

## Summary

My dissertation focuses on Mishima Yukio and the way the author, who strongly occupied himself with reflections on the imperfection of human language during the last decade of his life, conveyed the things that he was not able to or did not want to express explicitly. The dissertation is based on the metaphor of four rivers flowing into the Sea of Fertility, one of the arid lunar maria, that the writer used for his ‘inconsistent’ life shortly before his death. The four rivers that merged in Mishima’s final work, the grandiose tetralogy *The Sea of Fertility*, represented four areas of the author’s life. Each of them allowed him to express his ideas and feelings in a slightly different way. The River of Writing represented his fiction, the River of Theater showed his plays and his acting, the River of Body emphasized the role of bodybuilding and other sports in his life and finally, the River of Action revealed how the effeminate writer had transformed himself into a ‘man of action’.

The first section of my dissertation deals with Mishima’s view on verbal communication. Although Mishima was a renowned writer and playwright who for the most part led a hardworking life and poured most of his energy into his writing, his attitude towards words was rather ambivalent. On the one hand, Mishima loved playing with words; his style was appreciated for its brightness, the subtlety and richness of his vocabulary, and figurative language and so the writer was recognized as the most gifted post-war Japanese author already in his twenties. On the other hand, language as a barrier to other people became one of the leading motives of Mishima’s writing; many of his heroes, even those who able to use words in the most elaborated way, like Mishima himself, failed when they tried to communicate their feelings or ethical ideas. In the last decade of his life, Mishima expressed repeatedly his doubts about language even in his theoretical treatises.

In the third part, I focus on figurative language in Mishima’s literary production and its analysis. Here, I first summarise the opinions on figurative expressions which have developed from antiquity to the present. I then apply the theoretical knowledge to an analysis of the metaphoric expressions in the short stories *Cigarette* and *Sea and Sunset* and in the novel *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion*. In the analysis of the metaphorical expressions, I rely mainly on knowledge from the cognitive sciences; hence, I analyse Mishima’s metaphoric language from the perspective of the perception of the senses, sphere from which the author draws his metaphoric expressions, and a spatial embodiment of the metaphorical expressions. I also devote attention to the metaphorical language of the characters and message that the writer put into his works.

The final part of the work is devoted to the message hidden in Mishima's suicide. In this part, I proceed from the writer's conception of *kanshi*, thus voluntary death, which is an expression of strong protest against the authorities, and from Mishima's perspective on the post-war development of Japanese society. Nevertheless, I also deal with the implicit message hidden in Mishima's work, since even in the artist's *seppuku* it is possible to find a nihilistic view of the world, an effort to create a legend from his own life, fascination with death, masochistic tendencies and other aspects that are captured in the writer's production. I naturally also take into account the knowledge reached by researchers who have devoted themselves to the study of Mishima's production and life.

**Keywords:**

Mishima Yukio, Japanese literature, philosophy of language, metaphor, figurative language, suicide