powers. Just as "Sanshōuo" and the early works did not prepare us for the sparkling vistas of Sazanami gunki, so did "Yōhai taichō" and the other post-war works fail to apprise us of the possibility of such a brilliant tour de force as Kuroi ame. In this later period Ibuse's art has again undergone a major transformation as the author brings together elements from the past and from the present, revealing a new breadth of vision which also encompasses depth of experience and emotion and he now creates a work of art which must surely stand as one of the major contributions to literature in this century.

This thesis will now examine in detail the four works which seem to best represent the principal stages in Ibuse's career and will attempt to show through such an analysis how the author's literary vision undergoes certain shifts of emphasis and certain modifications as he strives to evoke not only the vigour and movement of life but also the more tenuous and hidden qualities which give life its depth and perhaps also, in the final analysis, its significance and meaning.

Chapter 1

Ibuse Masuji's first published work, "Sanshōuo",¹ is a short story which portrays the folly of a salamander who finds itself wedged in an underwater cave due to its own carelessness. The portrayal of a creature trapped by and at odds with its natural environment is something of an anomaly in a literary and cultural tradition which, with very little exception, stresses the harmony and beauty of nature. Moreover, in the work of a writer like Ibuse who is particularly well-known for his deep affinity with the natural world, the existence of such a piece of writing may seem even more unusual. As an allegory, the work is also something of an oddity, and yet, in spite of its peculiarities "Sahshōuo" stands out as a revealing and significant statement of certain imagery and themes central to the author's later work; it also comprises the essential elements of various techniques which later come to characterize this author's particular style. After presenting a short synopsis of "Sanshōuo", this chapter will examine the above matters in some detail, special consideration being given to allegory and symbolism, theme and technique.

In "Sanshōuo" a salamander living inside a cave at the bottom of a pool suddenly finds itself grown too large to squeeze out the narrow entrance and thus it is forced to remain inside the cave forever. This rather grim situation is not without its humorous side which the author effectively exploits. Although the salamander makes several concerted efforts to free itself, the only result is that its head becomes stuck in the entrance "like a cork".² Tremendously unhappy, the unfortunate creature's only diversion is to peer out the narrow entrance at the scene in the pool outside. Here, killifish swim among clumps of duckweed while water spiders and a powerfully swimming frog cavort in the water.

While watching their antics, the salamander is overcome with emotion as it realizes even more acutely the hopelessness of its situation.

The salamander's only company in the cave besides the moss and mold growing over the ceiling and in the hollows is a tiny shrimp who ventures into the cave one day to lay its eggs. Eventually, the frog, too, makes its way into the cave, and in a moment of diabolical inspiration, the salamander decides to prevent the frog from leaving. To have placed another animal in the same position as itself affords the salamander "exquisite pleasure".³ Two years pass and the frog and the salamander remain imprisoned in the cave, the frog refusing to come down from the hollow where it is hiding and the salamander demanding that it come down. The two creatures, alternately transformed into "lumps of mineral"⁴ in the winter and back into creatures of flesh and blood in the summer, seem doomed to spend the rest of their lives in the cave. As the story ends, the frog, nearly dead from starvation, suddenly assures the salamander that he is not really angry with him.

"Sanshōuo", then, at least outwardly, is an animal story, and since the animals function not only as animals but also exhibit the characteristics of human beings, "Sanshōuo" is also an allegory. The animal allegory, associated primarily with didactic fables and social satire,⁵ has a fairly long history in Western literature beginning in classical times and extending into the present day. In Japan, however, this kind of literary tradition remains relatively undeveloped, indicating that "Sanshōuo", at least as an allegory, owes a great deal to the influence of Western literature. This indication is further strengthened by the fact that Ibuse himself was a student of French literature and familiar with other Western literatures as well. If we are to examine "Sanshōuo" as an animal allegory, it seems

appropriate to do so first in terms of the Western tradition, thereby ascertaining to what extent this work is in keeping with that tradition or, on the other hand, to what extent it is different.

According to one study, the successful animal allegory in Western literatures usually exhibits three basic features. It tends to expose humanity by revealing human traits in non-human characters, to represent no more than one human trait at a time in the animal figure and to keep the reader conscious simultaneously of the human traits (being exposed) and of the animals as animals.⁶ In the case of "Sanshōuo", the author clearly exposes humanity by 'revealing human traits in non-human characters'. The salamander confined in his cave assumes a variety of poses, all of which cleverly satirize the behaviour of human beings who find themselves in difficult predicaments. The salamander, for example, alternately sneers at those it considers less fortunate than itself and envies those who have escaped its misfortune, it calls on God, it indulges in self-pity, it threatens insanity and finally it takes pleasure in subjecting another to the same fate as itself. The portrayal of the salamander at the human level is thus ingenious and amusing; it is also complex. Far from representing 'only one human trait at a time', the salamander presents the reader with a great number of emotions and attitudes which are not necessarily consistent. "The salamander felt sad", the author tells us in his opening line, but the salamander is not only sad, it is by turns self-critical, foolish, despairing, elated, envious, benevolent, malicious, friendly etc. The salamander is not merely an animal that represents one particular human quality, it is very nearly human itself. The salamander is difficult to see as an animal, and indeed, its animal characteristics are not particularly well-developed. For example, we do not know what it eats nor how it manages to survive as long as it does in the cave; we know almost nothing

about its life as an animal, either in the cave or outside. It neither speaks nor thinks nor acts in any way that might serve to remind us of its 'salamander-ness'. The salamander, then, seems much more convincing on a human level than on an animal level.

Unlike the salamander, however, other animal figures in the story are quite convincing as animals. At the same time these animal figures exhibit particular human traits which are not overly complex. The shoal of killifish, for example, which swims in and out of the duckweed, demonstrates an amusingly unimaginative mentality. The shrimp, as a model of a determined parent, is shown to be a rather unsympathetic creature while the frog with its powerful swimming ability and stubborn yet forgiving nature seems to typify the strength and sincerity of a virtuous human being.

In terms of the Western tradition of animal allegory, then, "Sanshōuo" is only partially successful. The figure of the salamander in relation to the other animal figures appears as something of an enigma. Believable on the human level, it lacks credibility as an animal. In this respect it seems that the use of the salamander figure in the story is entirely arbitrary; any animal trapped in a cave would have done just as well. Nevertheless, such an assumption ignores completely the fantastic aspect of the salamander, ignores in fact the significance of the salamander as symbolic figure.

That the salamander is a figure of some particular significance is suggested at several points in the story where the author enters the narrative, encouraging the reader to think kindly of the prisoner:

The reader should not sneer at our salamander. He should appreciate by now that he had been immersed in his murky tub long enough to make him sick of it, and had reached a point where he could bear things no longer. 7

And again:

I would implore the reader once more: do not, I beg, scorn the salamander for being so banal. Even a warder in a jail, unless he is in a particularly difficult mood, would scarcely reprimand a life⁸ prisoner for giving vent to a pointless sigh.

These entreaties on the part of the author are so persistent and beseeching that the reader soon begins to suspect that the salamander does not represent just any human being, but refers more specifically to the author himself.

If we consider the salamander as a persona of the author, then the allegory takes on a new level of meaning. For example, the cave, referred to both as "prison"⁹ and as "eternal home"¹⁰ in the story, may be seen as representing the restrictions of fate and tradition; it is a place which does not seem to offer enough scope for a young writer who finds himself peering enthusiastically out at a larger world where great writers like Tolstoy, Chekhov and Ōgai excite the emotions and where poets like the French symbolistes defy tradition and stir the imagination. Compared to these literary giants and innovators, the author's own imagination seems a paltry thing. The salamander, closing its eyes, sees only a "vast blackness":

The blackness was a gulf that stretched away into infinity. Who could find words to describe the depth or breadth of that gulf? 11

The fact that the inner world of the salamander is closely connected with the image of a dark and infinite gulf gives us an indication of how the author views his own inner depths. Although emotion and imagination exist in these dark and fathomless reaches, their expression tends to be limited and absurd (with his eyes closed the salamander merely feels "sad" and likens himself to "a scrap of tin"¹²) unless stimulated and inspired by the lively activity and bright clarity of the pool outside:

To peer out at a bright place from inside
 somewhere dim -- is this not a fascinating
 occupation? Never does one see so many different
 things as when peering from a small window. 13

Thus, the world outside appears as a source of pleasure and inspiration, particularly when its varied scenery can be circumscribed by a small window and its vitality compressed into a few selected images.

The use of allegory as well as the carefully disguised yet suggestive figure of the salamander seems to represent an early attempt by Ibuse to work in some kind of symbolic framework, to capture some of the essence of what he felt to be the techniques of great literature. And so, just as the salamander trapped in a cave struggles to come to terms with its existence, the young author trapped by feelings of confinement and loneliness struggles to come to terms with life and art. Looked at in this light, "Sanshō" is more than an experimental first story; it represents a kind of artistic manifesto in which the young writer somewhat shyly announces himself to the world. And yet, to have chosen the guise of a salamander seems not only ridiculous, but just a little mysterious. It is therefore necessary to inquire further into the nature of this curious animal figure.

The definitive technique of symbolism, according to one critic, lies in the suggestion or evocation of things while "avoiding the explicit naming of them"¹⁴ and as a result symbolist works (whether in art or literature) are often deliberately ambiguous, suggesting more than they reveal. "Sanshō", too, in spite of its more obvious animal-human-author levels of meaning, seems to hint at something else, to suggest other possibilities. In order to discover what these other possibilities may be, the figures of salamander, cave, frog and pool will be examined as symbols per se.

In Japan, the salamander is an animal associated with the areas around slopes and ravines.¹⁵ Placing the salamander in the pool of a mountain stream is entirely in keeping with its natural habitat. The name sanshōuo, composed of three Chinese characters, mountain, san, 山 ; mountain ash (a tree), shō, 椒 ; fish, uo, 魚 , points to this natural habitat as well as to the creature's amphibious nature. In the story the salamander is often described in terms which seem to emphasize the mountain or earth element in its name. For example, besides being trapped in a cave of rock, it is also seen as a "club-shaped rock",¹⁶ a 'scrap of tin', a 'lump of mineral'. The salamander also feels that, like the stone of the cave, its body is slowly becoming covered with moss. Thus, the salamander itself is turning into a rock, becoming part of the mountain. The shō or mountain ash does not appear in the story, but being a tree of the mountains, it too seems to emphasize the earthy aspect of the salamander. The fish or water element is also seen in the figure of the salamander as it attempts to swim about its cave and to enter the waters of the pool outside. Thus, the figure of the salamander encompasses images not only of animal, human being and author, but also of mountain and fish, i.e., of earth and water.

This emphasis upon earth and water elements is seen not only in the characters used in the word sanshōuo but also in the activities and images linked with this figure. Although the constant, fixed qualities of earth are in ascendance, the more mutable or changeable qualities of water are also to be seen, making the salamander a figure which contains both static and dynamic elements. As a symbol, the figure of the salamander is many-layered, suggesting not only the ultimate interconnectedness of the human, the natural and the artist's creative imagination, but also hinting at the nature of the vital forces which fascinate the author and which in turn seem to underlie the various aspects of his work.

The emphasis upon stasis and movement seen in the figure of the salamander is developed further in the image of the cave. The cave, a dreary place of moss and stone, is so cramped in the beginning of the story that the salamander can hardly move:

He tried swimming about the inside of the cave as freely as it would allow him...All he could manage, in fact, was to move his body somewhat to and fro and from side to side. 17

As time passes, however, the cave's boundaries appear to expand somewhat. First a shrimp and then a frog manage to enter the cave, the frog finding a hiding place in the hollows of the wall. The boundaries of the cave are rather vague and flexible. The actual levels of air and water in the cave are also vague and the only clear picture presented of the cave's interior is a description given of the cave's ceiling. The ceiling is covered with hair moss and liverwort; the dainty flowers of the hair moss scattering pollen on the surface of the water while in the hollows clumps of mold grow and disappear in an apparently endless cycle. The salamander, however, takes no pleasure in the moss and mold and it fears that the pollen will pollute the waters of its cave. The cave, then, with its single narrow entrance, amorphous interior and pollen-scattering moss appears as a kind of womb-area. This image is strengthened by the entrance of the shrimp into the cave, its transparent belly full of eggs as well as by the yearly 'rebirth' of the frog and salamander.

This womb-like cave, however, is described in somewhat ambiguous terms. On one hand, it is compared to a 'prison', a "chamber of a lunatic"¹⁸, a 'murky tub', all of which emphasize its stifling, constricting qualities. The fact that the enmity of the frog and salamander gradually dissolves as time passes in the cave serves further to emphasize the

tendency towards dissolution and stasis which exists inside this dark grotto. Yet the cave also appears as the 'eternal home', a place of eternal shelter and protection. The womb-like cave, then, appears to possess both harsh and gentle qualities. It is an area in which the mysterious processes of birth, dissolution and regeneration take place. These processes seem to occur according to certain observable natural laws (e.g., the "law of propagation",¹⁹ the periodic hibernation of the frog and salamander), yet the fact that these processes remain essentially mysterious is contained in the repeated description of the cave as murky, dim, gloomy etc. The cave with its admixture of earth and water, air and plant life seems to represent the womb-like depths of existence; a symbol of confinement, it is also a symbol of rebirth and regeneration.

The depths of the cave contrast markedly with the waters of the pool outside. Just as the cave is dark and gloomy, so the pool is bright and cheerful, teeming with life and activity. Waterplants thrust their straight stalks to the surface while shoals of fish swim past and water spiders flee from the leaps of the frog. Full of charming and delightful scenes, the pool also contains a strong current and a constantly moving whirlpool which sucks floating flowers down into the depths. Although the salamander derives pleasure from gazing at the waters of the pool, he is also overcome with emotion and at one point he almost feels giddy. Thus, besides its bright, pleasing and refreshing qualities, the pool also seems to have a potential for violent and excessive movement which is not only destructive but also well nigh irresistible. Like the cave, the pool possesses both harsh and gentle qualities, yet in contrast to the static vitality of the cave, the pool is active, a symbol and a source of energy and movement.

The frog, one of the denizens of the bright pool, seems to personify the vigorous and vibrant qualities of the world outside the cave. This animal figure appears towards the end of the story and, although we are presented with very little detail concerning this figure, its character is soon delineated in a few deft strokes, showing it to be a lively and quick-tempered creature who delights in action and movement:

The frog thrust up powerfully and rhythmically from the bottom towards the surface, showed his triangular snout briefly in the air, then thrust down again towards the bottom. 20

Not only is the frog a creature of action, it is also a creature of heart. The frog's final words to the salamander ("Even now I'm not really annoyed with you"²¹) show this creature's basic sincerity and compassion as well as its ability to come to terms with life (and death) in a modest and humble way. Energy and warmth as well as an unassuming acceptance of things as they are seem to characterize the figure of the frog.

The salamander's envy of and eventual capture of the frog points to the frog figure as a kind of vital essence without which life is not worth living, perhaps literature not even worth writing. Just as the salamander is connected with the darker, hidden forces which lie within, so the frog seems to represent the vital spark from outside which inspires and stimulates and thus helps to illuminate the hidden depths.

An analysis of the four principal images in the story reveals a number of possible associations and interconnections, thus suggesting that these images are part of an artistic and symbolic design which represents a particular way of seeing the world. The depths of cave and pool, for example, suggest a primal area of growth, creation and regeneration in which the static and the concealed are contrasted with the

dynamic and the brightly visible. It seems somehow significant that the author has chosen such a setting for his story, implying not only an attraction towards the vital even unlovely aspects of the natural world, but also a fascination with the hidden, elementary forces of life itself. Thus, in spite of the active, potentially revelatory elements in "Sanshōuo" there is a rather intense concentration upon confinement and seclusion not only as we have seen in terms of imagery and characterization but also in terms of theme.

"Sanshōuo", according to the author, was written after reading a short story by Anton Chekhov entitled "The Bet"²² in which a young man spends fifteen years in solitary confinement in order to win a bet. The story ends with a characteristic Chekhovian irony as the young man, almost unrecognizable after fifteen years, emerges to renounce both the amount of the wager and the world. This story's theme of imprisonment or confinement was to provide the theme for "Sanshōuo" and also the first title "Yūhei" (Confinement). In spite of the fact that "The Bet" offered a kind of inspiration for Ibuse's "Sanshōuo", the two stories handle this theme of confinement rather differently. Although both the Chekhov character and the salamander are confined as a result of their own folly, in Chekhov, this folly is voluntary, an act of will, whereas in Ibuse, the salamander seems very much a victim of circumstance, a victim of his own bad luck. The confinement of the salamander seems attributable to the sheer arbitrariness of fate.

The word used by the salamander to describe its condition is minoue (身の上)²³ which means one's fortune, one's lot and also includes such related meanings as one's personal history, one's career, one's past or personal affairs, in short all the various matters which surround and define the individual, govern his existence and to a greater or lesser

degree, determine his fate. The minoue of the salamander (and eventually that of the frog) is determined primarily by the confines of the cave. The cave, as we have seen, is both prison and eternal home, a place of restriction and also a place very close to the essential life processes. By analogy, one's fate is not only imposed on one by circumstances (cave as prison), but it is also something which is dictated by the very nature of existence itself (cave as womb, eternal home). "Sanshōuo" seems to stress the fact that all creatures are subject both to the demands of their environment and to certain natural laws. Faced with the inexorable workings of fate and the mysteries of life, the frog comes to accept his lot whereas the salamander gives in to despair and longing.

The maliciousness of the salamander is closely connected with its desire to escape the cave. There seems to be no way the salamander can realize its longing for the world outside. This passionate longing on the part of the salamander points to another thematic element in the story which seems to run counter to the theme of fate and confinement, i.e., the will to live. In the salamander this will to live is continually being frustrated. Unable to take any action, the salamander indulges in emotion. It envies the pool creatures and yearns for the pool outside. Its longing never ceases. As time passes, its feelings become perverted, finding expression only in the cruel and malicious treatment of the frog. The salamander, who has hardly any ability to look at matters objectively, sees the world primarily in terms of its own likes and dislikes. It is excessively emotional and extremely self-centred; its will to live seems rooted in the subjective realm of emotional attachment.

The frog on the other hand remains relatively free of excessive emotion. Its will to live seems centred in its own strength and vitality. Self-contained and stouthearted,

the frog gradually comes to regard its own fate as well as that of the salamander with equanimity and detachment.

③ In "Sanshōuo" the principal theme is that of confinement, particularly as seen in the workings of one's fate. In contrast to confinement is a minor theme, the will to live, which finds expression both through the action and acceptance of the frog and through the desire and emotion of the salamander. The acceptance of the frog implies a kind of sympathetic detachment while the excessive emotional attraction of the salamander seems to result in eternal unhappiness, a kind of mental confinement. This conflict and contrast between salamander and frog seems to highlight some of the difficulties the author has faced in his attempt to deal objectively with the expression of sentiment and emotion, a problem which he seems to resolve rather successfully through the cultivation of certain techniques and the development of a particular literary style.

Generally speaking, a story about eternal confinement in the depths of an underwater cave is not likely to be light and amusing and yet, in "Sanshōuo", this is exactly the case. This lightness of tone, even when dealing with a potentially gloomy subject, is perhaps one of the most outstanding stylistic features of "Sanshōuo"; its essence deriving primarily from the utilization of two techniques: objective observation and humour.

In "Sanshōuo" the author's fascination with life's vitality is clearly evident, yet he does not eulogize nor extol the wonders of life and nature. Instead, he attempts to see such matters objectively. This objectivity may seem at times almost scientific in its detachment:

The ceiling of the cave was thickly overgrown with hair moss and liverwort. The scales of the liverwort wandered all over the rock, and the

hair moss had dainty flowers on the end of its very slender, scarlet carpophores. The dainty flowers formed dainty fruit which, in accordance with the law of propagation among cryptogams, shortly began to scatter pollen. 24

This description catches our attention not only for its objectivity but also for its careful attention to detail. The author, moving his eye over the ceiling of the cave, gradually brings the scene into sharper and sharper focus until not only do we see the dainty flowers and fruit but also the tiniest of motes, the pollen.

This focusing technique has the effect of interrupting or momentarily suspending the narrative in order that some significant detail or image may be presented to the reader's view. These narrative suspensions in "Sanshō" tend to occur abruptly, yet they are not ill-timed. They create a kind of 'tableau' effect in which time comes to a standstill and the reader's awareness is heightened. Thus, the reader, somewhat like the salamander peering through his window at the scene outside the cave, is able to see fascinating and unusual things and perhaps even experience certain sensations or emotions. This effect can be seen particularly well in the following passage:

The surface of the pool moved ceaselessly in a sluggish whirlpool. One could tell this from a single white petal that had fallen into the water. On the surface, the white petal described a wide circle that gradually shrank in size. It increased its speed. In the end, it was describing an extremely small circle until, at the very center of the circle, the petal itself was swallowed up by the water. 25

This scene of the petal in the water captures not only the attention of the salamander, but also the attention of the reader, drawing the attention down into the depths, suggesting the force and movement of the water, the lethargic but irresistible energy of the whirlpool.

Besides the use of the tableau effect, Ibuse also interrupts the narrative in another way, i.e., he enters the story himself to make several comments to the reader. In a series of 'asides', the author asks the reader to treat the salamander kindly, to have sympathy with his faults etc. Rather than establish objectivity and distance on the part of the author, these asides serve to create a feeling of concern and involvement. In subsequent works, however, such direct appeals to the reader cease and any authorial remarks or comments are skillfully integrated into the body of the work.

In "Sahshōuo" the author prefers to keep a certain distance from his subject, yet at the same time he seems concerned with communicating sensation and emotion to the reader. He attempts for the most part to communicate such emotion in an oblique way, letting selected images and scenes evoke mood and feeling. Although the author's asides are an exception, he is generally careful not to exceed certain limits and thus he avoids both the sublimity of tragedy and the sensationalism of melodrama.

Besides the use of objective observation, excessive seriousness or emotionality is also avoided by the author's skillful utilization of humour. As most critics and commentators allow (both in Japan and in the West), the Ibusean brand of humour is unique. Described as "gently mocking"²⁶ or even as humour one "can't really laugh at",²⁷ it is the kind of humour that sympathizes with its object rather than ridicules it. Similar to the use of objective observation, Ibuse's sense of humour has the power to arouse the reader's sympathy and yet, at the same time, to keep excessive emotion at bay. Thus, salamander and frog emerge as pathetic figures; their folly inspiring laughter, yet it is a laughter tinged with pity. For example, the author

begins by telling us that the salamander is sad and cannot leave its cave, yet in the same sentence we are also informed that the salamander's head gets stuck in the entrance 'like a cork'. The author has simultaneously aroused our sense of pity and of comedy.

This combination of pathos and humour is also used ironically. For example, the salamander, determined to leave the cave, mutters to himself: "All right -- if I can't get out, then I have an idea of my own!"²⁸ This is followed by the author's comment: "But it scarcely needs saying that he had not a single idea of any use."²⁹ Thus, the reader is alternately invited to sympathize with the salamander and then to regard its affectations with ironical detachment.

Besides juxtaposing the amusing with the pathetic or ironic, the author also uses dialogue as comic relief. The scene of the killifish, for example, is a comparatively lengthy passage in which the irony is well-sustained and a particular point well made (i.e., all creatures are confined in some way), yet the actual humour of the situation does not break through until the salamander remarks: "What a lot of excessively hidebound fellows!"³⁰ Dialogue continues to play an increasingly important role in the story until, by the final passage, the text consists of nothing but an amusing and revealing exchange between salamander and frog. Although Ibuse's masterful use of dialogue and dialect later became one of the hallmarks of his style, in "Sanshōuo" we see its use only in embryo. Nevertheless, so well-paced and well-integrated is this dialogue sequence that we can easily catch a glimpse of that quality which has prompted one critic to refer to Ibuse as "rakugo meijin"³¹ (a master of the narrated comic tale).

Ibuse's sense of humour, similar to his technique of objective observation, helps maintain distance and avoid

excessive emotional display. At its driest, it creates a sense of ironic detachment; at its most sympathetic, a feeling of pathos. The author does not use humour as a means of attack, but instead as a means of revelation and release, thus imparting not only lightness of tone, but also creating a distinct impression of tolerance and forbearance.

"Sanshōuo", then, is a work which operates on several levels, i.e., as a humorous fantasy in which human beings are gently satirized in the form of animals, as a symbolic allegory in which the world of salamander and cave, frog and pool represent the genesis of a particular artistic vision and as a short thematic sketch in which the ideas of fate and confinement, desire and detachment are cursorily examined. The world of "Sanshōuo" presents a fairly complex and inter-related set of images and themes which at times may puzzle and mystify and yet these same themes and images clearly emphasize the vitality of the natural world. The depiction of vitality rather than of beauty seems to be the author's chief concern. In order to convey the impression of vitality, the author builds his story on a series of contrasts and juxtapositions which in turn seem to derive from one fundamental contrast, that between stasis and movement. Thus, elements that conceal, confine, hold or attach are placed against those that move, reveal, release or detach; "Sanshōuo" thereby suggesting that life's vitality is the result of a continuing interplay between opposing yet complementary vital forces. It is due primarily to the author's skill in effectively evoking something of life's true vitality through such a series of contrasts that "Sanshōuo" succeeds, in spite of its limitations, as a work of art.

Chapter 2

Sazanami gunki,¹ an account of the gradual disintegration of the Heike clan as reported in the diary of a young Heike nobleman, marks a significant stage in the development of Ibuse's career. In Sazanami gunki Ibuse turns away from the avant garde experimentalism that characterized his earliest work "Sanshōuo" and, making use of a familiar Japanese literary device, the diary, finds inspiration in Japan's distant past. Ibuse's interest in historical themes seems to have been encouraged, at least in part, by the reading of the works of Mori Ōgai. Ibuse, however, as a writer of the Showa era, seems relatively indifferent to the themes and concerns which occupied Ōgai, who, as a spokesman for an entire nation undergoing rapid transformation, sought to bridge the gap between old values and new. In Ibuse such concerns are of relatively little importance. Ibuse's view of history is that of a new literary generation who, with no particular need to resolve the dilemmas of Meiji, is able to look back upon the past with a certain measure of detachment and perhaps also with a certain nostalgia.

The gap between "Sanshōuo" and Sazanami gunki is only seven years and yet in that short span of time we see great changes in Ibuse as a writer. From the symbolic and allegorical "Sanshōuo" in which no human figure appears, we come to Sazanami gunki, a work that abounds in skillful and colourful characterizations and which explores the attitudes and emotions of human beings caught up in the events which came to be immortalized in one of the most moving works of Japanese literature, the Heike monogatari. Ibuse handles the historical theme, the many characters, the romance, the pathos with great insight and aplomb and, in true Ibuse fashion, instills throughout the work a sense of the vitality of man and nature.

Sazanami gunki, the first of Ibuse's numerous historical pieces, represents a step in a new direction for the author.

In order to understand what Ibuse achieved in this work and why it is significant, theme, characterization, imagery and technique will be examined in an attempt to determine not only the artistic merit of the work but also the nature of the author's new accomplishment as a writer.

In Sazanami gunki, the Heike, ousted from the capital by their old enemy, the Genji, wander throughout western Japan, accompanied by the child emperor, Antoku. Their only hope is to somehow recoup their losses and retake the capital. Although victorious in isolated skirmishes and minor battles, the Heike are outmaneuvered and outfoxed by the brash Genji generals, Yoshinaka (Kiso) and Yoshitsune (Genkurō) and, unable to establish themselves, the Heike are forced to flee from one island to another. These same matters are treated at greater length in the Heike monogatari, the thirteenth century military chronicle upon which Sazanami gunki is based. Although Sazanami gunki derives its inspiration from this early chronicle, the two works are essentially quite different. The Heike monogatari, an "oral work appreciated for its musical quality, dramatic impact and Buddhist teachings",² provides a marked contrast to Sazanami gunki's rather subdued tone, informal prose style and marked lack of Buddhistic instruction. The openings of the two works perhaps demonstrate most clearly these two very different approaches, the Heike monogatari providing some of the most well-known lines in all of Japanese literature:

The bell of the Gion Temple tolls into every man's heart to warn him that all is vanity and evanescence. The faded flowers of the sala trees by the Buddha's deathbed bear witness to the truth that all who flourish are destined to decay. Yes, pride must have its fall, for it is as unsubstantial as a dream on a spring night. The brave and violent man - he too must die away in the end, like a whirl of dust in the wind. 3

By contrast, Sazanami gunki begins:

In July of the second year of Juei the people of the Heike clan, driven by war, fled the imperial capital. The following record is an account of their flight left by a certain young boy of the Heike. I have tried here to translate a part of this record into modern language.

July 25 (Juei 2). Last night Harada, Kikuchi and Matsuura returned to the capital leading about three thousand horsemen. I understand that they came from suppressing the Chinzei Rebellion. In the plaza of the Rokuhara Ikedono a bonfire was set. 4

Ibuse is determined to keep his distance. Avoiding the great emotional impact and intensity of the Heike monogatari, Sazanami gunki convinces the reader by its very ordinariness, its total absorption in the world of everyday life. Perhaps due to its more earthly concerns, Sazanami gunki does not stress the Buddhistic theme of 'vanity and evanescence'; on the contrary, Sazanami gunki is concerned with themes of growth and development, activity and movement.

Thus, the wandering of the Heike, rather than their actual destruction, provides the central theme in Sazanami gunki. This theme of wandering and dispersal is in marked contrast to the theme of confinement treated in "Sanshōuo". In Sazanami gunki the author, so to speak, releases the salamander from its cavern and thrusts it willy-nilly into the wide world of the pool where it is destined to roam, homeless forevermore. No longer a rock-bound salamander, the author views the wanderings of the Heike through the eyes of the young nobleman, Musashi no Kami, whose diary forms the text of Sazanami gunki.

In the beginning, the young nobleman lives quite comfortably and safely with his parents in the Rokuhara, the Heike's palatial headquarters in the capital.⁵ When the Heike are finally forced to flee their homes, it is decided that the Rokuhara, hitherto a symbol of refuge and relative safety, will be burned. The young nobleman, envisioning the pillars

of his childhood home going up in flames, agonizes over such an inconceivable loss: "Our Rokuhara! It is our father and mother."⁶ Like the cave of the salamander, the Rokuhara represents both womb-area and home. Unlike the salamander's cave, however, the Rokuhara is a very pleasant place. Its red lacquer pillars and shady banana trees show it to be both beautiful and luxurious; in short, a place one does not wish to leave. When word comes that the cloistered Emperor has deserted the Heike and disappeared and that the monks of Mt. Hiei have joined forces with Kiso, the Heike's position in the capital is no longer tenable and they flee hastily towards the abandoned capital at Fukuhara and thence by boat through the Inland Sea.

The Inland Sea area offers a vivid contrast to the elegant Kyoto home. Its waters abound with strange islands and unknown harbours; there are sudden encounters with beautiful young girls, pirates, spies and bold warriors. The young nobleman finds danger, romance, war and hardship; he also finds comradeship, worthy advisers and, as the fortunes of the Heike wane, a new understanding and acceptance of both life and death. Like the pool in "Sanshōuo", the Inland Sea is a place of action and movement; it brings pleasure, excitement and emotional stimulation. Yet, also like the pool in "Sanshōuo" whose current sucks down the beautiful petals that float heedlessly on its surface, the Inland Sea, too, engulfs and destroys the noble Heike. Driven at last from their stronghold at Ichi-no-tani, the Heike forces are dispersed once again and, as the diary draws to a close, the young nobleman and his followers slowly wend their way through the islands to Kyushu to join the remnants of the once-powerful Heike clan in what is to be their final battle.

In spite of the fact that the Heike are doomed to go down in defeat, Sazanami gunki stresses their wandering and homelessness rather than their eventual destruction. The

author, intrigued by the possibilities of movement and fluidity, does not heavily underscore the tragedy of defeat and failure. The young Musashi no Kami, for example, grows and matures during his enforced sojourn in the Inland Sea area. A mere boy in Rokuhara, he emerges both as a warrior and as a man nine months later. Wandering brings growth, struggle and change; in the case of Musashi no Kami this nine month period of struggle and change is marked by a new birth into adulthood.

Closely allied to the central theme of Sazanami gunki, i.e., the wandering of the Heike, then, is the growth to manhood of the young nobleman, Musashi no Kami. This growth is determined in part by events and experiences which befall the young man on his journey through the Inland Sea. It is also determined to a large extent by the people that he meets, a great variety of colourful characters from all walks of life: monks, fishermen, sailors, merchants, warriors, courtiers, commoners. While historical figures do make their appearance in the story, the majority of these characters are kept at a distance, their actions and deeds being reported to the young nobleman by messenger or through another fictional figure. As a result, there is no particular emphasis upon great or powerful personalities, that is, personalities that could arouse excessive sentiment and emotion. Most well-known figures, such as the beautiful Atsumori, are mentioned briefly in ways which only subtly heighten the dramatic content; mention of such figures also pre-suppose a familiarity on the part of the reader with certain episodes from the Heike monogatari itself. In Sazanami gunki, for example, as the Heike ships flee the debacle at Ichi-no-tani, news of the battle is exchanged between ships, the retainers shouting back and forth over the waves. One samurai calls out his news and name, adding that he is one who has seen the death of Atsumori and has been overwhelmed with sadness. No further information is offered

and this ship soon sails past. Such details as this assume the reader's familiarity with the fate of Atsumori on the beach at Ichi-no-tani as well as knowledge of his renowned youth and beauty. Atsumori's death reported in this way, although hinting at the tragedy of early death, adds primarily to the sense of movement and change: the death of the beautiful youth is represented by nothing more than a brief call from a ship speeding past on the open sea. The figure of Atsumori is recalled later in the story when Musashi no Kami and his followers receive tribute from a local leader, Kusune of Ohashi. Kusune's features closely resemble those of the good-looking Atsumori who used to wear light make-up even when he left for the battle front. Musashi no Kami reflects that he, too, used to indulge in such fashions, but now he contrives to look as tough as possible. Musashi no Kami's comparison of Atsumori and himself also serves to remind us of growth and change. Atsumori, his youthful beauty preserved forever by untimely death, seems to represent the static, fixed qualities of the capital whereas Musashi no Kami, transformed from a boy to a warrior, is clearly allied with the forces of movement and change represented by the vibrant Inland Sea.

Among the numerous fictional characters who fill the pages of Sazanami gunki, there are three figures in particular who seem to have a more than ordinary effect upon the young nobleman. From each of these three figures, a young girl, an old soldier and a warrior-monk, Musashi no Kami gains some new insight not only into himself but also into the mysteries of life, love and death. Almost a month after leaving the capital, the Heike ships disembark at the harbour of Muro no Tsu, an old fishing village. Here, while out riding, the young nobleman meets a beautiful young village girl under a pear tree. In an effort to imitate the style of the Heike women, the girl has styled her hair in the fashion of the capital, but, unwittingly, she has chosen

the style of married women. The young nobleman, charmed by her beauty as well as her rusticity, offers her his horse's reins while he knocks the pears from the tree. That evening the two meet again on a sandy beach which is only briefly exposed during the low tide. Here, in a skillfully wrought scene the author juxtaposes the depths which normally lie hidden under the sea with the depths of emotion which are often concealed in the human heart. Although the hidden depths of life played such an important role in "Sanshōuo", this scene on the sandy beach is one of the few times when such matters are dealt with in Sazanami gunki and, in keeping with the new emphasis upon the visible and the fluid, these depths are revealed only momentarily. Thus, the beach is exposed only briefly and the rendezvous is cut short by the returning tide. Later, when the Heike re-visit this village, Musashi no Kami returns to the house by the pear tree. By now, however, the house is deserted and the tree stripped of fruit. Months after this second visit and far away, he hears finally that the village has been burned. Although Musashi no Kami never meets the girl again, he treasures her image in his heart. Because of her, he reflects, he has been able to love someone outside the ranks of the Heike.

The beautiful young girl, then, is associated with the positive and gentle aspects of life and love. Not a person of court or capital, she represents Musashi no Kami's first encounter with the people of the Inland Sea and he falls in love with her. Although she lacks the sophistication and polish of the capital, her gentleness and beauty completely captivate the young nobleman who, it seems, is quite prepared to embrace the wonders of this strange new world. When Ibuse first began to write Sazanami gunki, his original intention was to end the story with the young nobleman and the girl going off together to take up life in the country.⁷ Thus, the rapture and ardour of young love is seen as a

powerful and vital force, one which is connected with the very depths of one's being, having the capacity to change one's whole heart, if not one's whole life.

Soon after this encounter, the young nobleman participates in his first military action and meets Miyaji Kotarō, a rough old samurai from the Inland Sea area. Kotarō impresses the young nobleman with his great bow three times stouter than the young man's own, his dragon-headed helmet, his grizzled face and his quaint way of speaking. Soon Miyaji Kotarō is assigned to the unit commanded by Musashi no Kami. Also assigned to the unit is the warrior-monk, Kakutan of Izumidera. Although Musashi no Kami is officially in charge of the unit (a Heike lord in command helps prevent desertion among the ranks), the real power of command lies with Kakutan. Kakutan is a wise and learned man; his advice and judgment are invaluable. Both Kakutan and Kotarō become friends and Musashi no Kami's constant companions. With them, Musashi no Kami sails from island to island, scouting for the enemy, taking prisoners, questioning spies, setting up encampments and winning minor victories. Finally, gathering together with the main Heike force at Ichi-no-tani, Musashi no Kami and his faithful retainers prepare for a major confrontation with the Genji forces. Ichi-no-tani, however, the virtually impregnable stronghold, will bring not only a major defeat, but also the eventual separation of these three comrades.

After the fortification of Ichi-no-tani is completed, Kakutan, an expert strategist, recommends the Heike attack the capital and cut off Genkurō's forces as they ride out to attack the Heike at Ichi-no-tani and Ikuta forest. Musashi no Kami presents this argument to his father, the commander Tomomori, who approves the idea. In spite of Tomomori's support, however, Kakutan's proposal is over-ruled and, giving in to despair, the old monk leaves the camp. Later, when a report comes that the old monk has been seen making his way back, Musashi no

Kami, with a cry of joy, goes out to welcome his old friend. The priest explains that he has returned only in order to warn Musashi no Kami of a weak place in the defenses. Kakutan proposes that they take special measures to secure their position at the cliff base in order to thwart an attack from above. There is no time to do this, however, as the enemy is expected at any moment. Here again the author plays upon the reader's knowledge of the Heike monogatari in which Genkurō's famous wild ride down the cliffs at Ichi-no-tani eventually helped turn the tide of battle in the Genji's favour. Kakutan's proposal, far-sighted as it is, is only a pretext for his return and Musashi no Kami, astute enough to realize this, keeps silent; his dealings with men having reached a new level of sophistication and maturity. A few days later the attack begins and Kotarō is killed in the fighting in Ikuta forest. Musashi no Kami and Kakutan retreat as best they can, engaging the enemy in several skirmishes until they can finally board the boats which carry them to safety.

Both Kotarō, the man of action, and Kakutan, the learned monk-strategist, are advisers and companions to the young nobleman. Their courage and dauntlessness in the face of adversity make them outstanding and admirable figures. Brave and loyal, wise and kind, the major difference between the two seems to be that of temperament. Kotarō, a native of the Inland Sea area, is somewhat coarse and unrefined, yet his abilities speak for themselves. His great strength and physical prowess remind us of the vital forces associated with the area outside the capital, the Inland Sea. Kotarō's vitality seems to arise from his association with the flux and movement of this watery realm; he has fought in many battles, he has even been a pirate. Thus, Kotarō, unlike Kakutan, seems to take life pretty much as he finds it. Unassuming, accepting the rough with the smooth, Kotarō's disposition is reminiscent of the qualities exhibited by

the frog figure in "Sanshōuo".

Kakutan, on the other hand, like the salamander itself, is much more complex. A man of intellect and learning, he finds the Heike's actions rash and ill-considered. Unable to effect any change in their policies, he succumbs to despondency and despair. His "Account of Juei" which he composes at night by the fire while Musashi no Kami writes his diary and Kotarō stands watch comes to be the expression of this despair. It is significant that Kakutan does not begin writing this record until after he returns to the camp at Ichi-no-tani. The account thus represents an attempt by Kakutan to channel his feelings of negativity into some positive and constructive direction. Unlike the salamander, then, Kakutan manages to come to terms with his despair. This sanatory effect of written records appears throughout Ibuse's works and can be seen especially well in Kuroi ame.

Thus, as the Heike wander over the Inland Sea, the young Musashi no Kami grows to manhood. From his guides and mentors, Miyaji Kotarō and Kakutan of Izumidera, he learns not only the arts of war and the ways of the world but also the ways of men's hearts. Nevertheless, it is up to Musashi no Kami to come to terms with these experiences himself, and this he does, in ways which suggest understanding and a new-found maturity.

The death of Miyaji Kotarō, for example, is an event to which the young man must reconcile himself. As it happens, the death comes at a moment when Musashi no Kami can have little thought for anything but flight and battle. Only afterwards and as time passes do we see his attempt to come to terms with the death of this staunch supporter. The first time Kotarō is mentioned in the diary (after the reported description of his death) occurs at the end of that day's diary entry when Musashi no Kami, unable to sleep, writes in his diary:

Since Kakutan is absorbed in writing up his 'Account of Juei' by the light of the fire, I, too, am writing my diary inside the ship. And yet, Miyaji Kotarō who always stood watch for us by the fire is no longer of this world. 8

Musashi no Kami, filled with the sadness of defeat and loss, struggles to come to terms with the fact that Kotarō is really dead. Several weeks later, Musashi no Kami, setting up another camp, recalls the favourite styles of encampment of Miyaji Kotarō who was "killed in Ikuta forest."⁹ The young man's feelings towards the death are now rooted in the reality of the event itself. Kotaro, killed in the forest, is now associated with those things of which he was most fond, as Musashi no Kami strives to create positive and meaningful memories. The final mention of Miyaji Kotarō occurs when Musashi no Kami compares the moral courage of a new retainer to that of Miyaji Kotarō who, the diary now simply states, is "Miyaji Kotarō who is dead."¹⁰ Kotarō's death is accepted and yet at the same time his former existence is affirmed as Musashi no Kami recognizes his qualities in other human beings and, in this sense, Kotarō lives on, not only in memory but in reality. The same can also be said of Atsumori whose pleasant features seem to live again in the face of Kusune of Ohashi.

In such ways as this, then, the young nobleman seeks to come to grips with war and loss, life and death as well as with the powerful emotions such experiences can engender. Due primarily to the emphasis upon such affirmative processes as these, Sazanami gunki avoids the heaviness of gloom and tragedy. In spite of the potentially sombre subject matter, there is a distinctly encouraging and hopeful quality in the work and Sazanami gunki seems instilled with the glow of life. This emphasis on light and life seems to be the product of a special kind of vision. In order to examine the nature of this special vision more closely, it is necessary to look

at certain techniques in some detail.

Perhaps one of the most outstanding of these techniques is the use of time. The diary, a literary device often employed by Japanese writers from classical times to the present, is used by Ibuse for the first time in Sazanami gunki. The author, fascinated by the flow and movement of life, no doubt finds the diary form well-suited to the portrayal of time as a continuous process of flow and change while, with each incident and episode, he is able to bring time temporarily to a standstill and, in a kind of expanded tableau effect, call the reader's attention to a particular and significant moment. The diary form lends itself very well to the portrayal of time as both particular moment and unceasing flow, thus underscoring the contrast between the static and the dynamic.

At the same time, however, Ibuse's fascination with the flow of time and life has other dimensions. The young diarist, Musashi no Kami, for example, exhibits an almost total lack of interest in or concern about the future. Even when the Heike are forced to leave the capital and wander they know not where, the young Musashi no Kami does not engage in any kind of speculation as to their destination or their future. He is fascinated primarily by the glow of the fires from the capital and he also notes the difficulty he has sleeping in the saddle:

When night fell, the sky became red in the direction of the capital. The glow illumined the retreating figures of those who rode with heads hanging. If anyone of them would have looked back, the red glow of the sky would have shone on his sad face... since I tended to doze off while on horseback I was cautioned frequently by the samurai. 11

This kind of total involvement with the immediate present is a feature which is found throughout Sazanami gunki. It seems that Musashi no Kami is rooted almost entirely in the here and now. This is shown further in the next diary entry

where Musashi no Kami realizes he may have lost track of time:

Today might be the 28th. I've lost track of the exact date. But I stopped myself from asking my companions. It would only make them sad. Dates are probably necessary only for those who have hope. 12

It seems that Musashi no Kami has lost track of the exact date primarily because of his absorption in events rather than because of any particular despair. Unlike his companions, Musashi no Kami has hope and yet this hope seems to have its roots not in the future but in the mundane passing of present time.

Musashi no Kami is not concerned exclusively with the present. He also has a certain feeling for the past. His connection with the past, although nostalgic, is slight and as time passes, this connection becomes more and more tenuous. This can be seen in the three principal memories which Musashi no Kami seems to cherish. The memory of Miyaji Kotarō, as we have seen, becomes integrated rather quickly into the fabric of new life and experience. The memory of Rokuhara, the old home, is assimilated somewhat less quickly. Not until seven months later and after his attempt to convince his father to attack the capital does Musashi no Kami cease to mention his old home. The memory that has perhaps the longest life is that of the beautiful young girl under the pear tree. When the news comes towards the end of the story that her house has probably been burned, Musashi no Kami briefly recalls her hairstyle and their meeting on the beach:

I once stayed in that harbour town and met that young girl from the house on the hill secretly on the beach. At that time she imitated the Rokuhara hairstyle. Suenari probably burned her house too.

In the capital there was an official proclamation concerning the casting of the Great Buddha. 13

Although memories of the past seem to call up certain emotions, such memories do not seem to have an existence apart from the present time and the events of the everyday world; thus the memory of the young girl is followed immediately by a note concerning the casting of the Buddha. The death of Kotarō, the burning of the Rokuhara and the destruction of the young girl's house are events which inspire deep emotion and yet at the same time these occurrences are readily accepted as part of life. There is no undue agonizing over loss or over the changes wrought by the passage of time. Such activities as these are left to Kakutan and his journal of despair. Musashi no Kami, like old Kotarō, seems to have a great confidence and trust in life. Musashi no Kami does not cling inordinately to the past nor does he worry about the future. Memories of joy or sadness fade gradually away while thoughts of the unknown, the future do not occupy him at all.

Another outstanding technique which gives us further insight into Ibuse's unique way of seeing the world lies in the use of natural imagery. As in "Sanshōuo" the vitality of nature is emphasized and, also as in "Sanshōuo" we find this vitality expressed in images of stasis and movement. In Sazanami gunki, however, such contrasting imagery also has close and intimate links with the world of human beings. Perhaps one of the most memorable of these natural and human associations is the meeting of Musashi no Kami and the young girl under the tree full of ripe pears. The beautiful young woman under a tree is a motif which has a long history in Japanese art and literature.¹⁴ This image, notable particularly for its evocation of fruitfulness and fertility, also suggests peacefulness and calm strength. The girl, like the pear tree, seems to embody these two different yet mutually complementary aspects of the life force, one dynamic, associated with fertility, growth and change (symbolized by the ripening

and falling fruit) and the other static, associated with endurance and tranquillity (symbolized by the house and the pear tree itself).

Another association of human beings and trees occurs in the mention of the ubamegashi trees which appear throughout the story. The name of this tree, a kind of oak, is written with three Chinese characters: old woman, uba, 姥 ; female, me, 女 ; oak, kashi, 榎 . Its name hints that the tree itself is like an old woman, no doubt gnarled and worn but with a kind of robust vitality. This tree is particularly significant in that an enormous ubamegashi tree appears at the very end of Sazanami gunki, an arrow protruding from its trunk. The arrow, symbolizing the war and perhaps the passage of time as well,¹⁵ has made its mark upon the tree just as it has upon Musashi no Kami himself, and yet both the young warrior and old tree live on, representing the static yet persistent and enduring qualities of both man and nature. The fact that Sazanami gunki draws to a close with an image evoking the static rather than the dynamic forces of life seems to indicate that Ibuse's shift towards the static and confining areas of life has already begun (this final installment of Sazanami gunki being published in 1938).

Although the author tends to view the natural world as intimately entwined with the human realm, he avoids both affectation and sentimentality of expression and maintains his objectivity. At the same time, his tone is neither cold nor devoid of sympathy. Rather it is imbued with a warm fellow-feeling, full of delight and wonder at all aspects of the natural world, even the lowliest. At the abandoned capital of Fukuhara, the author has the young Musashi no Kami write:

...in the cracks of all the paving stones
various grasses grew luxuriously. Gen no shōko,

Obako, susuki, ominaeshi etc...It was arranged that I stay at the beach palace. This building was dilapidated like the others. The eaves leaned and a big hole gaped in the roof. I could gaze at the night sky and the moon through that hole. In the corridors great numbers of seabirds flocked, flapping their wings. 16

Finding nature fascinating even in desolation, Musashi no Kami carefully notes the presence of the simplest weeds and grasses, calling them affectionately by name and later he shares his billet contentedly with seabirds and the moon.

The author's delight in the world of nature is partly an expression of his fascination with its great vigour and vitality. Thus Musashi no Kami notes the size of the banana leaves in the garden at Rokuhara:

I believed that the leaves of the banana tree in the garden weren't any bigger than usual, but when I looked at them just now, I noticed they were twice as big as last year. In the shade of the banana leaves sturdy flowers are blooming. 17

Or his attention is attracted by the "splendidly protruding branch of a karatachi hedge"¹⁸ that has the power to scratch the armour of soldiers riding past. Nature's vigour sometimes seems to possess an almost magical potency. For example, the pine tree in the Kojima camp is described as the kind of tree "a tengu would sit in."¹⁹ Ibuse's sense of wonder at the natural world, then, is not precious or artificial. He observes the world of nature as he does the world of men -- carefully and matter-of-factly yet with a certain sympathetic affection and admiration that finds pleasure and satisfaction in nature's variety and vitality.

Ibuse's special way of looking at the world is thus marked by a sense of delight, a very real feeling for the inter-connectedness of all phenomena both natural and human as well as by an emphasis upon the immediacy of the moment. The essential charm of Sazanami gunki seems to lie in the

author's successful communication of these several viewpoints which, by virtue of their charm and appeal, suggest that the author is tapping something basic in the human consciousness; he seems to have re-created some fundamental life experience which we all know and share. In short, Ibuse's particular mode of perception seems to recall the special vision of childhood and early youth. Just as Ibuse utilizes humour and pathos in "Sanshōuo" to create a feeling of lightness and ease, so in Sazanami gunki he maintains a similar lightness of tone through the evocation of a kind of 'child-like' sense of wonder and pleasure in all the myriad facets of life and experience.

This child-like quality is made even more pronounced by the fact that the main protagonist, Musashi no Kami, is himself still a boy. Although we do not know Musashi no Kami's exact age, the author refers to him in the opening lines as a boy (shōnen) and, although Musashi no Kami matures considerably during the course of the story, he does not lose his child-like mode of perception. That is, although he comes to know the pain of parting, sadness, death and the pressures of adult responsibility, Musashi no Kami does not become trapped by any particular emotion or experience. For this young nobleman, adulthood seems to bring a fuller participation in life and a widening of possibilities rather than limitation, confinement or restriction.

Musashi no Kami, then, continues to trust in life. As in the past, his feelings are powerful, but fluid and thus he possesses a great capacity for adapting to life's vicissitudes. In short, the young Musashi no Kami does not attempt to cling on to the passing phenomena of life, instead he lets go. This brings a flexibility and resilience of character reminiscent of childhood; it also brings lightness and buoyancy in tone and, in the final analysis, seems to suggest something about the nature of Ibuse's detachment.

As in "Sanshōuo" the author is clearly fascinated with the phenomena of life and tries to observe it as clearly and as carefully as possible. In order to do this he strives to avoid excessive emotion which by its very nature implies attachment, a kind of blockage in the flow and movement of life. In order to prevent as many blockages as possible, Ibuse maintains his position of detached observer. Whereas the author relied primarily upon humour and irony in "Sanshōuo" to maintain this detachment, in Sazanami gunki he depends chiefly upon his ability to evoke the flow and movement of life. Thus, he does not hold onto events, nor to emotions. He is able to mention the glow from the fire destroying the capital in almost the same sentence as he notes the tendency to doze in the saddle; he records the burning of the girl's village at the same time as news of the casting of the Great Buddha; he contrasts the luxuriously growing grasses with the ruins of Fukuhara. This continual juxtaposition of such seemingly disparate elements gives a feeling of constant change and renewal which precludes any excessive attachment and also, in a manner which recalls the fresh spirit of early youth and childhood, creates a feeling of wonder and delight as the world is made anew with every changing image.

In Sazanami gunki Ibuse has come a long way from his experimental first work, "Sanshōuo". In "Sanshōuo" confined both by theme and genre, Ibuse seemed unable to find true ease of expression. Although "Sanshōuo" is undoubtedly the kernel from which all his later work grows, it is far too tight, withdrawn and difficult to show Ibuse's real potential as a writer. Sazanami gunki, on the other hand, represents the first full flowering of Ibuse's abilities. Exceeding all other early works in conception, in scope and in execution, Sazanami gunki must surely stand as Ibuse's earliest masterpiece. No doubt the actual manner in which Sazanami gunki

was written might help to explain, to some extent, the author's remarkable achievement. Ibuse began writing Sazanami gunki in 1930 and published it in a series of installments and under various titles until 1938 when the work was finally consolidated in its present form.²⁰ It seems that as the author himself evolved and matured, so did the work. Nevertheless, almost one-third of Sazanami gunki was completed by the end of 1930 and thus major questions of style, format and characterization were already determined at the earliest date.

Sazanami gunki can thus be viewed as a work in which Ibuse first fully realizes his capabilities as a writer. Leaving behind the darkness and resignation of "Sanshōuo" Ibuse moves into the bright world of Sazanami gunki where each episode stresses the reality of the present moment and also that moment's quickly changing patterns. The solidity or reality of life is seen in the use of concrete imagery which stresses the vitality and interconnectedness of man and nature while life's flow is seen in the ever-changing variety and diversity which characterizes both the human and natural worlds. In these ways, then, the author calls our attention to the immediacy of life and instills throughout the work a child-like feeling of wonder and delight at its protean vitality.

In Sazanami gunki the feeling of darkness and confinement seen in "Sanshōuo" has been dispersed, although perhaps not quite dispelled. In spite of the accent on movement, growth and vitality, the spectres of loneliness and exile cast their dark shadows now here, now there. And yet, in spite of and perhaps due to these very shadows of adversity, an inexperienced boy becomes a young man while the author himself, emerging from the depths of literary experimentalism and self-consciousness, brings to fruition a prose style that is unique in its ability to bestow a sense of life and light even in the midst of war and upheaval.

Chapter 3

In "Yōhai taichō", a short story written in 1950 some twelve years after the completion of Sazanami gunki and set in a country hamlet around the end of World War II, Ibuse views the closed and static world of village life and contrasts its more or less fixed standards and attitudes with the changes wrought in the weary soldiers coming home from war. One of these soldiers is Yūichi Okazaki, ex-lieutenant in the Japanese army. Lamé, no longer in his right mind, given to periodic mad fits, Yūichi presents a rather sorry figure in comparison to the youthful and enterprising Musashi no Kami of Sazanami gunki. In contrast, too, to the almost lyrical evocation of the distant past seen in Sazanami gunki, "Yōhai taichō" is a pungent satire of the contemporary scene that arouses the reader's laughter as well as his sympathies. Yūichi, the mad ex-officer, still believes he is in command of his own troops and, given to raving and shouting wild orders, he is a major source of disruption in the otherwise peaceful village of Sasayama. Although he is now only a pathetic caricature of the hard-nosed military man, Yūichi was once greatly feared by his troops who, mocking his passion for bowing repeatedly to the East (i.e., to the Emperor), gave him the nickname 'yōhai taichō' or Lieutenant Lookeast.

In this story, Ibuse, using the figure of the ranting ex-officer as a pivotal point, skillfully shows the attitudes and mores of village society through the various reactions of the villagers to the madman in their midst. The satire is thus double-edged; directed not only against the rigid and intolerant military character, it also pokes fun at the everyday world of village life where gossip often runs wild and where the young are coerced into maintaining the status quo. Although its topicality and satirical bent make "Yōhai taichō" a work which will appeal naturally to

the modern taste, whether in Japan or in the West, its success as a work of art may also be attributed to the author's careful manipulation and juxtaposition of various levels within the story itself. In contrast to the multi-imaged scenes of Sazanami gunki, "Yōhai taichō" is perhaps more reminiscent of "Sanshōuo" in that it is multi-layered. Whereas Sazanami gunki captivated the reader by its emphasis upon the variety and vitality of the wide world of external reality, "Yōhai taichō", similar to "Sanshōuo", reaches down into the depths and probes below the surface, exposing the foibles of human beings while at the same time suggesting their virtues. In order to see the exact nature of this relationship between "Yōhai taichō" and the earlier works and thus determine the significance of "Yōhai taichō" and its place in Ibuse's writings, this work will be examined in some detail with attention given particularly to theme and structure, characterization and technique.

In "Yōhai taichō", the author once again turns his attention towards the theme of confinement. Similar to the salamander trapped in the cave due to its own folly, ex-lieutenant Yūichi Okazaki, too, suffers because of his own foolish and uncompromising behaviour. Yet Yūichi finds himself enclosed not by the rock walls of a cave but by the mental prison of insanity. Labouring under the delusion that the war is still on and that the able-bodied men of Sasayama are troops under his command, Yūichi, at the height of one of his attacks, can cause quite a disturbance with his unexpected commands to "Charge!", "Take cover!" or "Fetch me the NCO!"¹ He even exchanges blows with a stranger who refuses to obey his orders and, on occasion when escorted home by the villagers, he is shut up in a sturdy cage by his mother for two or three days until the attack passes. Thus, Yūichi's confinement is both literal and figurative: he is imprisoned not only by

delusions of the past, but also by the stout wooden bars of his mother's cage. The author tells us that:

By and large, a general distinction can be made: when he is not having an attack, Yūichi has the illusion that he is stationed at home, whereas during an attack he is stationed overseas. 2

Yūichi lives continually in a delusion from which there is no escape. Utterly lost in events from the past, Yūichi is no longer aware of the reality of the present. For him, time has come to a standstill. Like the salamander, Yūichi exists in a state of perpetual stasis and confinement. Even the Chinese character used to write Yūichi's name: yū, 悠 suggests images of permanence and eternity, emphasizing the fact that his confinement is truly inescapable.

Although Yūichi leads an existence which is totally circumscribed and restricted by the bonds of his illness, there are other factors which tend to mitigate the harshness of his situation. His mother, in spite of the sturdy wooden cage, does not treat Yūichi cruelly. On the contrary, she provides him with shelter and protection. Doing her best to keep him out of mischief, she treats Yūichi like a wayward child which, in fact, is how he often acts, pretending to run away from her and then hiding in chicken coops or night-soil sheds. Even though he tries to hide, Yūichi sticks close to home and never leaves his section of the village. The villagers, too, are surprisingly tolerant, even kind, in their treatment of Yūichi and will do their best to humour him even in awkward circumstances. They feel called upon to protect Yūichi from the rough treatment of outsiders who may not understand his ways. Thus, in spite of his madness, Yūichi is not mistreated, but receives a goodly share of aid and support from the local people.

Yūichi's confinement, then, like that of the salamander

in the cave, seems to have both restrictive and protective aspects. Unable to change, unable to get well, sometimes shut up in a cage, Yūichi is nonetheless sheltered and protected from unnecessary cruelty and punishments. Unlike the salamander, however, Yūichi makes no real attempt to escape and does not seem to realize at all the fact of his own confinement.

Not only is Yūichi almost entirely unaware of the facts of the present, he also seems to remember very little from the past. His loss of memory seems to centre primarily around the injuries he has suffered and thus all enquiries about his lame leg elicit nothing but a blank stare. The actual cause of Yūichi's condition is shrouded in mystery and leads to no end of speculation by the villagers who propose several theories, each of which has a brief vogue. The mystery is eventually dispelled by Yojū, a villager of the same age as Yūichi (32), who, returning home from war, hears the story from Yūichi's ex-orderly, Ueda Gorō, on the train south from Tsugaru.

Ueda's tale adds another dimension to the story, transporting the reader from the cozy atmosphere of Sasayama village to the steamy jungles of war-torn Malaya. Unlike the wandering of the Heike through the bright world of the Inland Sea, however, the progress of Yūichi and his platoon is hampered on all sides by the rigors of the climate, by the destruction caused by war as well as by the breakdown of one of their own transport vehicles. Forced to take refuge in a grove of rubber trees until a bombed-out bridge can be repaired, Yūichi and his platoon can do nothing but wait and watch for air raids. Finally, just when the unit begins to cross the newly completed bridge, the lead truck breaks down in the middle and they are again prevented from moving on. Packed tight in the trucks, the men soon find the heat stifling and begin loud, desultory conversations. Noting the vast number of bomb craters nearby, one of the men, Lance-corporal Tomomura, comments upon the

extravagance of military expenditure:

"An extravagant business, war is," said a lance-corporal called Tomomura. "Extravagant. War costs money, it does." 3

Yūichi, sitting in the front of the truck, cannot help but overhear this remark and, jumping down from his seat, he goes to the rear of the truck to discipline the man. Standing just inside the tailgate, Yūichi orders Tomomura to stand and repeat what he has just said. When Tomomura does so, Yūichi hits him twice across the face and is ready to hit him a third time when the truck suddenly gives a lurch and the two men are catapulted out of the truck and over the edge of the bridge, Yūichi pulling Tomomura down after him. Tomomura disappears in the muddy river while Yūichi, who lands on a bit of concrete debris, escapes with a severe head wound and a broken leg. Tomomura's body is never recovered while Yūichi, suffering from his head injury, spends the rest of his military career confined to the field hospital, afflicted with jungle sores, muttering scraps of military jargon and bowing assiduously to the east.

Yūichi's fanatic devotion to military principles, then, leads directly to his own downfall. Losing the ability to judge and discern in the fall from the truck, Yūichi's obsession with duty and service begins to run entirely out of control. One soldier remarks:

"He's had it...if you ask me," said one soldier who went to the hospital. "Real simple-minded, he is. It's like he was full of drink." 4

Nevertheless, it seems that Yūichi's 'intoxication' is not entirely a new phenomenon. On board the transport to South-east Asia (Ueda reports) Yūichi was already notorious for having his men bow to the east. In a pep talk one day he tried to explain to his men the ecstasy which can be gained from a true understanding of the spirit of self-sacrifice

and service:

"If only you read the Field Service Code deeply and thoughtfully enough...you, too, my men, will, in a great flash of light, suddenly perceive the wonderful truth behind our bowing to the east. Once you begin to understand it, it will fill you with a kind of intoxication." 5

Thus, the blow on the head has only aggravated and exaggerated Yūichi's obsession. Caught up in fanaticism and the excessive emotion which it generates, Yūichi has never been able to view life with the graceful detachment evinced by Musashi no Kami in Sazanami gunki. Yūichi seems doomed to live out his life in a permanent state of 'intoxication' with his fanatic principles.

Ueda's story shows us that Yūichi has never been particularly well-balanced and thus not only do we begin to see Yūichi in a new light, we also begin to realize the astuteness of the villagers and their principal theory. Although some of the village speculation concerning Yūichi's condition borders on the bizarre or sensational (e.g., a strange South Pacific malady or congenital syphilis), the theory that gains general acceptance is the one that is the closest to the truth:

Even in the army, they reasoned, Yūichi's insistence, in his language and behaviour, on service and self-sacrifice must have seemed overdone; it was quite possible that a colleague had complained to him about it, that they had fallen to blows, and that he had broken a leg as a result. Thus the theory evolved that he had broken his leg in a fight with someone with whom he had quarreled. 6

The villagers, it seems, were well aware of Yūichi's fanatic proclivities long before his accident and, taking their explanation of Yūichi's behaviour one step further, they even begin to cite Yūichi "as a good example of how the sins of the parents are visited on the children."⁷ Yūichi seems to

come by his over-zealousness naturally. His mother, too, is possessed of a great earnestness which, although it could hardly be called a 'sin', is nevertheless somewhat excessive. In the original Japanese text the word used in the context of the above quote is a word which means fate; karma; causality; inga; 因果⁸, a word which shows, perhaps more eloquently than any other, the true nature of Yūichi's confinement.

After the death of Yūichi's father whose demise was the result partly of the deprivations of poverty, Yūichi's mother hired herself out as a maid and, from her earnings, managed singlehandedly to put Yūichi through school as well as refurbish her property, tiling the roof, planting a hedge of cedars around the grounds and setting up enormous concrete gateposts. The gateposts were

...added for good measure, without any relevance to the garden and the surrounding scene, but the neighbours nevertheless could hardly fail to be impressed by the will to succeed that had made his mother lay out so much money on such a detail.⁹

Although the translation uses the phrase 'will to succeed', the word in the Japanese text is ikigomi, 意気込¹⁰ which means not only determination but also ardour and enthusiasm and thus shows Yūichi's mother to be motivated not only by strength of will but also by intense desire and emotion. Her intensity as well as her tremendous sense of devotion seem to have been passed onto her son whose loyalty to the Emperor and unswerving devotion to the fortunes of the state become his sole *raison d'être*.

"...I'd like you to see the concrete gateposts outside Yūichi's house. You'll never understand him properly until you've seen those."¹¹

So Yojū remarks to Ueda. And indeed, these concrete gateposts not only bring Yūichi and his mother a better social standing, they also bring praise from the villagerheadman himself and a recommendation for Yūichi for cadet training college. In

short, the concrete gateposts bring Yūichi and his mother both prosperity and opportunity and, almost as if Yūichi's mother had made a second marriage, the village headman praises their "model family!"¹² The concrete gateposts are thus not only a symbol of motherly love and devotion. They also evoke masculine images of worldly success and opportunity, their presence actually helping to provide Yūichi with patriarchal support and patronage. Yūichi, seeking to express his gratitude as well as his devotion, gradually comes to embrace a ritual in which the central figure, the Emperor, symbolizes, like the gateposts, the bestowal of protection and largesse.

The gateposts, a typically complex Ibusean symbol, suggest a variety of images and meanings which the villagers seem to have summed up rather well in the simple yet revealing phrase: "the fate/karma (trans. 'sins') of the parents", oya no inga, 親の因果.¹³ The gateposts, both father and mother, help to remind us that in Ibuse's works one's fate is not only the result of daily circumstances (e.g., Yūichi and the stalled truck, Tomomura and his chance remark) but it is also something which is imposed upon one by the accident of birth and heredity. Thus, Yūichi's present condition is the result not only of his own actions but also of the actions of his mother who, with her tendency towards extravagant gestures, helped to seal her son's fate.

In contrast to Yūichi who is the prisoner of his delusions, the rest of the villagers adapt fairly readily to the vicissitudes of life. During the war, for example, the villagers did not find Yūichi's attacks particularly noticeable, but

...as Japan's defeat became imminent...people began to wonder at his way of carrying on. And it was not until several days after the end of the war that he showed unmistakable signs of mad fits. 14

Thus it is clear that although the villagers are able to move with the times, Yūichi can not. Nevertheless change in the village remains largely superficial when seen in the context of village customs and traditions. Young men like Yojū just back from the war, for example, are urged to conform to the old ways:

Hashimoto...said soothingly, "Now don't say that, Yojū. When in Rome, you know...If you don't behave, you'll find yourself without a girl to marry you." 15

Although translated as "When in Rome..", the saying in the Japanese text literally means: "When in the village, abide by (the ways of) the village."¹⁶ Sasayama village is, to Yojū at least, a place of some restriction and confinement. Much like the cave of the salamander, Sasayama village exhibits both pleasant and unpleasant aspects. As a home and womb-area the village offers shelter and sustenance while in terms of modern or progressive ideas, it seems rather behind the times. Yojū, refusing repeatedly to visit his ancestor's tomb because it is "a relic of the feudal era and a symbol of religious conformism,"¹⁷ is unable to make his brother, Munejirō, and the two other villagers, Hashimoto and Shintaku, understand his point of view and, prevailed upon from all sides, Yojū is finally forced to give in and pay the requisite visit.

In the closing scenes of the story, the four men, performing their rites at the ancestral tomb, are suddenly interrupted by the peremptory voice of Yūichi as he commands them to "Fall -- in!"¹⁸ Hashimoto, immediately recognizing that Yūichi is at the height of one of his attacks, offers him a bun stuffed with bean jam which has just been laid on the grave and Yūichi, accepting the gift with every sign of gratitude, acknowledges the bun as a gift from the Emperor and then, as we might expect, orders the group to bow to the east. Even though the day is cloudy, Yūichi makes no mistake about the direction, aiming accurately towards Hattabira pond

which lies due east from the graveyard. The obeisance over, Yūichi places a small piece of the bun in each man's mouth before consuming the remainder himself. Thus occupied, Yūichi is easily caught and led away by his mother who comes creeping up behind him. Spitting out the bits of bun, the four worshippers turn back to the grave to repay their respects, but Yojū is furious:

"Rubbish, the whole lot of it was!" said Yojū.
 "Nothing but a lot of playacting by madmen. A chorus by a bunch of men in jackboots." 19

It takes both Munejirō and Hashimoto to calm Yojū down and, as they return to the village, Munejirō realizes that as elder brother he will have to assert some authority over Yojū who on top of his outburst just now has also ignored his request to drain Hattabira pond. It seems that Yojū, if he wishes to marry and settle down in Sasayama, will have to learn to put up with one of its more unpleasant inhabitants as well as respect the authority of his elder brother.

The villagers, their lives circumscribed by custom and tradition, do their best to maintain the status quo. Although there is some change, it is change imposed from outside the group as a whole (as in the case of the war) rather than from within by one or two individuals. In general the villagers are loath to rock the boat and so Sasayama village remains a picture of stability and conservatism with strong roots in a continuing tradition. The villagers, similar to Yūichi, thus have a more than ordinary connection with the past. In the case of Yūichi, however, the past is not only limiting and confining, it is also totally absurd and meaningless in terms of his present existence. For the villagers, however, the past gives order and cohesion to their lives; it is meaningful in the context of the present and therein lies its value. Munejirō, for example, preventing a young man from attacking the raving Yūichi, says to him:

"Come off it! Just think a moment -- you'd put up with it all right if only it was wartime, wouldn't you? They used it (i.e., military language) all the time during the war. We're all in the same boat, aren't we?" 20

Munejirō, in recalling the past, is asking the other to share in and confirm his memory. More importantly, he is asking the other to accept that memory and the past it represents, the bad as well as the good. The young man, however, refuses and, very much like Yojū, seems to have little use for such acceptance and magnanimity. The villagers, then, in spite of their old-fashioned and stuffy ways, attempt to deal with life in ways which stress the unity and wholeness of existence. Thus they do not neglect the past nor do they refuse to accommodate the 'relic' which exists in their midst. Instead, very much like Musashi no Kami in Sazanami gunki, they seek to re-integrate their past experience with the reality of the present and by so doing re-affirm the value and significance of their own lives.

"Yōhai taichō" is a work in which the past plays a major role not only, as we have seen, in terms of theme and characterization, but also in terms of structure. Although "Yōhai taichō" begins in the present, the story does not move forward in a consecutive fashion as does Sazanami gunki, rather it continually stops and tacks back to some time in the past before moving forward again. Ueda's tale is the longest of these flashbacks and after this, the story remains in the present until the final scene in which there is a brief flashback to Yūichi's early life.

In this final scene, the four men, returning home from the graveyard, pass by Yūichi's house just as his mother is drawing water from the well. As the bucket is wound up, the sound of the iron well-chain grates unpleasantly on their ears. The village headman, the author informs us, once praised the

sound of that well-chain when he came to recommend Yūichi for cadet school and Yūichi's mother, susceptible to the flattery, for some time after that continued to "draw more water than she really needed, so that the neighbours all about would hear the sound."²¹ Thus, we are reminded once again of Yūichi's mother's lack of moderation and her son's unfortunate fate while at the same time we are struck by the way in which the story has come full cycle. Just as Yūichi is identified as the chief source of "ruptions in the village"²² in the very beginning of the story, so, at the end of the story is his mother's iron well-chain a cause of disturbance in the otherwise peaceful environs of Sasayama. "Yōhai taichō" begins with Yūichi in the present but ends with his mother in a scene from years gone by. The past, then, is gradually and continually being revealed and, as it is slowly uncovered, we begin to understand and appreciate the events of the present. Thus, the final image of Yūichi's mother drawing water from the well represents not only a scene from the past which illuminates the present and adds a finishing touch to the story, it also seems to imply that, very much like water drawn from a well, life's hidden depths can also be brought to the surface.

The impression of concealed or hidden depths is seen further in the use of natural and other imagery. In contrast to the sparkling quality of Sazanami gunki, for example, "Yōhai taichō" makes use of imagery which emphasizes murkiness or cloudiness. The muddy waters of the unknown river in Malaya thus hamper the soldiers in their search for Lance-corporal Tomomura and in the end they fail to find him. Not only is the river muddy but the clay on the river bottom sticks to the soldiers' boots and further delays their progress. The murky river seems to have the effect not only of concealing the fate of the unfortunate Tomomura, but it is also associated with the accident in which Lieutenant Lookeast's

brain becomes permanently clouded. The bomb craters which dot the area around the river are also filled with muddy water and thus their depths cannot be fathomed. In one of these craters

...two water buffaloes were soaking companionably in the muddy water, with only their heads above the surface. A white heron could be seen perched on the horns of one of the buffalo. Bird and beast alike were perfectly still, as though spellbound by the sight of the engineers at work on their bridge. 23

Immobility and concealment are thus emphasized, two qualities which are further underscored in scenes of Sasayama village, particularly in the case of Hattabira pond, a quiet backwater of Sasayama village which is filled with 'perfectly unremarkable, faintly cloudy water.'²⁴ Hattabira pond lies in a grove reached by a woodcutter's track and is the "kind of insignificant pond that a stranger would never notice."²⁵ This pond, however, figures in a children's song which Lieutenant Lookeast used to sing so often on the transport to South-east Asia that Ueda Gorō himself learned it. And it is this song and the discussion of the dialect pronunciation of Hattabira that initailly brings Ueda and Yojū together on the train from Tsugaru.

From the graveyard Hattabira pond lies due east and, as we have seen, even though the weather is cloudy, Yūichi makes no mistake about which direction the men should bow. For Yūichi, the pond seems to be the one link between his dimly remembered past and his equally dim and deluded present. Yūichi, who sang the praises of Hattabira on the troopship going south, thus continues to pay homage to its murky waters in the present. The fairly well-hidden and 'faintly cloudy waters' of Hattabira pond are closely connected with Yūichi himself and remind us of his continued isolation from life's flow due to the murky shadows of his obsession.

Isolation from life is further stressed in Yūichi's connection with the graveyard where he walks among the stones, lashing out at them with his belt as if they were his troops. The stones, however, mark the graves of the village ancestors and thus Yūichi seems to be lashing out in his deluded way not only against the lowly soldiers who believe war to be extravagant but also against the very roots of his own existence which to a large extent seem to have determined his fate. The nadir of darkness and isolation comes soon after this as Yūichi's mother, clinging to the hem of her son's jacket, pulls him away from Yojū and the others and leads him away down the hillside. Here "Yōhai taichō" reaches its gloomiest moment:

Through the trees, they could see down to the village street below, with a view onto Yūichi's house -- tiled roof, cedar hedge, concrete gateposts and all. Usually the colored glass that topped the posts glinted now red, now blue, but on a cloudy day it made a poor showing. They could see Yūichi and his mother trudging in through the gateway. 26

As the retreating figures of Yūichi and his mother merge with images of decline and obscurity, we realize the true extent of mother and son's failure and misfortune.

The villagers, however, continuing on down the hill, begin to make plans for the yearly draining of Hattabira pond on the next day. It seems that just as the unknown events surrounding Yūichi's illness have at last been revealed to the villagers of Sasayama, so, too, will the hidden depths and recesses of Hattabira pond now stand exposed to the light and air. Thus, in spite of imagery which stresses concealment and darkness, the hidden depths are gradually brought to light and, as the past slowly comes to illuminate the present, our view of Yūichi and the village of Sasayama is also altered. Instead of simply an obnoxious and overbearing madman, we see also a son who has come to

represent the failure of all his mother's fond hopes and instead of simply a gossipy, close-knit, conservative little community, we see also a group of people who possess a great tolerance, an amazing resilience and also, in the face of life's changing fortunes, an unhesitating acceptance.

The author's keen sensitivity to life's contrasting possibilities, then, creates a work which alternately excites our laughter and arouses our pity. This ability to combine elements which are amusing or ironic with those which are pitiful or pathetic is a technique which we have seen before in "Sanshōuo" and in "Yōhai taichō" it is again employed. In "Yōhai taichō", however, there is a certain edge to the irony and amusement which is not seen in "Sanshōuo" and it is this which, among other things, seems to give "Yōhai taichō" its particular intensity.

No doubt such intensity is due in part to the way in which Ibuse has chosen to treat the theme of confinement, i.e., through emphasis on madness and militarism, two elements which tend to provoke extreme reaction and emotion in most people whether in Japan or in the West. Ibuse himself is no exception in this case and manages to convey his feelings very clearly by equating the uncompromising military mind with obsession and madness. Thus, irony becomes satire and the reader is invited to share in the author's outrage at the excesses of the military. At the same time, the village of Sasayama comes in for its share of mockery as Yūichi's fate is shown to be closely tied up with his mother's extravagance and village hypocrisy. Nevertheless, the village has its redeeming features whereas the military does not, and in this the author reveals his bias.

For Ibuse, both militarism and madness are extreme forms of attachment and thus they tend to block life's flow. By placing such elements within the context of ordinary everyday life, the author is able to demonstrate their obstructive

qualities to full advantage. Such juxtapositions also create a sense of the absurd and the incongruous and it is through this sense of incongruity that Ibuse is able to make us laugh. Thus, Yūichi's arrival on a scene is always incongruous:

...two young men who had come to the village to buy vegetables for the black market were resting by the wayside shrine, when Yūichi happened to come past. "Target, three hundred!" he declared, much to their astonishment. "Goddam fools!" he chided them almost immediately. "What are you dithering for? You're under fire!" 27

Such humorous incongruity is often followed by a satirical observation:

Utterly demoralized, the two young men inquired no further, but fled in abject confusion. The war was only just over, and in all likelihood the vegetable brokers were intimidated by a certain authority they sensed in the military phraseology. This was a hangover, no doubt, from wartime days, when military language was something no one could afford to ignore. 28

Ibuse's satire against the rigidity of military thinking is no doubt partly the result of his own experiences when, drafted to serve as a war reporter in Singapore from 1941-42, Ibuse found himself in the midst of men devoted to a military cause. Nevertheless, in spite of the author's obvious distaste for such rigidity of thought and emotion, he does not allow such feelings to gain the upper hand. Instead, the intensity of "Yōhai taichō" is tempered throughout by images which arouse our pity and compassion. Due no doubt to the sharpness of the satire, such images seem all the more pathetic.

Yūichi, for example, the "stiff-necked martyr to duty,"²⁹ is also portrayed as singing a children's song on the way to war. And, in his madness, Yūichi is frequently likened to someone possessed by a fox spirit, yet Yūichi, the author tells us, is not nearly so elusive. Rather than fleeing from hilltop to hilltop, he merely hides in chicken coops. Yūichi

is also shown to be fond of sweet things and towards the end of the story in a rare gesture of gratitude he acknowledges the gift of the bun from the four worshippers. In such ways as these, the author evokes not only the pathos of Yūichi's condition but also his essential humanity. Mad and offensive though he may be, this "God-awful" relic³⁰ is not devoid entirely of human sensibilities.

"Yōhai taichō", then, is a complex work of several levels. The village and the outside world, past and present, madness and fate, war and change are but a few of the many layers which are superimposed one upon the other in this story. In respect of this complexity as well as in its theme of confinement and in the use of humour, "Yōhai taichō" has much in common with "Sanshōuo". On the other hand, "Yōhai taichō" is not self-conscious nor self-absorbed as is "Sanshōuo", but looks to the outer world for inspiration very much as does Sazanami gunki. Thus, "Yōhai taichō", similar to Sazanami gunki, is able to incorporate a great variety of characters and situations into its whole, and yet at the same time, unlike Sazanami gunki, it dwells upon the deep and intimate connections between these figures and events. "Yōhai taichō", therefore, represents a very particular merging of earlier stylistic patterns and devices. Whereas "Sanshōuo" stressed the vitality of the inner, hidden world and Sazanami gunki the vitality of the external, "Yōhai taichō" incorporates both, thereby achieving a greater unity as well as a greater concentration and complexity.

Instead of the constantly moving, ever-expanding scenery of Sazanami gunki or the tight and static world of "Sanshōuo", "Yōhai taichō" moves back and forth in time and space, gradually bringing the picture of Sasayama village and its madman, Yūichi Okazaki, into sharper and sharper focus. "Yōhai taichō" is thus an extremely sophisticated example of Ibuse's ability to examine one scene in minute detail. Here

he shows us not only that scene's various aspects, he also brings to light its unexpected angles and hidden depths.

"Yōhai taichō" possesses an outstanding acuity as well as compactness, representing not only a new refinement of style and technique but also a consolidation of earlier perspectives. Inasmuch as "Yōhai taichō" represents an attempt by the author to come to terms with war and its aftermath, it also represents an attempt to re-integrate an earlier pre-war literary vision with the demands of a new era. And so, like the soldiers in his story, Ibuse turns towards home, taking with him past and present, war and peace, inner and outer and, setting it against the relatively unchanging backdrop of village life, he finds not bitterness or resignation but, in fact, acceptance and the determination to carry on, qualities which seem to give "Yōhai taichō" its added poignancy and strength.

Chapter 4

Perhaps the most widely known and widely read of all Ibuse's works, both in Japan and in the West, is Kuroi ame. Separated from "Yōhai taichō" by fourteen years and from the event it describes by nearly two decades, Kuroi ame was completed when Ibuse was nearly seventy years of age. Thus this work attests not only the author's great vigour and virtuosity as a writer, but also his tremendous vitality and perceptivity as a human being who, from the vantage point of age and experience, has brought his full talents to bear upon the portrayal of an event which does not readily lend itself to any form of aesthetic interpretation -- the atomic bombing of Hiroshima.

There have been many attempts (both East and West) to write a "book about the bomb"¹ and in Japan this kind of work has even acquired the status of a particular genre, the 'atomic bomb novel' or genbaku shosetsu 原爆小説, yet in spite of such numerous attempts, very few works have succeeded in achieving any major literary standing. Two works which may be mentioned here as among the better examples of this type of literature are Natsu no hana 夏の花 (Summer Flowers, 1947) by Hara Tamiki 原民喜 (1905-1951) and Shikabane no machi 屍の町 (City of Corpses, 1945) by Ōta Yōko 大田洋子 (1903-1963), the latter of these being one of the works which Ibuse himself regarded as of particular value.² Part of the difficulty in writing about the bombing no doubt stems from the nature of the material itself which constitutes, for the most part, accounts of endless horrors, grotesquery and tragedy. Ibuse's success in avoiding the sensational yet in evoking the reality of the event is due no doubt to his ability to examine and observe the world from a position of some detachment, considering both the pleasant and the disagreeable, the ordinary

and the extraordinary as but parts of the whole. Not only is the author able to maintain objectivity, he also has considerable experience, as we have seen, in treating themes of war and disaster. Besides such works as Sazanami gunki and "Yōhai taichō" which deal with war, there is a whole body of Ibuse's works which are concerned with natural disasters and the reactions of human beings caught up in such catastrophes. The author's initial fascination with excessive and violent natural events can be seen even in "Sanshōuo" in the image of the powerfully moving whirlpool. These novels of disaster are not limited to one period of the author's career, but span four decades of Ibuse's creative life. Thus, Ibuse writes about such varied calamities as those of volcanic eruption in "Aogashima taigaiki", of flood in "Nakajima no kaki no ki" 中島の柿の木 ("Nakajima's Persimmon Tree," 1938), of fire and volcano in "Gojinka" ("The Sacred Fire," 1943), of volcano, landslide and the submersion of an island in "Wabisuke", of shipwreck in Jon Manjirō hyōryūki and Hyōmin Usaburō and finally of the atomic disaster in "Kakitsubata" かきつばた ("Iris," 1953) and Kuroi ame.³

Ibuse's long fascination and experience with themes of war and disaster as well as his skillful utilization of stylistic devices which foster objectivity seem to be two possible reasons why he has been successful in writing about the bomb where others have failed. Nevertheless, there are other reasons for the success of this work, some of which have been pointed out by other critics in analyses and commentaries on Kuroi ame. Kawakami Tetsutarō, for example, notes that Kuroi ame does not play upon the reader's sense of righteous indignation but instead emphasizes the stoicism and endurance of the people of Hiroshima. It is this "constancy of heart"⁴ and "extraordinary ordinariness"⁵ that helps set Kuroi ame apart from the typical atomic bomb

novel. Other Japanese critics also remark upon the outstanding strength and earnestness of the town and country folk and comment in various ways upon the vivid evocation of everyday life that is perhaps a hallmark of Kuroi ame. Nevertheless, there is as yet relatively little criticism on Kuroi ame among Japanese scholars and critics⁶ whereas the work has not yet been dealt with in any detail by Western scholars with one notable exception, i.e., the rather extensive analysis proposed by A.V. Liman. Professor Liman sees Kuroi ame as a mythopoeic structure in which rising forces (tatsu chikara)⁷ characterized by pillars, trees, columns etc. and flowing forces (nagareru chikara)⁸ characterized by waves, rivers, whirlpools etc. meet and mingle, thereby creating a series of patterns and images that offer a glimpse into the very nature of the cosmic forces which encompass the realms of life and death, heaven and hell, the individual and the universe.

Such observations as the above, then, show us that Kuroi ame is much more than a novel about the atomic bomb. A work of great scope and many facets, the reasons for its success also appear to be manifold. In order to determine the significance of this work not only in relation to the above interpretations but also in terms of its place in the body of Ibuse's writings, Kuroi ame will be examined, as were previous works, with particular attention being paid to theme and structure, characterization and technique.

Ibuse first began writing Kuroi ame under the title Mei no kekkon, 妹の結婚, The Niece's Marriage⁹ and only later changed it to Kuroi ame.⁹ The use of these two rather disparate titles indicates that there are in fact two stories here, one, the story of Shigematsu Shizuma's attempt to find a husband for his niece, Yasuko, and the other, the story of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima which was followed, among

other strange phenomena, by a 'black rain'. Since local village rumour has it that Yasuko was present in Hiroshima when the bomb fell, it is suspected that she must have contracted some radiation disease and thus no marriage proposals are forthcoming. It is in order to dispell such a rumour as this that Shigematsu undertakes the transcription of Yasuko's diary of the bombing for the perusal of the go-between. Later he decides to append his own journal of the bombing to Yasuko's briefer account and it is this document which forms the basis of the rest of the story.

The diary, similar to Sazanami gunki, provides the story's basic structure, yet in Kuroi ame this structure is infinitely more complex, incorporating not only Yasuko's diary and Shigematsu's "Journal of the Bombing" but several other diaries and numerous eye-witness accounts as well.¹⁰ Nevertheless, it is primarily through Shigematsu's journal that the story unfolds, gradually revealing the events of the past. The emphasis upon the significance and importance of the recorded past is seen as Shigematsu finishes the transcription of Yasuko's diary and decides to append his own. He tells his wife, Shigeko:

"This diary of the bombing is my piece of history, to be preserved in the school library." 11

For Shigematsu, as for the villagers of Sasayama in "Yōhai taichō", the past has meaning and it is through the acknowledgment and understanding of this past that life acquires significance. Also like the villagers of Sasayama, Shigematsu looks to the past for reassurance and vindication of his own actions. The diary, he hopes, will give Yasuko a clean bill of health, proving that she was nowhere near the blast on the day the bomb fell.

Engrossed in the copying of his old journal, Shigematsu soon finds himself caught up in memories of those war-time days and, as the diary entries become longer, the past indeed seems to live again. So compelling is this record of the past

that Shigematsu returns to the present only to eat, to run errands or to check on the progress of the baby carp he and his friends are raising. Otherwise, he is totally absorbed in the events of his journal and for three-quarters of the story his present life seems a mere leitmotiv compared to the story of the bombing. When the present at last asserts itself, however, it does so with a vengeance as Shigematsu's hopes for Yasuko are dashed. Delving deeper and deeper into the events surrounding the bombing, Shigematsu soon comes to realize that proximity to the blast is not the only criterion for contamination. Simply walking through the ruins as did Shigematsu with his wife and Yasuko is enough in most cases to cause sickness and death. The past, then, far from vindicating Shigematsu's convictions, confirms his worst fears and at the same time, gives an unexpectedly unpleasant twist to the present as Shigematsu discovers that Yasuko has begun to show symptoms of radiation disease.

Unable to continue with his transcription, Shigematsu casts about for a cure, for any ray of hope, and by chance comes to hear of the remarkable recovery of Dr. Iwatake who, in a much worse condition than Yasuko, managed to beat the disease. Iwatake's account of the bombing, his injuries and subsequent illness and recovery as well as his wife's recollections fill the final chapters of Kuroi ame, giving Shigematsu new hope and the necessary impetus to finish his own transcription.

The past, similar to "Yōhai taichō", represents the hidden, seemingly unimportant or forgotten moments of life from which present events take their shape and in Kuroi ame such matters are brought to light primarily through the medium of written records which provide lengthy and absorbing flashbacks into the past. The past, also as in "Yōhai taichō", not only helps to clarify the present and affirm the signifi-

cance of human existence, it also brings to our attention the vagaries and restrictions of fate (i.e., of past actions). At the same time, however, the events of the past are developed much more fully than in the earlier work and in Kuroi ame we come to realize the tremendous significance that past time has for the author. Not only is the past seen as restricting and confining, it is also seen as supportive and reassuring, hence the close association of the past with the village, its environs and with mature female figures such as the mother and/or the woman of the household. Whereas this female figure was portrayed as a symbol of fate and confinement in "Yōhai taichō", in Kuroi ame she appears primarily as a custodian or guardian:

In the old days, Shigematsu had left the regular airing of the things in the storehouse entirely to his mother; since she had died, he had left it to Shigeko. 12

Shigeko's position as protector of the past is further emphasized as she takes Shigematsu into the dark and gloomy family storehouse to show him the colour of the ink in an old letter. The letter, written in Western ink in the early years of Meiji, is found to have faded and this prompts Shigematsu to resume his transcription using Japanese brush and paper instead of the Western pen he has employed so far. Thus, no matter how fragile or faded, the past is preserved and protected in the dark recesses of the family storehouse, an area associated with wife and mother, representing the womb-space of the family itself and thus the static forces of life, forces with which Shigematsu is also closely associated in his role as recorder and preserver of past events.

At the same time, however, the past is also seen as an acknowledgment of life's flow and movement. This emphasis upon the past both as static entity and as indicator of life's flow can be seen particularly well in the descriptions of

everyday life in war-time Hiroshima as well as in the continual references throughout the story to other historical periods, particularly to times of war or, as in the case of the above letter, to times of radical social change.¹³ It seems that the past contains both static elements (represented by the finished or completed act) as well as dynamic aspects (emphasized through historical imagery and records of daily life which stress change and movement). Thus, while the emphasis upon the past and upon life's static forces is of prime importance throughout Kuroi ame and while themes of fate and confinement as well as of support and preservation loom large, Kuroi ame also stresses change and movement, an element seen at its most dramatic in the depiction of the bombing and at its most prosaic in the activity and affairs of everyday life. Kuroi ame, then, is a work in which the wholeness of life is stressed, in which both flow and movement, stasis and confinement play major roles. The juxtaposition of these contrasting elements is instrumental not only in depicting life's totality but also in bringing unity to the work. Thus, in spite of its episodic nature, Kuroi ame is neither loose nor disjointed, but drawn tightly together through the skillful utilization and development of two pivotal elements which, in their essential natures, reflect the complementary yet opposing forces of stasis and movement, i.e., the image of the bomb, a force of sudden, radical and disastrous change and the figure of Shigematsu himself, a figure that emphasizes the steadfast and enduring qualities of man and nature.

The bomb, with its brilliant blinding flash over Hiroshima early on the morning of 6 August 1945 is the point around which every account revolves. This great flash of light followed by a tremendous roar, total darkness and the rising of an enormous mushroom-shaped cloud is

described again and again in various terms by the survivors as they recount their escape from the destroyed city:

When the bomb fell...14
 When the ball of fire...burst...15
 When a ball of fire blazed in the sky...16
 When there was a brilliant flash...17
 When there was a terrible flash of bluish-white
 light outside...like a shooting star the size
 of hundreds of suns...18

'When the bomb fell' (and its numerous variations) becomes a constant refrain which accompanies each account noted by Shigematsu as he collects and collates the myriad views of the bombing. The mysterious after-effects, the sudden collapse and death of those who are barely injured, the raging firestorm that sweeps the city -- all these features, too, are noted repeatedly by the survivors who each have their own individual story to tell. Throughout that fateful day and the days following until the Japanese surrender on 15 August, Shigematsu reports in detail not only his own thoughts and actions but also those of his family, friends, co-workers and those strangers with whom he comes in contact. What emerges is an intricate and dynamic mosaic, consisting of countless inter-locking facets, all of which reflect, in one way or another, the image of the bomb bursting over Hiroshima.

The bomb thus represents a terrific energy release which brings radical, drastic change. In this excessiveness of heat, light and movement, we see an overflow of the dynamic principle which brings death, dispersal and disruption. Just as the excessive confinement of war and militarism blocked life's flow in "Yōhai taichō", so does the excessive energy release of the atomic bomb play havoc with the natural course of things in Kuroi ame. Thus, Shigematsu notes the peculiar regeneration of a plantain tree a few days after the blast:

Yesterday, I had seen a new shoot a foot and a half

long on a plantain tree...The original stem had been snapped off by the blast and had disappeared without a trace, but a new shoot, encased in a sheath like bamboo, was already growing in its place. Today, the shoot was a good two feet long. Familiar with trees as I was, after a childhood spent on a farm, I was astonished. 19

The bomb, it seems, brings strange and unnatural change, having the power not only to destroy but also to affect life's very essence by accelerating the cycles of growth and reproduction. Not only does the bomb tamper with life's essential processes, it also exposes areas and/or objects previously hidden. The effects of this exposure are noted by Shigematsu almost at once as he observes the effects of the bomb blast on fish in making them rise to the surface and he compares this to the same effect on fish observed during an earthquake.²⁰ The bomb, similar to a natural disaster, initiates radical change and reveals life's hidden depths; yet unlike such natural disasters, its destructive energies also contain the potential to either alter or extinguish all of life itself. Closely allied to the excessiveness of the bomb which brings destruction is the excessiveness of war which, similar to "Yōhai taichō", brings restriction and confinement. In Kuroi ame, images of the bomb and of the war are closely intertwined, offering a marked and vivid contrast not only between the forces of stasis and movement, but more particularly, between the excessiveness of these forces which, unleashed and unchecked, bring unpleasant and unnatural disturbances.

The image of the bomb bursting is associated not only with the actual event but also with another equally shocking and disturbing occurrence, the discovery of Yasuko's radiation sickness. Shigematsu writes:

Her sight has deteriorated rapidly, and she complains of a constant ringing in her ears.

When she first told me about it, in the living room, there was a moment when the living room vanished and I saw a great, mushroom-shaped cloud rising into a blue sky. I saw it quite distinctly. 20

Although the effects of the bomb do not manifest in Yasuko's case until almost five years after the event, once the disease takes hold, it brings rapid and complete deterioration and within a few short weeks Yasuko becomes practically an old woman. Seemingly emphasizing the bomb's capacity to alter and accelerate life's natural cycles, the radiation disease appears as a particularly horrible and pathetic parody of the aging process. Thus, Yasuko's hair and teeth begin to fall out and, covered with festering sores, pale and anemic, she gradually becomes a bed-ridden invalid.

Besides bringing Yasuko's illness, this "new and savage"²¹ bomb is also the reason for Japan's surrender and here, in two subtle, revealing scenes the author shows us another kind of destruction which is not physical or material, but in its own way, just as devastating. Although the atomic bomb has achieved a particularly horrendous total destruction on a scale never before seen by man, the people of Hiroshima at first see the bombing as only one more misfortune of war to be endured and overcome. Everyone is still preparing to fight on. In a scene from the first chapter of Kuroi ame the village headman of Shigematsu's village of Kobatake addresses the relief and rescue team on their way to search for survivors:

"...it is an unquestionable fact that a war is in progress, and you, as members of a voluntary labor unit, are proceeding henceforth to bring home your comrades-in-arms. I must request you above all, therefore, to take care not to drop those symbols of your invincible determination to fight on to the bitter end -- your bamboo spears." 22

As the team pauses for lunch at a farmhouse half-way to

Hiroshima, they hear over the radio "an unprecedented broadcast by His Majesty the Emperor"²³ announcing the surrender. After sitting for awhile in silence, the group decides to move on, leaving their bamboo spears behind. Although the English translation explains that the broadcast is one made by the Emperor, the Japanese text is much less explicit. The sentence simply states that: "At that time (i.e., when the group was eating lunch), they heard an important broadcast on the radio inside the house."²⁴ The fact that every Japanese reader, even today, at once understands without further elaboration the nature of this 'important broadcast' shows the tremendous impact this announcement had upon the entire nation. This broadcast does not appear again in the story until the final pages where Shigematsu, able to look at the roiling mushroom cloud but unable to listen to the 'important broadcast', stands outside the works canteen gazing at baby eels swimming upstream. When the broadcast is over and Shigematsu returns to the canteen, he realizes that something very serious indeed has occurred:

I walked along the corridor towards the canteen. A stream of workers passed me, their expressions grimmer than I had ever seen them before. Some of the male hands were crying. Some of the girls had covered their faces with their work hats...Tears started into my own eyes...A middle-aged kitchen helper who had just finished setting the table came up to me. "Oh, Mr. Shizuma," she began, bowing formally in the manner of one who offers condolences, "I really don't know what to say at a time like this. You know, I may not be much - I'm only a poor old woman - but I feel so sad, and so angry...I don't want..." Her voice faltered. "Oh dear..." 25

With the Emperor's broadcast the people are psychologically destroyed in a way that the bomb itself did not accomplish. Their great efforts of sacrifice and devotion seem to have been in vain. Thus, besides the atomic blast of radiation

which destroys an entire city, other 'bombs' are released throughout the story, one, the Emperor's broadcast, a psychological bomb that nearly destroys the foundations of the society and the other, a slower-ticking time-bomb, the radiation disease that suddenly and unexpectedly almost five years later strikes Shigematsu's beautiful and innocent niece, Yasuko.

Just as images of the bomb provide a major pivotal point in the story, so, too, does the figure of Shigematsu Shizuma of Kobatake village. Shigematsu, observer and compiler, is a capable and determined individual. In contrast to the violent movement and activity associated with the bomb, Shigematsu appears as a steadfast and resolute figure, well able to withstand danger and hardship. Employed during the war in a military clothing factory just outside Hiroshima, Shigematsu is present in the city at the time of the blast. Fortunate enough to escape with only a burn on his cheek, Shigematsu is soon re-united with his wife and niece whom he leads through the burning ruins of the city to the clothing factory and relative safety. After the defeat Shigematsu and his family return to the village of Kobatake where Shigematsu suffers a mild bout of radiation sickness and finds he can no longer engage in strenuous physical activity. As a result he joins his two friends, Asajirō and Shōkichi, also survivors of the bomb, in the raising of carp, an occupation considered suitably relaxing as well as sufficiently remunerative for victims of the bomb. It is while he is copying out his journal and preparing the fry for the ponds that Shigematsu discovers his niece's illness. Powerless to cure her, Shigematsu finds himself hoping in vain for a miracle.

In many respects, then, Shigematsu is a familiar character. Very much like Miyaji Kotarō in Sazanami gunki, Shigematsu is an older, middle-aged man, steadfast and

resourceful. The portrayal of such mature or elderly men, as critics have noted, is an area in which Ibuse excels:

These men are usually in touch with the basic elements of their locale: they offer a focal point and a key to its essence...when they are put to the test, it is the strength of these earthy old men that proves equal even to the Bomb. 26

Shigematsu is one of these 'earthy old men', closely connected with his natural surroundings very much as Miyaji Kotarō was connected with the Inland Sea area in Sazanami gunki. And indeed, just as Miyaji Kotarō stood valiantly at Ichi-no-tani, so does Shigematsu 'prove equal' to the bomb at Hiroshima. This can be seen particularly well just after the bomb blast when Shigematsu realizes something dreadful must have happened:

There was no particular pain, yet a mild horror prickled at the nape of my neck...a chill struck throughout my body. Suddenly the uproar about me receded into the distance; it was not exactly faintness, but the mental shock of that moment was quite indescribable...

"Something terrible's happened," I said. "Something terrible, so we must keep calm, Mrs. Takahashi. We must think before we act. And keep really calm." 27

And again as he stares up at the mushroom cloud and feels himself about to collapse in terror:

With a mighty effort, I forced myself to get a grip on myself. Catching sight of a stick...I beat myself indiscriminately on the calves, buttocks and thighs. Next, I beat my shoulders and upper arms. Then I shut my eyes and did some deep breathing...breathing in and out very slowly, in almost incantatory fashion. It gave me back control of my legs as well as a certain mental detachment, and I set off eastward along the tracks. 28

Shigematsu struggles not only with his fears but also with his emotions which at times threaten to overpower him:

For a moment, I felt like flinging my bundle in the river. I hated war. Who cared, after all, which side won? The only important thing was to end it all as soon as possible: rather an unjust peace, than a "just" war! 29

And yet his calm practicality soon reasserts itself:

I went back to the parapet, but instead of flinging my bundle into the river made it fast on my back. It was full of things necessary for survival amidst the ruins. 30

This great fortitude and determination of Shigematsu is perhaps his most outstanding feature and even seems to be reflected in the characters of his name which mean honour and respect; oppressed; heavy, massive; to pile up: shige 重 and pine tree: matsu 松. As in Sazanami gunki human beings are again associated with trees. Professor Liman interprets the name as follows:

(Shigematsu) is not only a pine...but also a shigeru matsu. The shige of his name is written with the character for kasanaru, to pile up, store up. So the emphasis in shigeru is on the onflow, or piling up of experience, strength and wisdom that grow and pile up in waves just as a tree's years. 31

Nevertheless, in spite of Shigematsu's amazing ability to endure and to control his fears and emotions, there is another aspect of his character that is somewhat less happy. Bound and restricted by the circumstances of war and fate, the figure of Shigematsu seems to represent not only the 'piling up of experience, wisdom and strength', but also the piling up of duties and responsibilities. Kuroi ame begins:

For several years past, Shigematsu Shizuma, of the village of Kobatake, had been aware of his niece Yasuko as a weight on his mind. What was worse, he had a presentiment that the weight was going to remain with him, unspeakably oppressive, for still more years to come. In Yasuko, he seemed to have taken on a double, or even a triple, liability. 32

This 'weight' that oppresses Shigematsu in the English translation is in the Japanese text a word that also means responsibility and obligation: futan: 負担³³ and by the end of the story Shigematsu's responsibility towards Yasuko has indeed grown heavier. It was Shigematsu who brought Yasuko to Hiroshima and found her a job in his own place of work to prevent her being drafted elsewhere, and it was also Shigematsu who made the decision that they should brave the ruins of Hiroshima. Although in the beginning of the story the possibility of marriage seems remote for Yasuko, by the end of Kuroi ame her very survival seems unlikely. As far as his niece is concerned, Shigematsu seems beset by misfortune. Shigematsu's name, then, has a double significance; not only is strength and durability implied but also the heaviness of responsibility and fate.

In the figure of Shigematsu, we see one of the most powerful concentrations of the static force that has yet appeared in a character in Ibuse's works. Combining both positive and negative aspects of stasis (i.e., endurance and confinement) Shigematsu stands out as a solid and steadfast individual limited and confined by the circumstances of fate. No doubt due to such confinement and restriction, Shigematsu finds himself particularly attracted to the free and unrestrained, to the forces of flow and movement, and in this respect, perhaps nothing is as compelling and ultimately fascinating as the spectacle of the atomic disaster itself. Thus Shigematsu observes:

Although the cloud seemed at first glance to be motionless, it was by no means so. The head of the mushroom would billow out first to the east, then to the west, then out to the east again; each time, some part or other of its body would emit a fierce light, in ever-changing shades of red, purple, lapis-lazuli or green. And all the time it went on boiling out unceasingly from within. Its stalk, like a twisted veil of fine cloth, went on swelling busily, too. 34

And some time later:

The mushroom cloud was really shaped more like a jellyfish than a mushroom. Yet it seemed to have a more animal vitality than any jellyfish, with its leg that quivered and its head that changed colour as it sprawled out slowly toward the southeast, writhing and raging... 35

Not only is Shigematsu fascinated by the excessive and violent action of the bomb, he is also attracted by the gentler, more refreshing movements of life, such as that of the baby eels "swimming blithely upstream against the current."³⁶ Like the salamander trapped in the cave, Shigematsu also peers out at the world from the confines of his own existence and beholds the violence and movement of life with a mixture of wonder and awe. Also like the salamander, he recognizes his confinement and must struggle with his emotions. And yet, even though his feelings are active and powerful, he is not overwhelmed by them as is the salamander, or Kakutan of Izumidera in Sazanami gunki. Instead, like the ultimately detached frog figure of "Sanshōuo", Shigematsu attempts to come to terms with life and death, accepting the vicissitudes of fate and taking responsibility for his own actions. In the figure of Shigematsu, we find qualities that are particularly reminiscent of both frog and salamander, and thus in some respects the figure of Shigematsu harks back to the earliest story where two lowly creatures of the depths struggled with such imponderables as fate and confinement.

Shigematsu, too, like the frog and salamander, has close and intimate connections with the depths and, similar to the frog and salamander, he undergoes a kind of metamorphosis while immersed in these lower reaches. Called upon by the works manager to perform the last rites over those who have died on the factory grounds, Shigematsu secures the necessary sutras from an old priest and undertakes the reading of the appropriate

scriptures. From dawn to dusk for two days Shigematsu acts as priest, intoning the funeral service over the dead in the factory or in the dry riverbed where the bodies are taken for cremation. In a scene at the riverbed which recalls the twelfth century Hell Scroll paintings,³⁷ Shigematsu surveys the utter desolation:

From the top of the embankment, countless holes were visible, dug in the sand. I could see bones in most of them, and the skulls especially stood out with strange clarity...Some of the skulls gazed fixedly at the sky with empty eye sockets, others clenched their teeth in angry resentment...

In some holes, only the head and the legs had been consumed. In others, bright red tongues of flame still flickered fitfully. I remembered the other body awaiting me, and set off back along the embankment, murmuring the "Sermon on Mortality" to myself as I went. This time, I got through it without so much as a glance at my notes. 38

And later in the city where he has been sent to procure coal for the factory, the images of death and destruction which have been growing steadily throughout the story reach their maximum intensity as Shigematsu stumbles upon a scene of soldiers burning bodies in hastily dug pits. At this makeshift charnel house under the blazing summer sun, Shigematsu faces the ultimate in death and horror and, quite overcome by the spectacle, he momentarily loses himself in the realization of complete annihilation. Muttering the "Sermon on Mortality" and watching life's processes wind down to the final endpoint, Shigematsu, too, seems to touch bottom, perceiving almost in spite of himself the very depths of extinction and dissolution.

From this point onward, however, Shigematsu's connection with the end of things, with death, with the continual recitation of sutras etc. begins to disappear. Having passed through the fires of hell and beheld their workings, he now emerges from their depths, seemingly reborn from the very ashes of the destroyed city. Thus, resting on some stone

steps, Shigematsu observes:

(There was) a thick layer of ash settled on them. It was a dry, powdery ash like buckwheat flour. Dabbing at it with my finger, I found I could draw scrolls and write letters in it. I wrote all kinds of things. I visualized the blackboard at school in my childhood, and started to draw the diagram for Pythagoras's theorem... 39

For the first time, then, Shigematsu begins to entertain possibilities of reconstruction, of building a new life from the rubble. His contact with the depths of existence seems to have given him a new lease on life. Seemingly reborn from the depths, he is ready to re-enter life's flow. At the same time, however, the images of the past and of established principles that Shigematsu finds in the ashes of Hiroshima serve to re-affirm and re-establish his essential qualities of stability and constancy. Thus, Shigematsu's return to life is not marked by sudden, drastic change, but by a re-affirmation of his sturdy abilities; rather than attempting any untoward action, Shigematsu merely decides to pursue a more "independent"⁴⁰ course in his efforts to acquire the requisite coal. Shigematsu's search for this vital commodity which originates in the earth's midden recesses reminds us yet again that the depths contain possibilities not only of extinction and dissolution but also of sustenance and continuity. This process of revitalization begun in the ruins of Hiroshima continues throughout the remainder of the story and, even in the face of Yasuko's advancing illness, Shigematsu, in an act of faith and determination, reaches down once again into the depths, this time not in the role of one who officiates over the forces of dissolution, but as a progenitor in an act of creation as he struggles to bring life from the cloudy hatchery ponds he and his two friends have prepared and constructed.

Shigeko, Shigematsu's wife, is so closely allied to her husband that the two are virtually inseparable. Like Shigematsu, Shigeko also possesses the homely virtues of patience and fortitude, practicality and calm strength. If her husband is the enduring pine, then she is that pine's worthy branch. Her name, written in kana (シゲ子),⁴¹ offers no possibility for interpretation beyond that of reflecting the shige of her husband's name and thereby reinforcing her image as her husband's help-meet and faithful companion. Her notes entitled "Diet in Wartime Hiroshima" which Shigematsu appends to his journal of the bombing as well as her diary of Yasuko's illness show Shigeko to have as observant an eye as her husband in recording matters while at the same time her goodwifely image is stressed. Shigeko accompanies Shigematsu wherever he decides to lead, even through the incredible dangers and the seething ruins of Hiroshima, giving him her support and trust. Shigeko, as we have seen, is also associated with images of shelter and preservation, qualities which reflect the gentler aspect of the confined and static world of home and village. Shigeko's connection with preservation is also emphasized particularly well in the scene where she hurries to sink important household items in the pond and bury others in the air raid shelter before the approaching firestorm descends on their Hiroshima city house.

Although Shigeko's responsibilities towards Yasuko are not emphasized as are Shigematsu's, Shigeko nonetheless helps shoulder her husband's burden and the two make their way through life together, offering and receiving mutual aid and support. Thus, when we see Shigematsu, leaning on a bamboo spear and with one arm round his wife's shoulders, struggling homeward "rather like a defeated remnant from one of the peasant risings of the last century,"⁴² we realize that both Shigematsu and Shigeko, like the sturdy pine associated with their names, have their roots planted deep in

their native soil. Beset with troubles though they may be, they are both tough and durable, persistent and indomitable survivors.

Both Shigematsu and Shigeko are closely associated with the elements of stasis and confinement and thus their figures provide an effective contrast against the forces of drastic change and movement associated with the bomb. Although we have seen these elements of stasis and movement continually juxtaposed in a variety of ways throughout the story -- and indeed, the story revolves around just such a juxtaposition (i.e., between Shigematsu and the bomb) -- there are some areas in which these forces are not merely contrasted but instead seem to converge and commingle, as for example, in the case of Shigematsu's niece, Yasuko.

Yasuko has a great deal in common with her aunt and uncle. Dutiful and considerate, modest and practical, Yasuko is a great help to Shigeko and to Shigematsu, she is "almost a daughter."⁴³ Nevertheless, in spite of her capabilities, it seems that there is some inherent weakness in Yasuko's constitution. Unlike Shigematsu who has escaped with relatively mild symptoms of radiation disease and Shigeko who seems affected not at all, Yasuko becomes desperately ill for no apparent reason. Yasuko's possible contamination by the bomb is suggested early in the story, however, as she and her companions are rained on by a shower of 'black rain' coming towards them from the direction of the bombed city. No matter how hard she rubs at the marks on her skin, the spots will not come off. Shigematsu, however, blames himself for her illness and attributes its cause to the scrape which Yasuko received on her elbow as the family made their way through the sticky asphalt street of the ruined city, crawling under downed electricity cables. At any rate, for whatever the reason, the young and beautiful Yasuko on the verge of a successful marriage arrangement falls ill and weakens rapidly.

In the figure of Yasuko, then, we see not only a proper and dutiful 'daughter' dependent upon both aunt and uncle for sustenance and strength, we see also a fastidious and gentle young woman eager to enter the flow of life and yet so frightened and upset by the sudden turn of events that she gives way to despair and seems to lose even her will to live. This combination of dependence and delicacy reflects Yasuko's connection with the forces of both stasis and flow, a connection which can be seen in one of the early images of the story. When the bomb falls, Yasuko, in shock and fear, presses herself against a rock very much like the small white flower that already clings there. This image of the white flower clinging to the rock emphasizes Yasuko's relationship to her sturdy aunt and uncle and thus her connection with the static forces; at the same time this image stresses Yasuko's delicacy and fragility, qualities that call our attention to the transiency and ephemerality of life.

Although Ibuse generally tends to find vitality in the flow and movement of nature, here, in the figure of Yasuko he seems to recall more traditional associations, noting delicacy instead of strength, susceptibility instead of potency. The emphasis upon life's transiency can be seen further in the first character used in Yasuko's name: arrow, ya, 矢⁴⁴ which emphasizes Yasuko's connection with the flow of time and thus, like the image of the flower, suggests that the passage of her days will be rapid. Yasuko's delicacy is also emphasized by the ease with which she is marked by the black rain whose falling drops symbolize the pollution of life's natural flow. The second character of Yasuko's name calls our attention to the dependent or static aspect of her nature, showing it to be characterized by a sense of duty and obligation as well as by a certain amount of restriction or confinement, this second character having the meanings of ought; must; proper; to wait: su, 須⁴⁵. Thus we see that

not only must Yasuko wait for help and strength from her sturdy relatives, she is also circumscribed by obligations to them. In terms of static strengths and qualities, as with qualities of dynamism and movement, Yasuko is rather poorly endowed. Somewhat like Musashi no Kami in Sazanami gunki, Yasuko's fate is closely connected to her family as well as to the flow of time. And yet, while Musashi no Kami's life energy waxes strong, drawing strength from such a solid figure as old Kotarō, Yasuko shies away from Shigematsu once she is ill, due it seems to a combination of shame and disappointment, and thus, unable to draw strength from the one person who could be her support and mainstay, Yasuko's energy quickly wanes with time's passage as does her determination to survive. Although one can hardly blame her for giving up so horrible is the disease, Yasuko's circumstances offer a marked contrast to the much more severe case of Dr. Iwatake who somehow manages to recover.

Dr. Iwatake's story which Shigematsu shows to Yasuko's own doctor as an example of one successful treatment and recovery from this "freak disease"⁴⁶ is an encouraging tale of survival against all possible odds; an essentially true story, the real Dr. Iwatake eventually resumed his practice in Tokyo after his convalescence.⁴⁷ Unlike Yasuko, Iwatake was very close to the centre of the actual explosion. On a parade ground receiving a pepetalk from his unit's second-in-command, the middle-aged late draftee Iwatake even sees the bomb as it is dropped by parachute from a lone B-29 flying overhead. Buried under rubble, burned severely on face and hands, Iwatake nevertheless manages to free himself and make his way to safety along the river, wandering for several hours through the heart of the mushroom cloud itself. Collapsing at a reception centre for refugees, Iwatake is finally re-united with his wife who together with her brother, a doctor, nurses him back to health.

The treatment, consisting primarily of blood transfusions and injections of vitamin C, is also supplemented by a diet of grated peaches and eggs. Iwatake's wife, afraid that the peaches, a well-known local variety, will soon be out of season, stores two big lots at the bottom of a deep well. These peaches concealed in the depths of the earth remind us that life's healing and restorative processes are primarily the result of tapping those reserves of strength and endurance that lie hidden in the deep well of one's being, the static yet regenerative depths of life. And indeed, during his illness, Iwatake exists only on these peaches, managing to consume the entire amount. Even Yasuko makes an effort to contact the healing powers of the deep, pulling up and eating the roots of the aloe in a vain attempt to cure her rapidly advancing anemia. Iwatake, however, due no doubt as much to the careful ministrations of his brother-in-law and his wife as to his own inner reserves of strength, begins to recover steadily, gradually acquiring "more or less literally, a new body."⁴⁸ Iwatake's great fortitude as well as his ability to survive can also be seen in the characters of his name which are suggestive of a long and fruitful life based upon a substantial and enduring foundation: rock; crag, iwa, 岩 and bamboo, take, 竹.⁴⁹ Accordingly, even while sick in bed and reduced to a skeleton, Iwatake is capable of seeing his emaciated body as the "iron framework of a building under construction."⁵⁰ Similar to Shigematsu, then, Iwatake is also reborn from the depths of his experience and without hesitation at once begins the task of recovery and reconstruction.

After a close perusal of Iwatake and his wife's story, Shigematsu concludes that the reason for Iwatake's recovery lies not only with the treatment he received but may also be attributed to his "enormous will to beat the disease."⁵¹ That Yasuko is somehow lacking in such determination, Shigematsu instinctively realizes, and thus he decides that the only

course of action is to give Yasuko confidence that she, too, will live. Although the requisite transfusions and injections are begun on Yasuko, Kuroi ame comes to a close before we are able to learn the results of this treatment or of Shigematsu's decision to render extra support and encouragement. Yasuko's fortunes, then, suddenly decline while Iwatake's gradually improve. Iwatake, very much like Shigematsu himself, comes into contact with the ultimate powers of destruction and, sinking into the nethermost realms of existence, he confronts the essential forces and emerges literally a new man. Both the middle-aged Shigematsu and Iwatake have close connections with the static and hidden side of life whereas Yasuko, being young, lives very much on the surface of things and is not able to draw courage from the depths of life and experience as are Iwatake and Shigematsu. Yasuko's fate, it seems, is her susceptibility to excessive flow and movement, her inability to endure in the face of sudden, drastic change. Thus, in the final lines of the story Shigematsu stands gazing at the hills, hoping that somehow Yasuko will be able to overcome this susceptibility and make contact with the vital and positive elements of life's flow:

"If a rainbow appears over those hills now, a miracle will happen," (Shigematsu) prophesied to himself. "Let a rainbow appear -- not a white one, but one of many hues -- and Yasuko will be cured."

So he told himself, with his eyes on the nearby hills, though he knew all the while it could never come true. 52

The hoped-for multi-coloured rainbow is an image which reminds us of the variety and vitality of life's natural flow from which Yasuko has been excluded. Associated with monochromatic images (such as the white flower, black rain and white rainbow) which stress weakness and susceptibility, Yasuko seems unlikely to find the strength necessary to recover and, unlike Shigematsu and Iwatake, is not likely to survive.

The theme of survival and endurance is thus of primary importance in Kuroi ame. Although various aspects of this theme may be seen in the earlier works, e.g., the determination to carry on ("Yōhai taichō") or the durable vitality of man and nature (Sazanami gunki), Kuroi ame, as we have seen, offers a much fuller and more thorough-going treatment of this theme. Nevertheless, the core of the theme lies in Ibuse's earliest work, "Sanshōuo", with its emphasis upon the will to live. Very much like Shigematsu who finds inspiration and new hope in his earliest childhood memories, the author, too, recalls the elements of one of his earliest themes and brings it to new expression in Kuroi ame. Thus, just as fate and confinement are juxtaposed against the will to live in "Sanshōuo", so is the unfortunate fate of an entire city contrasted against its citizens' tremendous will to survive in Kuroi ame. Reminiscent of the self-contained and stout-hearted frog figure in "Sanshōuo", the people of Hiroshima, in numerous vignettes, display a remarkable ability to take courage in action and yet at the same time to find strength through the acceptance of their situation. Their indomitable will is thus tempered by a spirit of acceptance and calm endurance. The will to survive in Kuroi ame as in "Sanshōuo" is composed of two distinct aspects, one active, the other passive, suggesting that, at a deep and very basic level, existence itself is essentially the result of a carefully maintained and continuous interchange between both active and passive, dynamic and static forces.

Kuroi ame, very much like "Sanshōuo" and "Yōhai taichō", represents the author's fascination with the hidden depths of life and yet, unlike these earlier works in which these mysterious recesses remain hidden or are revealed only through complex manœuvres, Kuroi ame stands as a work of immense clarity and lucidity. At every turn, the author brings the hidden depths to light, revealing not only the static shadowy

qualities but also the vitality and movement of these areas which until now have remained concealed from view. This concern with clarity can be seen in the figure of Shigematsu, for example, who sees himself primarily as an observer of factual reality, as one who dispels obscurity. He views his journal as a work devoid of frills or fancies: "From a literary point of view, the way I describe things is the crudest kind of realism,"⁵³ he tells Shigeko over dinner. And then, with the kind of light touch which belies artistic 'crudity' and yet at the same time conveys the impression of an artless grasp of reality, the author has Shigematsu continue: "By the way, have these loach been kept in clean water long enough to get rid of the muddy taste?"⁵⁴ The Japanese text here literally says something like "Have these loach been made to spew out their muddiness?"⁵⁵ a much more vivid expression and thus, in one seemingly simple yet telling juxtaposition, the author places the creation of realism in literature side by side with the image of muddiness being expelled.

The elimination of muddiness and the exposure of the depths remains a primary concern of the author throughout the story and thus no hidden or concealed areas are left unplumbed or unfathomed. The interiors of those areas previously associated with the static or hidden and elusive forces of life, such as ponds, pools, wells, jars, pits, rivers and the like, now stand exposed to our view and, like Shigematsu at the firepits, we are able to see their inner workings. Perhaps the most significant of these hidden areas which are exposed to the light of day are the hatchery ponds of Shigematsu and his two friends. The main ponds into which the fry will be released, for example, have been prepared in a special way. First they were completely drained and

...then fish entrails, kitchen waste, and the like had been put in along with silage and other stuff, and the whole lot left to decompose in the heat of

the sun. Only then had water been run in. Both Asajirō and Shōkichi had agreed that the water had turned cloudy to just the right degree. It was not transparent like spring water, they explained, but had nourishment in it, producing vegetable plankton and water fleas. The water came from the stream nearby, and the pond was so arranged that it flowed gently through for five or six hours every day. 56

Thus, even though the depths stand revealed in Kuroi ame, they are eventually returned to their original state; it seems that cloudiness and muddiness as well as clarity and light are necessary to sustain life and by analogy, we may also assume that in works of literature the starkness of realism must also be tempered by the more nebulous poetic qualities in order to achieve success. The hatchery ponds, then, are a composite image in which light and dark, creation and dissolution, stasis and movement appear in varying degrees. And yet, a careful balance is maintained, each component performing a necessary function and none allowed to run out of control. As a result, the hatchery ponds are able to preserve and sustain life and in the closing scenes of Kuroi ame as Shigematsu stands by the hatchery ponds, we are shown the eventual fruitfulness of this carefully controlled yet vital and vibrant environment:

The aiko (sic) were coming along well, and in a shallow corner of the larger pond some water weed was growing...Its oval, shiny green leaves dotted the surface of the water, and from their midst rose a slender stalk on which a small, dark purple flower was in bloom. 57

Very similar to the figure of Shigematsu's niece, Yasuko, the hatchery ponds represent an area in which elements of both stasis and movement meet and mingle and yet, in contrast to the ill and despairing niece, the hatchery ponds present an image of strength and vitality. Yasuko's debility can thus

be seen as a kind of imbalance in which static and dynamic qualities are insufficiently concentrated and incapable of interchange, thereby rendering Yasuko incapable of producing or sustaining life. In the image of the hatchery ponds, however, we see not only the fecundity and regenerative power of life's depths, we see also the balanced and controlled interchange of static and dynamic principles that is the basis of life itself.

Not only does the author explore the concealed and hidden depths of the natural world, he also probes the depths of the human realm, dealing not only with the personal experiences of such people as Shigematsu and Iwatake and their families, but also with the deep and intense emotion aroused by the war and the defeat. Although such matters were dealt with to some extent in "Yōhai taichō", by and large the overt expression of deep feelings connected with the war tended to be eschewed. In Kuroi ame, however, the depths of these emotions are explored in a direct and immediate way not seen in the earlier work. That is, rather than the oblique and satirical complexities of "Yōhai taichō" which were concerned primarily with the aftermath of war, Kuroi ame takes a look at war-time itself, examining its innermost aspects with a view to clarifying matters which have long remained hidden or unexpressed. This can be seen in Shigematsu's description of his initial reaction to the Emperor's broadcast. As tears start to his eyes, Shigematsu suddenly recalls a time from his childhood when, tortured by a bully, he used to run to his mother and "badger (her) into baring her breast" for him; he continues:

It was only then, at the sight of that familiar haven, that I burst into tears at last. Even now, I can still remember the salty taste of her milk. The tears I shed were tears of relief, and I believe that my tears this day were of the same kind. 58

Here, the figure of the Emperor is connected more explicitly

to the mother figure than was the case in "Yōhai taichō". The Emperor, very similar to Shigematsu's mother, offers a most welcome and immediate release from unbearable pressure and torment. Unlike the unfortunate Yūichi in "Yōhai taichō" who can never be released, Shigematsu has been freed from the bonds of war.

In spite of the feeling of freedom and release, there are still some attempts at obscuring matters, notably by the works manager who says:

"The Emperor just broadcast a message. The radio's not working properly, though. One of the hands tried to adjust it, but the more he tinkered with it the worse it got, and we couldn't hear very well. But it seems like surrender, all right. 59

A factory hand, too, who maintains that the "Imperial broadcast had been annexhortation to the nation to fight still harder"⁶⁰ gives everyone a bad moment. Such attempts, however, are not successful and finally all those present agree that Japan has been defeated. Unlike the depths of the hatchery ponds, then, the deep, often hidden or obscure emotions connected with the war no longer serve any useful or creative purpose and must now stand exposed in the light of unexpected and new-found freedom.

And so, Shigematsu, released from the confinement and restrictions of the war, goes outside to take one more look at the baby eels on their way upstream. The eels, however, have swum past and instead Shigematsu finds that the waters of the stream are now running "clear and empty."⁶¹ Thus, the "Journal of the Bombing" ends -- on a refreshing note of naturalness and clarity as the flow of life, so long interrupted, seems at last to have been restored, the need to struggle onward against the current no longer necessary. The Emperor's broadcast, then, is not only a psychologically-destroying 'bomb' that staggers the whole society, it also provides a means of release and renewal whereby life's flow

and movement may be re-affirmed. The Emperor, a figure associated with the static qualities of life, has, in a few short moments, dissolved the detritus of the past and in so doing stimulated life's flow, setting it in motion once again, an action that calls attention not only to the latent power of the static forces but also emphasizes as in the case of the hatchery ponds the necessity of balanced and continuing interchange between the forces of both stasis and movement.

This affirmation of life's flow and movement has much in common with Sazanami gunki and in Kuroi ame as in other works of Ibuse that treat themes of disaster or upheaval, contact with the destructive force often brings a renewal of life's energy and vitality. Thus, in Sazanami gunki the upheaval of war brought contact primarily with the forces of life and nature as the Heike wandered throughout the beautiful and Vital Inland Sea area while in other works that deal with disasters, similar contacts also occur. Perhaps one of the more notable examples is that of "Nakajima no kaki no ki" in which a young woman takes refuge from rising flood waters in a giant persimmon tree and gives birth to a child. In Kuroi ame, however, the victims of Hiroshima wander through a wasteland of unremitting horror, cut off from almost any possibility of relief or succour, struggling desperately to re-establish contact with the forces of life.

This contact is re-established in several ways, primarily as we have seen, through a new appraisal and understanding of life's hidden depths; it is also re-established through a new appreciation and re-affirmation of external reality, i.e., of the flow of life. Not since Sazanami gunki have we seen such a fascination with the circumstances of everyday life. Life at work and at home, life in the city and in the country, the features of the city itself and its environs, diet, the weather, beliefs, superstitions, festivals, rumours, household

items, clothing and possessions, houses and buildings, wounds, illnesses and their treatment -- the range is enormous and succeeds in communicating the prosaic yet vital details of ordinary existence in a way which is at once immediate and convincing. So well has Ibuse chronicled such details that occasionally Kuroi ame has the flavour of an almanac or other good book of mundane information; the major difference here being Ibuse's extraordinary ability to view each object, each detail not only as a thing in itself (i.e., 'objectively') but also as a thing of significance and value. Thus Shigematsu observes:

This month...was a succession of festivals. The Mass for Dead Insects had gone by already; the Rice-Planting Festival came on the eleventh, and the Iris Festival, by the old lunar calendar, on the fourteenth. On the fifteenth there was the River Imp Festival, and on the twentieth the Bamboo-Cutting Festival. In all these countless little festivals he seemed to sense the affection that the peasants of the past, poor though they were, had lavished on each detail of their daily lives. And...it seemed to him that in their very insignificance these farmers' festivals were something to be loved and cherished... 62

And indeed, the author has a real feeling for the 'insignificant', the 'unimportant' detail which attests the significance of life's flow whether in the midst of disaster or in ordinary circumstances. Keeping a diary or a journal, like keeping the farmers' festivals, is simply one of the myriad ways in which the vitality of the external reality of human existence is affirmed.

The importance of the everyday world is also acknowledged through an emphasis upon commonplace objects. Similar to the use of objects in "Yōhai taichō" (e.g., the iron well chain, the gateposts etc), ordinary objects in Kuroi ame are often used to sum up a scene, to complete the picture the author has drawn and to add the finishing touch. For example, in

the scene in Yasuko's diary where the group has just settled down to have tea, the bomb flashes and everyone rushes outside. After the blast has passed, Yasuko suddenly notices the tea kettle lid where it has fallen below the verandah. Such a simple yet attentive observation gives the scene an added poignancy and at the same time hints at other things, in particular the destruction of tradition, the end of old Japan. The potential destruction of old values culminating in the Emperor's broadcast is seen through the use of other objects as well: the old column with the word "Dream" carved on it in the ruins of Hiroshima, the scorched paper with the cherry blossom music that floats down from the sky, the burned piece of wood fished from the river with a carving of Mt. Fuji etc. Although objects are used to mark the end of an era, they are also used to indicate continuity and the ability of civilization to rise again from the rubble. The pots that Shigeko takes with her to the university pool are reminders that the world will go on, just as the pathetic notices tacked to walls and standing columns show the frailty yet persistence of human civilization.

Even though the author attests the worth and value of external reality through close attention to the objects and details of ordinary life, he is also aware of the ironies and incongruities inherent in this reality and, similar to earlier works, utilizes such material for satirical, humorous or pathetic purposes. Thus, as we might expect, war and the military come in for their share of mockery. Perhaps one of the most amusing of these sketches is that of the passengers on a train who stuff their precious rice balls into the boots of a sleeping army officer to protest the man's arrogance at sprawling over an entire seat. There are also comical scenes drawn from village life such as the confrontation with the woman from Ikemoto's or humorous digressions such as Shige-

matsu's observations on lumbago and the Japanese dance, but by and large such scenes as these are tinged with considerable pathos; the situation which is now funny has arisen due to previous unpleasant circumstances, such as the bombing, radiation disease and the like.

The incongruous is made use of not only for satirical or humorous purposes; it also plays a very great part in helping the reader to understand the horrors and also the wonders of the strange new world that the bomb has created, thus the 'black rain' of the title itself. Very much like a 'stranger in a strange land', Shigematsu comes to observe the mushroom cloud and wander in the ruins; and yet, what is remarkable is that there is no sense of alienation. Forced to face the nightmare of atomic holocaust, Shigematsu never becomes inured to the parade of horrors that passes before his eyes nor does he give way to despair or madness. Peering into the very maw of cosmic forces gone wild, he is filled with terror and awe and yet, very much like the villagers of "Yōhai taichō", he accepts what he finds and in his own way seeks to interpret his experiences in the light of the familiar, the known, the human.

Kuroi ame, then, stands at the pinnacle of Ibuse's works, representing not only a re-statement of certain basic themes and images which have long occupied the author but also a complete and masterly re-working of those same themes and images into a work of immense scope and complexity. Thus, while we see once again the lowly yet vital world of pool and pond, there is not the simplistic categorization of "Sanshōuo" nor the convolutions of "Yōhai taichō". Instead the protective yet confining areas of life are seen with clarity and insight; due to the blinding flash of the bomb their depths are revealed to our gaze and their murky waters momentarily cleared. In this way we are able to see the true nature of Ibuse's depths -- the vital yet ambivalent womb-area in which life itself thrives and flourishes,

protected by such 'deities' as Emperor and mother, restricted by war and the workings of fate, stimulated by change and movement, yet at all times a constant source of regeneration and renewal, of growth and life, of artistic inspiration and creation. Just as life's inner recesses are fully explored, so, too, is the nature of external reality as the author confronts the ultimate dynamic essence of life's flow in the release of the atom. Thus, time itself is no longer able to move in the arrow-straight patterns of Sazanami gunki nor in the tidy flashback sequences of "Yōhai taichō", but instead, like the image of the whirling atom itself, past and present turn and wheel in kaleidoscopic images of people and events, customs and traditions, object and fact that reflect not only the horrific energy of the bomb but also the vitality of ordinary reality, the true flow and movement of everyday life.

Just as Sazanami gunki represented a tremendous leap forward in terms of Ibuse's earlier writings, so does Kuroi ame represent a similar achievement in terms of Ibuse's post-war work. Kuroi ame can thus be seen as a culmination of that process which was beginning to take place in "Yōhai taichō", i.e., the consolidation of past efforts and the development of a better integrated and more highly polished literary style. That Ibuse succeeds in this in Kuroi ame is due no doubt to his long experience as well as to the passage of time itself which has enabled the author to acquire the necessary perspective not only in terms of his own work, but also in terms of the events he describes. Thus, Ibuse is able to place matters in right proportion, to look back upon the war and the defeat and see not only restriction and insanity but also images of renewal, release and rebirth; to look even at the atomic bombing itself and find hope and strength in the fact that there were many who managed to survive on of the most awesome and dreadful events of our time. In Kuroi ame this constant juxtaposition and merging of contrasting images

of stasis and movement not only emphasizes the vitality of man and nature, it also creates a new awareness and perception of the totality of life and experience while at the same time re-affirming the author's artistic stance as sympathetic yet objective observer.

The author's new-found perspective gives Kuroi ame a wholeness and vitality not seen in earlier works. Thus, although there is the depth and complexity of "Sanshōuo" and "Yōhai taichō" as well as the breadth and scope of Sazanami gunki, Kuroi ame stands out as a multi-layered and multi-faceted whole which in every respect is very much greater than the sum of its parts. No doubt Kuroi ame owes something of its extraordinary power and unity to the ultimate confrontation that it depicts between one determined human being and the dread forces unleashed by the atomic catastrophe. Just as Shigematsu is able to survive only by tapping deep reserves of hidden strength, so, too, does Ibuse rely upon his own innermost resources, and not only is he able to come to terms with the war and the bombing, he is also able to draw strength and inspiration from his life's work and thus, very much like Shigematsu who brings life from the hatchery ponds, Ibuse, too, reaches down into the depths of his art and creates a work of great and lasting value.

Conclusion

It can be seen from the preceding analyses, then, that the work of Ibuse Masuji represents a truly unique and distinctive artistic vision, unique in that the focal point of this vision lies in the realm of powerful contrasting natural forces which primarily stress life's vitality, and distinctive in the sense that the author's exploration of this realm is marked by the development of a highly original prose style which in its various and diverse elements is particularly well-suited to the depiction of both dramatic and subtle aspects of these contrasting natural forces. Fascinated from the very beginning of his career by the vitality of life and nature, Ibuse demonstrates early that although the true essence of this vitality may be found in such traditional natural imagery as frogs and ponds, it also exists in such lowly things as salamanders, caves and pollen-scattering moss. As the author probes the depths of just such a humble world as that of the sanshō, he creates not only a marvellously imaginative set of images and themes which contain the essence of his vision, he also develops an extremely novel mode of literary expression which combines fantasy with realism and symbolism with humour. Thus, Ibuse's attempt to plumb the depths of this world is not haphazard nor arbitrary, but is accomplished within a carefully constructed literary framework in which the author scrupulously avoids the whirlpools of emotion and strives to maintain a careful distance as well as a sympathetic objectivity.

The depths of life and nature which Ibuse beholds in this way are seen primarily in terms of a contrast between the forces of stasis and movement, a fundamental contrast which underlies much of Ibuse's work. Although this contrast is seen essentially as one of constant interplay and interchange, many works tend to emphasize either one element or the other just as do certain proposed periods of the author's literary career. Thus, in "Sanshō" and in the other early works

the author is concerned primarily with the static areas of life while in Sazanami gunki and throughout the 1930's Ibuse is particularly fascinated by the dynamism of life's flow and movement. While the war years and the years immediately following the war mark a return to a concern with confinement and restriction, the author now develops these aspects of his literary vision in ways which not only stress the complexity and intensity of emotion but also demonstrate his mastery of earlier techniques. "Yōhai taichō", which is one of the best examples of this period, exhibits the polished style and precision of a master craftsman yet nevertheless remains a work concerned primarily with the darker, static regions. Attempts to find release or to reveal the hidden depths of life and human emotion are treated symbolically and satirically, while contrasts between the static and the dynamic are viewed largely in terms of pathetic incongruities rather than as meaningful realities.

It is not until the later works, particularly Kuroi ame, that we see the full integration of both static and dynamic forces as Ibuse reaches the peak of his mature expression. So naturally are these vital forces and their various aspects interwoven and entwined that the author succeeds not only in emphasizing life's totality but also in suggesting that its depths and fastnesses, exteriors and surfaces are but alternating aspects of a constant yet essentially dynamic pattern of existence. Kuroi ame thus represents a consummate artistic achievement in which Ibuse fully realizes the power and scope of his literary genius.

This thesis has attempted to gain some insight into the nature of Ibuse's genius as well as into the nature of his creations through a study of four selected works and hopefully it should also point the way to further studies of this writer who, by virtue of his distinctive style and unique view of life and art, represents one of the most intriguing literary

figures writing in Japan today. That there is as yet no single volume study of this author in Japan (or in the West) seems surprising in view of Ibuse's stature as a modern author. This lack of any comprehensive overview of Ibuse's work such as attempted in this thesis is no doubt related to the fact that Ibuse is not a "popular" writer and even today continues to occupy a position somewhat outside the mainstream of current trends and affairs. Thus, Ibuse's works, rather like the secluded pools and ponds he is so fond of describing, remain largely unplumbed and unfathomed by Japanese and Western critics and scholars alike. It seems that the time has now come and may in fact be long overdue for the concealed yet vital and vibrant Ibusean world to be revealed more fully to both Japanese and Western readers in ways which will bring a greater appreciation and understanding of his art, not only as Japanese literature, but in a wider sense, as literature which in its primary emphasis upon the vitality and robustness of life can have meaning and relevance for the larger world.

NOTES

Introduction

¹ Although the first translation of one of Ibuse's works appeared in 1940 (Jon Manjirō: the cast-away, his life and adventures, tr. Hisakazu Kaneko, Tokyo, Hokuseido), it was not until the mid-1950's that translation of Ibuse's works began in earnest in the West.

² One exception to this is A.V. Liman of the University of Toronto whose work on Ibuse is well-known both in the West and in Japan.

³ Kobayashi Hideo, "Ibuse Masuji no sakuhin ni tsuite," in Kobayashi Hideo zenshū, Vol. 4 (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1967), pp. 31-35.

⁴ Nakamura Mitsuo, "Kaisetsu," in Ibuse Masuji shū:nihon bungaku zenshū, Vol. 32 (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1963), p. 574. All translations of words or phrases from critical sources in Japanese are mine.

⁵ Onuma Tan, "Ibuse Masuji: ōakka to sakuhin," in Ibuse Masuji shū:nihon bungaku zenshū, Vol. 41 (Tokyo: Shūeisha, 1974), p. 397.

⁶ Onuma, p. 404.

⁷ Onuma, p. 404.

⁸ The original title was "Yūhei" 幽閉 ("Confinement") but this was changed to "Sanshōuo" in 1929.

⁹ This information is from my supervisor, Prof. Kin'ya Tsuruta.

¹⁰ Of these works only "Kuchisuke no iru tanima" has not been translated.

¹¹ Kawakami Tetsutarō, "Kaisetsu," in Sanshōuo - Yōhai taichō, (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1975), p. 153.

¹² Kobayashi, p. 31.

¹³ Kobayashi, p. 32.

¹⁴ Nakamura Akira, "Ibuse Masuji," in Gendai bungaku to kotoba, No. 2 (1975), p. 66.

¹⁵ The most important of these were Seiki 世紀 which published "Sanshōuo" in 1923 as "Yūhei"; Bungei toshi 文芸都市 which Ibuse became associated with in 1928; Sakuhin 作品 in 1930; Bungakkai 文学界 in 1938.

¹⁶ Edward Putzar, Japanese Literature: A Historical Outline (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1973), p. 209.

¹⁷ Tōgo Katsumi, "Ibuse Masuji: 'Sazanami gunki' ron," Gunkimono to sono shūhen (Tokyo: Waseda University Press, 1969), p. 835.

¹⁸ A.V. Liman, "Ibuse's 'Black Rain'," in Approaches to the Modern Japanese Novel, ed. Kinya Tsuruta and Thomas E. Swann (Tokyo: Sophia University Press, 1976), p. 67.

¹⁹ Of these works only Jon Manjirō has been translated.

²⁰ Donald Keene, "The Barren Years: Japanese War Literature," Monumenta Nipponica, Vol. xxxiii, no.1 (1978), pp. 67-112.

²¹ Of these works "Fukikoshi no shiro", "Wabisuke", and "In no shima" have not been translated.

²² Putzar, p. 229.

²³ Synopses of Contemporary Japanese Literature II 1936-1955, by the Kokusai Bunka Shinkokai (Japan Cultural Society, Tokyo, 1970), p. 132.

²⁴ None of these are translated.

²⁵ Of these works only Yosaku has been translated.

Chapter 1

¹ All quotations from Ibuse's translated works discussed in this thesis (i.e., "Sanshōuo", "Yōhai taichō" and Kuroi ame) are taken from the translations of John Bester. Any quotations from the Japanese texts will be so indicated.

² John Bester, trans., Lieutenant Lookeast and Other Stories, by Ibuse Masuji (Tokyo and Palo Alto: Kodansha International, 1971), p. 59.

- ³ Bester, Lookeast, p. 64.
- ⁴ Bester, Lookeast, p. 64.
- ⁵ Ellen Douglass Leyburn, "Animal Stories," in Satire: Modern Essays in Criticism, ed. Ronald Paulson (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1971), p. 217.
- ⁶ Leyburn, pp. 220-222.
- ⁷ Bester, Lookeast, p. 62.
- ⁸ Bester, Lookeast, p. 63.
- ⁹ Bester, Lookeast, p. 62.
- ¹⁰ Bester, Lookeast, p. 59.
- ¹¹ Bester, Lookeast, p. 63.
- ¹² Bester, Lookeast, p. 63.
- ¹³ Bester, Lookeast, p. 60.
- ¹⁴ Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism (New York: Atheneum, 1969), p. 92.
- ¹⁵ Kawakami, Sanshōuo, p. 156.
- ¹⁶ Bester, Lookeast, p. 62.
- ¹⁷ Bester, Lookeast, p. 59.
- ¹⁸ Bester, Lookeast, p. 62.
- ¹⁹ Bester, Lookeast, p. 60.
- ²⁰ Bester, Lookeast, p. 62.
- ²¹ Bester, Lookeast, p. 65.
- ²² Kawamori Yoshizō, "Ibuse bungaku no shūhen," in Nihon no bungaku, supp. 34, vol. 53 (Tokyo: Chūō koronsha, 1966), p. 5.
- ²³ Ibuse Masuji, "Sanshōuo" in Ibuse Masuji zenshū, Vol. I (Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 1974), p. 7.
- ²⁴ Bester, Lookeast, p. 60.
- ²⁵ Bester, Lookeast, p. 61.
- ²⁶ Bester, Lookeast, p. 9.
- ²⁷ Kawakami Tetsutarō, "Kaisetsu," in Kuroi ame (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1970), p. 314.
- ²⁸ Bester, Lookeast, p. 59.
- ²⁹ Bester, Lookeast, p. 59.
- ³⁰ Bester, Lookeast, p. 61.
- ³¹ Isogai Hideo, "Ibuse Masuji," Lecture in Asia 533, University of British Columbia, March, 1978.

Chapter 2

¹ Sazanami gunki has not yet been translated into English. The title has been rendered as Echoes of War by A.V. Liman in his article "The Old Man and the Bomb" and by Edward Putzar as Just a Little War in Japanese Literature. Literally, sazanami means ripple or wavelets and gunki is a military chronicle. All translations of the text in this chapter are mine.

² Hiroshi Kitagawa and Bruce T. Tsuchida, trans., The Tale of the Heike (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1975), p. xxi.

³ Kitagawa, p. 5.

⁴ Ibuse, Sazanami gunki in Ibuse zenshū, Vol.I, p. 370:
Juei ni-nen shichigatsu, Heike ichimon no hitobito wa heiran ni owarete teito o tōbō shita. Tsugi ni shimesu kiroku wa, sono toki Heike nanigashi no hitori no shōnen ga kakinokoshita tōbōki de aru. Koko ni watakushi wa sono kiroku no ichibu o gendaigo ni yakushite miru.
Shichigatsu jū-go nichi (Juei ni-nen) Kinō no yoru, Harada, Kikuchi, Matsuura to no hitotachi ga, san sen yo ki o inotsu shite teito e kaetta. Chinzei no muhon o tairagete kita yōshi de aru. Rokuhara ikedono no hiroba ni wa, kagaribi ga takarete atta.

⁵ The capital: Kyoto.

⁶ Ibuse, Sazanami, p. 377: Watakushitachi no Rokuhara! Sore wa watakushitachi no chichi de ari haha de aru.

⁷ Kawamori, p. 7.

⁸ Ibuse, Sazanami, p. 464:
Kakutan ga kagaribi no akarumi de isshin-furan ni kare no 'Juei ki' o kakitsuzuru no de, watakushi mo senchū kono nikki o kakitomete iru. Shikashi nagara, itsumo takibi no mihari o shite kureta Miyaji Kotarō wa, mohaya kono yo no mono de wa nai.

⁹ Ibuse, Sazanami, p. 470: Ikuta no mori de uchijini shita Miyaji Kotarō...

¹⁰ Ibuse, Sazanami, p. 471: Nakunatta Miyaji Kotarō...

¹¹ Ibuse, Sazanami, p. 379:
Hi ga kurete shimau to, teito no hōgaku de wa sora ga ichimen ni aku nari, sono akarumi wa, unadarete uma ni matagatte iru hitobito no ushisugata o terashita. Moshi ato o furikaette miru hito ga atta to sureba, sora no aka-iro no akarumi ga,

sono hito no kanashige na kao o shōmei shita de arō...Watashi wa bajō de inemuri o shigachi de atta no de, shiba shiba samurai-tachi ni chūi sareta.

¹² Ibuse, Sazanami, p. 380:

Kyō wa shichigatsu ni-jū hachi nichi de aru ka mo shirenai. Watakushi wa seikaku na tsukihi o shitsunen shita. Shikashi watakushi wa, ryōyū ni shitsumon suru no o gaman shō. Aite o kanashimaseru dake de aru. Hizuke to iu no wa, kibō o idaite iru hito ni totte dake hitsuyō de arō.

¹³ Ibuse, Sazanami, p. 475:

...sono minatomachi ni shukuei shi, watakushi wa sono urayama no chūfuku ni aru minka no shōjo to nagisa de mikkai shita koto ga aru. Sono toki kanojo wa tōhatsu o Rokuhara fū ni mane shite iru. Suenari wa kanojo no ie mo yakiharatte shimattarō. Teitō de wa daibutsu chūzō no senyū ni tsuite furei sareta to iu koto de aru.

¹⁴ For example, the paintings of ladies under trees in the Shōsōin treasures; the association of women and trees in the Tale of Genji, etc.

¹⁵ Japanese proverb: koin ya no gotoshi.

¹⁶ Ibuse, Sazanami, p. 380:

...shiki ishi no kotogotoku no sukima ni wa, kusagusa naru kusa ga oishigette iru. Gen no shōko, ōbako, susuki, ominaeshi etc... Watakushi wa hama gosho ni shukuhaku suru koto ni natta. Kono tatemono mo hoka no tatemono to onajiku kōhai shite shimatte, noki ga magari, yane ni ōki na ana ga aite iru. Sono ana kara yozora to tsuki to ga nagamerareru. Kairo ni wa sūta no umidori ga muragatte habataki shite iru.

¹⁷ Ibuse, Sazanami, p. 372:

Niwa no bashō no ha wa, reinen yori ōkiku naranai no da to shinjite ita ga, sakihodo miru to, kyonen yori nibai mo ōkiku natte iru koto ni ki ga tsuita. Bashō no ha kage ni kengo na hana ga saite ita.

¹⁸ Ibuse, Sazanami, p. 392: Karatachi no migoto nīnobita eda...; karatachi is the Bengal quince.

¹⁹ Ibuse, Sazanami, p. 468: ...tengu no kakete matsu no yō na ōki na matsu...; tengu - a long-nosed goblin; symbol of strength and magical power.

²⁰ For a list of previous titles and publishing dates, see Zenshū, p. 487.

Chapter 3

¹ Bester, Lookeast, p. 24.

- 2 Bester, Lookeast, p. 24.
- 3 Bester, Lookeast, p. 35.
- 4 Bester, Lookeast, p. 42.
- 5 Bester, Lookeast, p. 43.
- 6 Bester, Lookeast, p. 31.
- 7 Bester, Lookeast, p. 31.
- 8 Ibuse, "Yōhai taichō," in Ibuse zenshū, Vol. IV, p.304.
- 9 Bester, Lookeast, p. 30.
- 10 Ibuse, "Yōhai taichō," p. 303.
- 11 Bester, Lookeast, p. 44.
- 12 Bester, Lookeast, p. 30.
- 13 Ibuse, "Yōhai taichō," p. 304.
- 14 Bester, Lookeast, p. 29.
- 15 Bester, Lookeast, p. 46.
- 16 Ibuse, "Yōhai taichō," p. 320: "...Gō ni haitte gō ni shitagae" is the proverb.
- 17 Bester, Lookeast, p. 46.
- 18 Bester, Lookeast, p. 47.
- 19 Bester, Lookeast, p. 49.
- 20 Bester, Lookeast, p. 27.
- 21 Bester, Lookeast, p. 51.
- 22 Bester, Lookeast, p. 23.
- 23 Bester, Lookeast, p. 34.
- 24 Bester, Lookeast, p. 32.
- 25 Bester, Lookeast, p. 32.
- 26 Bester, Lookeast, p. 50.
- 27 Bester, Lookeast, p. 25.
- 28 Bester, Lookeast, p. 25.
- 29 Bester, Lookeast, p. 51.
- 30 Bester, Lookeast, p. 49.

Chapter 4

- 1 John Bester, trans., Black Rain, by Ibuse Masuji (Tokyo and Palo Alto: Kodansha International, 1969), p. 8.

- ² Kawamori, pp 8-9.
- ³ Of these works only Jon Manjirō, "Kakitsubata" and Kuroi ame have been translated.
- ⁴ Kawakami, Black Rain. p. 313.
- ⁵ Kawakami, Black Rain, p. 313.
- ⁶ Only eight major articles do appear in literary magazines from 1965 - 1974.
- ⁷ A.V. Liman, "The Old Man and the Bomb: The Mythopoesis of Ibuse's 'Black Rain'," in Life, Death and Age in Modern Japanese Literature, ed. Reiko Tsukimura (Toronto: University of Toronto-York University Joint Centre on Modern East Asia, 1978), p. 38.
- ⁸ Liman, "Old Man", p. 38.
- ⁹ Ibuse, Kuroi ame in Ibuse zenshū, Vol. XIII, p. 455. The completed text of Kuroi ame consists of twenty chapters.
- ¹⁰ ~~Tadae Michitaro~~, p. "Ibuse Masuji 'Kuroi ame' - furusato no ochita genbaku," Asahi Journal, 9, No. 10 (1967), p. 38. Tada notes at least six diaries.
- ¹¹ Bester, Black, p. 36.
- ¹² Bester, Black, p. 41.
- ¹³ Other historical references include the mention of the Teiyū civil war, the fleeing Heike, the peasant revolts of the nineteenth century, etc.
- ¹⁴ Bester, Black, p. 11 et passim.
- ¹⁵ Bester, Black, p. 119.
- ¹⁶ Bester, Black, p. 123.
- ¹⁷ Bester, Black, p. 89.
- ¹⁸ Bester, Black, p. 21.
- ¹⁹ Bester, Black, p. 191.
- ²⁰ Bester, Black, p. 219.
- ²¹ Bester, Black, p. 299.
- ²² Bester, Black, p. 12.
- ²³ Bester, Black, p. 13.
- ²⁴ Ibuse, Kuroi ame, p. 6: Sono itoki ie no naka kara rajio no jūdai hōsō ga kikoete kita.

- 25 Bester, Black, p. 297.
- 26 Liman, "Old Man", p. 36.
- 27 Bester, Black, p. 46.
- 28 Bester, Black, p. 55.
- 29 Bester, Black, p. 161.
- 30 Bester, Black, p. 161.
- 31 Liman, "Old Man", p. 44.
- 32 Bester, Black, p. 9.
- 33 Ibuse, Kuroi ame, p. 3.
- 34 Bester, Black, p. 53.
- 35 Bester, Black, p. 54.
- 36 Bester, Black, p. 296.
- 37 These twelfth century paintings frequently show human figures burning in agony in the flames of hell.
- 38 Bester, Black, p. 138.
- 39 Bester, Black, p. 163.
- 40 Bester, Black, p. 170.
- 41 Ibuse, Kuroi ame, p. 19 et passim.
- 42 Bester, Black, p. 144.
- 43 Bester, Black, p. 92.
- 44 Ibuse, Kuroi ame, p. 3.
- 45 Ibuse, Kuroi ame, p. 3.
- 46 Bester, Black, p. 226.
- 47 Bester, Black, p. 6 (Alive as of 1969).
- 48 Bester, Black, p. 270.
- 49 Ibuse, Kuroi ame, p. 235.
- 50 Bester, Black, p, 270.
- 51 Bester, Black, p. 266.
- 52 Bester, Black, p. 300.
- 53 Bester, Black, p. 60.
- 54 Bester, Black, p. 60.
- 55 Ibuse, Kuroi ame, p. 55.
- 56 Bester, Black, p. 271.

- 57 Bester, Black, p. 300. Aiko should be kego.
58 Bester, Black, p. 298.
59 Bester, Black, p. 298.
60 Bester, Black, p. 299.
61 Bester, Black, p. 300.
62 Bester, Black, p. 101.

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- _____. "Kaisetsu." In Kuroi ame 黒い雨. Tokyo: Shinchōsha 新潮社, 1970, pp. 310-315.
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