Ethos in the Novels by Jun'ichiro Tanizaki and Henryk Sienkiewicz

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1. INTRODUCTION

I know of no direct way to compare the condition of "knowledge" and "culture" of various nations and races at any particular stage of their development. I know no certain way of resolving the methodological chaos now spreading in the study of culture and civilization of the world. I do not know whether it is possible or not to compare on a strictly academic basis the "history of education" and "education" of Japan with those of a country such as Poland which belongs to an entirely different civilization. By comparison I mean not simply to find arbitrary points of similarity, nor merely to seek propaganda effects by stating, for example, "They had universities of a modern type as early as in the 14th century in Poland" or "The common education system was adopted in Japan more promptly and more efficiently than in Europe."[1]

By what standards can the value of educational systems as developed by various royal families, religious houses, priests and governments be assessed? Can any comparison between history of education in Japan and Poland or Japan and Europe supply the answers to important questions that arise in the comparative study of civilizations? And what are those important questions?

From which point in time should we start a chronological comparison of facts and phenomena? What unit should we use for determining stages, cycles, or, to put it in a simpler way, changes in the development of civilizations during the past more than ten centuries? Synchronic automatism, that is, automatic selection of the same period for comparison, probably is not the best method for our purpose, because the year 1600 A.D., for example, does not necessarily mark an equivalent point of development in separate civilizations.

Is it appropriate to make comparisons between similar phenomena, neglecting differences in the time of occurrence? Is it proper to compare facts in the history of education located at the crossing of a synchronic line of longitude and a diachronic line of latitude, faithfully adhering to a principle of world time? There are very many problems in study technique, and no satisfactory solutions. Therefore, we will make our way through unknown spiral staircases of historical process rather than on external scaffolding made of lines of geographical longitude and latitude. The spiral staircases, however, may in some cases be built one upon another and entangled, their materials extremely complicated, like a language already dead and forgotten, or the brain of a fourth generation computer which has yet to be created.

The next question is what exactly should be compared with what. Should it be the educational systems themselves, or the number of centers for education and propagation of thought, or only those educational organizations whose purpose is ideally worked out and established? Or should we somehow compare the major results of education? How can the results of education be measured? How could we avoid falling into an irresponsible pattern of comparison which would give only a random account of various centers and groups propagating education? Should plans in progress also be taken up for comparison?

Another problem is inherent in the methodology of cultural anthropology or the study of culture at large; for the most part they have been conducted without reference to a holistic view of interrelationships within ecosystems. That is, it should be determined what can be utilized out of the methodological achievements produced by functionalists, structuralists, scholars of semiotics and other scholars such as Gadamer and Ricouer who are generally recognized as exponents of hermeneutics. Probably, for example, suggestions made by post-structuralists with a tendency toward "de-construction" will be meaningful to us.[2]

Literature has recently fallen rapidly to the rank of a stepchild among the human sciences, but, thanks to my involvement with literature, I am in the habit nevertheless of analyzing human behavior and views of the world through literary works. What arouses my interest first is the text of contextual relations or contextual rules within texts, and then the geographical, racial and social rules that follow.[3]

Before seeking any answers to the above-mentioned questions arising out of the problem of the "conduit" connecting the world and the human existence, I will, for the purpose of comparison, make use of my own experience of studying literature, especially the literature of Jun'ichiro Tanizaki and Henryk Sienkiewicz, a Polish novelist. My approach will be intuitive rather than logical.

The basic problems of individual persons and the world in which they live can be recognized through their fate or through the fate of leading characters appearing in novels. Clearly, these problems include those of educational activities and their results, that is, the culture and socialization that make it possible for people to participate in cultural and civilized social organizations.

Both education and morality are expressed through systems of signs and sym-

bols. Some such systems differ among civilizations and others are the same. Various positive educational activities and passively accepted models, when closely combined together, will affect the formation of ethos. The word "ethos" is used in relevance to a strongly interconnected group or a system of values under which people are functioning. Some such behavioral features may be strongly related to one group, and other features may be widely consistent across groups. In any case, ethos generally differs by social class.

Novelists create or select characters for their novels from actual models, and mold them into figures of symbolic value by deft exaggeration. They do not stop at descriptions of individuals, but extend to delineation of the typical social groups and classes to which the individuals belong. Fictitious characters and phenomena in novels by Tanizaki and Sienkiewicz depict typical living situations found in Japan and in Poland respectively, or, when more widely generalized, in Japan and Europe. Tanizaki and Sienkiewicz are typical among such novelists. Characters created by these two novelists often tell more about their society and culture, more plainly, than a huge number of treatises on culture and textbooks of history.

Here arises the problem of how to understand the ethos which categorically holds the key to such a study. Stated briefly, ethos means a mode of living in a community and an order of values generally accepted and expressed directly in words or read in human behavior in the community.[4] It is this "mode of living" and "order of values" that we try to ascertain from the speech and behavior of the leading characters of a novel. We also aim to clarify points of similarity and difference between the characters and to examine the role of "wisdom, education and intelligence" in their ethos.

Henryk Sienkiewicz (1846–1916) made his debut in the literary world approximately forty years earlier than Jun'ichiro Tanizaki (1886–1965). So they cannot be called members of the same generation, and in terms of world history, the nearly homogeneous periods to which they belonged to were quite different from one another. Nevertheless, just as Tanizaki was a great novelist representing 20th century Japan, so Sienkiewicz represented the transitional period in Poland from the 19th century to the 20th century. While Tanizaki was a novelist in a sovereign country, Sienkiewicz waited persistently for the lost sovereignty of Poland to be restored, and, therefore, "Polish problems" significantly stimulated his passion for writing novels. Each novelist still retains an influence upon the literary and moral education of his countrymen. In spite of obvious differences in their respective spheres of influence, the two novelists do share some important qualities. They were both in a certain sense idealists and dreamers. They both thought and wrote about past events, traces of which still remain at the present time, or which were important in those past times. What they both tried to retain and preserve was something passing away out of memory, or national values that were becoming lost. With regard to literary technique, both Tanizaki and Sienkiewicz attached much importance to the plot of a novel or the role of fiction. In fact, Tanizaki himself used to say publicly that he wished to write such appealing and faultless

novels as those of Sienkiewicz.[5]   For these reasons, we may be justified in matching, or comparing when required, these two novelists.   In any case, these two great novelists, writing in the contexts of entirely different civilizations, if matched together even by chance, would provide an opportunity to reveal something about their respective civilizations.

2. KNIGHTHOOD ETHOS AS OBSERVED IN THE NOVELS BY SIENKIEWICZ
   —AN OUTLINE OF THE GENERAL FEATURES—

In 1880 Sienkiewicz wrote his first historical novel named *"Tartar's Slavery,"* with as narrator an indomitable duke, a member of the peerage (Szlachta).   He then wrote many other famous novels one after another, which are still read by an unusually wide range of people in Poland.   Among these novels, *With Fire and Sword* [1884], *Deluqe* [1886] and *Pan Michael* [1888] constitute a trilogy.

Characters appearing in Sienkiewicz's novels, like those in Walter Scott's novels, move freely about in a world presented half in the form of fiction and half in the form of historical actuality.   The characters in his novels are mostly historical persons of secondary importance in history textbooks, but historical events exert a decisive influence on the fate of such individual characters.   Sienkiewicz, like Tanizaki, in his literary style sometimes wore the mask of a writer of memoirs of the peerage, and sometimes wrote about historical events in the style of an epic poet or in the style of a chronicler of the 16th century.   But he was different from Tanizaki in that he wrote mainly about battles which occurred in the 17th century.   These included, specifically, battles during the last years of Great Poland against the background of Chmielnicki's Revolt in the Ukraine, which then belonged to Poland, a battle against the Swedish invaders, a battle against the Ottomans who then hoped to conquer the whole of Europe, etc..[6]

Sienkiewicz pushed to the forefront in his novels military, or, if not so, spiritual victories such as those the Poles won in Battle at Zbaraz, the defense of Czestochowa where a famous Catholic abbey was located, and battles at Kamieniec and Chocim.   In depicting such historical events, he used by preference a sonorous style of writing typical of Homer's Odyssey and the stories of knights of medieval Europe.   What evoked special empathy was the sense of honor of the knights and the patriotic and religious morality of the Polish aristocracy, who as the military main force depicted in his novels, won many victories.   In each of his novels there appears a national hero who is distinguished in political wisdom.

From what viewpoint did Sienkiewicz assess the historical events about which he wrote in his novels?   He obviously set the very highest importance on the principles of independence for Poland, national cooperation, and Christian worship. With regard to any contradictions and antagonisms caused by conflicting nationalistic and social interests, he either tried to downplay them or neglected them.

Readers' interest in the development of affairs in one of his novels depends

usually upon a pair of leading characters, namely, a knight and his true love. The pair will have touching and unfortunate experiences one after another. The plot will develop like this: they will be separated by force or by artifice by a rival in love on the enemy's side, but close to the end of the novel they will finally meet again through the brave help of a faithful friend. And it is in most cases after the Poles have won a decisive victory over the enemy that they meet again.

Leading characters in Sienkiewicz's novels are bold in action and quick in decision, but often act under the influence of a passing emotion. They are massively built, and sometimes somewhat Satanic. Most of them are physically strong and imposing in carriage, and characterized by the bravery of a knight, which conforms to the specific definition of "moralistic heroism."[7] The characteristics of the peerage and knighthood of Poland are to be found in such personalities. They attached the greatest importance to faithfulness to duty and honor, the capacity for self-sacrifice and the renunciation of personal benefit.[8] Most of the leading characters in his novels are embodiments of self-denial.[9] Their action are always consonant with the image of an idealistic knight, although these actions often lack adequate psychological motives.

It must be emphasized that Sienkiewicz did more than select heroic characters as the leading characters in his novels. He was liberal enough to add the spice of comicality to such characters, which helped deepen their realism. Especially the richly individualistic villains who appear in his novels often move about in an utterly confused and inconsistent manner, due to conflict between their motives for action and the principles of morality. Some of the comical characters in his novels (for example, Zagloba) reveal wit and humor comparable to that of Ulysses.[10] Markiewicz asserts, however, that Zagoba has within himself all of the mental structure and habitual characteristics of the Sarmata (another name for the earlier Poles who were characterized by their conventional conservatism).[11]

Sienkiewicz's outlook on the world, toward the past or the present, was rather optimistic. He referred back to the past age of glory and presented as examples those left unscathed among those apparently doomed. Such an outlook on the world doubtlessly contributed to the restoration of national pride and to the denunciation, as a betrayal of faith, of negotiated concessions to the enemy. Characters appearing in his novels are marked with Sienkiewicz's faith in the strength of a nation with a glorious history of its own. Sienkiewicz also expressed his trust in Divine Providence guarding the capacity of justice across history.

Henryk Markiewicz, a famous scholar of Polish literature, supports the views of many other scholars in writing as follows:

> "He who makes a glorious comeback in the world of the leading characters in
> *Trilogy* is a person who deserves to be the paragon of the Poles, and his essen-
> tial characteristics as depicted are patriotic self-sacrifice, military mastery, and
> a knight's honor, but the additional elements of superficial piety, absorption in
> exaggerated gestures and predominance of brute impulse over critical introspec-
> tion can also be perceived."[12]

There are many previous examples of historical novels such as Kraszewski's, Lozinski's, etc. in Poland, and those such as Dumas Pere's, Walter Scott's, traditional Greek epics, etc. abroad, but the historical novels written by Sienkiewicz are distinctly original. He blended together adventure stories and spectacular picture scrolls, giving the leading characters in his novels a heroic aspect. He conveyed the cult of the past glory of the nation through the events and persons in his novels, thus creating a model of a Polish knighthood. In so doing he established an ethos of Polish knighthood for generations to come.

Sienkiewicz used this method of writing novels not only for his *Trilogy*, but also for his *Quo Vadis?* [1896]. He also participated through *Quo Vadis?* in a controversy between positivistic and materialistic views in order to defend Catholicism. He also suggested there existed a relation between the persecution of the ancient Christians and their final victory on one hand and the fate of the Polish nation on the other, as was suggested by Kraszewski in his *Rome in the Nero Time*.[13]

3. CHARACTERS IN TANIZAKI'S NOVELS AND ETHOS

Tanizaki's novels are reasonably well known throughout the world. Therefore, I will take up here for review his *Bushuko Hiwa* (Tanizaki: The Secret History of the Lord of Musashi [1932]. Translated by Anthony H. Chambers, NY 1982), which is comparatively less known, but in which the writer's main features stand out in relief admirably well, in connection with his *Ashikari* and *Shunkinsho*.[14] I would like to clarify the main elements of the ethos of the leading characters in Tanizaki's novels.

The hero in *Bushuko Hiwa* is characterized in principle as a paragon of the 'samurai' ethos,[15] and his fate also was typical of that of the Japanese aristocracy in the Sengoku age of civil strife. This model samurai, the Lord of Bushu, of whom Tanizaki wrote, had long appeared in historical records, and had already been made famous through literary works when Tanizaki wrote.

It should be noted, however, that Tanizaki was not content with constructing this character according to the well-known model, but tried first of all to describe various aspects of his life about which the writers of his personal records had been silent. Tanizaki tried to redefine this model, which had been rigidified in the tradition of the 17th century, by adding descriptions of psychology and behavior incompatible with the ideal of a faithful samurai, specifically, by depicting the agony of the character's compromise between ethical and moral inducements and psychological and aesthetic inducements.

Terukatsu, the leading character of this novel, and Lord Bushu, the Governor of Musashi, did not entirely lack "giri," the sense of moral duty that constituted a very important element of the human relations in the Edo period as depicted in the literature of the same period. Nor was Terukatsu indifferent to feelings of loyalty to his lord or master. In fact, when his situation is considered, there is room to

doubt why loyalty to the Tsukuma family, which was an enemy of his family in his childhood, was required. In spite of this, after peace was concluded, Kawachi no Suke, who later became the Governor of Musashi, came to serve at the residence of the Tsukuma family, and to be treated on almost equal terms with Norishige, the eldest son of the Tsukuma family, who later became Kikyo's fiance. Kawachi no Suke, thus indebted, was obliged to serve Norishige faithfully for an indefinite time. In these circumstances, Kawachi no Suke had come not to feel any longer strong psychological pressure or the necessity for revenge. However, when he found proof of illicit intercourse committed by the attractive wife of the Lord of the Tsukuma family, he did not inform the Lord of it. He tried to understand his difficult position. Morality, and the gratitude and obligation of retainer to master, had been playing a certain influence in his life. Personal involvement in rivalry among various clans, and loyalty to generations of ancestors (who are not referred to in the novel) only served him as a pretext or ground for carrying out a previously contemplated plan to defeat the Tsukuma family, and seize Norishige and his beautiful wife, Kikyo.

Bushuko Hiwa, though different from *Ashikari* and *Shunkinsho* in that its leading character is male, is a story, nevertheless, in which the main events are caused by women. Tanizaki's interest does not focus on heroic acts, but on an aspect of psychology about which biographies had previously been silent. Tanizaki looks hard at the sex life of the leading character, who has sadistic and masochistic inclinations, describing him as a man who, though not as passive in nature as male characters appearing in *Ashikari* and *Shunkinsho*, cannot maintain relationships with those ideal and glamorous ladies whom he loves so much that he sees them even in his dreams. He finally loses Kikyo, and his wife, O'etsu, because such ladies cannot give themselves to his abnormal taste, confining themselves within generally accepted ethical and moral rules, and having their attitudes shaped accordingly. He acts contrary to their moral principles, and, enjoying no happiness and tasting only the bitterness of anxiety and agony, finally is defeated.

Tanizaki states definitively at the beginning of the novel that no one is born bad, nor good. He says that each individual has various aspects within himself, and that such aspects, when aroused consciously or unconsciously under certain conditions, may appear as bad or good according to the situation. Each individual, therefore, has an embryonic bud of evil, which may, when triggered off by any other person's conscious or unconscious act, determine his future. Beauty, especially the beauty of attractive women, plays a decisive role in arousing this embryonic bud of evil sleeping within the hero. The beauty of women is always followed by what may be called a demon of cruelty which appeals to the hero's imaginative faculty, awakens the instinct of evil in his heart, and determines his acts. In this sense, women exert an influence on the course of history, causing intrigues, battles and the collapse of families. In short, the heroine of this novel is not passive, but actively participates in backstage activities that shape history. In the drama *Kaoyo* [1933], feminine beauty exerts a destructive power, and in *Mumyo*

and *Aizen* [1924], a woman's charms change the fate of a Buddhist priest. Kaoyo, a 14th century heroine whose name titles that drama, is depicted as a woman who is the object of male desire, and who thus causes a battle and resulting desolation and death. Tanizaki does not place her directly before the audience, because to him it seems best in the case of an idealized depiction of beauty to keep a distance between the heroine and the hero, and between the heroine and the readers or the audience. Tanizaki suggests that there exists an ideal of feminine beauty; such beauty, which may influence the fate of men and furthermore the course of history, is not to be approached or possessed. He thinks that a distance such as exists between God and the worshiper keeps a beautiful woman an ideal. This proposition of his is substantiated in his *Shunkinsho, Ashikari, Momoku Monogatari, Kaoyo, Shosho Shigemoto no Haha* and *Bushuko Hiwa*.

Tanizaki created his own image of "Eien no Josei" or "eternal womanhood" (the words used in his *Tadekuu Mushi*). He tried to depict for study a typical Japanese woman of several centuries earlier, who was educated under a specific paradigm of education that forbade women to reveal their emotions. Women at that time were expected to be totally obedient and meekly subservient, as if always waiting for the men entitled to decide their fate to nod assent. Tanizaki did not conceal that he himself was charmed with such an aesthetic and social paradigm. He tried at the same time, however, to look under the mask feudal society forced women to wear, which enabled him to show that women were not always as obedient and modest as historical records and portraits indicate, but that some were cruel and tyrannical. He thought, however, that such cruel women were not born cruel, but made cruel by environmental factors and, therefore, that they did not need to dread the judgment of sin or damnation. Men, like women, had to abide by the rigid social rules of the time. If they were found to have acted contrary to loyalty, fidelity or other moral duties known as "giri," they were liable to punishment by banishment or death. Terukatsu and Kikyo in the novel *Bushuko Hiwa* related to each other in a way that might justifiably be punished by death. They, therefore, had to be prepared for the worst, when they plotted together.

Against a background of the age of civil strife, *Bushuko Hiwa* depicts, through the fate of the leading character, a life shadowed by death. This novel echoes war chronicles from the 16th century to the 17th century in its depiction of cruel acts, ambition for power and conquest, rigid rules governing samurai behavior, the uncertainty of human existence, changes of fortune, and particular outlooks on life including the basic attitude that thinks little of death. This novel draws its substance from records and history books of that period, and synthesizes a world picture presented by them.

The behavior pattern of heroines in Tanizaki's so-called classical period novels (written in the thirties) is determined largely by sensual impulse and instinctive reaction unnoticeable in ordinary social life, as was true in the early years of his writing career. But such characters (O'yu, O'ichi, O'hisa, Kikyo, Shunkin) differ from those in the early period of modernism in that they do not betray their emotion and

passion so explicitly, because they wear the mask of classical beauty. That is, their individuality is covered with the mask of such a model as is observed in the portrait of a court lady or a samurai's wife or daughter or in the stereotyped mask of a Noh dance, or the face of a puppet in a modern puppet play. Their emotion, therefore, conceals itself behind the ethical and aesthetic paradigm of stereotyped behavior. Emotional impulse usually hidden deep in the heart raises its head, however, when it intends to have a certain desire satisfied. Once aroused, this emotional impulse determines the fate of the hero and heroine. In this sense, it is difficult to trace the process of growth, maturation and transition in the leading characters of Tanizaki's novels. They grow older and accumulate experiences, but undergo no basic inner change. Their inherited character neither disappears, nor changes, until they pass away. Their inherited character is depicted most vividly in their impelling conceptions of beauty: first, desire to acquire an extremely beautiful woman, then masochistic devotion or domination.

Kaname, Sasuke, Shunkin, O'yu and Yaichi, as they appear in Tanizaki's novels, hold no concepts such as race, nation, native country or faith. Such concepts that extend beyond the individual have no decisive influence on their thought, character or outlook on the world. Only cultural and aesthetic inducements and inmost impulse move them. A combination of these two factors working in a complicated way is depicted most vividly in *Bushuko Hiwa*, especially in a scene where a beautiful young woman is purifying a severed head with the hero looking on. What is decisive and absolute for the hero, if anything, is aesthetics, especially as it is closely related to the adoration of feminine beauty. In their lives, there is no philosophical consideration of problems such as existence, life and love. This novel depicts human life in the costume of traditional aestheticism against a historical background. Most of the leading characters in Tanizaki's novels are characterized by a primal thirst for ultimate beauty in the realm of nature and in the world of human beings.

Characters in Tanizaki's novels do not struggle against their fates. Rather, they are obedient to the rulings of fate, and face calmly pain or even danger of death. As depicted in *Bushuko Hiwa*, they are sometimes oppressed and tormented with tyranny during their lives, but are nevertheless sufficiently resourceful to overcome the ills of life. Classical characters in Tanizaki's novels are never defeated, though rarely victorious, because they generally do not seek for any more than people are willing to give them. They seem to understand the unreliability of fortune and the uncertainty of human life as inevitable qualities of the human condition.

Happiness experienced by characters in Tanizaki's novels is of a passive nature. Characters feel happy only when they identify themselves with other people or nature itself. Most of them give significance to their lives by building ties with those around themselves, particularly by accepting their fates as they are, seeking fulfillment in nature or through other people. This is because they have neither a religious ideal of God nor patriotic ideals. In this sense, Tanizaki molded his

characters in accordance with the main thrust of native traditions, one born natural-
ly out of the tenets of Buddhism and adoration of beauty in the Imperial Court
age. Although Buddhism played an important role in this respect, Tanizaki's
characters are rather unfaithful to it, because Tanizaki himself did not recognize the
moral commandments of Buddhism. His characters rely on their senses, and abide
by the principles of aesthetics above everything else throughout their lives. It may
be said, therefore, that they are beings who feel rather than beings who think, and
that the idea of beauty has almost the same significance as the idea of "good."
Tanizaki overlapped the image of such characters with the characteristics of "good
education," which had been formed and established in the hundreds of years since
the Heian era when education was provided at the Imperial Court. The moral and
ethical principle of hiding one's feelings and controlling facial expression has an
aesthetic significance at its root. Men's and women's faces alike look more radiant
when they are not frowning due to dissatisfaction or despair; emotion, when trap-
ped within, seeks to appear in the eyes with greater immediacy.

   Tanizaki did not try to convey the effects of education only through the depic-
tion of characters in his novels, but he wrote directly as follows in his *Ren'ai oyobi
Shikijo* (Love and Eroticism): "Contrary to Western practices, the guiding principle
of Oriental education probably was to suppress the individual personality as much
as possible. In the field of literature and art, for example, our ideal was not to
create a new virgin concept of beauty, but to reach the stage of ancient great poets
ourselves."[16]

4. KNIGHTHOOD ETHOS, CITIZENSHIP ETHOS, NATIONAL ETHOS
   AND LITERATURE

   The foregoing brief review of leading characters in Henryk Sienkiewicz's
Trilogy suggests that an ideal model of European knighthood plays an important
role in his novels. The origin of this European chivalrous ideal may be found in
Homer's *Odyssey* and the traditions of ancient Rome in the age of Renaissance.
Characters appearing in Sienkiewicz's historical novels are heirs of heroic acts, a
fact that contributes considerably to the popularity of his novels among Poles of to-
day.

   The agreed-upon use of the word "ethos" refers not to individuals but to social
groups. Whenever I discuss individual characters appearing in Tanizaki's and
Sienkiewicz's novels, therefore, I investigate them as prototypes representing
specific social groups. Norbert Elias says, "The history of a community is reflected
in the histories of individuals who belong to the community. Each individual will
certainly reproduce an epitome of the cultural development process the community
as a whole has followed during the past one hundred years."[17] This quote also
underscores significance of characters appearing in literary works.

   The concept of "ethos" also includes individuals' attitudes toward knowledge
and culture, toward education, and toward the problem of which human values and

objectives shall be given preference among those which a community or a nation as a whole recognizes.

As I have stated above, Greek civilization created an ethos governing how knights should behave in war and in peace. Characters in Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are precursors of this ethos. From these two epopee, Europeans have obtained knowledge of the way of life, and of the moral and aesthetic principles of the knighthood, a select group corresponding to the aristocracy of later generations. The idealized ethos of the Greek knighthood may have come to be taken as a model —although one that could hardly be followed in medieval Europe. In the same way, the "cult of beauty" in the Heian era played a similar role in the culture of Japanese samurai and merchants. As good birth counted greatly in the social status of the warriors appearing in Homer's works, so were relations with the Imperial Household often an important matter to be considered in Japan. In western Europe and Poland, before the Second World War, people of noble birth were proud, even though they had no property or social status to hand on to their descendants.

Personal beauty was deemed as important as noble birth. Greek warriors as depicted by Homer in his works were very sensitive to personal beauty. And for them physical beauty including muscular strength and dexterity also was essential to personal beauty, unlike Japan where, for example, at Court in the Heian era, physical beauty was hidden under heavy clothes. Knights had to be eloquent especially when they were talking with ladies. In Japan, too, especially at Court, eloquence was thought to imply noble birth, but rhetoric and oratory have never played as important a role in Japan as in the European civilization.

In Europe, eloquence, graceful carriage, good facial expression, proficiency in an art and other attributes of "cultured behavior" had to be coupled with modesty and bravery. Knights and nobles felt most humiliated when they were suspected of cowardice. Everyone made great effort to win recognition as honorable and of good reputation. Kindness to others was a good attribute, stinginess a bad one.

Ethos may be classified into three types based on the literary inheritance of ancient Rome: the highly developed knighthood ethos (Iliad); the citizenship ethos, not as often depicted in literary works (Hesiod); and the farmer ethos, only rarely depicted (Aesop's Fables). These three types of ethos developed in Europe, underwent changes, and still remain in existence. *The Iliad*, which is a unique and comprehensive compilation of wisdom, exerted a decisive influence on education, and the intellectual level of individuals in the upper classes was measured by their knowledge of *The Iliad*. *The Iliad* played an important role in education and enlightenment, equal to that of the Bible in some areas under Christian influence.

Roman civilization exerted a great influence upon education of the aristocracy during the Renaissance. For example, in Poland, the educational criteria from the Renaissance continued to exist as recently as the 17th and 18th centuries, based on the Latin language and works by several elite writers, including *The Metamorphoses* by Ovidius (Naso), *Bucolics* and *The Georgics* by Virgil and works by Cicero.

Knowledge of ancient myths and history that the Polish nobles possessed at that time was, though rough and random, indispensable to their eloquent and admirable speeches. Latin and Greek were among the most important subjects in the curriculum of middle schools for the humanities.

Like many other vague terms used in cultural sciences, the term "knighthood ethos" appears to cover a number of variations. One important variation for France and Poland may be reconstructed from court stories including poems of heroic bravery and stories of love and chivalry. (See Chretien de Troyes and Marie de France.) This variation reproduced attributes of the knighthood ethos formed in ancient Greece, while increasing the importance of the adoration of feminine beauty. Importance was placed on physical strength because the armor used in Europe in those days was very heavy, unlike Japan where samurai armor was generally lightweight. According to the Court stories, most knights were physically strong by nature. Sienkiewicz faithfully observed this tradition still in the 19th century. For example, Sienkiewicz created in his *Teutonic Knights* [1900] Zbyszko of Bogdaniec who was physically strong from his childhood.[18]

Knights often appear on the scene to aid stupid kings. (In Japanese literary works, no emperor or lord of such stupidity is found except in Kyogen or Noh farces where some lords are lampooned.) Sienkiewicz created Jan Casimir (Vasa) in his novel *Deluge*. This warrior of noble birth plays the part of a man of justice who faithfully observes knighthood's general principle of protecting the weak, especially, widows, orphans, and maidens. (It is interesting to ask whether any trace of such an attitude can be found in the ethics of the Japanese samurai.)

To put it simply, European chivalry had by this time come to mean the attitude toward mortal enemies and toward women. The moral paradigm of medieval stories is that the way of fighting was more important than the results of the fighting. Fair play was most important, and it was shameful to kill a knight who fell off his horse or to make a surprise attack from behind. Macko of Bogdaniec was also well aware of this. [See *Teutonic Knights*.]

As is stated above, courtly love, the unique manner of attending ladies, especially beloved ladies, was an important attribute of knighthood. Women were to be loved and protected, and never tainted with blood. That is, a woman, even if she was the wife of a mortal enemy, was never killed. "To fight and love" was the motto of the knights, to which Sienkiewicz gave careful consideration in creating characters for his *Trilogy*, *Teutonic Knights* and other novels.

The adoration of the fair sex in the tradition of knighthood first appeared in France around the 12th century. In *Teutonic Knights*, which depicts the days from the 14th century to the beginning of the 15th century, the adoration of the fair sex is treated as something then newly introduced from Western Europe. But it probably was not introduced from Germany. There are many hypotheses for the origin of the adoration of the fair sex. Minstrels from the knight class possessing no land probably played a certain role, and the introduction of Roman civilization in the Renaissance age, especially *Ars Amandi* by Ovidius (Naso) also probably did.

In 16th or 17th century Poland, French was added to Greek and Latin in the curriculum of the aristocracy, which means that Poles then began to learn the traditions of the French knighthood. For sons of poor nobles it was the best they could do to go to school in their own country, but many sons of wealthy nobles went to France to be educated there. The charm of French civilization for Poles has thus been an unrequited love since the 17th century, though one that is considerably faded now. Knowledge of French was proof of nobility, and French was drummed into the heads of nobles from childhood.

Intellectuality was not highly regarded in the knighthood ethos, and only a rough education was given to the knights; but their emotional life had depth. In medieval stories there appear knights with a burning and hopeless love, and women who fall in love so passionately as to faint or die. The adoration of the fair sex has, since then, long been preserved in European literary works. In Japanese literary works, however, it is difficult to find such cases. (Some traces of this kind of ethos may be found metaphorically in kimono sleeves wetted with tears.)

In 15th century Europe, the idealization of knighthood lost popularity. The use of gunpowder in battles had reduced the effectiveness of the knights' heavy armor, and the social position of independent knights who had no lords to serve had undergone a change. They had in due course become nobles or courtiers.

For his novels dealing with the 15th to the 17th centuries, Sienkiewicz created characters on the prototype of a high-minded knight, that is, a knight who was known for his bravery and as an adorer of feminine beauty. He made every effort to depict conspicuously their bravery in facing danger, and to deny any cowardly action. For example, in *With Fire and Sword*, Skrzetuski never shrinks from the danger threatening him on the both sides of a river on the way to Chmielnicki, and Jeremi Wisniowiecki walks about with great dignity on a castle wall, surrounded by the enemy. They never neglect their duties even when they are in danger of death. Kmicic, who refuses to use the evidence of his innocence, is another example of bravery. As they have a keen sense of honor, they do not attack defenseless enemies, and they give assistance to enemies who ares ill (Rzedzian and Bohun). Generally speaking, the honor and pride of knighthood and of nation are the most important influences on the high-minded actions of the knight.

I have indicated many points of similarity between the leading characters in Sienkiewicz's novels and medieval knights, especially in France. The special feature of the knighthood ethos common to both of them is not cooperation, but rivalry and confrontation among individuals. Individual dignity and prestige were valued more than was benefit for the whole clan or nation.

This medieval ethos was revived by romanticists from the 17th century to the 19th century, and then by Sienkiewicz and J. I. Kraszewski toward the end of the 19th century. The Poles, who had been subordinate to the three powerful countries surrounding them since the end of the 18th century, were spiritually uplifted by the knighthood ethos as revived by these novelists. Even Joseph Conrad (Korzeniowski), an English novelist from Poland, paid homage to the knighthood

ethos of the Polish nobility, who so highly valued pride and honor. "Honor and Mother Country" was the phrase that symbolized Polish values for several decades following 1919.

In Europe, and of course in Poland also, the intellectual content of the knighthood ethos was enriched by courtiers and nobles, because knowledge of cultural sciences was prized by courtiers. In this connection, many books on court etiquette and manners published at that time attached a special importance to being a "refined" person of "the upper class," namely an "educated" person. [See Castiglione's *The Courtier*.]

The attributes of the knighthood ethos and the role that literary works have played in propagating certain values of the ethos have been reviewed above. It must be added that the ethos of gentlemanliness developed as a direct descendant of the knighthood ethos. Simultaneously with the development of the ethos of gentlemanliness, education assumed an increasingly important role in shaping the image of an ideal human being. The necessity of education was argued for by Geoffrey Chaucer in the 14th century and then Daniel Defoe from the 17th to the 18th century. Higher education served to reduce the difference in social status between the elite from the nobility and the elite from the citizens. Nevertheless, the citizenship ethos differed fundamentally from the knighthood ethos with respect to the occupation, birth, daily behavior, and so forth of those to whom it pertained. The concept of "gentleman" was taken in a good sense as it is today, while the citizenship ethos was thought lightly of, though it contributed much to the development of commerce and industry.

Sienkiewicz's novels indicate that the typical "good Pole" acts according to the principles of the knighthood ethos. In his novels, the citizenship ethos is regarded as questionable. Poles of the 20th century doubtlessly have more of the knighthood ethos than the citizenship ethos. They often brave danger like knights, and throw away the prudence peculiar to the petty bourgeois. Individual competition and honor seem to attract the Poles more than do benefit and security. For Poles, honor is an important factor for them in human life even now. By virtue of literary works more than anything else, the ethical values left behind by memories of honor that are otherwise things of the past remain among the traditional practices of the Poles today. To put it simply, these ethical values are accepted and kept in good condition even now within the national ethos.

5. CONCLUSION

What conclusions can be drawn by comparing, from the viewpoint of ethos, some works by Sienkiewicz and Tanizaki, two great novelists of worldwide fame? Must we first prepare a list of "points of similarity and difference," and then draw conclusions? Probably so. But we have already arrived at a conclusion at this stage, which may serve as an object of further study. At this stage, therefore, I will summarize this conclusion as well as some other problems uncovered in this review.

1.   It is not very difficult to enumerate or interpret the features of the knighthood ethos established in Henryk Sienkiewicz's historical novels.   The features of the knighthood ethos, the ancient Greek ethos and the medieval West European ethos can be directly compared, because they are all of closely similar origins.   Meanwhile, at least at this stage, and as reflected in the works of the two novelists under consideration, it cannot be said definitively whether the European knighthood ethos corresponds to the Japanese samurai ethos.   The fact that I have not reviewed here the ethos of all Japanese social classes, including the samurai, court nobles and merchants in the Edo era, makes it all the more difficult to answer such a question.

2.   The highest ideal for the characters appearing in Sienkiewicz's novels is no doubt "honor and motherland," and, therefore, these characters, nobles or not, shine with what may be called a halo of heroic spirit.   Meanwhile, with regard to the characters in Tanizaki's novels, they all have a common attitude toward beauty, and beauty seems to be the yardstick for them to appraise various kinds of values including ethical values.

3.   The ethical strength and spirit of the leading characters in Sienkiewicz's novels originate from their faith in Christianity, especially their belief in Catholicism and their devotion to the mother country.   Meanwhile, Tanizaki's leading characters are directed by something undefinable, a living process, but one that never reveals its natural shape, and that cannot really be explained.   This "something" may be a moral doctrine.   Once a man selects a doctrine, it gives significance to his acts as he follows it, while his acts provide the stage on which to perfect fulfillment of his duties, realization of his intentions and likewise.   At the same time, he must be harmonious with himself and with nature surrounding him.

4.   The adoration of women appears in both Sienkiewicz's knighthood ethos and Tanizaki's "world of values."   But what is hidden behind the generally accepted decorative mask of this adoration is still a riddle.   The social climate of adoration of women did not protect women from "witch-hunting" and burning at the stake in Europe; the lowered social status of women in Japan compared to the Court age should not be taken as proof that they were not adored in 17th and 18th century Japan.   The attitude toward women that Tanizaki depicted in his novels was incompatible with the common thinking of the Japanese at the time he wrote; yet this does not necessarily show that he was influenced by Europe.   There is little doubt, however, that women are educated to be obedient and restrained in Japan, while women are inculcated to accept respect and compliments without reserve in Europe.

5.   It is easy to point out what leading characters in Tanizaki's novels think is most important in life.   It is difficult, however, to answer satisfactorily the question of whether they represent the samurai ethos, the nobility ethos or the merchant ethos, because there is no clear line of demarcation among the three.   There is no doubt, however, that they represent the ethos of a certain privileged social class, probably that of the nobility, which was closest to representing a national ethos at that

time.

In Poland, literature even now serves as an important intermediary through which various customs, life-styles, values and ranking of values are disseminated. It is difficult to define what aspects of moral education are covered by literature in Poland these days, but it may be said that literature still vies with home and school in education. In Japan, school seems to have played a decisive role in education from olden times up to the present. Of course, however, the educational role of Japanese literature also should not be underestimated. In this respect, conditions are probably different in America, where literature is deemed unreliable for educational purposes. For the study of Japanese "wisdom" and "education," we need, therefore, to clarify what significance *The Tale of Genji* and other works by Saikaku Ihara, Monzaemon Chikamatsu, Soseki Natsume, Jun'ichiro Tanizaki and others have on the Japanese educational system.

NOTES

1) PASSIN, H. *Society and Education in Japan,* p. 4.
2) CULLER, J. *On Deconstruction.*
   GASCHÉ, R. *The Tain of the Mirror.*
3) RICOEUR, P. "Egzystencja i hermeneutyka," PIW 1975, p. 130.
4) OSSOWSKA, M. *Ethos rycerski i jego przemiany,* p. 5.
5) TANIZAKI, J. "Naoki-kun no Rekishi-shōsetsu ni tsuite," *Tanizaki Junichirō Zenshū,* vol. 22, p. 92.
6) MARKIEWICZ, H. *Literatura pozytywizmu,* p. 117.
7) MARKIEWICZ, H. op. cit., p. 119.
8) MARKIEWICZ, H. op. cit., p. 119.
9) MARKIEWICZ, H. op. cit., p. 119.
10) Ulysses—Odysseus—see: Homer's "Odyssey."
11) MARKIEWICZ, H op. cit., p. 119.
12) MARKIEWICZ, H. op. cit., p. 120.
13) MARKIEWICZ, H. op. cit., p. 121.
14) MELANOWICZ, M. *Tanizaki Jun'ichiro a krag japońskiej tradycji rodzimej,* pp. 100–136.
15) MELANOWICZ, M. op. cit., pp. 157–174.
16) TANIZAKI, Jun'ichiro "Ren'ai oyobi Shikijō" See: *Tanizaki Junichirō Zenshū,* vol. 17, pp. 218.
17) ELIAS, N. *Przemiany obyczajow,* p. 313.
18) SIENKIEWICZ, H. "Krzyżacy," vol. 1, p. 7.

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