

# THE SCIENCE OF SYMBIOSIS AND LINGUISTIC DEMOCRACY IN EARLY TWENTIETH-CENTURY JAPAN

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## ABSTRACT

Focusing on the early twentieth-century Japanese Esperantist and popular celebrity writer Miyazawa Kenji as an embodiment of a larger intellectual phenomenon of early twentieth century Japan, the essay delineates the scientific world view behind the Esperanto movement and corresponding internal logic that developed in the language movement's foundational years. It argues that Esperantism in Japan in its early years was not an isolated linguistic movement among a small number of leftist intellectuals, but part of a much larger intellectual, cultural, and social movement that reflected the particular scientific worldview of what I call 'anarchist science'. This worldview defied the conceptual bifurcations of 'modern vs. tradition' and 'nature vs. culture' in modern history. A history of its vision offers a fresh perspective on modern history, future visions of the past, and the historical meanings of Esperantism.

## KEY WORDS

natural science, Miyazawa Kenji, symbiosis, Esperanto, linguistic democracy, childhood, anarchism

## CLASSIFICATION

JEL: N35, O35

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## INTRODUCTION

The regional train line that takes one through the bucolic northern prefecture of Iwate is called the '*Ginga tetsudo*' (the Galactic Railroad). The name refers to the local writer and Esperantist Miyazawa Kenji's most famous children's narrative, *Ginga tetsudō no yoru* (Night on the Galactic Railroad). Miyazawa wrote the story in 1927 in both Esperanto and Japanese. A widely viewed 1989 animated film based on the story paid homage to the spirit of Miyazawa's vision by incorporating Esperanto into the film in captions and in the animation. Infused with Miyazawa's knowledge of astronomy, the story takes the reader on a trip through the Milky Way itself, seen through the eyes of a child, and puts the reader in touch with the science of astronomy along the way. The name of the *real* northern railway line in Iwate infers that by travelling through this agrarian region, one will discover one's place in, and connection to, the unbounded and unseen galaxy beyond. This discovery can be attained only by openly imagining the universe from a child's perspective.

Miyazawa's home village of Hanamaki has adopted the Esperanto name 'Ihatov' as its second name for itself, broadcasting the word across the village homepage<sup>1</sup>. The Esperanto name was given to the region by Miyazawa, who is now among the most celebrated literary figures in Japan. A kind of Esperanto-Russian transliteration of 'Iwate' (formerly 'Ihate' in an older spelling), the word was created by Miyazawa as the name for the locus of the simultaneously fantastic and scientifically informed world of his writings. Firmly established as a place in northern Japan by Miyazawa's publications, the Esperanto name gives the area the allure of being directly tied to the limitless wider universe, and the animate and inanimate world beyond human society featured in Miyazawa's works. It appears to reaffirm the deep connectedness of northern Japan with the simultaneously fantastic and scientific intergalactic world of Miyazawa's literature.

Miyazawa not only wrote poetry and children's literature, but studied and taught Esperanto and immersed himself in chemistry, geology, biology and astronomy, seeking to improve local people's lives through scientific knowledge. Puzzled by his eclectic commitments and dazzled by the extent of his interdisciplinary pursuits, scholars have largely ignored Miyazawa's interest in Esperanto. While Esperanto perhaps evokes images of enthusiastic leftist eccentrics conversing in urban bookshops, the agrarian locale of Hanamaki where Miyazawa used and taught Esperanto does not correspond with that image. His interest in the language has been (mis)understood as having had no clear relation to his other commitments to literature and science. It is not Miyazawa, of course, who failed to fit himself into the modern disciplinary organization of knowledge, but it is we, as his observers today, in our attempt to understand his intellectual universe through existing modern academic disciplines, who have been unable to make sense of his thought and practice and the wider embrace of his work and life<sup>2</sup>.

This article demonstrates that, beginning with his interest in Esperanto, Miyazawa and his brand of eccentricism were in fact very much products of the culture and thought of his times. Rather than presenting Miyazawa as a unique, isolated and eclectic intellectual, this essay places him instead as a metaphoric starting point, a guidepost if you like, to observe a much larger intellectual phenomenon. By so doing, it introduces a major intellectual source of the beginnings of the Esperanto movement in Japan in the immediate post-Russo-Japanese War (1904-05) period previously hidden from history. I argue that Miyazawa's Esperantism and that of many other key figures in the Japanese Esperanto movement were both rooted in and inspired a popularly embraced concept of the world closely tied to 'anarchist science'. Early twentieth-century anarchists embraced the latest scientific findings. They actively translated

and promoted scientific writings that inspired and supported their view of the world as symbiotic, democratic and non-hierarchical from its natural origins, and in so doing, succeeded in popularizing science by framing it in a manner that still has repercussions today in popular culture. They sought to construct a scientifically oriented community, with Esperanto as the medium.

Conceived as a language of idealistic eccentrics, the meaning of Esperanto in Japanese cultural history has been largely ignored<sup>3</sup>. This essay attempts to view its history through the lens of ‘trans-disciplinary complex systems.’ Esperanto was a ‘system’ in the sense that it implied an interlocked conceptual universe that linked various seemingly unrelated fields. By looking at Esperanto in this way, the essay argues that Esperantism was not an isolated linguistic movement among a small number of leftist intellectuals, but part of a much larger, intellectual, cultural and social movement that reflected the particular scientific worldview of ‘anarchist science.’ Miyazawa was an embodiment of this phenomenon – part and parcel of this larger culture of knowledge. This essay attempts to delineate this scientific worldview and the corresponding internal logic behind the Esperanto movement in its foundational years in Japan. It may be of timely significance to note that Esperantism was a cultural phenomenon that, after all, arguably more than any other internationalism(s) of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, brought the question of human freedom and equality in diversity into the forefront of a popular discourse and imagination to link Japan with the wider global humanity. At the heart of Japanese interest in Esperanto and scientific discovery was the debate about the very origins of knowledge and human capacity for understanding (‘culture’) itself. This epistemological questioning of the origins of human knowledge lay at the crux of anarchist critiques of Eurocentric civilizational discourse and its diverse practices.

## **THE CENTRELESS UNIVERSE IN POST-RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR JAPAN**

It is to this dust, to these infinitely tiny bodies that dash through space in all directions with giddy swiftness, that clash with one another, agglomerate, disintegrate, everywhere and always, it is to them that today astronomers look for an explanation of the origin of our solar system, the movements that animate its parts, and the harmony of their whole. Yet another step, and soon universal gravitation itself will be but the result of all the disordered and incoherent movements of these infinitely small bodies – of oscillations of atoms that manifest themselves in all possible directions. Thus the centre, the origin of force, formerly transferred from the earth to the sun, now turns out to be scattered and disseminated: it is everywhere and nowhere. With the astronomer, we perceive that solar systems are the work of infinitely small bodies; that the power which was supposed to govern the system is itself but the result of the collisions among those infinitely tiny clusters of matter, that the harmony of stellar systems is harmony only because it is an adaptation, a resultant of all these numberless movements uniting, completing, equilibrating one another [1; pp.3-4].

The year 1905, with Japan winning the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905), is usually discussed as a turning point when Japan began to be part of the elite group of Western nation states. After winning the war, at the height of the ‘yellow peril’ in the West, people in Japan had an unprecedented opportunity to engage with the wider world afresh. And the ‘world’ was watching with great anticipation what the ‘champion of the coloured people’ as some African American intellectuals labelled Japan then, would bring to the world [2; pp.3-4, 2; pp.6-29.]. It is hardly a coincidence that some historians begin the history of decolonization movements from 1905 because of the perceived significance of Japan’s war with Russia in the colonized world [3].

At this critical moment in the history of Japan’s engagement with the world, a very different kind of cultural turning point was observed. It first made its appearance as a linguistic

movement in Japanese popular culture. *Asahi News*, a major national newspaper, reported that Esperanto was one of the top two biggest fads in Japan of the year 1906. While observed as a popular fad, this trend was also joined by some of the leading and most recognized faces in cultural, political and intellectual life in the Japan of the early twentieth century.

With the appearance of Esperantism, the end of the war simultaneously marked a scientific turn. The well-known anarchist Ōsugi Sakae emerged as an important initiator of the Esperanto movement, helping to found the Japan Esperanto Association at this time. Ōsugi's turn to Esperanto at this critical moment in history coincided with his turn to science and anarchism. Well before Miyazawa, Ōsugi paired his interest in Esperanto with a deep interest in scientific knowledge of astronomy, evolutionary biology and animal behaviour. At the very moment that Ōsugi's readings of scientific writings on biological evolution inspired him to realize he was an anarchist, Ōsugi also advocated Esperanto and opened the first school of Esperanto in Japan in 1906.

Ōsugi himself recalled the perfect coinciding of his readings of evolution with the moment of his realization that he was an anarchist immediately after the war: "As I read [the biological evolutionary writings of Oka Asajirō] I felt as if I were gradually growing taller and as if the limits in all directions were steadily expanding. The universe that I had not known until now was opening itself to my eyes with every page. [...] There is nothing at all which is not changing." [4; p.47]. This discovery was simultaneous with his discovery of the scientific bases for modern anarchist writings. Ōsugi wrote:

Anarchists begin by explaining astronomy in the introduction. Then, they explain the plants and animals. Finally, they discuss human society. In due course, I tire of books. I raise my head and stare into space. The first things I see are the sun, moon, and stars, the movement of the clouds, the leaves of the paulownia tree, sparrows, black kites, chickens, and then, lowering my gaze, the roof of the opposite prison building. It is exactly as if I were practicing what I was just now reading. As scant as my knowledge of nature is, I am constantly embarrassed. I think, "From now on I will seriously study nature."

The more I read and think about it, nature is for some reason logical, and logic is embodied completely in nature. Further, I must admire nature greatly, for this logic must similarly be embodied entirely in human society which has been developed by nature [4; p.48].

Ōsugi, like Miyazawa, found a direct link between human society and the centreless nature of the universe and claimed that the interdependent relationship between humans and nature, or natural and human/social science, was such that it logically followed that humans had no choice but to harmonize society with the most advanced scientific knowledge of space, matter and the natural world. This devotion to scientific knowledge selectively interpreted by anarchists to represent the future of human society, is what I call 'anarchist science.' Ōsugi believed that human subjectivity and social relations ought to reflexively mirror scientific findings about the nature and 'logic' of the physical and natural universe around and within human beings.

Ōsugi was far from alone in this respect. Kōtoku Shūsui, a leading theoretical leader of anarchism and a supporter of the use of a non-hierarchical world language like Esperanto, also urged the alignment of social and political thought with scientific discoveries about the universe. Following the Russo-Japanese War, he called for a new direction in the progress of civilization toward unity between human society and culture on the one hand and the laws of the universe on the other. The universe Kōtoku referred to was the centreless universe without beginning or end, verified by the latest scientific findings, in which all energies interact and

evolve,. After Charles Darwin, “there will be no more debate about the beginningless and endless composition of nature,” Kōtoku stated in his introduction to Darwin’s theory that helped popularize ideas of evolution in Japan [5]. Kōtoku embraced what University of California astronomer Mark Davis has characterized as “negative discovery,” the understanding<sup>4</sup>:

- that Earth is *not* the centre of the Universe,
- that the Sun is *not* the centre of the Universe,
- our galaxy is *not* the centre of the Universe,
- our type of matter is *not* the dominant constituent of the Universe (dark matter predominates instead),
- our Universe (seen and unseen) is *not* the only Universe.

For Kōtoku, the centre of the universe was scattered everywhere and nowhere at the same time. Kōtoku was quick to interlink cosmological knowledge and biological discovery with the temporal and spatial order of the human world. Many enthusiastically turned to the biological and cosmological sciences in this manner after the war. In the context of wide-ranging questioning of the ideology of Western modernity following the Russo-Japanese War [6], science became the vessel through which the “true nature” of human behaviour and society could be discerned.

In this anarchist understanding of human existence in the natural world based on astronomy and the life sciences, Esperanto came to be the language of choice. Based on the principle of universality of human knowledge and understanding, it was seen as the most scientific language. Many Japanese Esperantists believed that the language was designed to promote the multiplicity of cultures interdependently coexisting and evolving. This distinguished it in important ways from the international languages of English or French, for example, that essentially belonged to one or more particular culture(s) and, given power in the context of civilization discourse of the time, expanded as a part of political, economic and cultural imperialism – “linguistic Darwinism”.

The critique of linguistic Darwinism was made possible through the anarchists’ critical reinterpretation of Darwinism. Wide circles of critical public intellectuals came together in the post-Russo-Japanese War era, leading Sakai Toshihiko, an Esperantist, and Yamakawa Hitoshi to found the journal *Heimin kagaku* (The people’s science) in 1907. The journal expressed anarchists’ interest in the question of evolution for human society and its implications for the progress of civilization. Articles in the journal included “The History of Human Development,” “The Evolution of Men and Women,” “Ethics of the Animal World,” and “The Birth and Death of Planet Earth.” Japanese anarchist Esperantists found that if the animal world was ethical, evolutionary theory could no longer be characterized as the departure of human civilization from nature, but rather as the nurture and development of what was already inherent in nature.

There was never a ‘little red book’ that outlined the ideology of Esperantism. Nor were there any real intellectual leader(s) to speak of in this phenomenon. Even the Japanese Esperanto Association was just one of numerous hubs of Esperanto activity scattered across Japan, and many who studied and spoke Esperanto never became members of the association. Nonetheless, those who consciously participated in Esperanto did share a pattern of thought on evolution and the interworkings of nature. For them, sociability and cooperation among beings was the key to human progress and survival. Their interpretation of science inclusive of this planned language and their future vision of the human world very often centred on anarchist views of nature whether participants acknowledged it or not.

## **SYMBIOSIS AND MULTIPLICITY IN NATURE**

Anarchist Esperantists translated and actively studied scientific writings, from Ilya Mechnikov’s studies of microorganisms to the evolutionary theory of Charles Darwin and the detailed

studies of insects' lives by the French entomologist Jean-Henri Fabre, together with discussions of the natural and physical world by Peter Kropotkin, a scholar of physical geography and geology. They succeeded in conveying their interest to the Japanese public through their translations of these writers. Indeed, anarchist Esperantists played a leading role in the popularization of the natural sciences in Japan in the early twentieth century. Ideas of nature and the natural sciences were then applied to ideas of culture in early twentieth-century Japan.

Kropotkin, Ilya Mechnikov, Darwin, and Fabre might seem odd choices for the formation of a coherent pattern of thought, given that they were at odds with one another in their views on evolution. Kropotkin's work was read as much for its insights on biological evolution as for its contribution to civilizational theory. Both Mechnikov and Kropotkin belonged to a larger Russian school critical of Darwin, and Mechnikov began his scientific career by heavily criticizing Darwin for his Malthusian view of competitive nature. Fabre in turn disagreed with Darwin on religious grounds. Fabre concluded that the perfection or genius of such tiny beings as insects could have been achieved only by divine intervention. Mechnikov, meanwhile, was a firm atheist who maintained that evolution occurs without a divine plan. The apparent incoherency of their thought easily feeds the historiographical tendency to view Japanese interest in "Western thought" as similarly contradictory and random.

Despite the differences, the translation of their ideas in Japan following the Russo-Japanese War reveals an internal logic hidden behind their presence. Anarchist-Esperantists identified in their work an idea of progress based in science that was fundamentally at odds with the Spencerian idea of progress. With the help of natural science, they removed the distinction between high and low, subverted the centrality of the state in human progress, advocated the multiplicity of ever-changing cultures, and promoted voluntary associations for an interdependent world.

Little known to historians is the fact that the popularity of Darwin in Japan derived to a significant degree from anarchist Esperantists' translations. Darwin was made famous in Japanese popular discourse in a way that overturned social Darwinist understandings of the world. Their writings on natural science negated social Darwinism while promoting a new cooperative society based on natural tendencies for mutual aid gifted by nature.

Ōsugi and other anarchist Esperantists promoted Darwin's *Origin of Species* by incorporating both competition and cooperation in the struggle for survival that they identified as part and parcel of Darwinist evolutionary theory. They popularized the *Origin of Species* and promoted Esperanto while ignoring Darwin's second work, *The Descent of Man*, which applied evolutionary theory to humans. Containing Spencerian and Malthusian discussions of race and culture which Japanese anarchists would undoubtedly have found fault with, a section of *The Descent of Man* for example conjectured that the savage or "weaker" races would eventually die out or be absorbed through contact with the "civilized races" and through interracial and intertribal competition. Darwin himself adhered to a concept that equated race with culture – a view that would become widespread at the turn of the century<sup>5</sup>. The natural selection of species led Darwin to conclude that races, and therefore cultures, would be naturally selected out. This would lead to the extinction of the more "savage" people, physically, culturally and linguistically [7]. It was no accident that *The Descent of Man* went untranslated and was virtually unknown by ordinary Japanese. Instead they guilelessly paired Darwin's *Origin of Species* with Kropotkin's anti-Malthusian rereading of Darwin in terms of mutual aid and symbiosis, reflecting the originality of their translation practice.

Nobel Prize winner Ilya Mechnikov, whose writings emerged suddenly in a number of prominent Japanese cultural figures' works in the post-Russo-Japanese period, is emblematic of the interest in natural science in Japan during this time<sup>6</sup>. Mechnikov discovered the

symbiotic functions of the natural world from within the human body itself by examining the interrelations of bacteria and other microorganisms that thrived within the body. For Japanese anarchists, the human body discovered by Mechnikov was a body functioning in mutual interaction and interdependence with its environment and as a reflection of the cosmological universe. His understanding of multiple levels of “social” relations among organisms inside and outside the human body led him to reflect in his writings on how an understanding of humans’ interdependent relations with the microbiotic world within them might prolong individual lives – findings which, many decades later, would contribute to American biologist Lynn Margulis’s influential discoveries of the effects of cellular level symbiosis on the evolution of life [8, 9]. Margulis’ work has been described by Richard Dawkins as one of the great achievements of twentieth-century evolutionary biology. She later co-developed with James Lovelock the controversial hypothesis of our self-regulating planet, Gaia, based on her understanding of microorganisms’ interactions with their inorganic surroundings. Mechnikov examined microbiotic organisms as separate entities that were incorporated into the body in a symbiotic relationship over evolutionary time. From the perspective of Japanese anarchists, then, the presence of interdependent and symbiotic relations and of a cooperatively based world discernible from the internal workings of human beings themselves at the smallest microbiotic level of organic life, negated Malthusian assumptions about the struggle for survival promoted by capitalism and social Darwinism<sup>7</sup>.

The most notable case of anarchists’ popularization of scientific writings was their introduction and translation of the entomologist Henri Fabre. In Japan, Fabre’s writings remain among the most popular and most widely read works for children and adults to this day. His observations of the lowly dung beetle drew widespread attention a century ago, and the Japanese have not let go since. Japanese translators of Fabre today are aware that the Fabre craze that has outlasted the twentieth century originated with Ōsugi Sakae’s vivid translation in the early 1920s. Ōsugi’s translation is still considered among the best available and has recently been reprinted, despite the fact that numerous other competing translations exist in contemporary Japanese [10]. Why did such leading Esperantists as Ōsugi translate Fabre?<sup>8</sup>

More than those of any other biologist, including Darwin, the translations of Fabre popularized scientific investigations of the biological world. Fabre’s observations of the insect world seemed to verify a democratic view of non-hierarchical nature in which each species or form of creature had its own naturally or divinely endowed virtue, its own talent, specialized knowledge and ability. Fabre’s dung beetle became a heroic figure in the genre of children’s stories, as Fabre’s exciting and minute descriptions of this little creature began to be read in much the same way and to the same degree of popularity as Mother Goose among English-speaking children, playing a similar role in teaching about moral human behaviour and relationships. Ōsugi’s successive translations of Darwin’s *Origin of Species* in 1914, Kropotkin’s anarchist account of evolution *Mutual Aid* in 1917, and Fabre’s study of insects, *Souvenirs entomologiques* (Entomological Remembrances), in 1922 reflected his belief in anarchism as the closest social expression of scientific discovery as negative discovery [11-14].

Confident of the naturally endowed intellectual, social, and cultural capacity of ‘the people,’ anarchists assumed that common people were capable of assimilating science into their thought and practices. The dissemination of Fabre’s writings became an ideal means to further the integration of human life with the latest scientific findings on a broad scale. The simple language and narrative style used by Fabre, who attempted to make his findings accessible to youth, made his work a perfect means for Ōsugi to promulgate the latest scientific findings to ‘the people’. With its accessible language and narrative style, Ōsugi’s and other anarchists’ translations of Fabre’s work made it become a massively popular and

integral part of children's literature in Japan. It's worth noting that Fabre was virtually unknown in France, indicating the originality of Japanese translations of his work.

Ōsugi's translated volume of little creatures embodying the progressive practices of everyday activity and playing a part in a much larger dynamic environment has captured the imagination of children in Japan in a way no other children's literature could have. Sōbunkaku, the anarchist publishing company, published Ōsugi's translation of the first volume of Fabre's *Souvenirs entomologiques*, which was widely adopted by the public as the book marking Japanese childhood and given the popular and endearing nickname "Konchūki" (Insect Tales). Asuke Soichi had founded Sōbunkaku, becoming an influential publisher on whom Ōsugi and many others who shared similar notions of the future relied on to publish their writings. It would be Sōbunkaku who supported the blind Esperantist Vasili Eroshenko by publishing his works. Before founding Sōbunkaku, Asuke worked as a travelling vendor who pushed a sweet potato cart he called Ippomaya, the scientific term for sweet potato [15].

Fabre's work is considered a precursor to ethology, the science of animal and human behaviour. He wrote about the natural intelligence and functioning of insects from the perspective of the insects themselves, earning the moniker "psychologist of the world of insects." Fabre's genius lay in his telling of the details of the beetle's life, and he imbued his tales with examinations of insects' astounding knowledge, or what he called divine "intelligence." His studies captured the various trials and tribulations that the clever dung beetles undergo, working together to make a pile of animal excrement many times their own weight into a workable ball that they can roll into an appropriate hiding place for long-term shared consumption. Without the natural virtue of the lowly beetle, the farms that rely daily on the transformation of the piles of dung from cows, pigs, sheep, and other farm animals into nutrient-filled soil for regeneration into healthy grass and crops could not exist. Esperantists would find an affinity in Fabre's portrayal of the dung beetle and his observations of the unique knowledge and talent arising naturally from within each species.

The turn to anarchist science on popular grounds interacted discursively with the modern Western construct of civilizational progress. When stripped down to its most basic intellectual foundations, that construct of Western modernity may be most simply understood as a movement away from "nature" and toward "culture." Ishikawa, a promoter of Esperanto, saw this development as the frightening product of the conception of nature as the enemy of civilization and the antithesis of human culture. He proposed instead to embrace boundless nature, leading to a deep connection of the limited human life to the limitless world of nature. If there were to be any progress in his own life, Ishikawa wrote, that progress was to aim at that idea of a human civilization deeply interconnected with nature [16]. It would not be a coincidence that Ishikawa promoted the spread of Esperanto among agrarian labourers in the countryside.

From cosmology to microbiology to the insect world, it was in this centreless world depicted by science that anarchists identified Esperanto as the single most relevant language expressive of this world. The language appeared to be the most scientific, was based on the principle of the universality of human capacity to know and understand reality, and was designed to promote the multiplicity of cultures that interdependently coexist and evolve. According to this view, the division between culture and nature in Western modernity would dissolve.

Esperanto has become inseparable from ecological movements, a particular tendency in Japan that has its roots in the pairing of anarchist science and Esperantism outlined here. It is a view that persists to this day. This article's attempt to understand the ties of early twentieth-century Esperantism with a particular notion of nature and the environment in Japan helps to solve the long puzzling pattern of the strong associations of Esperanto with environmentalism, a link that no other 'international' or 'national' language ever attained in modern world history.



## **THE LANGUAGE REVOLUTION AND LINGUISTIC DEMOCRACY**

As we have noted, Japanese promoters of Esperanto understood humans to coexist in a mutually interdependent and symbiotic world, from the micro-level of cells within the body itself to the larger society of bodies in social context and contact. This borderless symbiotic understanding was critical to their adoption and development of Esperanto as the linguistic means to embrace linguistic democracy and the multiplicity of cultures.

The introduction of Esperanto occurred as an important part of the radical language revolution within Japan in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and beyond. This movement sought the democratization of language through the vernacularisation of written text. Many men and women in the early Meiji period (1868-1912) participated in democratizing and modernizing Japanese by unifying the written and colloquial languages, a trend that occurred in many modern societies. Esperanto can be viewed in this historical context as a natural extension of language democratization. Japanese supporters sought to bring about language equality (later conceived as language ‘rights’) in the international arena by introducing a language that does not belong to any culture, at a time when culture and race were synonymous and races were ordered according to a hierarchical model of civilization. Futabatei Shimei, a major figure in the language revolution, a leading novelist known most commonly as the founder of the ‘first modern novel in Japan’ and father of the modern Japanese language, was one of the first to introduce Esperanto to Japan. He was also a translator of Russian literature. Readers of Futabatei’s literary works and translations found a new modern sense of the “social” as a historically specific problem in need of a solution. Implicit in this consciousness was the possibility and necessity of change.

Futabatei had earlier constructed a modern Japanese language from a combination of Russian-language populist literature with Edo (Tokyo) commoners’ vernacular language from the late Tokugawa period. His manufacturing of a written vernacular through literary translations from Russian was integral to his endeavour to transform society and its state of mind. Nineteenth-century Russian writers strove to reflect the situation of the Russian people realistically and critically with the expectation that their literature would transform society. They often relied on vernacular language to produce the sense of realism and immediacy that they needed, creating thereby a sense of situatedness in the immediate historical present [17; pp.100-102].

Futabatei’s crafting of a new Japanese language out of Russian and Japanese colloquial dialects initiated the modern vernacular language movement in late Meiji Japan. The “people” who spoke this vernacular were neither an undifferentiated national or ethnic mass nor a coherent and undifferentiated class of proletariat, of the kind described by Marx and Engels. They were differentiated ethnically, as well as by gender, culture, individual talents, and other characteristics. Cultural differences were not primordially defined; they were in a constant state of flux through adaptation and contact with others. Futabatei, like many other speakers of Esperanto, did not see the progress of civilization in the rapid disappearance of small nations or peoples via capitalism in a social Darwinian struggle for national existence. Rather, progress lay in the cultural encounters of world societies and the constant change that ensued in a million different ways.

If literature and this ever-changing vernacular language were tools to shape subjectivity and redirect society, Esperanto was a tool to help shape a new world order based on the common people as the subject and vehicle of historical progress. Futabatei’s introduction of Esperanto thus may be functionally superimposed on his construction of the Japanese language. For Futabatei, both modern Japanese and Esperanto were manufactured languages that mediated between the vernacular and the international spheres while dissipating hierarchy on the social,

ethnic, racial, and international levels. In writing a dictionary of Esperanto, a language perceived to be without a culture associated with any particular territory, ethnic group, or visible community, Futabatei had given expression in his language production to a widespread sentiment about the symbiotic nature of society at large that extended beyond the confines of the Japanese nation-state.

Speaking Esperanto was conceived as a levelling practice that promoted linguistic democracy and equality. It was this understanding that propelled Nitobe and ethnologist Yanagita to promote Esperanto as common language of the League of Nations. If language was culture, then culture could be exchanged via Esperanto for mutual gain rather than exchange by force. Japanese Esperantists thought of language as an expression of a particular culture, albeit one that is always forming and reforming. Although languages may change and interact with other languages over time, they were seen as expressions of different cultures that, each in different forms and in their own ways, contribute to others and whose existence and contributions to the whole were necessary for the advancement of civilization. Cultures form and re-form, exchange and change in a spontaneous manner.

Esperantists' expectation of equitable and non-hierarchical linguistic relations reached well beyond the category of the nation state to social relations on the local, everyday level. The above-mentioned Ishikawa Sanshirō founded with other colleagues the Nōmin jichikai (Farmers' Self-governing Association) in 1925 as a society that advocated self-sufficiency and improvements in daily life and promoted self-governing farmers' councils in rural Japan<sup>9</sup>. Its founding declaration stated that Esperanto would be encouraged as a levelling language to disseminate knowledge and enrich and develop culture in rural areas. Those who promoted a more democratic, equal society in Japan, many of whom were anarchists and embraced anarchist science, saw Esperanto as the language of democracy and the primary linguistic tool to transform society in a democratic manner.

For supporters of this idea, democracy was best expressed as a form of sociability that valued community *and* individual freedom to the maximum by nourishing each individual's own talent. One of the best articulations of this idea may be found in Ishikawa's writings. Ishikawa articulated democracy as "*sensa banbetsu*", rendering a new term for democracy as everyday practice by defining and retranslating the English term "democracy" into new Japanese terms. He broke the word up into multilingual component parts: the Greek *demo*, which he translated to mean indigenous and rooted, that is, 'the people' linked with the soil, and *kurashi*, which means 'everyday life' in Japanese – "*demokurashi*" [18]. Ishikawa also created another neologism for democracy: *domin seikatsu* (the life of people on the soil) [19-22]. Although *domin seikatsu* stirs up images of farmers tending the soil, Ishikawa was in fact referring to the organic rootedness of all people in their individual talent or virtue given them by nature. Ishikawa believed that each individual had a will (*ishi*) or subjectivity/virtue (*jitsusei*) that was unique to that person. This will, or talent, could be realized only through hard work and repeated practice. Ishikawa called this activity of work and practice *nenriki*, which is the energy or power everyone has to begin work on and realize his or her virtue. The resulting force that is created in realizing one's virtue he called *katsudō*, or active motion in society. "Freedom" (*jiyū*) was the possibility given to each individual to discover and realize his or her personal will and virtue gifted by nature, *ishi* and *jitsusei*. This freedom was the source of human development, which he called *sensa banshu* (one thousand differences, one million kinds). This realization of the plurality of individual development, the so-called million ways of participation in the human community, was what Ishikawa meant by democracy, *domin seikatsu*. Social hierarchy was the obstacle to the realization of this concept of democracy.

Democracy here echoed with 'anarchist science' and cosmological order as negative discovery, and the symbiotic functioning of microorganisms within the human body on the

micro level. Ishikawa saw democracy as an expression of what he called the “new cosmology” defined by the centreless universe. He described the “unity in multiplicity” that would lead to independence and equality in human society. For Ishikawa, the infinity that characterized the centreless universe dictated both the absence of an absolute subject of power and the limitlessness of possibilities for human interaction and cultural invention. Anarchism was an expression of infinity in human life, in which only relativity was absolute [21; p.201, 22; p.217]. Ishikawa linked democracy with rootedness in nature and the cosmos:

From my very foundation, I am a child of the land, and I cannot be separated from the land. I rotate with the land as the land rotates, and with the land circle around the sun. I too circle around the sun, with the energy of the solar system, so I will be inseparable from its energy. Our lives emerge on the land, we cultivate and work on the land, and we return to the land. This is democracy [*domin seikatsu*]. [...] Rotation and revolution are nature’s poetry. Natural rotation provides day and night. The revolution of the land provides the seasons, spring, summer, fall and winter. [...] Democracy is the truth-good-aesthetics of human life [*shinzenbi*] [18].

For Ishikawa, Miyazawa and others who promoted democracy in the rural areas of Japan, knowledge was universally accessible and Esperanto would serve as the tool to access that knowledge from beyond the hierarchically ordered knowledge production centred on the imperial and private universities in Tokyo, reaching out to other languages and sources of knowledge. Echoed by Miyazawa’s later practices in Iwate, Ishikawa’s Nōmin Jichikai promoted the expansion of universities, libraries, and research centres in rural areas as a means for common people to self-manage learning and the exchange of knowledge, thereby enabling local communities to become the locus rather than the periphery of cultural development. This scientific community was intended to help dissolve the dichotomies and hierarchical ordering of city vs. country, modern vs. traditional, development vs. stagnation created by notions of ‘development’.

Allowing for the expression of nature itself, Esperanto would be a tool to develop connections to the wider world and facilitate the direct acquisition of knowledge and culture without mediation by the urban centres that monopolized political, cultural and social power. *Tanemaku hito*, or *The Sower*, an influential literary and cultural journal founded in 1921 in a northern rural village in Akita Prefecture, expressed and was itself an expression, of such ideas. It had the Esperantist subtitle *la Semanto*, and published contributions by well-known Esperantists and supporters of Esperanto like Eroshenko, Akita Ujaku and Arishima Takeo.

The ethnographer Yanagita Kunio, widely known for his studies of folklore and rural culture, also studied and understood Esperanto with a similar conceptual consciousness. He served on the Mandate Committee of the League of Nations in 1921-1923, where he sought to attain the League’s recognition of Esperanto as an international language. Historians have described Yanagita as a cultural nationalist because of his interest in Japanese folklore. Yet behind this apparent cultural nationalism was Yanagita’s linguistic and cultural democracy. Expressing the Esperantist ideal in Japan that culture belongs to everyone, Yanagita promoted not just Japanese culture in the League of Nations, but the right of all cultures and languages to coexist and thrive through Esperanto without disappearing under the rubric of ‘civilizational progress’ as defined by the West. Yanagita was unique in promoting non-assimilationist policies for the indigenous peoples of the former German colonies following World War I [23].

It was hardly a coincidence, then, that one of the leading and most recognized ethnographers in post-war Japan, Umesao Tadao, one of the founders and the first director general of the National Museum of Ethnology in Osaka, was also an enthusiastic speaker of Esperanto.

Umesao's teacher and mentor was in turn the internationally recognized primatologist Imanishi Kinji. It may be difficult to understand the intellectual ties between the primatologist Imanishi and his advisee Umesao. In fact, they shared a basic understanding of the integral relationship between culture and nature. Imanishi was very much a part of popular discourse on anarchist science. He closely studied the anarchist writings of Kropotkin on mutual aid to develop an understanding of culture in the animal world. His own research was a part of anarchist science<sup>10</sup>.

## ESPERANTO AS MATHEMATICS

Futabatei Shimei, who wrote the first Japanese introduction to Esperanto and an initial attempt at an Esperanto-Japanese dictionary, was confident about the human capacity to learn Esperanto because he understood its grammar as scientific, and thus universally understandable to anyone anywhere. Introducing Esperanto in his dictionary, he wrote that it was easy for *anyone* to study and learn: Esperanto was a very simple and strictly rule-based language, theoretically devoid of culture and grounded in 'anarchist science'. Futabatei claimed confidently that one could master the basic rules of the language in only a few days of study, for the language necessitated only a grammatical pursuit, not mastery of another culture. The book was advertised as introducing a scientific language that functioned much like a simple mathematical formula [25]. The use of this mathematical metaphor in the first Esperanto text in Japan placed Esperanto beyond hierarchical boundaries, setting the tone for how the language would be understood by future students and speakers. Esperantists understood that the capacity to absorb Esperanto was already present within the learner, rather than constituting external knowledge that someone needed to teach. Thus, to learn the language, the brain had to be stimulated to use what was naturally given from the start: it had to be nourished from within, rather than treated as a blank slate to be inscribed from without.

They believed that human brains were imprinted with that innate 'programme' from inception, comparable with the universal ability to understand mathematics. These notions of language and language acquisition found echoes in what the widely recognized American linguist and anarchist Noam Chomsky would call 'universal grammar' more than a half century later. Chomsky argued that the human brain contains the basic cognitive structures needed to learn any language: an inborn universal grammar. This inborn universal structure common to all human beings similarly allows mathematics and logic to be universally understood rather than being culturally relative. Chomsky believes that these structures within the brain are a reflection and an evolutionary product of the naturally arising geometrical, mathematical and physical patterns that surround us in the real world [25].

Such an understanding of Esperanto and the capacity to learn language reversed the notion at the time that the modern languages of European civilizations, or Japanese language in the Japanese Empire, were superior languages to be taught to the inferior as part of the progress of civilization. Yet how could Esperanto be considered an 'international' language in Japan? After all, it had the structure and grammar of European languages and would have looked like just another European language to many in East Asia, whose languages were not at all reflected in the structure and grammar of Esperanto. The creator of Esperanto, L.L. Zamenhof, had composed the language by taking elements from a number of Slavic, Romance and Germanic languages. In fact, if Esperanto had been seen as merely a European language like English and French, there would have been a fundamental incoherence between the universalistic idea of the language and the meanings assigned to Esperanto in early twentieth-century Japan. Far from being reduced to another language of Europe, the language was seen as a universally and equally understandable code for everyone – a *scientific* notion of language and of the universal natural ability to use and comprehend it. Once one acquired

the ‘grammar’ of the linguistic code, like mathematics, it could belong to anyone. The universality of Esperanto lay not so much in how many languages were integrated into this one language, but how much it reflected ‘mathematical’ reasoning without the constrictions of human cultural geography.

## **CHILDHOOD AS THE SITE OF KNOWLEDGE**

Why were so many Japanese Esperantists like Miyazawa intent on producing children’s literature and songs, and why did they become interested in children’s educational issues in the 1910s and 1920s? Moreover, why was children’s literature linked in writers’ minds with scientific discovery? Ōsugi Sakae, translator of Fabre’s accounts of insect lives; Yamada Kōsaku, who wrote some of the best known children’s songs of today and cofounded the Japanese Esperanto Society with Ōsugi; Eroshenko, the well-known writer of children’s literature and the embodiment of youth; Akita Ujaku, another respected children’s writer; Arishima Takeo, whose children’s stories are still told today, and anarchist publisher Asuke who published Esperanto stories and children’s literature – and finally Miyazawa, the most popular children’s literature writer – were all Esperantists or strong supporters of the linguistic trend of Esperantism. How are we to understand the merging of Esperantism and the deep-seated interest in science with the devotion to children’s education and literary production?

Childhood became a highly contested concept because it was in the child that notions of the relationship of nature to culture were manifested, thereby forming the basis for critiques of cultural nationalism and the nation state. The Japanese Esperantists believed that virtue and talent arose naturally in children as something to be nourished. They opposed the view of children as blank slates needing to be taught to become virtuous and devoted citizens of the nation state. Developing the citizen who would best contribute to the spontaneously arising transnational relations understood by Esperantists necessitated a free, democratic society that nourished a spontaneous virtue arising naturally and internally. It was this free, spontaneously acting individual – not the nation state – who was to be the core subject of ‘international society.’ With this understanding, the development of children’s education became integral to the Esperantist agenda.

Participants in the Free Education Movement (*Jiyū kyōiku undō*) contemporary to Miyazawa, for example, saw childhood as a critical site of cultural progress. The movement left an important mark on the history of popular education and ideas of childhood. In Japanese, the word for “education” (*kyōiku*) is composed of two characters, ‘to teach’ (*kyō*), and ‘to nourish’ (*iku*). State intellectuals like Inoue Tetsujirō, who taught ethics at Tokyo Imperial University, advocated the teaching of national morals. Inoue believed that by implementing a nationwide educational policy to teach what was “good” and “bad” in accordance with national ideology, people’s everyday conduct could be governed. The Free Education Movement reversed this understanding of education from an emphasis on *kyō*, teaching the individual how to be a member of *kokumin*, the imperial national subject, to an emphasis on *iku*, nurturing and nourishing a person’s unique and naturally endowed talents and his/her spontaneous contributions to society. By shifting the emphasis to *iku*, education could maximize the nourishment of individuals and its progressive effects for the larger community. The moral community moved from the nation state to a borderless, nationless, amorphous ‘people’. This echoed the idea of Esperanto as a language that could be learned by anyone, an idea that was embedded in the widespread practice of self-study of Esperanto in Japan. Indeed, the language was never taught in universities, but rather through self-study textbooks and radio shows, and occasionally privately organized classes and tutoring sessions.

If the Free Education Movement sought to nourish the child’s natural abilities, talents and will to learn, the Children’s Literature Movement saw the child as the source of knowledge

and enlightenment for adults. The best representative of this notion was the blind Russian youth Eroshenko, an Esperantist, who was a celebrity in Japan. While other Esperantists and supporters of Esperanto also wrote children's literature as part of this movement, Eroshenko not only wrote children's literature, but himself embodied the idea of the child as the source of enlightenment and knowledge for the adult.

The new Children's Literature Movement overturned the existing practice of writing stories for children that imposed adult activities like fighting wars and conquering foreign lands on child characters. The pioneering children's literature magazine *Akai tori* (The red bird), founded in 1918, played a major role in upending the prevailing culture of writing for children. *Akai tori* published children's stories written and illustrated by famous anarchists like Arishima, Akita, Ogawa Mimei, Takehisa Yumeji and the massively popular songwriter Kitahara Hakushū, a number of whom either spoke Esperanto or were at the forefront of supporting its ideals and its dissemination. These figures shared a practice of writing stories and songs for adults that, in the words of Kitahara, were written in the language of children and reflected their minds. By knowing the world as a child knows the world, adult minds could be opened to the original, innately possessed knowledge of virtue derived from nature. The Esperantist future was invested in childhood, from which adults could study and learn.

Kitahara Hakushū, probably the most famous writer of children's songs in Japan to date, believed that children in particular were able to grasp the true essence of things; he sought to draw out humans' innately creative potential through children's songs. He described the capacity to see and experience the world through a child's vision not only as essential to writing authentic children's songs but also as the source of creativity in adults. Echoing this sentiment in 1921, the Esperantist Akita Ujaku stated that although he had written his stories for children, they were also for adults who had a childlike nature within themselves. Beginning in 1919, Akita intensively produced children's stories, a number of which appeared in *Akai tori*. Harada Mitsuo, who was a part of this network with close ties to Arishima, Eroshenko, and others, founded the popular children's magazine *Kodomo no kagaku* (Children's Science) in 1924, a magazine that exemplified this merging of 'children' and science.

Eroshenko also began to write children's stories in this context, just as the popularity of children's literature among Japanese Esperantists came to the fore. Using predominantly children, animals, and the blind as the heroes of his stories, he echoed this current of juvenile literary production. Eroshenko seemed to give perfect expression to the peripheral spaces of children's and animals' worlds that were described in his literature in such a way that they preceded the psychological distinction of any and all borders, including the cultural distinction between East and West, subject and object, seeing and non-seeing, old and young, citizen and foreigner.

Echoing the larger children's literature movement, Eroshenko's children's literature was written for adults, albeit from the perspective of children and animals. These children's stories were widely promoted and financed by figures like Arishima and Akita and were published by Asuke's anarchist publishing company Sōbunkaku. Leaving an unmistakable if rare primary source for historians, the popularly read stories reflected and promoted ideas of childhood circulating in Japan at the time.

Eroshenko's attempt to portray the world from a child's point of view would seem to be a philosophical impossibility. Nonetheless, for many Japanese, the blind youth himself embodied the perceptiveness and natural virtues of childhood. The 1923 drama *Chiisaki gisei* (A small sacrifice), published in *Josei* (Woman), featured a blind boy who was remarkably similar to Eroshenko as the embodiment of innocence, a victim of the "adult's world." Artistic and creative, the blind young man listens to the nature that surrounds him and creates

a new world in his mind. It was no coincidence that Eroshenko was long portrayed and remembered in Japan as a blind youth who never seemed to age.

Eroshenko's embodiment of the anarchist-Esperantist imagination of childhood as blind to hierarchies of nation, class, ethnicity, and race had already helped make him very popular in Japan. Thousands of people at a time came to listen to him speak, sometimes in Esperanto, sometimes about the world vision of Esperantism, but always in a poetic manner. They wanted to catch sight of the man who was physically unable to see distinctions of race, ethnicity or nationality. Eroshenko often sang Russian folk songs, recited his own poetry, and drew his lectures from his many children's stories. One of his first speaking engagements was a lecture given in the Esperanto language. The talk was hosted by Ōsugi [26].

The Esperantist and liberal intellectual Hasegawa Nyozeikan echoed the widespread belief that Eroshenko was free of hierarchical ideologies of race, ethnicity and nation:

Eroshenko must be happy that he is blind. Whereas the poet who sees cannot not see the color or the form of man or object, the blind poet cannot see anything other than the man or object itself. Whereas the religious believer who sees cannot not see the color or the form of God, the blind believer does not see anything but God Himself [27].

## **MIYAZAWA AS PRODUCER OF ESPERANTIST CULTURE**

Once anarchist science redefined nature, the concept of culture was turned upside down. Beginning with the Esperanto movement for a language without culture at the turn of the century, a number of distinctive cultural movements and intellectual developments followed one another to constitute the multifaceted conceptual turns in culture based on the anarchist idea of nature. Once science understood nature as functioning symbiotically, from the tiniest microorganisms studied by Mechnikov to the insects of Fabre's entomological remembrances, the turn-of-the-century concept of culture as race that was hierarchically ordered became unsustainable.

The Esperantist concept of culture was still modern in the sense that it stressed culture's irreplaceable role in human progress. However, "culture" was no longer limited to a select handful of Japanese elites who had attained civilised "enlightenment" in a rational, Christian, and Westernized self. Nor did it refer to the familiar hierarchisation of race as culture. 'Common people' became the subject and object of progress in this discourse. They thereby became the carriers of "culture" – not as natives in possession of an authentic and timeless national culture, but as those possessing the capacity to re-create and alter their surroundings in a cooperative manner for the mutual improvement of their lives. The dualism between the concepts of culture and nature that fed the idea of progress had disappeared. "Culture" was now the varied, creative expressions of each individual's virtue derived from nature. Thus, anarchist science inverted both the modern Western notion of civilization and the ideological foundations of the Japanese imperial state. The language of this revolutionary concept of culture was Esperanto.

Such varied cultural expressions as the children's literature movement, agrarian populist culture, and the People's Arts movement, developed in tune with the concepts of multiplicity, democracy, mutual aid, and symbiosis in nature. Though they lacked a conductor to harmonize them, the various cultural expressions nonetheless appeared as if they had been orchestrated. Anarchist-Esperantists overturned the meaning of culture and the cultured to meet the demands of symbiotic nature, producing shifts from high culture to popular, state to non-state, institutional to non-institutional, and sociolinguistic Darwinism to multiplicity and diversity of cultural development. Esperanto was the manifestation of this worldview and its new understanding of culture and the cultured.

Miyazawa Kenji arrived relatively late on the scene in the development of the discourse of anarchist science and the overturning of culture. His cultural practices were an accumulation and manifestation of the broader developments in anarchist science and culture that preceded them. Miyazawa was dedicated to the study and teaching of chemistry and other sciences. He taught chemistry, soil science and crop production at the county agricultural and forest school Gunritsu Hienuki Nōgakko, and continued to develop his understanding of the relations between the molecular world, geological history and human culture as an inseparable part of his literary career. Indeed, his literary career was an expression of his dedication to the natural sciences. Satō Sōnosuke, a contemporary who reviewed Miyazawa's work in 1924, wrote that he "made poetry out of geology, botany, mineralogy and meteorology" [28; p.166]. As literary scholar Gregory Golly describes it, Miyazawa's works embodied "the simple notion that organisms, entities and processes can and do exist independently of human knowledge and perception ... in a narrative that asks us to consider what it means to occupy a world that has experienced (and continues to experience) its own history beyond reference to human subjectivity, but which is nonetheless profoundly connected to humanity" [28; pp.166-167]. In other words, Golly writes, he allowed the intransitive world to speak. Not content to keep understanding and knowledge of this world to himself, Miyazawa founded a group called the Rasu Chijin Kyōkai (Rasu Association of People of the Planet Earth) that sought to develop 'farmers' art' and "create a new beauty" that recognized the unity of "our own intuition" with the "proofs of modern science and the experiments of the truth-seekers" [28; p.169]. Thus, he sought to materialize and reflect natural and physical science in human art that was itself a product of intuition, a talent given by nature to anyone regardless of class, race, nationality, or gender. He linked the reality of the world of the farmer to the larger cosmos: "to live justly and strongly means to be aware within ourselves of the Milky Way Galaxy, to respond to that awareness." Echoing the anarchist belief that social relations ought to reflect an awareness of our existence as physical components of the universe, Miyazawa reminded his readers that "We are, to begin with, all shining atoms scattered through space" [28; p.169].

Miyazawa's writings practices and literature were solidly situated within a broader anarchist discourse of science and the resulting conception of culture. While local affairs and the nation state appeared to consume elites, public intellectuals and many of Japan's best-known historical figures, it was this spirit of boundlessness and interconnectedness that led Miyazawa to promote Esperanto. His practice of teaching Esperanto to farmers and educating them in the latest findings of astronomy, geology, biology, chemistry and agricultural science was part of a broader understanding of scientific knowledge as universally accessible and attainable, and of language, specifically Esperanto, as the tool to access, share and disseminate this knowledge.

At the height of the interest in children's literature and after his graduation from school, Miyazawa travelled to Tokyo to write children's literature. Returning to Hanamaki, he studied Esperanto and taught the language to local farmers, dedicating himself to the development of agrarian education, promoted artistic expression and scientific study among local farmers, and integrating the latest findings in biological evolution, physics, chemistry and astronomy into his children's writing in the 1920s and early 1930s. He conceived of farmers' art as a creative expression and a natural extension of their everyday life and labour. In turn, he called this art "the grand fourth dimension of art." Art was to be a "concrete manifestation of a cosmic spirit that interpenetrates Earth, Man, and Individuality" [29]. In the words of anarchist science, art was to manifest the unification of human social life with the cosmological laws of the universe. Accordingly, the local farmers of the Rasu Association organized by Miyazawa studied Esperanto along with agricultural science, cosmology, physics, biology, music, and art.



Ordinary Japanese have soundly embraced Miyazawa in the popular culture of the twentieth century. Today, the writer is memorialized in the Miyazawa Kenji Museum of Hanamaki. Reflecting his national ‘hero’ status, things ‘Miyazawa’ have become the local industry in Hanamaki. A constant flow of visitors comes to his hometown to pay homage to the long deceased writer. Their pilgrimage reflects a new kind of tourism that seeks not to look at the preserved past, a past that no longer exists, but to experience and absorb an alternative vision for the future that is very relevant for the present.

The village of Hanamaki promotes a sense of connection between the rural Iwate of the 1920s and 30s to which Miyazawa belonged, and the vision of the future that he imagined. The village’s numerous museums and exhibitions on Miyazawa’s life and works seek to transport the adult back to the child’s world of exploration and the first-hand discovery of the real natural and physical world. Visitors to the various spatial recreations of Miyazawa’s fantasy stories and visions in the parks and museums of Hanamaki are challenged by the town’s local/cosmopolitan self-representation, which questions such bifurcations in modern history as ‘cosmopolitan vs. vernacular’, ‘modern vs. traditional’, and ‘nature vs. culture’ by asserting cosmopolitan transnationalism and, indeed, trans-Earthism, in the agrarian countryside. Thus the community embodies and represents Miyazawa and the Esperantism of an earlier era in the history of Japan.

## REMARKS

<sup>1</sup>“Thatōbu Hanamaki”, <http://www.kanko-hanamaki.ne.jp/en>, accessed on October 28, 2014.

<sup>2</sup>Gregory Golly’s chapters on Miyazawa in [28] offer persuasive insights into the literary writer, albeit as a singular intellectual in Iwate. I have little to add to Golly’s wonderful elaboration of the place of science in Miyazawa’s literature; rather my claim is that he was fully a part of a much larger trend introduced here in this article.

<sup>3</sup>For recent exceptions to this trend, see [29, 30]. See also the pioneering look at this topic in English [31].

<sup>4</sup>Davis is quoted in [32].

<sup>5</sup>For an account of the concept of culture as race, see [33].

<sup>6</sup>Yanagi Soetsu, a representative of the Shirakaba school and later the leader of the Mingei arts movement, echoed this trend in [34], in which he devotes the second half of the book to Mechnikov. Decades later, Ishikawa Sanshirō reviewed the significance of Mechnikov’s scientific thinking for anarchism in [35].

<sup>7</sup>On the anti-Malthusian metaphor in Russian evolutionary thought, see [36].

<sup>8</sup>Ishikawa’s translation of Fabre is in [16].

<sup>9</sup>On the Nomin jichikai, thanks go to Nadine Willems at the University of Oxford Faculty of History, whose Ph.D. Thesis focuses on Ishikawa.

<sup>10</sup>For a discussion of the influence of the science of Imanishi on contemporary primatology, see [37].

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