"Good Bye *Shōsetsu*, Hello Again, *Monogatari*?
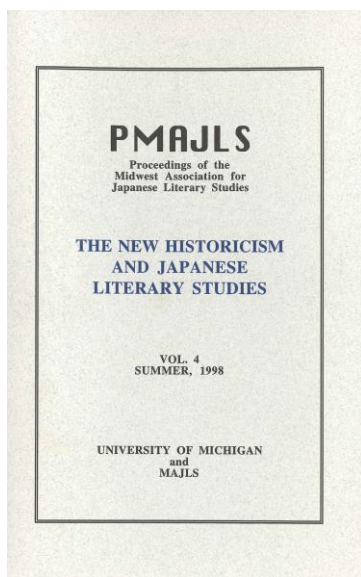The Validity of Restoring Contextuality in Prose"

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Good Bye *Shōsetsu* , Hello Again, *Monogatari*?: The Validity of Restoring Contextuality in Prose

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Let me begin with a synopsis of a contemporary Japanese novella entitled "Shōsetsu den" [lit., "A Legend of a Novel"], by Kobayashi Kyōji (1957-), published in 1986.[1] This futuristic story, set in 2064, evoloves around a floppy disk discovered in a recently deceased man's belongings, which turns out to contain the world's longest novel--500 volumes in total. He had lived alone, hardly speaking to anyone, and had apparently spent his last years solely in writing the text of the novel. The presence of the novel quickly becomes a matter of great journalistic interest, because of its unsurpassed length. Also, scholars from literature to sociology to space physics engage in the interpretation of such an anachronistic act of writing a novel, since the genre of the novel had been long extinct by the time in which the story is set.

It was estimated that one would finish reading it after three years of full-time work. The length of the novel was found too intimidating to warrant a large audience if it was published, and the novel remains unpublished at first. Then a high-profile prisoner publicly promises that he would complete reading the novel by the time his term was over. The solitary writer is matched with a solitary reader with nothing else to do but kill time. But the solitude of the prisoner doesn't last long; his statement draws the mass media's attention, and his time is quickly eroded by constant interviews for television and tabloids.

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[1] Kobayashi Kyōji, "Shōsetsu den" (1986), *Shōsetsu den* (Tokyo: Fukutake bunko, 1988), 5-113.

When he is released and found unable to keep his promise, he is ostracized from the society, and spends the rest of his life in physical and verbal abuse from the nation wherever and whenever he is seen.

This first failed attempt intimidates even more the potential audience. But a number of interested people, mostly intellectual, copy the files and read the novel in secret. The mass media keeps tracking any suspected reader, and demands that the suspected readers summarize the story and let them hear. When the 16-year-old daughter of one suspect voluntarily claims that she had been reading the novel, she is asked to give a synopsis of the novel as far as she had read. The performance is reported live on televisions and earns 97.7 percent of viewing rate.

This phenomenal reception of the orally presented version of the novel convinces some publishers of a potential commercial success of its publication. They are right. When the 500 volumes are collaboratively published by five publishers, each volume up to Vol. 149 becomes the best-selling book of the week of its release. This means, however, that an ordinary reader would not attempt to read the novel beyond that point. Reading a novel is indeed an act, and as such, is time-consuming; only so many people could afford such time. And, being an act, reading also affects readers' lives. Hence, the prisoner I mentioned above. This is also the case with the 16-year-old; she has her steady progress televised, but when everything looks promised, she suddenly falls into a coma. Further, a group of readers who decides to read collaboratively is compelled to flee constantly in order to avoid physical attacks attempted by a competing group. Eventually, the group called "Argō dokushokai" (obviously named after "The Argonauts") succeeds in finishing reading the novel, and is honored with governmental and other awards and celebrations though the members die soon after the achievement.

The young woman who fell into a coma awakens from it after the achievement, and is found that she has lost all memory of the novel.

This seemingly absurd story nonetheless suggests historicist and non-historicist views of the genre of the novel, depicting receptions of it we have seen since the time of its appearance. First of all, the fact that people had ceased to write or read novels by the 21st century with a few exceptions suggests that the genre exists only in a certain set of socio-historical conditions. It urges us to denaturalize the privilege of the genre which is now almost a synonym of literature. Second, the fact that the novel was written by the totally isolated person, without anyone else's knowledge, caricatures the non-communal circumstances under which novels have been produced. Third, the fact that the text was stored in the floppy disk highlights not only the autonomy of the text as the premise of structuralist textual analysis, but also the materiality of the novel which is often discussed in contemporary cultural studies. Fourth, despite all above that suggest the autonomy of the novel as a text, and the solitude in the act of novel-writing, the novel was sought after by the mass audience, and was revealed to it by the oral presentation of a synopsis. And the last is the point I would like to focus this paper on.

Here we may be looking at the return of *monogatari*--prose fiction is received as performance, and it becomes a communal act, involving narrator and narratee, and affecting both parties in one way or the other. The only and yet significant difference is that the mass media- directed format of the public interview involves what appears to be the up-close-and-personal exposure of the image of the author, that is in fact publicly constructed in order to cater to the public demand for an icon, and that is addressed to the mass audience which consists of unidentified individuals. While *monogatari* in Heian period was produced for

and consumed by friends and associates of the author, modern shōsetsu is for mass consumption. Instead of earning a nickname of "Murasaki" among your colleagues, the modern narrator is either idolized or ostracized, sought after by those whom she or he had never met, who would show up from nowhere and demand pieces of her or his body-- her photographs, or his blood.

The combination of solo-production and mass consumption, which is typical of the production, and their juxtaposition with quasi-*monogatari*-like communal act of oral presentation in "*Shōsetsu*-den," do*shōsetsu* not seem to be irrelevant to a scholarly and intellectual trend in 1970s and 1980s Japan, in which literary critics and writers chose to speak of the term: "*monogatari*." Some writers who were termed "*shōsetsu -ka*" declared in this period of time that they would write *monogatari* rather than *shōsetsu*. Kurahashi Yumiko (1935-), for an example, renounced in her mock-interview entitled "*Shōsetsu ni tsuite*" which she wrote up herself and published in 1981, and claimed to write *monogatari* from then on.[2] More specifically, she would have the stories narrated by someone who is specific though masked, and who would refer to fictional characters with a variety of honorifics and addresses (e.g., "-san," "-kun," "-shi"), suggesting the positionality of the narrator, and relationality of narrative performance.[3]

Monogatari was a major focus of Japanese literary criticism as well, in the 1970's and 1980's, both by itself and in contrast with the genre of *shōsetsu*. The genre in the historical sense was studied by members of "*Monogatari* kenkyū kai" [lit., Study Group of *Monogatari*]. They re-examined and foregrounded the

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[2] Kurahashi Yumiko, "Shōsetsu ni tsuite," *Tokushū: Kurahashi Yumiko, Yuriika* [Eureka] (March 1981): 52-55.

[3] Kurahashi, 54.

contextuality of *monogatari* narrative, discussing gaze and voice, not only in terms of honorifics and other linguistic features which had already been carefully studied in the traditional *kokubungaku* scholarship, but also in the light of theories of narratology and gender studies.

Perhaps inspired by such theoretically informed classicists, literary critics specializing in modern literature began to re-view *shōsetsu* as *monogatari*. Saeki Shōichi (1922-), originally an American literature scholar in Japan who had taught Japanese literature in North America, published *Monogatari geijutsu-ron* [lit., On *Monogatari* as an Art] (1979), in which he ardently praised the traditional genre of *monogatari* and defended certain *shōsetsu* by suggesting they were in fact successors of *monogatari*: Akutagawa, Tanizaki, and Mishima are the Japanese authors Saeki deals with, whom he considers comparable to Joseph Conrad and William Faulkner in the art of narration. Saeki suggested that the narrative dynamism would reenergize the genre of *shōsetsu*.[4]

Situated on the opposite pole would be works of Hasumi Shigehiko (1936-), a scholar of French philosophy and film studies who is intellectually indebted to Roland Barthes and Michel Foucault. His *Shōsetsu kara tōku hanarete* [lit., Far and Away from *Shōsetsu*] (1989) relentlessly highlight the dependency of *shōsetsu* on what Hasumi conceives as conventional plot patterns of *monogatari*, such as presence of twins and confusion of their identities, treasure hunting, and so forth. The repetition of the same old plot pattern is found in well known contemporary *shōsetsu* by Inoue Hisashi, Maruya Saiichi,

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[4] Saeki Shōichi, *Monogatari geijutsu ron: Tanizaki, Akutagawa, Mishima* (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1979). Its original version was serialized in *Subaru* from September 1974 to October, 1977.

Ishikawa Jun, and Murakami Haruki among others.[5]

While Hasumi says he is "fed up with" [or, in key phrase in his vocabulary, "*unzari saserareta*"] the persistence of *monogatari* mannerism in *shōsetsu*, Iguchi Tokio seems to accept it not as a lack of individual authors' talent, but as inescapable if one is ever to narrate. While never claiming to discuss *shōsetsu* either as individual works or as the genre, Iguchi deals with works of *shōsetsu* in his *Monogatari-ron/Hakyoku-ron* [lit., On *Monogatari*/On Catastrophe] (1987), and maintains that one begins to narrate in order to escape from a catastrophic experience and to re-make the world into an accountable one. Iguchi is with Hasumi to the extent that he notes the sense of *déjÒa`-lu* persistence in *monogatari*, and the erasure of individuality and overflow of experience above the level of meaning from *monogatari*. But he seems to see the very pressure of the one-time-ness of individual experience, or what is beyond the meaning already discovered what he calls "hakyoku" or "catastrophe," is such that one needs to flee from it and to restore one's place by writing *monogatari*, concluding the story and giving it a meaning. Thus, according to Iguchi, *monogatari* needs to be mannerist; it has to be *déjÒa-` vu*, or *déjÒa-` lu*, to neutralize the shock of the unaccountable, individual, and singular experience.[6]

When the inescapability of *monogatari*, which frustrates Hasumi and which intrigues Iguchi, is discussed, "*monogatari*" seems to mean a set of textual characteristics, rather than a

[5] Hasumi Shigehiko, *Monogatari kara tōku hanarete* (Tokyo: Nihon bungei sha, 1989). Its original version was serialized in *Kaien* from March 1987 to September, 1988.

[6] Iguchi Tokio, *Monogatari-ron/ hakoku-ron* (Tokyo: Ronsōsha, 1987). Especially relevant to this paper are: "Monogatari ga kowareru toki: Sakaguchi Ango to Kobayashi Hideo," 109-143 (originally written for the November 1986 issue of *Gunzō*, and "Dentatsu to iu dekigoto: Murakami Haruki ron," 189-214 (first ed. in *Gunzō* (October 1983)).

historically defined literary genre or oral performance of narration. Iguchi says that *monogatari* shall not be reborn, because "it has never died."[7] The statement suggests the ahistoricality of "*monogatari*" in his usage of the word. Also, when Iguchi laments the loss of present-ness [*genba-sei, genzen-sei*] and incidentality [*gūhatsu-sei*] which entails the beginning of *monogatari* writing, he seems not to be thinking of the present-ness or incidentality of narrative performance which had accompanied the production of *monogatari* as a literary genre in the past. Such qualities are exactly the characteristics of the narrative performance, the dynamism shared by the narrator and narratee. That aspect of *monogatari*--communal production and reception-- seems to be lost on Iguchi and Hasumi.

My interest is more in the fact that the term is used so broadly and emphatically in relation to *shōsetsu*.. I am opposed to the heuristic identification of *shōsetsu* with *monogatari* as a literary genre, because such a choice would imply a complete disregard of the utter gap in socio-political conditions which formed distinct narrative contexts both within and around texts of the two genres. Any attempt at re-reading of *shōsetsu* as *monogatari* should first provide a defense of such ahistoricity. On the other hand, rather than simply rejecting any association with studies of *monogatari*, I find it useful to reflect on the different degrees of attention to narrative context observable in the texts and readers of the two conventions. In *monogatari*, the context of narration is often explicitly specified (as, for example, in *Ōkagami* (c. 1077?) [trans., *Ōkagami, The Great Mirror* (1981)]) and at other times only vaguely implied (as in *Genji monogatari*). In any case, the presence of a particular circumstance under which the narration

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[7] Iguchi, "Monogatari no 'shinjitsu,' monogatari no 'shūmatsu'," Ibid., 107.

takes place, if not the circumstance itself, is made explicit at least by the use of the auxiliary verb "*keri*" for hearsay of things which happened in the past, or by sentence-ending phrases such as "*to zo hon ni*" [lit., "such as the above is in a book"] for suggestion of the second-handed-ness of the narration. In *shōsetsu*, on the other hand, we often do not know why and how the narration has come about.

I think there are three ways of accounting for the loss of context-markers in *shōsetsu*, suggested by critics. First, the extra-textual context of production of *shōsetsu* is considerably different from that of the production of *monogatari*. Texts in the earlier genre were commissioned by the authors' patrons, and written for readings of, and recitations for, the commissioner and a limited number of acquaintances who more or less were expected to share the same reading knowledge of pre-existing literature. *Monogatari* texts circulated in handwritten copies of a very limited number, which introduced an element of the copyist's personality, at least through the handwriting style if not through textual errors or outright editorial changes on the copyist's part.

In contrast, *shōsetsu* texts were written in isolation and mostly in silence. They were reviewed for possible publication by editors at publishers who might not necessarily know the authors in person. Once accepted, the texts were printed mechanically, produced and marketed for a mass audience; received by just about anyone who could afford to buy (or borrow) a copy, and was able and willing to read the text; and reviewed in public media rather than in personal correspondence. At every step mentioned above, forces work toward the erasure of the author's positionality, as well as the relationality of the author to the audience. The dead text is transmitted from the fleshless author to the faceless reader. Has this nature of the extra-textual context surrounding *shōsetsu* texts affected the intra-textual context of

narration within them? Perhaps. If the author would rather not contextualize acts of narration within *shōsetsu*, it would have been easily accomplished, and as easily overlooked by the reader. As Walter Benjamin puts it:

> The earliest symptom of a process whose end is the decline of storytelling is the rise of the novel at the beginning of modern times. What distinguishes the novel from the story (and from the epic in the narrower sense) is its essential dependence on the book. The dissemination of the novel became possible only with the invention of printing. What can be handed on orally, the wealth of the epic, is of a different kind from what constitutes the stock in trade of the novel. What differentiates the novel from all other forms of a prose literature the fairy tale, the legend, even the novella is that it neither comes from oral tradition nor goes into it. The storyteller takes what he tells from experience his own or that reported by others. And he in turn makes it the experience of those who are listening to his tale. The novelist has isolated himself. The birthplace of the novel is the solitary individual, who is no longer able to express himself by giving examples of his most important concerns, is himself uncounseled, and cannot counsel others.[8]

I am more convinced, however, by the argument that it is the different language employed for most of the *shōsetsu* texts the genbun itchi style that has enabled them to dispense with explicit mention of their context-boundedness.[9] This style, typified by the

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[8] Walter Benjamin, "The Storyteller: Reflexions on the Works of Nikolai Leskov" (1955), ed. and introd., Hannah Arendt, and trans., Harry Zohn, Illuminations: Essays and Reflexions (New York, NY: Schochen, 1968) 87.

[9] Roland Barthes' reflexions on the *prtétérit* ("the preterite" in trans.) and the third-person as crucial factors in the *roman* ("the novel" in trans.) in "Writing and the Novel" have inspired many Japanese critics as they write on the *shōsetsu* and the *genbun-itchi* style, such as Hasumi Shigehiko, Karatani Kōjin, etc.. However, they do not always credit Barthes explicitly--perhaps following either the common mode of Japanese critical dsicourse, or the very mode of Barthes. See *Writing Degree Zero* (1953; New York, NY: Noonday P, 1976) 29-40.

use of the "*ta*" ending for the past tense, and the "*de aru*" ending for affirmation of facts,[10] and by the presence of the omniscient narrator, was invented to match an imagined modernity. The style considerably neutralized markers of class, gender and other social status of the narrator, and created the illusion that he or she is omniscient and omnipresent, free of any position and relation to others. The communality of language which is lost on modern literature is described by Roland Barthes as follows:

> Classical language is always reducible to a persuasive continuum, it postulates the possibility of dialogue, it establishes a universe in which men are not alone, where words never have the terrible weight of things, where speech is always a meeting with the others. Classical language is a bringer of euphoria because it is immediately social. There is no genre, no written work of classicism which does not suppose a collective consumption, akin to speech; classical literary art is an object which circulates among several persons brought together on a class basis; it is a product conceived for oral transmission, for a consumption regulated by the contingencies of society: it is essentially a spoken language, in spite of its strict codification.[11]

Also, humanism and democracy as dogmatic ideologies of modernity helped create the illusion of a non-hierarchical relation between narrator and narratee, and of a communicative act in

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[10] Karatani Kōjin examined the use of "*ta*" constructed in the *genbun itchi* style in place of "*keri*" in classical language, as the eraser of position markers in several articles such as "Sōseki to 'bun'" (1990), *Sōseki ron shūsei* (Tokyo: Daisan bunmei sha, 1992) 233-260. Suga Hidemi touches upon the necessity of additional examination of "de aru" as a more crucial sign of the style in his *Nihon kindai bungaku no <tanjō>: Genbun itchi undō to nashionarizumu* [nationalism] (Tokyo: Ōta shuppan, 1995) 39-56.

[11] Roland Barthes, "Is There Any Poetic Writing?" *Writing Degree Zero* (1953), trans., Annette Lavers and Colin Smith (New York, NY: Noonday P, 1967) 49.

which the narratee is interested in, and capable of, understanding all that the narrator has to say. This illusion is perceived as problematic for two reasons. First, according to Hasumi, "if one writes [about something], one can write, and if one reads it, one can read it."[12] One writes not "intransitively," but "transitively," to translate the passage into Barthesian language[13] about something, and one reads to receive the "something." The exchange of the content of *shōsetsu* is made possible in part, in my own view, by a perceived nature of the modern Japanese— a transparent medium by which to convey messages in such a way that everyone can decode it and find the messages. That is to say, communication is perceived not as performance but as medium. Second, as Suga Hidemi and Watanabe Naomi argue: "One would not have been able to become a literary man/woman until [the institution of] *genbun itchi* if one could not write in *kanbun* or read *The Tale of Genji*. The destiny of modern literature is to have enabled everyone to write and read it."[14] The access to literature was no longer a privilege of a selected group of the elite or literati who had acquired a particular type of knowledge and skills, but a

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[12] Hasumi Shigehiko, "*Monogatari*=shomotsu=bungaku," *Shōsetsu ron=hihyōron* (Seidosha, 1981) 323. Hasumi has made similar observations elesewhere as well. One of them that is not specifically about *shōsetsu*, but also *bungaku* [literature]), points out more explicitly the universality of the transitive function of language: "everything can become the 'something,' or the subject [of a book], and everyone can become the subject of the acts of writing and reading" (Ibid. 328-329). Though again Hasumi's focus is on the "transitive function" of the verbs, "*kaku*" [to write] and "*yomu*" [to read], the easy access to language guaranteed for everyone and the perception of language as a tool to express something else seem to me particularly relevant to *shōsetsu* as a product of humanism and democracy.

[13] Roland Barthes, "To Write: An Intransitive Verb?" (1966) in *The Rustle of Language*, trans., Richard Howard (Berkeley, CA: U of California P, 1989) 11-21.

[14] Suga Hidemi and Watanabe Naomi, *Sore demo sakka ni naritai hito no tame no bukku gaido* [book guide] (Tokyo: Ōta shuppan, 1993) 38.

human right everyone shares by birth. Thus, the institutional, abstract and universal nature of *shōsetsu* was confirmed by its mode of production, language and ideology, at the expense of the spontaneous, concrete and context-bound nature of *monogatari*.

However, there are some valuable exceptions to the negation of narrative performance, which inescapably involves relationality (including hierarchical relationships) of participants, in *shōsetsu*. Some modern Japanese writers wilfully resisted the modernization of prose fiction, and tried to re-present the dynamics of the act of narration within the text to remind us of the context-boundedness of narratives. Tanizaki Jun'ichirō is an example of such. His much too-publicized disputes with Akutagawa Ryūnosuke, which is often termed "hanashi no nai *shōsetsu* ronsō " is only a less eloquent manifesto of his stances in this regard. His narratives often present the narrator and narratee, and elaborate how they are charged with their own motivations and interests in participation in the narrative act.

In my recently completed book, I treat such narrative dynamism in Tanizaki and other modern authors' works not as anti-modern or post-modern consciousness in recycling pre-modern narrative circumstances, but as speech acts, or as the intra-textual narrator and narratee doing things with words. Threats, desire to violate others' privacy, distrust, disdain. Fear, intention of retaliation, keeping secrets, theatrical self-exposure, self-silencing. Such are the attitudes of significant narrators and narratees shown as they participate in narrative acts. Yet such negatively construed terms of relationship do not at all signal the void of narration. Quite on the contrary, narration is prompted by the very desire for conquests and/or erosion of the other party hence, the complexity and ambiguity of the narrator-narratee relationship. While the narrator can be knowing, condescending, patronizing, overpowering, or even harrassing, so can the

narratee. Neither of them is autonomous of the other, or of the relationship with the other as one perceives it the relationship, which is, in turn, ever-changing in the course of narrative performance, as words uttered and heard, written and read, do things to the relationship. Or rather, relationships are defined through speech acts, while speech acts are directed by relationships among participants. Ross Chambers' pun-like mention of the verb with the double meaning–"to *relate*"–is indeed profoundly suggestive of the fact that speech does things to people.[15]

The recent development of Japanese scholarship seems to suggest their perception of reading as a a speech act. Hasumi Shigehiko, in his reflections on the classic concept of "poetic language"--discussed by Roland Barthes,[16] among others-- reminds the reader of performativity of criticism, though perhaps as a side effect:

> What human beings can write is nothing more or less than language. Nor is what humanbeings can read anything but language. No one writes or reads literature. It is simply that one comes across, or does not come across, language as circumstance. "Poetic language" is not a closure of any privileged area somewhere *inside* language as circumstance. If such a thing [as "poetic language"] existed, there would be no borderline between everyday language and "poetic language." Something that deserves to be called "poetic language" is not something that exists, but an *incident*, a happening which vertically pierces the environment [of language], which would never leave a scar on language. It is not to be owned, but to be experienced. To encounter it, one has to be a reader. I maintain

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[15] Ross Chambers, *Story and Situation: Narrative Seducion and the Power of Fiction* (Minneapolis, MN: U of Minnesota P, 1984) 3.

[16] Roland Barthes, "Is there any Poetic Writing?" *Writing Degree Zero* 41-52.

the above not because I wish to promote criticism vis-à-vis
creative writing; it is because it is the very *act of reading* that
can be firmly related to the entire area of the human activity,
which is most remote from literature as "myth."[17]

Hasumi thus unmakes the notion of literature as a constative,
intrinsic and sustaining entity distinct from, or opposed to, what
is not literature, in much a similar manner to Terry Eagleton's old
article, "What is Literature?"[18] Hasumi suggests that the act of
reading is the only way to make a given writing into literature, that
literature, thus, happens momentarily (rather than existing for
duration of time), and that readers make literature "happen"--
hence, "human activity." Thus, the "present-ness" or
"incidentality" which the text of *monogatari*-like *shōsetsu* may
have been deprived of is to be (re)constructed by the act of
reading which is a one-time performance.

A similar awareness of the mission and effect of criticism
seems to be shared by other critics, as is evident in the titles of
their works. Komori Yōichi's recent book, which deals with
Natsume Sōseki's *Kōfu* (1908) [trans., The *Miners* (1988)], is
entitled: *Dekigoto to shite no yomukoto* (1995) [lit., *Act of
Reading as an Incident*].[19] The title suggests, very explicitly, his
consciousness of critical reading as something that makes
literature "happen," and of "*doing* literature" by reading. Another
example of scholarly work on the literary speech act is *Dekigoto
to shite no bungaku* [lit., *Literature as an Incident*] (1995) by

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[17] Hasumi Shigehiko, "Kyokō no jiba," *Shōsetsu ron=Hihyōron* 320.
Emphasis in the original.

[18] Terry Eagleton, *Literary Theory: an Introduction* (London, Eng.: Basil
Blackwell, 1983) 1-16.

[19] Komori Yōichi, *Dekigoto to shite no yomukoto* (Tokyo: U of Tokyo P,
1995).

Kobayashi Yasuo (1950-),[20] a scholar of French literature, philosophy and phenomenology, and a translator of Jean-François Lyotard.

A book that Kobayashi edited and published recently is more blatantly entitled: *Bungaku no gengo kōi ron* [lit., *Literary Speech Act*] (1997).[21] This is an anthology of critical essays on speech acts happening in prose narratives by Ōe Kenzaburō, Kawabata Yasunari, James Joyce, Fyodr Dostevsky, Marcel Proust, André Breton, Marguerite Duras, Charlotte Brontë and others (thus neutralizing the national boundaries of literature). Though without an introduction which would define the theoretical framework of the book, it becomes evident that the individual chapters draw upon J. L. Austin and, perhaps more significantly, Shoshana Felman who was inspired by Austin. The following statement made by Kobayashi in the postscript to his volume earns my genuine agreement:

> A literary text is not "texture of significance" but "a site of acts" in which a variety of acts acts of characters, acts of the writer, acts of the narrator intermingle each other. We, too, enter the "site" as the subjects of the act of criticism. If there is anything in particular that motivated the editing of this volume of anthology, it should be nothing but the awareness of such an act, that is consistent throughout this anthology.[22]

Renouncing Structuralism, Kobayashi defines criticism as an act, and literature as an incident, suggesting that we should remain aware of our own act of reading as we are engaged in it.

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[20] Kobayashi Yasuo, *Dekigoto to shite no bungaku* (Tokyo: Sakuhinsha, 1995).

[21] Kobayashi Yasuo, ed., *Bungaku no gengo kōi ron* (Tokyo: Miraisha, 1997).

[22] Ibid., "Atogaki" 243.

In conclusion, let me confirm the following. As far as the extra-textual contexts of production are concerned, *shōsetsu* should not be confused with *monogatari*. Modern production of literature has lost the dynamism of oral performance. However, it does not mean that *shōsetsu* is devoid of contextuality *per se*. Works of *shōsetsu* have been also produced in a web of human relationships, and as such, cannot be autonomous of contexts as they may have appeared. Further, within the texts of some *shōsetsu*, it is reconfirmed that any statement is context-bound, and that the narrator and narratee inside the text affect each other and each other's participation in narrative acts in the same manner that the narrator and audience of *monogatari* must have. Finally, any *shōsetsu* does not exist in itself or by itself. The act of reading is necessary for any *shōsetsu* to come into existence, or to happen, and to that extent, *shōsetsu* should always remain *monogatari*. *shōsetsu*, as well as *monogatari*, is always context-bound, emerging only out of the readers' intents, desires and circumstances, and not existing anywhere else.