

Abstract in English

This thesis maps the changes, that occurred in Japanese literature during the late 1970's and early 1980's. Literature written in this time period is often associated with the phenomena of postmodernism. This thesis is based on the presumption, that Japanese postmodernity is a historical phenomenon, and its shape is closely related to the shape of Japanese modernity before and after the World War II. The aim of this thesis is to analyze these postmodern tendencies in their historical continuity in relation to the modern literary discourse, and by doing that fill in the gap between modern and contemporary Japanese literary development.

The methodological basis of this thesis is in the Western discourse about postmodernism, from which it borrows a formal framework, and at the same time in the works by Japanese critics, which give the concept of postmodernism a necessary specific localized content. The analysis of respective representative literary texts is based on how they were perceived in contemporary literary magazines and in the press, and on close reading of them. The analysis of the texts is based on the fictional worlds theory.

This thesis is divided into two larger parts. Part one is centered around conceptual and theoretical definition of Japanese modernity on two levels. Firstly, in the context of the Meiji period (1868–1912) and pre-WWII period, and secondly, in the context of postwar development. This is followed by the analysis of main currents in literary production and criticism during the 1980's. All of this serves as a basis for conceptualizing the essential framework of Japanese postmodern literary tendencies.

These tendencies are then being analyzed on the examples of representative literary texts. Those are *Kagiri naku tōmei ni chikai burū* (1976) by Murakami Ryū, *Misaki* (1976) by Nakagami Kenji, *Kaze no uta wo kike* (1979) by Murakami Haruki, *Nantonaku, kurisutaru* (1980) by Tanaka Yasuo, *Sayōnara, Gyangutachi* (1981) by Takahashi Gen'ichirō, *Yasashii sayoku no tame no kiyūkyoku* (1983) by Shimada Masahiko and *Shōsetsu den* (1986) by Kobayashi Kyōji.

These texts clearly incorporate active reflection upon modern phenomena, be it through parody, intertextual references, or dealing with subjects, that are characteristic for Japanese modernity. We can thus say that postmodern tendencies in Japanese

literature do not constitute a divide or discontinuity, but in the context of modernity are rather manifestation of necessary literary development.

Key words: postmodern literature, modern literature, 1980's, Japan, Japanese literature, contemporary literature