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## Synopses

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## SYNOPSIS

### THE SETTING OF THE ENGLISH NOVELS IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY (1)

by *Toichiro Ohta*

When we trace the history of English prose fiction, we can find three kinds of forms: the novel of action which records a succession of events and which is the most simple form of prose fiction, the novel of character in which human nature is made the main material, and the dramatic novel in which the life of the characters is subject to the influence of the setting or the surroundings and is destined to come to a tragic end.

In the novel of action, the elements of character and setting do not play an important part; the character of a hero or heroine is universal, but not personal, as seen in John Bunyan's allegorical story *The Pilgrim's Progress*, or Daniel Defoe's adventurous story *Robinson Crusoe*. In the novel of character such as Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones* or W. M. Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*, the characters of Tom Jones and Becky Sharp are both personal and full of life; the characters are not imagined as parts of the plot, and the action and the setting are merely subordinate to the characters.

Thus, in the growth of English prose fiction, two kinds of novel can be distinguished: the action novel in which the plot must be strictly developed, and the character novel in which the delineation of character is primary and the plot may be secondary and loosely made up. Time and space have no important significance in these novels. For example, the character of the figures in *Vanity Fair* is unchangeable; some are weak and conservative, some are worldly

and vainglorious from the beginning of the novel and they do not lose their own character to the end. Space needs a geographical accuracy, but it is not restricted in its development.

In the dramatic novel, however, the element of setting has a close, organic relation with the plot and with the make-up and development of the characters in the novel. It becomes an indispensable part of the story itself; it can be seen that a particular character is formed by its surroundings, and that events happen and develop under the influence of those surroundings.

# VIRGINIA WOOLF AND THE NARRATIVE CONSTRUCTION OF FICTION

by *Haruyuki Togawa*

In the twentieth century the novel has become the dominant form of literature. It may be because that the art of the novel has made much more progress than that of any other genre of literature. One of modern achievements of the English novel is the novelist's presentation of human motivation from the inside. Virginia Woolf asserts in her "Phases of Fiction" that the novelist's aim is 'to give a full record of life', not the climax and crisis but the growth and development of feelings.' Virginia Woolf doubts the essential validity of 'reality' as the term which has been understood by the realists and the naturalists. To her, what is 'real' is not the external incident in the life of a character but the mental process of the character in reaction to the external incident. Therefore, she devotes herself to the delineation of this internal life, intuitive and associative, in her works. With this purpose she uniquely invents a new device to develop her own vision in the situations she presents through style and structure. To elucidate the narrative construction of her novels is the aim of this short article.

To begin with, I have analysed the novel into its component parts and examined Woolf's attitude toward those components in turn. Then I have pointed out the difference of her creation from that of any other novelist. To take but one instance, as for the character of the novel, Peter Walsh in *Mrs. Dalloway* cannot be called a character in a literary sense of the term. Woolf seems to introduce to the reader Walsh merely for the purpose of making him tell of Mrs. Dalloway's youth. Walsh is a narrator and not a character. For 'the stream of consciousness' of a character itself could not mirror

a good many incidents occurring in the character's life. From the view-point of the literary technique, it proves to be a new and appropriate device. Thus, it is concluded that Woolf's narrative construction has displayed her originality as a novelist and made a significant contribution to the contemporary novel.

## D. G. ROSSETTI AND J. KEATS

by *Sanechika Kodama*

In not a few points is D. G. Rossetti akin to J. Keats. Their similarities in sensibility, themes, materials, designs, verbal manipulation *etc.* have been slightly pointed out. In fact, when Rossetti touches upon Keats in his works and personal letters, he is always laudatory. We also become aware that we often feel something of Keatsian flavour in the works of Rossetti.

Among many analogous points, leaving the differences aside a while, the attention is drawn in this essay to their verbal style, especially their frequent use of oxymoronical expressions, which becomes in both increasingly frequent in their works as they grow matured through their "sweet and bitter" experiences of the real world.

The most significant and revealing of all the contradictory terms used by them is "A living death." For in this apparently ambiguous but paradoxical phrase is contained the romantic agony: conflicts and tensions of the discordant self caught in the limbo. It is the most important manifestation of their life-philosophy, in which self-negation in this world is the vehicle for the attainment of their ideals.

Since the earlier romantic poets, such as Wordsworth, Coleridge and Shelley, as well as Keats, are also primarily concerned with philosophies almost identical with that in "A living death", it may safely be said that Rossetti, though a half-century younger Victorian, is in the tradition of romanticism in the sense that he yokes together contradictory words as the symbolic expression of his agonizing soul caught in the depth by his negative-affirming philosophy.

# RIP VAN WINKLE AND URASHIMA-TARO

by *Umejiro Kinugasa*

We find "A Study of Organic Chemistry" by Mitsuru Kuhara in the *Tōyō-Gakugei-Zasshi* (Oriental Magazine of Art and Science), 1882. In his essay Kuhara emphasizes the need of keeping touch with up-to-date information from abroad, if we are to study chemistry which makes rapid progress. He remarks that we shall become a Rip Van Winkle if we fail to notice it, and he gives an outline of Washington Irving's famous masterpiece. As far as the present writer knows, this brief outline is the first introduction of "Rip Van Winkle" into Japan.

In 1886, Bimyō Yamada compiled and published the *Shintaishi-sen* (A Selection of New-Style Poetry), in which we find "Rip Van Winkle" related in verse by Kyūka Maruoka. Maruoka took a great interest in Irving's strange story, which bears some resemblance to "Urashima-Taro", an old Japanese legend. At that time he devoted himself to the composition of *shintaishi* (new-style poetry), and he composed an outline of "Rip Van Winkle" in verse. In the preface to his *shintaishi*, he points out the likeness between "Rip Van Winkle" and "Urashima-Taro".

In 1889, "Urashima" by Masayuki Kataoka, reprinted from *The Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine*, appeared in the *Shōnen-yen* (Children's Garden), a fortnightly for boys and girls. This short piece in English has a subtitle "A Japanese Rip Van Winkle" as "Urashima-Taro" resembles Irving's masterpiece in some respect. In the same year, Ogai Mori wrote "Shinsekaino-Urashima" (An Urashima in the New World) for the *Shōnen-yen*. Mori's contribution is a translation not from the English original, but from the German version which he read during his stay in Germany. Second-hand as his "Urashima" is, it is completely translated and makes quite clear the the resemblance between our two heroes.