

南山大学大学院

博士（地域研究）論文

**Nuclear Issues in Japanese Literature  
after Higashi Nihon Daishinsai:  
Reading Tawada Yoko`s Short Stories in  
*Kentoushi***

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ANDINA, Misana

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## Abstract

Higashi Nihon Daishinsai that occurred in 2011 not only influenced many aspects of Japanese society, it also gave influence on Japanese literature. This research attempted to observe Japanese literary works published in post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai. Before entering the discussion of post-disaster literature, a broad overview of this disaster itself was presented. The discussion related to Higashi Nihon Daishinsai was observed from inside and outside of Japan's perspectives. How this disaster was perceived by the people outside Japan was represented by the discussion related to Higashi Nihon Daishinsai through the Indonesian media perspective.

In an attempt to understand the post-disaster literature, the search for themes that generally appeared in post-disaster literary works was conducted. I summarized as many themes as possible that appeared in the post-disaster literary works, then divided them into 'major themes' and 'miscellaneous themes'. After the presentation of post-disaster themes, the discussion on literary works that are considered to be representative of post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai's literature was presented. Two literary works that were considered to be representative of post-disaster literary works are "Kamisama 2011" and *Yamaneko Doomu*. The reason to choose these works was that they are often discussed as prominent works in post-disaster, and both of them raised themes that fit the category of 'major themes' in post-disaster. The discussion of these two works focused on the effects of nuclear incidents and how the trauma caused by the nuclear incident is represented in the lives of the characters in the story.

The discussion of "Kamisama 2011" and *Yamaneko doomu* was presented to give an overview of the literary works that appeared in post-disaster. However, the main discussion in this research was about *Kentoushi*, the collection of stories written by Tawada Yoko. The Fukushima nuclear power plant accident was assumed to be a prominent event in the Higashi Nihon Daishinsai disaster. Therefore, the nuclear energy-related theme was regarded as the main theme in post-disaster literature. *Kentoushi* is a literary work that discusses the effects of a nuclear disaster in depth. Three stories in *Kentoushi* that were discussed are "Kentoushi", "Fushi no Shima", and "Higan". The decision to choose *Kentoushi* as the main work in this study could not be separated from the role of its author, Tawada Yoko. Tawada Yoko's characteristics presented in her literary works, and her views on Higashi Nihon Daishinsai were examined before the discussion of *Kentoushi* was presented. The discussion of *Kentoushi* focused on prominent themes that appeared in it, namely; the worst effects of nuclear energy use, the criticism regarding nuclear policy, the post-disaster evacuation issues, the restriction of freedom of speech, and the despair and helplessness that followed the nuclear incident. Besides, the performative aspect of *Kentoushi* was also observed to illustrate how this work has the power to 'do something' to the readers. This research was conducted in order to provide an understanding of the post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai's literature. In addition, the research is expected to be an attempt to illustrate how these

disaster-related themes are depicted in post-disaster literary works, notably the themes with a correlation to nuclear energy use.

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## INTRODUCTION

### 0.1 Background

This research is written as a continuation of the thesis that had been completed in the master program with the title “Kondisi Sosial dan Trauma Pasca Higashi Nihon Daishinsai (2011) yang Tercermin dalam Cerita-cerita Pendek pada Kumpulan Cerita *Soredemo Sangatsu wa, Mata* (2012)” (Social Condition and Trauma after Higashi Nihon Daishinsai (2011) Reflected in the Collection of Short Stories *Soredemo Sangatsu wa, Mata* (2012)). In the writing process of this thesis, the research was considered too limited and that the research still has a wider potential to be developed. At that time, the research of the thesis focused on the interpretation of a short story collection entitled *Soredemo Sangatsu wa, Mata*. The issues raised in the short stories collection were related to the issues that emerged after the disaster. Some of those issues are; the use of nuclear power plants, the appearance of *kizuna* phenomenon, the discussion on how people try to recover after the disaster, the long-term effects of nuclear radiation, and the trauma haunting the survivors. Through the writing process, it had been realized that there are still many post-disaster literary works with the above-mentioned post-disaster themes, potential to be explored. This research presents a discussion related to some literary works which were assumed to be the representative works in post-disaster. Besides, this research also presents how the post-disaster literature themes were assumed by literary academicians. It also depicts how the people outside Japan try to interpret this disaster.

The reasons why Higashi Nihon Daishinsai was picked as a significant topic to be examined in this research, will be explained below. Higashi Nihon Daishinsai was a series of disasters which occurred on March 11, 2011, it consisted of an earthquake, a tsunami, and then was followed by nuclear power plants accidents. The tsunami triggered the damage of the power plants, namely Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plants. As a country that is frequently hit by earthquakes, Japan has been prepared to handle the foreseeable earthquakes and tsunamis. However, one thing that was beyond expectation (the term “beyond expectation” or *souteigai* will be discussed at length in chapter I) was, the triple disaster, namely the earthquake, the tsunami, and the nuclear accidents happened in a row which then caused a long crisis in Japan. The fatal damage of these disasters then potentially causing the spread of the destructive effects all over Japan. The handling of the earthquake and the tsunami itself had already taken a lot of time, energy, and cost. Then, the handling of nuclear disasters demanded even more than that.

In the news covering this disaster, both by national and international media, it was described how four of the six nuclear power plants in Fukushima exploded and burnt within a couple of days. After those accidents, rumors regarding those explosions were immediately spread to the public. One rumor was connected to the fear of radiation caused by nuclear explosions. Due to this rumor, foreign residents began to leave the country, both driven by their self-awareness and being

urged by their embassies in Japan. Some of the airlines decided to temporarily halt flight services to Japan. Various rumors and issues began to spread since the situation in Japan was covered in panic. The economic situation of the country began to experience instability. First, there was a drastic decline in the price of shares held by the nuclear-related companies. This was followed by the terrified insurance companies which considered the disaster to be an indicator for people to withdraw their insurance money. From the political side, Higashi Nihon Daishinsai more or less influenced Prime Minister Kan Naoto's decision to resign in August 2011.

Higashi Nihon Daishinsai was one of the momentous disasters that happened in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, just as it was mentioned by Prime Minister Kan Naoto. This kind of disaster had never been experienced by Japan. The issues that arose from the early post-disaster period have continued and have not been solved completely even after eight years (when this dissertation was written) since the disaster took place. Even now, the issues related to the evacuation, the cleaning up of the areas exposed by radiations, and the lawsuits involving TEPCO officials (TEPCO is a company that operating Fukushima NPP) are still covered in the mass media. Realizing that the issues connected to Higashi Nihon Daishinsai are still embellishing the local and international media, it is assumed that the topic of Higashi Nihon Daishinsai is a significant topic to be examined, regardless of the fact that eight years have passed since the disaster occurred.

The reasons why the topic of post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai's literature is considered worthy to be examined will be explained below. Right after the disaster, a poet from Fukushima, Waago Ryouichi, published his collection of poems through Twitter. Following his action, many other writers seemed to compete against each other to show that they were participating in responding to this disaster. It began with Furukawa Hideo, a writer who went directly to the disaster area and wrote *Umatachi yo, Soredemo Hikari wa Muku de*. He was followed by Takahashi Genichirou, who wrote *Koisuru Genpatsu* which then became a controversial literary work in post-disaster. The post-disaster literary works were not only published domestically, there was also a literary work dedicated to the foreign readers who wanted to learn more or have a better understanding of this disaster through literature. A year after the disaster, *Soredemo Sangatsu wa, Mata* was published and translated into several languages. As stated in *Higashi Nihon Daishinsaigo Bungakuron* (Post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai's Literary Theory), the writer Iida Ichishi wrote that "the post-disaster literature" or *shinsaigo bungaku* covers not only the literary works with the themes related to the earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear disaster. The post-disaster literature also includes the literary works that contain a wide range of discussions that came up after the disaster, such as the political conditions and the psychological issues (Iida 2017: 7). One story that seemed to be representing "the literary work that did not contain the themes of tsunami and nuclear incident, yet it summarized the post-disaster discussion" is *Sweet Hereafter* written by Yoshimoto Banana. This work illustrates the main

character's experience when her boyfriend died in a car accident. The feeling of emptiness and helplessness are connected to what had been experienced by the Higashi Nihon Daishinsai's victims.

The publication of post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai's literary works did not stop just months after the disaster took place, they keep appearing even until 2017. A representative work titled *Eiri*, written by Numata Shunsuke won the prestigious Akutagawa literary award in 2017. Seeing the number of literary works that had been published, it is assumed that the topic regarding Higashi Nihon Daishinsai is still pertinent and ready to be examined from a literary perspective, even years after the disaster took place. Since the number of post-disaster literary works published are quite abundant, the question of how the post-disaster literary topic was accurately depicted inside those works has arisen. Iida Ichishi stated that the "pure literature" or "belles-lettres" was changed in the era after 2000, both for its themes and for the approaches used. It can be said that the era after 2010 was an era in which Higashi Nihon Daishinsai occurred just as the era after 2020 will be an era in which Tokyo Olympics will be remembered. Without an understanding of the post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai's condition, it would be difficult to conclude how the literary world after 2010 developed. Also, it would be difficult to move to the next literary era (Iida 2017: 10). Iida Ichishi added that in post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai, many great literary works appeared. The phrases such as "me who cannot write" (*kakenai jibun*) and "the powerless me" (*muryoku na jibun*) appeared as an important topic of those works. In addition, the themes related to the dystopian world, the terror and demonstrations, the group revolt, the correlation with post-war literature, and many other similar themes have appeared (Iida 2017: 7). These themes are helping to show how the post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai's literature is depicted.

Iida Ichishi in *Higashi Nihon Daishinsai Bungakuron* reflects on the debate whether Higashi Nihon Daishinsai had a significant impact on Japanese literature or not. Some people agree that this disaster changed Japanese literature, while others do not. Both sides have their strong arguments and they can cling tightly to them. However, when the discussion related to the "post-disaster literature" or *shinsaigo bungaku* is brought up, everyone realizes that they have something to say (Iida 2017: 8). The fact that everyone has his/her own opinion on this topic strengthens the assumption that the themes related to the post-disaster literature are still worthy to be discussed. The reasons presented above strengthen the determination to keep exploring and interpreting the themes of post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai literature.

## **0.2 Prior Research**

Several papers and books are important references in writing this research. The first book that has a significant role for this research is written by the Japanese academician and writer, Kimura Saeko, with the title *Shinsaigo Bungakuron-Atarashii Nihon Bungaku no tame ni* (Post-disaster's Literary Theory, for a new Japanese Literature). In the first chapter of this book, Kimura stated that Higashi Nihon Daishinsai was not a natural disaster, it was a human disaster caused by human errors. She also

underlined that this disaster was used as an opportunity to expose the nuclear energy-related theme which was previously considered taboo in Japan. Some of the post-disaster literary works are discussed in Kimura's book, such as *Koisuru Genpatsu* written by Takahashi Genichirou, *Kamisama 2011* written by Kawakami Hiromi, *Sweet Hereafter* written by Yoshimoto Banana, and *Souzou Rajio* written by Itou Seiko. Kimura also presented a discussion of some films that mentioned the nuclear disaster theme. Some of the films discussed are claimed to be a prophecy of what had happened in Fukushima later. Some films that specifically took Higashi Nihon Daishinsai as a theme were also explored, for example the film directed by Sono Shion with the title *Himizu*. Besides the novels and short stories, anthologies of short stories were also discussed in this book, such as *Hikari no Yama* written by Genkyuu Soukyuu and *Soredemo Sangatsu wa, Mata* written by several Japanese writers. Kimura also discussed how Higashi Nihon Daishinsai was interpreted by Japanese living outside Japan through the work of Sekiguchi Ryoko with the title *Kore wa guuzen de wa nai-Japaniizu Kuronikuru* and Tawada Yoko's work with the title *Yureru hibi no nikki- Fukushima ikou*. In the last part of her book, Kimura presents a discussion of four literary works published after Higashi Nihon Daishinsai. These works are *Koisuru Genpatsu* written by Takahashi Genichirou, *Aoi Hana* written by Henmi Yo, *Yamaneko Doomu* written by Tsushima Yuuko, and *Beddosaido Maadaa Keesu* written by Sato Yuuya.

The second book which is no less important than the first is *Higashi Nihon Daishinsaigo Bungakuron* (Post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai's Literary Theory) written by several Japanese literary experts. This book is divided into four chapters with a focus on the discussion of the writers and their post-disaster literary works. This book presents not only the discussion of the written literary works but also films related to post-disaster. Discussed in this book are Shigematsu Kiyoshi who wrote some works in post-disaster; Nakamura Fuminori who did not specifically discuss the theme of post-disaster but underlined the points needed to be discussed in post-disaster; and Takahashi Genichirou with his phenomenal work which is claimed to be the representative work in post-disaster, *Koisuru Genpatsu*. Also, there was a discussion of a science fiction genre and how the genre is applied to the description of post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai's condition. Another part of this book, which became an important reference for this research, is the paper "Doujidai to shite no Shinsaigo" written by Fujita Naoya. Fujita's paper was placed in the first chapter of this book, with the title "Shinsaigo Bungaku no Chourinkai". In his explanation, Fujita divided themes that generally appear in the post-disaster literary works into fourteen categories. He also included the titles of literary works which are considered capable of representing each category.

A third important book considered in this research is *Genpatsu/Genpatsu Bungakuron* (Nuclear Power Plants/ Nuclear Power Plants and Literary Theory) written by Kawamura Minato. In the chapter entitled "'Sekai no Owari' no Koukei", it was described how the connection arose between Higashi Nihon Daishinsai and the concept of "sekai no owari" (literally translated as "the end of the world"). This concept has been depicted in many literary works and films. The issue is connected to

nuclear energy, which was reawakened in the post-disaster period. It is correlated with the issue regarding nuclear weapons, which could be used in an upcoming third world war. Kawamura discussed some films as well as literary works which raised the issue of nuclear energy. However, most of them are the works and films published before Higashi Nihon Daishinsai. Kawamura also included the discussion of *Umatachi yo, Soredemo Hikari wa Muku de* written by Furukawa Hideo and *Kamisama 2011* written by Kawakami Hiromi. Both works were published in the post-disaster period. In Chapter One, Kawamura asserted that the “end of the world” scenario would be witnessed by people in a couple of years after Fukushima nuclear disaster took place. However, what is needed in the world is not an awareness that Fukushima is just one small place located far away, rather, what is needed is an awareness that this world, this place that we live in, could be drawing near to the “end of the world”.

Based on the observation of prior research mentioned above, it is assumed that some issues and themes have not yet been discussed in the previous research. There are still gaps that need to be filled and completed with new research. Even though the discussion of some prominent post-disaster literary works had been conducted, there are still many works that have not been interpreted in detail. Furthermore, most of the discussion related to Higashi Nihon Daishinsai itself, and the discussion of literary works published afterwards, namely how the post-disaster literature is depicted, were mostly viewed from Japanese perspectives. For that reason, this research tries to advance the discussion. This research covers three points, which have not been included in the previous research yet. First, this research covers the topic from a foreign point of view, drawing how people outside Japan try to perceive this disaster. In this research, the newspapers and writings published in Indonesia are chosen to represent Indonesian’s perception of Higashi Nihon Daishinsai. Secondly, an extensive amount of data is offered in this research. This research tries to summarize as many discussions as possible related to the literary works published after Higashi Nihon Daishinsai. An attempt to compile a table consisting of the titles, the writers, the publishers, and the publication date of post-disaster literary works has been made. The table will be attached to the end of this dissertation. The third point is related to the discussion of a collection of stories entitled *Kentoushi*, which had been chosen as the main literary work in this research. Some papers that portrayed the discussion of prominent literary works in post-disaster have been found. However, the papers with an in-depth discussion of the stories presented in *Kentoushi* compilation have not been found yet. Therefore, this research trying to present some alternative discussions regarding the literary work of *Kentoushi*.

### **0.3 Methodology and Approach**

Higashi Nihon Daishinsai theme covers a wide range. Its influence is not only limited to the literary world. To deepen the understanding of this disaster, some references were collected. These references range from the books, the scientific articles, and the newspapers that discussed Higashi Nihon Daishinsai. These references contain the discussion of Japan’s situation in the aftermath of the disaster

and how the disaster affected the social, political, economic, psychological, and other aspects of life. These references are found in three languages; English, Japanese, and Indonesian. Three choices of languages in the sources aim to provide a broad knowledge of how Higashi Nihon Daishinsai was discussed and understood in multi-lingual environments.

Besides the references of Higashi Nihon Daishinsai in general, an attempt to look for literary references that specifically mentioned the post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai's literature was also conducted. The references regarding the post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai were used to compile a list of literary works published after Higashi Nihon Daishinsai. These references mentioned various works that can be considered as post-disaster literary works. Also, these references were used to compile the themes that frequently appear in post-disaster literary works. They also show how Higashi Nihon Daishinsai continue to influence Japanese literature.

Before the discussion of post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai's literature was presented, a discussion of Higashi Nihon Daishinsai in general was first presented. The aim of this section was to provide a broad picture of this disaster before the discussion moved to a specific post-disaster's literary theme. What I want to present in this part is a discussion of Higashi Nihon Daishinsai that is not only perceived from the Japanese perspective. I assume that the understanding of this disaster will be different according to various points of view (inside and outside of Japan). Therefore, after the discussion of Higashi Nihon Daishinsai from the Japanese point of view is presented, there followed the discussion of Higashi Nihon Daishinsai from foreign perspectives, especially the Indonesian perspective. Indonesia is one of the countries that extensively expressed opinions and views on this disaster. The discussion of how Indonesian perceived this disaster is an alternative to represent the thought about this disaster outside of Japan. Responses to this disaster from other countries have actually been stated a lot in the media. These responses, in the form of writings, mainly came from European and American media and writers. As an effort to introduce opinions from outside Europe and America, Indonesian opinions which are summarized from *Kompas* newspaper and *Tempo* magazine (both are periodically published in Indonesia) is presented. The selection of *Kompas* newspaper and *Tempo* magazine is based on the assumption that these media are able to represent Indonesian's thoughts on a specific topic. The Indonesian opinion later resonates with *Kentoushi's* interpretation in this dissertation.

The main research object in this dissertation is the examination of literary works in the form of novels and collection of short stories published after Higashi Nihon Daishinsai. Not only they must be published after the disaster, but they also have to be connected with the disaster. To extend the understanding of post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai literature, also to find out what kind of literary works that worth to be interpreted, I tried to look for the titles of all literary works in the form of novels and short stories collection that were published after Higashi Nihon Daishinsai, as much as possible. The overall list of titles, along with the name of the authors, publishers, and the year of publication (until

December 2018) is compiled and attached in the end part of this dissertation. The titles of these literary works are obtained by examining the references related to post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai literature. Also by browsed the internet and newspapers.

Before the interpretation of post-disaster literary works is presented, it was deemed necessary to present an overview of the themes that generally appear in post-disaster literary works. The article entitled *Doujidai to shite no Shinsaigo*, written by Fujita Naoya, is the main reference in determining a kind of themes that generally appears in those works. Besides Fujita's article, the article written by Iida Ichishi in *Higashi Nihon Daishinsaigo Bungakuron* was also considered as a reference. With both articles as references, I made a list of general themes that appeared in post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai literary works. The process began with finding the theme of each work in the list of literary works in the appendix (a list of literary works published after Higashi Nihon Daishinsai until December 2018). The themes then were compiled in Table 3 (Chapter II). The process of compiling post-disaster themes made it possible to find the unique stories for interpretation.

Through the process mentioned above, it was decided that "Kamisama 2011" and *Yamaneko Doomu* would represent the post-disaster literary works as prominent works in the post-disaster era. These works are chosen because they are mentioned in almost every discussion regarding the post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai literature as prominent stories in post-disaster. Furthermore, these works contain post-disaster issues that are widely discussed, such as the issue related to the nuclear incident. Both stories illustrate how the long-term effect of the nuclear accident will lead to prolonged fear and trauma.

"Kamisama 2011" describes life after a nuclear incident, including how trauma shaped the lives of people in the post-disaster era. Meanwhile, *Yamaneko Doomu* presents a story of childhood trauma and a trauma represented in the reaction toward Fukushima's incident. To deepen the understanding of trauma, that will help in interpreting these stories, the discourse of trauma will be presented below. Although experts generally avoid giving a specific definition of trauma, Richard Crownshaw provides a broad definition of trauma as follows,

"Trauma can be defined as that which defies witnessing, cognition, conscious recall and representation – generating the belated or deferred and disruptive experience of the event not felt at the time of witnessing" (Crownshaw 2006: 167).

Specifically, in *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*, by describing PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) which is widely known as trauma, Cathy Caruth explained trauma as follows,

"While the precise definition of post-traumatic stress disorder is contested, most descriptions generally agree that there is a response, sometimes delayed, to an overwhelming event or events, which take the form of repeated, intrusive hallucination, dreams, thoughts or behaviors stemming from the event, along with numbing that may have begun during or after the experience, and possibly also increased arousal to (and avoidance of) stimuli recalling the event" (Caruth 1995: 4).

The traumatic level of an event (or events) is different for each person. Therefore, the pathology of trauma (the causes and effects of the trauma) cannot be defined simply by referring to the event or events. The pathology depends on the structure of the experience or the reception of people who experience it. The events that trigger trauma cannot be experienced all at once, they always come after experiencing the event. That is the reason why trauma makes the patients experience the event for a long time. Caruth defines it by, “to be traumatized is precisely to be possessed by an image or event” (Caruth 1995: 4-5).

Caruth explained the close relationship between latency and the experience of trauma.<sup>1</sup> She added the fact that the victims of trauma were not fully conscious at the time when the traumatic event occurred. Therefore, it seems that they managed to escape from the event without ‘being injured’. Caruth mentioned, “The experience of trauma, the fact of latency, would thus seem to consist, not in the forgetting of a reality that can hence never be fully known, but in an inherent latency within the experience itself” (Caruth 1995: 7-8). She added that because the trauma cannot be experienced right after the event occurs, trauma becomes real when it is connected to other places and other times. The explanation of trauma and latency provides an understanding of how important the aspect of latency is, in the definition of trauma. Therefore, an event (or events) cannot be considered as a trigger of trauma, without the existence of a period of time when the memory is repressed and then later reappears in the symptom of trauma.

Trauma can be contagious and felt by other people through testimonies. Therefore, there is a possibility that other people may experience trauma through the testimonials that they heard or the texts that they read. Crownshaw mentioned, “Trauma then, is contagious: unlocatable in and uncontainable by witness and event, and forever departing. Contagious, it spreads via language and representation” (Crownshaw 2006: 170). With the ‘language and representation’ as a media to transfer the experience of trauma, Alison Landsberg’s idea of ‘prosthetic memory’ seems to be related to the idea of how the trauma can be spread widely. Landsberg states that prosthetic memory is a memory that came from outside of someone’s personal experience. However, this experience is taken and worn by someone as if it was his/her personal experience. The process of admitting this memory as someone’s own experience is facilitated by the mass cultural technologies of memory. With a circulation of language and representation through an advanced media, the memories then felt like ‘public memories’ (Landsberg 2000: 19). It explains how the trauma experienced by the victims in post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai can be experienced by others who are not directly impacted by the disaster. The experience is transferred through social media and the mass production of ‘language and representation’ regarding the disaster thereafter.

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<sup>1</sup> The term ‘latency’ as proposed by Sigmund Freud, can be interpreted as ‘the period of time from the occurrence of the traumatic event until the appearance of its effect’.



The discussion presented as an interpretation of “Kamisama 2011” and *Yamaneko Doomu* is actually related to the themes that stand out from both stories. The discussion tried to provide an overview of the prominent themes that generally appear in post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai literary works. However, the theory of trauma, used as a basis to understand how trauma is conveyed by language and representation, was depicted in the world after the nuclear accident in “Kamisama 2011” and the world after Higashi Nihon Daishinsai in *Yamaneko Doomu*. In *Yamaneko Doomu*, the theory of trauma was also used to understand the childhood trauma experienced by three main characters.

The interpretation of “Kamisama 2011” and *Yamaneko Doomu* is considered insufficient to describe the broad aspect of post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai literature. In order to seek out other important points in post-disaster literary works, the interpretation of other works is considered necessary. Besides “Kamisama 2011” and *Yamaneko Doomu*, it was considered necessary to present the works that representing Higashi Nihon Daishinsai from different backgrounds. *Kentoushi*, written by Tawada Yoko fits this category because Tawada’s background is not only influenced by Japanese culture. She wrote in another language, so it can be presumed that she has a ‘foreign perspective’ on her understanding of this disaster. *Kentoushi* consists of five stories, and three of them are discussed in this dissertation. The three stories are “Fushi no Shima”, “Higan”, and “Kentoushi”.

The selection of *Kentoushi* is based on the assumption that the work clearly presents the issues and themes that stand out in post-disaster. Three stories in *Kentoushi* address themes that are a reflection after the big disaster passed. Some of the themes are; the changes in political policy, the evacuation, the sensitivity toward foreign countries, and the worst possibilities that countries had to deal with after big disasters. The selection of these three works is based on the assumption that they have the most relevance to the Higashi Nihon Daishinsai. “Fushi no Shima” presents the worst effect of the use of nuclear energy, while “Higan” criticizes the nuclear policy and the post-disaster evacuation process. “Kentoushi” itself discusses the restrictions of freedom of speech, the long-term effects of nuclear radiation, and powerlessness in the aftermath of a disaster. Therefore, it can be said that *Kentoushi* is one of the important works in post-disaster. There are also many reviews related to *Kentoushi* in the discussion of post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai literature.

*Kentoushi* presents a unique post-nuclear disaster world. By reading it, the readers are taken to an alternative world that can be formed with the role of nuclear energy. How *Kentoushi* conveys ideas related to the post-disaster situation, how these ideas are portrayed, how readers are drawn to the post-disaster world, how the post-disaster world is depicted as if it speaks and conveys its message to readers are some topics that are interesting to be interpreted. The performative side of *Kentoushi* is explored in its interpretation. An understanding of the word ‘performative’ and theory related to it will be explained below.

The term ‘performative’ was first suggested by J.L Austin in 1956. An understanding of the term was then summarized by Bennett and Royle as follows:

“A performative is a statement that not only describes an action but actually performs that action. A performative is, in principle at least, the opposite of a constative statement. A constative statement involves a description of how things seem to be, a statement or assertion of something that can be true or false. ‘The teachers are ignorant’, for example.

All language can be thought about in terms of the constative and the performative. On the one hand, there is language as *descriptive*, as saying something about something. On the other hand, there is language as performative, as not only saying something but *doing* or *performing* something at the same time ” (Bennett and Royle 2016: 308).

Holding to the first idea introduced by J.L Austin, the idea of performative was initially referred to as a real statement, not in a fictional context. However, in its development, the term performative deviated far from what was first suggested by Austin. The term performative is then applied in understanding literary works. How the idea that sentences can ‘do something’ and can be an alternative in literary interpretation is explained as follows:

“At first this idea may seem baffling. Surely, we may tell ourselves, literary text are simply ‘words on a page’ and moreover words that relate to fictional or poetic worlds, not to the so-called real world in which marriage ceremonies are genuinely performed, committee meetings truly take place and money is real. But the truth of the matter is a little more complicated than this. Literary texts can indeed be considered from the perspective of the performative” (Bennett and Royle 2016: 309).

The statement is supported by Culler who defined the performance aspects of ‘a work’ by linking it to theatrical and musical performances. Culler stated that to have access to a work, the first step is to explore its performance aspects. The performance itself requires interpretation. Culler emphasized that the performance could not have proceeded without the presence of an audience. In literature, the audience can be interpreted as readers who are ‘exposed’ to the literary works (Culler 2007: 138).

Culler added that a work creates character and situation. Literary works make the ideas and concepts they bring come alive. Culler takes as an example of La Rochefoucauld’s claim, where he said that no one could understand the concept of ‘romantic love’ without reading it in literary works. Therefore, the concept of ‘romantic love’ is considered born from the mass production of literary works at that time. The literary works’ ability to create new concepts cannot be separated from their performative aspect. In other words, the performative aspect helps in understanding literary works as an ‘act’. The idea that literary works actually contain a performative aspect, raises their reputation, because it proves that literary works are no longer made up of frivolous pseudo-statements (Culler 2007: 144-145).

Bennett and Royle mentioned the similar thing that emphasizes literary works’ ability to ‘act’ in the following statement:

“The notion of the performative is extremely helpful for thinking about literature, then, because it allows us to appreciate that literary texts not only describe but perform. Literary texts not only say but do things: they do things with words and do things to us. More precisely they do things *by* saying” (Bennett and Royle 2016: 312).

Bennett and Royle support the idea that the aspect of performative can help in interpreting literary work, because it treats literary work as something that ‘acts’ or performs. In its ‘acts’, literature does something to us as readers.

As with the previous works (“Kamisama 2011” and *Yamaneko Doomu*), the interpretation of *Kentoushi* discussed prominent themes and issues in the story. However, the examination of the performative aspect in *Kentoushi* helps in interpreting how this story makes the idea of post-nuclear disaster world become real and alive. It also shows how the post-nuclear disaster world became real in the arrangement of sentences and the settings displayed, also from the dialogue narrated by the characters in the story. It can be interpreted how the ‘post-nuclear disaster world’ affected the readers. Another way to understand *Kentoushi* is by translating this story into Indonesian.

The discussion of three stories in *Kentoushi* will be done by examining the prominent themes in them. The quotations that representing each prominent theme will be discussed. The discussion will refer to the data in articles, books, and reports that circulating in the post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai.

#### **0.4 Structure of the Dissertation**

This dissertation opens with the Introduction chapter, consisting of the Background, the Prior Research, the Methodology and Approach, and the Structure of the Dissertation. The Background includes an explanation of the reasons for writing this research, it states why the theme related to Higashi Nihon Daishinsai had been chosen, also a rationalization is given for picking the theme of post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai literature specifically out of many topics regarding Higashi Nihon Daishinsai. The section on Prior Research presents the previous research that is used as references for this research. Previous research has given an in-depth discussion of the Japanese literary world after the disaster. The next part, Methodology & Approach, explains the steps taken in writing this research. It includes the references read for the writing process, how the data had been collected, and how the interpretation process of the literary works has been conducted. It also includes the theories used for the interpretation of the stories. The last part of the Introduction chapter was the Structure of the Dissertation, contains a brief explanation regarding the contents of this dissertation.

The first chapter presents a broad overview of Higashi Nihon Daishinsai from both the domestic and international’s perspectives. The first chapter is divided into several subchapters. The first subchapter discusses the general overview of Higashi Nihon Daishinsai, and the second considers how Higashi Nihon Daishinsai had been perceived from an outsider’s perspective, represented by Indonesian perspectives. The first subchapter explained how Higashi Nihon Daishinsai impacted various parts of life in Japan. In the second subchapter, it is noted how the mass media and writings

outside Japan are interpreting this disaster. The news and writings circulated in Indonesia have been chosen as the main source for this part. The second subchapter itself had been divided into two parts, the first part contained some important points in the news and writings related to Higashi Nihon Daishinsai in Indonesia, and the second part considers different interpretation of the Higashi Nihon Daishinsai's discourse in Indonesia.

Chapter two was also divided into two subchapters. The first subchapter presents a broad overview of the post-disaster's literature, including the literary works published in that period. The second subchapter presented a discussion on prominent literary works in post-disaster. The second subchapter was also split into three parts, the first part presented a discussion of the prominent themes in the post-disaster literary works and the classification of general themes in post-disaster literary works. Following that, the second part presented a discussion of the prominent themes and issues raised in *Kamisama 2011* written by Kawakami Hiromi. The prominent theme and issue underlined in *Kamisama 2011* are correlated with the nuclear disaster and how radiation affected people's lives. Later, the third part presents a discussion of *Yamaneko Doomu* written by Tsushima Yuuko with its prominent issues. The issues that arise in *Yamaneko Doomu* are themes associated with fear, insensitivity and sympathy, the effect of false information, and the suspicion surrounding nuclear power plants.

In the third chapter, the background of *Kentoushi's* writer, Tawada Yoko, has been discussed. The discussion of Tawada's background was followed by the discussion of the themes and characteristics that commonly appeared in her writings. Following those discussions, the discussion regarding how Tawada Yoko perceives Higashi Nihon Daishinsai's disaster also presented.

Moving to the fourth chapter, the main topic of this dissertation is presented. The discussion of *Kentoushi*, which is one of the stories collections published in post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai, was presented. This chapter divided into three subchapters, discussing three out of five stories in the book, the story of "Fushi no Shima", "Higan", and "Kentoushi". The first subchapter presents a discussion of themes related to nuclear power plants in "Fushi no Shima". While the second subchapter presented a discussion of "Higan". This second subchapter is divided into three parts. The first part is a background of "Higan", the second part discussed the theme related to the criticism of nuclear policy arise in "Higan", and the third part discussed the theme of post-disaster evacuation arise in "Higan". The third subchapter presents a discussion of "Kentoushi", and it is divided into four parts. The first part presents the background of "Kentoushi" and its correlation with the story of "Fushi no Shima", the second part discusses the topic regarding the restrictions of freedom of speech arise in "Kentoushi", the third part presents the issue of radiation and its effects depicted in "Kentoushi", and the fourth part is a discussion of the despair and helplessness felt by people in post-disaster depicted in "Kentoushi".

The fourth chapter was a conclusion of the overall research that had been conducted. Finally, an overall conclusion is given and suggestions for future research are presented.

# CHAPTER I

## HIGASHI NIHON DAISHINSAI: VIEWS FROM INSIDE AND OUTSIDE OF JAPAN

### 1.1 Overview of Higashi Nihon Daishinsai

On March 11, 2011 at 14.41 p.m local time, an earthquake with a magnitude of 9.0 hit Japan's Touhoku region (consisting of Akita, Aomori, Fukushima, Iwate, Miyagi, and Yamagata prefectures). The earthquake was centered in the depth of 15.1 km, 130 km east of Sendai which is the capital city of Miyagi prefecture on Honshu island. A few minutes after the earthquake struck, huge tsunami waves struck along the Pacific coast. At 3.35 p.m., a gigantic tsunami wave with a height of 15 meters hit and caused damage to the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear reactor (reactor number 1). Consequently, rumors of nuclear contamination spread in the public (Slater 2012: 1). This series of disasters consisted of three incidents; the earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear accident were later known as Higashi Nihon Daishinsai or Great East Japan Earthquake. The Higashi Nihon Daishinsai occurred eight years ago. However, the reverberation of this disaster is still lingering even until now (in 2019). In 2019, the Japanese television programs were still broadcasting and covering the long-term effect of this disaster. The mass media also reporting information related to the aftereffects of this disaster regularly<sup>2</sup>. In addition, when the commemoration date of Higashi Nihon Daishinsai (11 March) is approaching, television programs usually begin to rebroadcast the magnitude of the disaster and mention that it is not yet over. The repeated news coverage of the disaster which occurred a number of years ago is actually one of the aftereffects of the disaster. This was the first time that Japan experienced damage to a nuclear power plant caused by earthquake and tsunami.<sup>3</sup>

Knowledge of this catastrophic disaster traveled quickly because it occurred at a time when information flowed quickly through media, especially social media. Most of information related to the disaster was obtained by people from social media. Social media played an active role in providing

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<sup>2</sup> The latest news related to the aftereffect of this disaster came on September 19, 2019, when the Tokyo District Court ruled three former TEPCO executives who were previously indicted of professional negligence resulting in the deaths of 44 people as well as injuries suffered by 13 people, as "not guilty". Most of the dead victims were patients of the hospitals located around the nuclear power plant. They were forced to be evacuated when the accident happened. However, due to the hustle and bustle of the disaster, these patients were neglected for some time resulting in their deaths. The innocent verdict was given due to the consideration that the tsunami which led to the nuclear accident was not possible to predict ("Ex. TEPCO execs acquitted over Fukushima nuclear crisis", *Kyodo News*, September 19, 2019. <<https://english.kyodonews.net/news/2019/09/01ee3dcf5193-hold-breaking-news-ex-tepco-execs-acquitted-overfukushima-nuclear-crisis.html>> [accessed November 13, 2019]).

<sup>3</sup> The disaster that occurred in Fukushima was not the first nuclear power plant accident in Japan. Previously, there were also the cases of Onagawa nuclear power plant in 2011, Tokaimura nuclear power plant in 1994 with an INES (International Nuclear and Radiological Event Scale) level of 2, Tsuruga nuclear power plant in 1981 with an INES level of 2, and Ishikawa nuclear power plant in 1999 with an INES level of also 2 ("Krisis nuklir kian memburuk", *Kompas*, March 18, 2011, p.1.) However, the Fukushima accident was the only one with enormous publicity that not only moved the Japanese public but also the international community.

fast and interactive information. Therefore, people around the world not only became witnesses of this disaster, but they also felt sympathy toward the victims.<sup>4</sup> The role of social media was considered not only to provide information, but also as a media helped in coordinating post-disaster's distribution of goods and disaster relief. Furthermore, social media also played a role as guidance when people's trust in government and mass media began to decline. People were more dependent on information circulating on SNS or Twitter than on other conventional media, as far as the effects of radiation are concerned (Kashimura 2016: 202). Looking at how social media played a major role in this disaster, Slater, citing Anderegg (1991), said that if the Vietnam War was the first war that could be experienced through television, then Higashi Nihon Daishinsai in Japan is the first big disaster that could be fully experienced through social media (Slater 2012: 1).

Since March 12, 2011, or just one day after Higashi Nihon Daishinsai occurred, the mass media was full of news related to the earthquake and tsunami happened in Japan that shocked the world. Besides loss of many lives and major destruction, this disaster also caused many electricity, communication, and transportation facilities to shut down. This effect did not only cover disaster-stricken areas, but it also reached areas hundred kilometers away, including the capital city of Tokyo. On the day when the disaster occurred, transportation facilities in Tokyo were paralyzed, leaving many people unable to get back home. These people who were unable to move from one place to another were confused and panicked. Until midnight, bus terminals and taxi ranks stations were filled with long queues. People who gave up going home flooded hotels and restaurants while others waited all night long. These people then were called *kitaku nanmin*.<sup>5</sup> Since that day, Tokyo and its surrounding areas had to face rotating blackouts until the situation was brought under control.<sup>6</sup> Since that day, Tokyo and its surrounding areas had to face rotating blackouts until the situation was brought under control. Due to the declining electricity supplies, the biggest electrical company in Japan called the Tokyo Electric Power Company or TEPCO (which also manages the Fukushima nuclear power plant) had called for electricity savings.<sup>7</sup> Like any other general post-disaster phenomenon, the first response that arose after the disaster was in supermarkets and convenience stores. People who want to buy in bulk swarmed the store. The queues were long and the staple goods soon became difficult to get.

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<sup>4</sup> “Jepang, simpati, dan pembelajaran”, *Kompas*, March 14, 2011, p.6.

<sup>5</sup> *Kitaku nanmin* (帰宅難民), which literally means “going home refugee”, is a term used for people who were unable to go back home in Tokyo after the disaster happened on March 11, 2011, because transportation access was interrupted as a post-disaster effect. At that time, taxis were also difficult to get, as a result many people decided to wait at stations, offices, or schools all night (“Kitaku nanmin, fuan na yoru eki mae/douro ni afureru hito toshin ni kinkyuu hinansho tsugitsugi higashi nihon daishinai”, *Asahi Shimbun*, March 12, 2011, p.17).

<sup>6</sup> To understand how this disaster was reported from the Japanese media's point of view, the reading of several Japanese newspapers (namely *Asahi Shimbun*, *Yomiuri Shimbun*, and *Nihon Keizai Shimbun*) was conducted. Since the information about nuclear accidents was almost the same in every newspaper, the *Asahi Shimbun* was chosen as a reference to represent the almost same information, such as information regarding statements by Prime Minister Kan Naoto or Chief Cabinet Secretary Edano Yukio.

<sup>7</sup> “Toukyou denryoku, konseki ni teiden osore hatsudensho teishi, setsuden yobikake higashi nihon daishinsai”, *Asahi Shimbun*, March 12, 2011, p.1.

Stories related to the problems in Fukushima NPP (nuclear power plant) dominated the mass media's news since the beginning of the post-disaster period. On March 12, 2011, it was reported that Fukushima NPP units 1 and 2 experienced failures in their cooling system due to the earthquake. Next, it was reported that regarding the current situation of the reactor, the pressure in the containment vessel was too high. Therefore, an effort had to be taken to prevent the heat that contained radiation from spreading in the air. Meanwhile, the government was directing residents who lived within a radius of 3 km from Fukushima NPP to evacuate. Through the government spokesperson, Edano Yukio, who at that time served as a Chief Cabinet Secretary, it was announced that up to that time, there was no radiation leak into the air.<sup>8</sup> The government gave a quick response regarding the possibility of a nuclear crisis that might happen. Prime Minister Kan Naoto held a meeting with his cabinet immediately after the disaster for making an emergency response plan.<sup>9</sup> The government urged people to pay more attention to the announcements broadcasted by television and radio, and to move calmly due to security reasons and to reduce the level of damage.<sup>10</sup> Surprising news came in the afternoon on the same day. It mentioned that the government expanded the evacuation area from 3 km to 10 km because the situation of two NPP units (units 1 and 2) kept getting worse.<sup>11</sup> At this point on the disaster, the term “*souteigai no jitai*” or “the circumstances beyond prediction” began to emerge. On the first day after the disaster, the government repeatedly affirmed that radiation from Fukushima NPP had not been leaked. Therefore, people were expected to be calm in digesting the information.<sup>12</sup>

On the following day, the morning of March 13, there was a report that on March 12 a hydrogen explosion damaged the roof of containment building of unit 1. Edano Yukio made a public statement that for safety reasons, and to prevent damage to the containment vessel, the reactor of unit 1 would be cooled down by using seawater. In that statement, he also added that the evacuation area was expanded from 10 km to 20 km.<sup>13</sup> On the same day, it was reported that the pressure in containment vessel building unit 3 was increasing. Therefore, the effort to release hot steam into the air was discussed.<sup>14</sup> After the news related to the increased pressure in unit 3, the news reporting that an explosion occurred in unit 3 was released. The explosion caused injuries to three people. At this time, concerns regarding radiation exposure began to arise, and the assumption was made that the

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<sup>8</sup> “Fukushima genpatsu, hoshanou houshutsu mo higashi nihon daishinsai”, *Asahi Shimbun*, March 12, 2011, p.1.

<sup>9</sup> “Higashi nihon daishinsai taiou, yoyatou isogu seifu, jouhou shuushuu owareru”, *Asahi Shimbun*, March 12, 2011, p.1.

<sup>10</sup> “Ochitsuite koudou wo Kan shushou messeeji higashi nihon daishinsai”, *Asahi Shimbun*, March 12, 2011, p.4.

<sup>11</sup> “Hoshanou houshutsu, go man nin hinan fukushima daiichi genpatsu ichi go ki, nenryoubou roshutsu higashi nihon daishinsai”, *Asahi Shimbun*, March 12, 2011, p.5.

<sup>12</sup> “Genpatsu, souteigai no jitai karadaki fusegu ECCS ugokazu higashi nihon daishinsai”, *Asahi Shimbun*, March 12, 2011, p.4.

<sup>13</sup> “Fukushima genpatsu de bakuhatsu daiichi go ki, shuuhun de 90 nin hibaku ka roshinyouki, tateya sonshou higashi nihon daishinsai”, *Asahi Shimbun*, March 13, 2011, p.1.

<sup>14</sup> “Fukushima daiichi genpatsu, san go ki mo reikyaku fuzen shikichi kyokai, housha senryou kijun uwamaru higashi nihon daishinsai tokubetsu gougai”, *Asahi Shimbun*, March 13, 2011, p.1.

information provided by the government was not clear enough.<sup>15</sup> After the hysteria caused by nuclear explosion in Fukushima NPP, the foreign media began to cover the topic of people's fears of nuclear radiation.<sup>16</sup>

The terror relating to the NPP accident did not end there. On March 14, at 11 am, it was reported that a second explosion occurred in unit 3, injuring eleven people. The government, represented by Edano Yukio, still holding to its previous statements, that there was still a low possibility that the huge amount of radiation particle would be dispersed into the air.<sup>17</sup> In the afternoon of March 13, Edano Yukio stated that there was a possibility of an explosion in unit 3, since the water level dropped as had happened in unit 1. However, even though a similar explosion may happen, the government guarantees that it would not affect the health of the evacuees.<sup>18</sup> News reinforcing an indication of a prolonged nuclear crisis was released the following day, March 15. Early on that day, 6.14 in the morning, it was reported that the sound of an explosion could be heard from unit 2. Furthermore, there was a report that a fire occurred in unit 4 of NPP. At that time, unit 4 of NPP was inactive, but it was used as a pool to cool down the fuel rods.<sup>19</sup> Based on the consideration that unit 2 began to release radiation particles, the evacuation zone was lengthened from 20 km to 30 km.<sup>20</sup>

On the following day, March 16, due to the fire incident that took place in unit 4, no one was allowed to enter the power plant complex. Meanwhile, to cool down the reactor, seawater was sprayed from the air using helicopters. The level of radiation released by the reactors around NPP complex was reportedly high. Therefore, the employees were allowed to be on-site for only one hour.<sup>21</sup> On the next day, Asahi Shimbun on March 17 presented other news besides the news relating to the NPP. It was reported that the condition of the evacuees was far from good. Many evacuation sites lacked food and water. The donation of goods and supplies that were supposed to arrive could not reach the evacuation sites on time. In Fukushima, many trucks loaded with donation goods had to turn around due to the fears of radiation exposure.<sup>22</sup> As of March 17, it was reported that the conditions of the nuclear reactor units 1, 2, and 3 were still unstable. If the water level in the containment vessel drops,

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<sup>15</sup> "Houshanou, mienu fuan kyueen heri wo matsu aida ni hibaku higashi nihon daishinsai fukushima genpatsu de bakuhatsu", *Asahi Shimbun*, March 13, 2011, p.2.

<sup>16</sup> "Genpatsu de bakuhatsu, sekai kinchou ajia, houshanou ryuushutsu kanshi kaiki shikou ni hiyamizu higashi nihon daishinsai", *Asahi Shimbun*, March 13, 2011, p.5.

<sup>17</sup> "San go ki mo suiso bakuhatsu fukushima genpatsu, tateya sonkai 11 nin fushou higashi nihon daishinsai", *Asahi Shimbun*, March 14, 2011, p.1.

<sup>18</sup> "Edano kanbouchoukan no kaiken (youshi) higashi nihon daishinsai", *Asahi Shimbun*, March 14, 2011, p.5.

<sup>19</sup> "Fukushima daiichi genpatsu no hankei 20-30 kiro, yanaitaihi Kan shushou yousei higashi nihon daishinsai", *Asahi Shimbun*, March 15, 2011, p.1.

<sup>20</sup> "Fukushima daiichi genpatsu, seigyo konnan houshanou tairyuu hisan osore ni go ki atsuryoku yokuseishitsu sonkai ka higashi nihon daishinsai", *Asahi Shimbun*, March 15, 2011, p.1.

<sup>21</sup> "Kounoudo houshanou, fukkyuu habamu fukushima daiichi genpatsu yon go ki, nenryou ni chikazukezu touden, heri sansui yousei e", *Asahi Shimbun*, March 16, 2011, p.1.

<sup>22</sup> "Mizu mo miruku mo shokuryou mon ai kyueen busshi, naze todokanai higashi nihon daishinsai", *Asahi Shimbun*, March 17, 2011, p.1.



the reactors will release radiation that comes from the water's surface. If water was not injected to raise the water level and to cool down the reactors, the containment vessel would be damaged, causing large amounts of radiation to be released into the air.<sup>23</sup> Because the news related to the accident at Fukushima NPP were circulated, the information related to the series of disasters on March 11, 2011 continued to be printed in the media for several months. Most of the news appeared in the media could be assumed as an effect of the nuclear crisis. Since the accident happened in Fukushima was unfolded in the media, most of the news appeared were related to the fear and panic over the radiation, information of the large numbers of foreign people that already left Japan, the lack of information provided by the government and TEPCO, the lack of communication between the government and TEPCO, the neglected victims of earthquake and tsunami since government's focus was directed only to the handling of nuclear disaster, and the crisis of people's trust toward the government.

To this point, it can be assumed that the nuclear accident made this disaster become big and prominent. Higashi Nihon Daishinsai revives the discourse related to the operation of nuclear power plants. Before this incident happened, the subject of nuclear energy itself was a sensitive topic in Japanese society. No one could bravely express his/her opinion regarding this matter, moreover, expressing their disagreement of the use of nuclear energy, since this theme is considered taboo (Kimura 2013: 22). In the early post-disaster period, in correlation with the nuclear incident that occurred, people began to turn their eyes to the company responsible for operating Fukushima nuclear power plant, i.e., the Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO). TEPCO is the party that must take the responsibility of the nuclear crisis which occurred. At the same time, many began to speculate that TEPCO was circulating less than accurate information related to the crisis. In the midst of public confusion, Prime Minister Kan Naoto also added public confusion by making sudden decisions, such as calling for residents to be evacuated. Although they had not mentally recovered from the disaster yet, the victims and people in general become panicky and confused due to the ambiguous rumors related to the nuclear crisis. As it was stated above, between the 11<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of March 2011, three nuclear reactors experienced a meltdown. However, until March 25, 2011, TEPCO denied that the incidents occurred, in spite of statements made by domestic and foreign experts who kept mentioning the crisis. The attitude taken by TEPCO, invited prolonged criticism. It showed an effort to avoid responsibility, and the statements uttered by TEPCO as well as its political colleagues that stated the nuclear disaster in Fukushima was something "unpredictable" or in Japanese term is *souteigai* (Dudden 2012: 346). This word became a prediction of how nuclear disaster will be handled in the future. It also reflected the past experience of how the crisis related to nuclear energy had been treated so far. The word *souteigai* was considered only as an attempt to strengthen the "safety myth" of nuclear energy or "*anzen shinwa*" that had been circulating for decades. It was widely believed that the

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<sup>23</sup> "Fukushima daiichi genpatsu, kyou ni mo souden kaifuku e reikyaku sagyou ni kitai", *Asahi Shimbun*, March 17, 2011, p.1.

accident in Fukushima would put an end to the absolute trust in the safety myth of nuclear energy. Up until 2011, the *anzen shinwa* spell had been repeatedly reinforced to the point where companies that operate nuclear power plants began to neglect security issues and obligatory inspections, as well as to be negligent in providing accurate data (Geilhorn and Weickgenannt 2017: 4).

The first issue that circulated, regarding radiation from the nuclear power accident was evacuation. The government arranged an “exclusive zone” within the radius of 20 km from Fukushima NPP which had to be evacuated (the exclusive zone was later expanded to 30 km). Therefore, every person living in that area had to leave. Based on the demand by regional officers who genuinely considered people’s safety, many residents living outside the exclusive zone also decided to evacuate willingly. At that time, the directions of the evacuation as well as information regarding the level of radiation were still unclear. Therefore, many people evacuate themselves without an order just based on their own initiative. Since the distribution of information regarding the level of radiation was still unequal, many people went to the place with a higher radiation level. Kimura stated that the nuclear accident was a manifestation of the lack of safety measures and crisis management. Those who were aware of the radiation bought Geiger counters for the detection of radioactivity and evacuated themselves without waiting for orders (Kimura 2013: 88). The evacuation order conducted by the residents near the NPP area, in a short time changed the pattern of life of tens of thousands of evacuees. One pattern of voluntary evacuation that gained public attention was the “mother and child evacuation” or *boshi hinan*. In this pattern, normally mothers who have small children were worried about the effect of radiation on their children, therefore they decided to move while other family members stayed or went to another location (Horikawa 2017: 67). This pattern of evacuation caused many family members to live separately. In some cases, fathers with one child would stay together in the affected area while the mothers and younger children went to a distant place (Segawa 2012: 4). The decision to be evacuated was also connected to the level of trust towards the government and the influence of victims’ surroundings. Horikawa stated that one of the influential factors in the decision to evacuate was a declining trust toward the government and authorities. The government and authorities were considered to be covering up information related to the radiation. Therefore, the decision to evacuate was an emotional decision based on the surrounding influence (Horikawa 2017: 70).

Furthermore, the order to evacuate was considered not easy by the elderly who had spent their whole lives in their hometown. They were not familiar with the outside world. Some of them ignored the order to evacuate, some even went as far as to commit suicide. The case of Okubo Fumio, who committed suicide after the government gave an order to evacuate shows how this nuclear disaster affected the most vulnerable victims, namely the elderly<sup>24</sup>. For years after the disaster, an attempt to

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<sup>24</sup> Okubo Fumio was a resident of Iitate which is a part of Fukushima. He committed suicide at the age of 102, just one day after he learned from television that his village (which is located 30-50 km from NPP) was included in the exclusive zone, meaning the residents had to evacuate. After Okubo’s death, his family demanded compensation money from TEPCO, who was considered responsible for the suicide. This demand was won in the court in 2018

decontaminate the polluted areas still continues. The decontamination workers still attempting to remove the top soil and clean up the contaminated materials from public spaces. These contaminated materials were temporarily accommodated in Fukushima before being moved to other places. As time goes by, the evacuation orders were being removed and the residents were gradually allowed to return back to their homes. However, despite the decontamination attempts that had been carried out, there were not many evacuees willing to return. Another problem also came from the refusal to use Fukushima as a temporary disposal site for nuclear waste.<sup>25</sup>

The next issue related to the nuclear accident was the difficulties and discrimination faced by Fukushima evacuees. The disaster forced these people to leave their homes and live separated from their families. Meanwhile, they were thrown into a new community that was unfamiliar with them. When the accident just had happened and they did not know where to go, they decided to ask help from relatives. But there were many cases where the relatives refused to give accommodation because of a fear that the evacuees may have already been exposed to radiation.<sup>26</sup> Another form of discrimination faced by evacuees was that they must show a health certificate as a proof that they were safe from radiation. Many hotels refused to give accommodations to Fukushima evacuees since they were considered as contaminated. Also, many children were bullied in schools because they were thought to have been ‘exposed to radiation’. The word ‘Fukushima’ automatically made people considers that people coming from that place were already contaminated (Dudden 2012: 348).<sup>27</sup> Many evacuees did not return to Fukushima even though the order for evacuation had been gradually lifted. Based on the comments of some evacuees who spent years outside Fukushima in the temporary houses subsidized by the government, it was stated that they had experienced unpleasant treatments from the neighborhood. They also got used to the more aggressive actions, such as vandalism to the cars with Fukushima’s plate numbers.<sup>28</sup> The problem faced by these evacuees even years after the disaster occurred was that they could not get housing assistance anymore since the evacuees who left without government’s order were no longer eligible to receive the compensation.<sup>29</sup> On the other hand, this

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(“Compensation awarded over 102-year-old’s suicide amid Fukushima crisis”, *The Japan Times*, February 20, 2018. <<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2018/02/20/national/crime-legal/compensation-awarded-102-year-olds-suicide-amid-fukushima-crisis/#.Xhw3lczbD5>>[accessed November 13, 2019]).

<sup>25</sup> Justin McCurry, “Fukushima grapples with toxic soil that no one wants”, *The Guardian*, March 11, 2019. <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/mar/11/fukushima-toxic-soil-disaster-radioactive>>[accessed November 13, 2019].

<sup>26</sup> Bobbie van der List, “‘You’re Contaminated’: The Stigma Against Japan’s Fukushima Survivors”, *Vice*, March 13, 2018. <[https://www.vice.com/en\\_us/article/mb5zny/japan-fukushima-earthquake-survivors-stigma](https://www.vice.com/en_us/article/mb5zny/japan-fukushima-earthquake-survivors-stigma)>[accessed November 13, 2019].

<sup>27</sup> Dudden added that people evacuated from Fukushima were considered as not the ordinary evacuees. They were considered as cursed people who were definitely being exposed to radiation, even though some of them were initially evacuated due to the threat of a tsunami.

<sup>28</sup> Bobbie van der List, “‘You’re Contaminated’: The Stigma Against Japan’s Fukushima Survivors”, *Vice*, March 13, 2018. <[https://www.vice.com/en\\_us/article/mb5zny/japan-fukushima-earthquake-survivors-stigma](https://www.vice.com/en_us/article/mb5zny/japan-fukushima-earthquake-survivors-stigma)>[accessed November 13, 2019].

<sup>29</sup> Romeo Marcantuoni, “The Fukushima Disaster Is Far From Over”, *Tokyo Review*, April 10, 2018.

action could be interpreted as the government's attempt to bring back Fukushima's residents inside the Fukushima region. But for the evacuees, the idea to return was no longer encouraging, since there was a crisis of trust on how the decontamination process had been carried out. Furthermore, the lack of public facilities built after the disaster was also considered to be an obstacle to have normal activities.<sup>30</sup>

Moving to other aspects of this disaster, very early in the post-disaster period, voices were raised that information regarding this disaster were widespread. News and information circulated in public were considered less transparent, therefore there was a suspicion that some things were being covered up, mainly the things related to radiation. The discussion related to the circulated news cannot be separated from the discussion of the role of the mass media. Some people argue that the Japanese mass media has a bad reputation, since there is a journalist association with close connections to the government, named *kisha club*<sup>31</sup>. Big newspaper companies in Japan (such as Yomiuri Shimbun, Asahi Shimbun, and Nihon Keizai Shimbun) are usually under the same group with television companies. These television companies are supported by the large sponsors, such as TEPCO. In other words, the electrical company that runs the Fukushima NPP is the biggest financial sponsor for the television and mass media companies. Based on this information, it could be assumed that it might be not a coincidence that information related to the nuclear accidents and radiation was not accurately and fully published in the mass media. Instead it was widely distributed in small independent media and short message services instead (Kashimura 2016: 202). Related to the assessment of Japanese journalism by international watchdog journalism, following the accident in Fukushima, Japan's ranking in the Reporters Without Border Press Freedom Index dropped dramatically from 11<sup>th</sup> in 2010 to 61<sup>st</sup> in 2015. The reason is because Japan considered put too much restrictions on independent coverages of nuclear accidents (Geilhorn and Weickgenannt 2017: 6). Instead of publishing the news related to radiation, the mass media seemed to be a tool to disseminate the principle of *jishuku* (self-restraint) in the aftermath of the disaster. *Jishuku* made all forms of entertainments became limited in the media and they were replaced with campaigns encouraging the public (Kashimura 2016: 199). The mass media encouraged words such as "*Ganbarou Nippon!*" (Fight Japan!) or "*Ganbarou Fukushima!*" (Fight Fukushima) to be born and circulated in the public. Some people think that these words of encouragement are more likely an effort to divert the issue related to radiation. Using these encouragement words, the people are guided to shift their minds to the issue of "revival Japan" instead of questioning issues related to food safety and the level of radiation. As if supporting the allegation of hiding information from the public, politicians also participated in this action by giving ambiguous

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<<https://www.tokyoreview.net/2018/04/fukushima-disaster-not-over/>> [accessed November 13, 2018]

<sup>30</sup> Bobbie van der List, "'You're Contaminated': The Stigma Against Japan's Fukushima Survivors", *Vice*, March 13, 2018. <[https://www.vice.com/en\\_us/article/mb5zny/japan-fukushima-earthquake-survivors-stigma](https://www.vice.com/en_us/article/mb5zny/japan-fukushima-earthquake-survivors-stigma)> [accessed November 13, 2019].

<sup>31</sup> *Kisha club* is allegedly monopolizing access to important political interviews and get rid of independent journalists, including foreign journalists (Kashimura 2016: 202).

statements. In the post-disaster, the Chief Cabinet Secretary, Edano Yukio, repeatedly stated that there was no direct effect from the nuclear radiation.<sup>32</sup> On the other hand, this statement can be interpreted as an attempt to hide the danger of radiation and make it easier for the government to avoid responsibilities (Kashimura 2016: 201).

Early in the post-disaster period, it looked like there was a gap between post-disaster's coverage from the foreign press and coverage of the post-disaster from domestic perspective. Higashi Nihon Daishinsai catapulted Japan's image as a strong and resilient country in facing major disasters. Praises were delivered to Japan via various foreign media which reported that Japanese people were not drowning in vain and remained calm despite the emergency situation that occurred. The victims were described as patiently waiting for help, and it noted that no looting occurred, as often happens in other areas struck by major disasters.<sup>33</sup> However, academician Kashimura Akio suggested that the Japanese gave a unique reaction to Higashi Nihon Daishinsai. They reacted by conducting a "big silence". People outside Japan translated this 'silence' as an act of 'patient and self-controlled' reaction. However, in fact this reaction is related to the repressed Japanese psychological system (Kashimura 2016: 196-197). Specifically it relates to the problem of how the victims' emotional trauma was repressed in the aftermath of this disaster. Psychologically, the victims found that it was difficult to ask for responsibilities, mainly when they are forced to feel guilty if they become a burden for others by demanding that certain parties must be responsible for the disaster. Kashimura added that trauma in Japan is manifested in the form of 'silence' to preserve the social order. However, this 'silence' made many social dysfunctions arising instead. Therefore, trauma caused by Higashi Nihon Daishinsai gradually became repressive and dangerous (Kashimura 2016: 206). From the psychological perspectives, Higashi Nihon Daishinsai developed an emergence of PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) in people involved, mainly in people who involved in nuclear-related incidents. An academician, Matsumoto Kazunori and colleagues, stated that the tendency of victims experienced PTSD was higher in areas affected by the radiation compared to the areas affected by earthquake and tsunami. The reason was because the damage from radiation is something that occurs continuously. The radiation itself is invisible. However, it is the prime source of constant fear. What makes the radiation become more complex is the difficulties to get accurate information. Moreover, there are many prejudices regarding the radiation-related problems in the public (Matsumoto et al. 2016: 329).

Higashi Nihon Daishinsai will not be easily forgotten by the victims directly involved in that disaster. Many victims passed away and not a few people lost their homes and remain uncertain whether they will be able to return back home or not. This disaster also overturned the lives of many

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<sup>32</sup> Terry Macalister, et al, "Japan earthquake forces thousands to evacuate in nuclear plant emergency", *The Guardian*, March 11, 2011. <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/mar/11/japan-earthquake-evacuate-nuclear-plant>> [accessed November 13, 2019]

<sup>33</sup> "Ketanggahan Jepang Memukau Dunia", *Kompas*, March 16, 2011, p.1.

people involved, while the handling of it still continues even years after the disaster itself passed. This disaster not only affected the direct victims, but it also had an influence on Japanese society as a whole. In the aftermath of this disaster, people from different backgrounds tried to interpret this disaster with their own expertise. Some tried to voice their opinion, or they just gave a comment. Many words and expressions emerged, noteworthy is the politician and writer, who was also the former Tokyo governor (served from 1999 to 2012), Ishihara Shintarou. Ishihara stated that this disaster was a “punishment from God” (in Japanese term is called *tenbatsu*). He added that the tsunami had to be used, to wash away the egoism that had taken root in the mentality of Japanese society. That was the reason why he thought this disaster was a “punishment from God”, even though he felt sorry for the victims.<sup>34</sup> Besides Ishihara Shintarou, in 2013, there was also another statement from Takaichi Sanae, a politician from the Liberal Democratic Party. Her statement was considered insensitive since it mistakenly sounds as underestimating the numbers of those killed in the disaster. She stated that there was no clear evidence that the death of the victims could be linked directly to the Fukushima NPP accident. Therefore, to overcome the lack of energy sources, there is no other option than re-operating nuclear power plants in Japan, after a careful security check is done.<sup>35</sup> This statement was interpreted as an assumption that there were no casualties directly linked to the NPP incidents, while in fact there were hundreds of patients from hospitals near the NPP site who were forced to be evacuated because of this accident, and many of them died. Takaichi later apologized for her statement. Moving to another statement with a different tone, the Japanese TV personality, Kitano Takeshi asked people to show more empathy to the victims. Kitano underlined that what was presented in the media after disaster was just the number of victims get killed and missing. He thought that if people only see these numbers, and if they saw this disaster as only one incident that took the lives of thousands of people, it means there is still no empathy directed toward the victims. Kitano mentioned that if there is an assumption that this disaster was just ‘one disaster that caused the death of 20,000 lives’, then there was actually no sense of solidarity with the victims. This disaster should be regarded as ‘20,000 disasters that took away one single life’ since every lost live has its own story, and for each life that had been lost, there are still families and relatives who keep mourning for the loss afterward.<sup>36</sup>

This disaster triggered the emergence of new energy in Japanese society. After the disaster, many volunteers came from all over Japan to the worst affected areas. They gave all their energy and

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<sup>34</sup> Ishihara later apologized for this statement and stated that he would withdraw it (“Ishihara sorry for quake gaffe”, *The Japan Times*, March 16, 2011. <<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2011/03/16/national/ishihara-sorry-for-quake-gaffe#.Xh0LxcgzbD5>> [accessed November 13, 2019]). However, these words are not forgotten and still discussed as a controversial reaction toward the catastrophic event.

<sup>35</sup> Reiji Yoshida, “Meltdowns haven’t killed anyone: LDP bigwig”, *The Japan Times*, June 19, 2011. <<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2013/06/19/national/meltdowns-havent-killed-anyone-ldp-bigwig#.Xh0NasgzbD5>> [accessed November 13, 2019].

<sup>36</sup> “Biito takeshi ga shinsai chokugo ni katatta ‘kanashimi no honshitsu to higai no omomi”, *News Post Seven*, March 11, 2014. <[https://www.news-postseven.com/archives/20140311\\_245075.html](https://www.news-postseven.com/archives/20140311_245075.html)> [accessed November 13, 2019].

provided necessary materials. Many of the volunteer groups went bankrupt and ran out of donations as well as supporters (Segawa 2012: 5). This disaster is uniting Japan in similar grief. People willing sacrificed their time, money, and properties in order to take part in the ‘solidarity wave’ that spread all across Japan. For this reason, the disaster is said to have reawaken the concept of “social solidarity” shown by a phenomenon called *Kizuna*. In the post-disaster, the word *kizuna* (which means ‘bonds’) as well as words such “Ganbarou Nippon!” (Fight Japan) or “Ganbarou Fukushima!” (Fight Fukushima) draw the attention of public. *Kizuna* seemed to represent solidarity in the post-disaster. *Kizuna* itself can also be interpreted as an emotional connection that ‘binds’ and ‘unites’ people in the same culture. This emotional connection, or bonds, besides creating empathy towards those in the community who experienced the disaster, also draws empathy from other people who were not directly affected by the disaster. It is said that Higashi Nihon Daishinsai revived the tendency to lean against each other since people finally realized that their lives are so close to the death<sup>37</sup>.

Years after the disaster took place, the way to deal with the nuclear accident is still continuing. Specifically, the handling is connected to the decontamination of the disaster areas and to the evacuation ordered due to radiation. Relating to the problem of evacuation, as it was mentioned before, a doubt arose about the progress of the decontamination process that has been carried out. Many evacuees have not returned yet, even though the evacuation orders have been revoked. In relation to the decontamination process, efforts have been made to clean the soil and other contaminated materials from public places. Also, efforts to clean nuclear reactors have also been carried out. Six years after the disaster, in early 2017, a robot was sent to Fukushima’s nuclear reactor number 2 with the purpose of monitoring the situation and finding the exact location of the melted fuel. The robot was sent as an initial effort to clean the reactors. The attempt failed, and it brought pessimism.<sup>38</sup> Nevertheless, at the end of 2017, another robot was sent to Fukushima’s nuclear reactor number 3, and It was successful in finding the location of the melted uranium. This success gained a positive reaction for the cleaning process that would be scheduled in the future. The cleaning process is predicted to take 30-40 years until completed with a huge financial cost.<sup>39</sup> Besides the unsolved problems of decontamination and evacuation, various social issues related to the nuclear accident

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<sup>37</sup> *Kizuna* is described as a bond that binds Japan as a single entity. In post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai, the *kizuna* term reappeared notably in Japanese society. After the disaster, more people started a family, raised children, and enthusiastically allocated their time and energy to domestic affairs than before the disaster took place (“‘Kizuna’ takes many forms in post-disaster Japan, including marriage and infidelity”, *Japan Today*, January 17, 2012. <<https://japantoday.com/category/features/kuchikomi/kizuna-takes-many-forms-in-post-disaster-japan-including-marriage-and-infidelity>> [accessed November 13, 2019]).

<sup>38</sup> Justin McCurry, “Dying robots and failing hope: Fukushima clean-up falters six years after tsunami”, *The Guardian*, March 9, 2017. <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/mar/09/fukushima-nuclear-clean-up-falters-six-years-after-tsunami>> [accessed November 13, 2019].

<sup>39</sup> Juliana Rose Pignataro, “Fukushima Melted Uranium Discovered 6 Years After Nuclear Disaster”, *International Business Times*, November 20, 2017. <<https://www.ibtimes.com/fukushima-melted-uranium-discovered-6-years-after-nuclear-disaster-2617543>> [accessed November 13, 2019].

appeared, some of these issues are the declining public trust towards nuclear energy, the future use of abandoned zones in Fukushima region, the debates over who would be responsible for the nuclear incident and who would pay compensation for it.<sup>40</sup> The attempt to bring TEPCO officials to court on charges of professional negligence resulting in the loss of many lives is seen as an effort to seek responsibilities. However, since the court decided that the three defendants were “not guilty”<sup>41</sup>, it is assumed that more efforts to seek responsibilities are still needed. How the problem will be solved is not yet predictable at the present time. From the previous paragraphs, it is evident that prominent issues emerged as a consequences of this disaster. Such issues are; the discrimination faced by the victims, the lack of information published by government and mass media, the disaster victims’ psychological condition, and the positive and negative responses of this disaster.

Higashi Nihon Daishinsai is assumed to bring new discourses and pull back the forgotten discourses to the surface. Quoting the words written by writer Iida Ichishi, both with positive and negative expressions, everyone has strong responses in the form of expression and assumption toward Higashi Nihon Daishinsai. Everyone seems to agree that “there was something there”. Therefore, even with the negative responses or dissatisfaction, everyone has something that they want to say. No one argues that this disaster with its after effect bring no significant effect on Japanese culture (Iida 2017: 8). Eight years have passed since the disaster occurred, many thoughts and interpretation had been born from a wide range of fields. Literature is also a field that directly affected by this disaster. Chapter II of this research will present a discussion of how Higashi Nihon Daishinsai influenced the Japanese literary world.

## **1.2 Higashi Nihon Daishinsai Portrayed in Mass Media and Writings in Indonesia**

Higashi Nihon Daishinsai is a disaster that not only captured national attention but global attention as well. Therefore, the detailed report related to this disaster was circulated both in the domestic area (within Japan) and globally. The power of the earthquake and tsunami that caused massive damage, coupled with a nuclear incident with long-term effects is written as one of the historical disasters in Japan. It was the first time in Japan, where a strong earthquake followed by a massive tsunami which later closed nuclear power plants. The accident happened in Fukushima NPP was raised public awareness that there is a possibility the handling of nuclear crisis would not be done for a short time since there is a “nuclear radiation” element that did not appear in the previous disasters. This “nuclear

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<sup>40</sup> Tatsujiro Suzuki, “Six years after Fukushima, much of Japan has lost faith in nuclear power”, *The Conversation*, March 10, 2017. <<http://theconversation.com/six-years-after-fukushima-much-of-japan-has-lost-faith-in-nuclear-power-73042>> [accessed November 13, 2019].

<sup>41</sup> “Ex. TEPCO execs acquitted over Fukushima nuclear crisis”, *Kyodo News*, September 19, 2019. <<https://english.kyodonews.net/news/2019/09/01ee3dcf5193-hold-breaking-news-ex-tepco-execs-acquitted-overfukushima-nuclear-crisis.html>> [accessed November 13, 2019].



radiation” element then was the factor that made Higashi Nihon Daishinsai accident a topic that consistently appeared in local and international newspapers even several months after the disaster occurred. The fact is that the victims of earthquake and tsunami were also Higashi Nihon Daishinsai’s victims. However, based on the observation of news circulating in local and international mass media, there is a sense that Higashi Nihon Daishinsai only presented in the form of nuclear disaster. It was little unfair to the victims of the earthquake and tsunami who also need attention and assistance after the disaster.

News related to Higashi Nihon Daishinsai were published in mass media with a wide variety of viewpoints. When the news published in Japanese mass media is compared to that published in the foreign mass media, there seems to be different messages, even when the subject discussed is same. It is difficult to say that the discussion of Higashi Nihon Daishinsai published in Japanese mass media was able to summarize the whole discussion of this topic. The unbalanced circulation of information can be sensed because the things that considered important in Japanese mass media sometimes are not shown in foreign media.

Since the Japanese mass media failed to represent the whole factual discussion of Higashi Nihon Daishinsai, it is necessary also to present a discussion of how this disaster was described in the foreign media. To fully understand this disaster, the discourse presented outside Japan is not less important compared to the discourse presented in Japan. Based on that consideration, this section tries to present the discussion of Higashi Nihon Daishinsai described in mass media and writings outside Japan. As an example, the discussion of Higashi Nihon Daishinsai from Indonesian perspectives is presented as an illustration of how this disaster is perceived from foreign’s perspective. The decision to take the writings and mass media published in Indonesia as an example is based on the convenient access to collect the primary data needed and to interpret them.

Besides, an attempt to illustrate how Higashi Nihon Daishinsai is perceived from outside Japan, i.e., from the Indonesian perspective will help to interpret *Kentoushi*, written by Tawada Yoko, which is an important topic of this research. *Kentoushi* raised prominent issues which need to be discussed in the post-disaster. However, some of those issues are not presented in the discussion of Higashi Nihon Daishinsai outside Japan. The discussion in this section aims to compare the issues raised in Japan with those raised outside Japan. Furthermore, it also tries to show data that will be helpful for the interpretation of *Kentoushi*.

This section tries to explore how Higashi Nihon Daishinsai is being perceived and understood by Indonesia people both who live in Japan and who observed this disaster from Indonesia. It was assumed that an understanding of the knowledge and viewpoint of the Indonesian people could be obtained through reading the writings and mass media’s news published right after the disaster until some period of time latter. To obtain the data needed for this section, the examination of Indonesian newspaper called *Kompas* (in printed form) was conducted. The examination covers the news that

published from March 12, 2011, one day after the disaster, until three months after the disaster, exactly June 11, 2011. Apart from that, an examination of a weekly magazine called *Tempo* (in printed form) for a period of 3 months, started from the March 14-20, 2011 issue to the June 6-12, 2011 issue was also conducted. For the following discussion, when the source of the mass media or writings are mentioned, the publishing year (2011) will not be mentioned to keep it in a concise form.

The observation is conducted only to the news and writings published within the period of 3 months after the disaster. The reason for that limitation is related to the huge amount of news that should be observed, if the period of publication time was previously set. If the observation were conducted for all news and articles related to Higashi Nihon Daishinsai published in *Kompas* and *Tempo*, even years after the disaster, there is a possibility that news related to this topic would still be appearing. Therefore, the scope of data would be too broad. Titles and date of publication of every article related to Higashi Nihon Daishinsai published in *Kompas* and *Tempo* will be documented and attached in the last part of this research. Besides the two sources of data that had been mentioned, the reading of the book titled *Magnitudo 9* written by Tim Fahima Jepang and FLP Jepang was also conducted. The book is a compilation of stories told by some Indonesians who were in Japan when the accident happened. In other words, they directly experienced Higashi Nihon Daishinsai.

In *Kompas*, Higashi Nihon Daishinsai's was the headline and was put on the first page for 9 days in a row, from March 12 until March 20. The first title in the headline was "Jepang Lumpuh Dihantam Gempa Dahsyat" (Japan is Paralyzed being Hit by a Powerful Earthquake), and on the ninth day the headline was "Air, Sayuran, dan Susu Tercemar Radiasi" (Water, Vegetables, and Milk are Contaminated by Radiation). After nine days in a row, the topic was moved to another page. However, the news related to Higashi Nihon Daishinsai was still published regularly in every edition until April 6. After that, the number of news articles related to this topic began decreasing. The news related to Higashi Nihon Daishinsai also appeared in the *Kompas*' international column for 13 days in a row starting from March 12 until March 23 (except for March 13). The number of Higashi Nihon Daishinsai-related news articles found in *Kompas* from March 12 until June 11 is 183. There were 151 articles in March, 24 articles in April, 4 articles in May, and 4 articles in June. In the early post-disaster period, the articles related to Higashi Nihon Daishinsai showed up from 12-17 every day. However, started when Higashi Nihon Daishinsai's topic did not show in the headlines anymore, the number of articles related to this theme was drastically decreased to 1-2 articles each day. It began to disappear but then it reappeared until it was last found on June 11. For *Tempo* weekly magazine, starting with the March 14-20 edition until June 6-12 edition (13 editions) there were a total of 17 articles related to Higashi Nihon Daishinsai, most of them published in its international column.

### 1.2.1 Important Points in News and Writings Related to Higashi Nihon Daishinsai

News and writings related to this disaster came in a variety of themes. The discussion of the content of both sources (*Kompas* and *Tempo*) will be divided into four points. Each point will contain one theme that is considered prominent in these news articles and writings. The four prominent themes are; the compliment to Japan for its disaster's handling process, the news related to Fukushima NPP, the opinion concerning “*ganbaru*” spirit, and the comparison between Japan and Indonesia in handling disasters. Each point will be discussed below.

The first quite prominent point in the news related to Higashi Nihon Daishinsai in Indonesia is a compliment of how fast the Japanese government tried to respond and deal with this disaster. In the early post-disaster, the public trust toward the government was also high. Two hours after the disaster, Prime Minister Kan Naoto declared an emergency situation and immediately arranged the plan of handling this disaster. In one article published in *Kompas* with the title, “Skala Bencana di Luar Perkiraan” (The Scale of the Disaster is Beyond Estimation)<sup>42</sup>, an Indonesian citizen living in Tokyo admitted that He did not feel panic when the earthquake happened, since everyone around him moved orderly and walked out of buildings calmly. He added that He did not worry about leaving children in school since school buildings are considered a safe place when it comes to disasters. Staff working in schools (including teachers) also had been trained in handling earthquakes and children used to have earthquake simulation practice in school. In the article with the title “Upaya Jepang Mengurangi Kerusakan dan Korban Jiwa” (Japan's Effort in Reducing Damage and Casualties)<sup>43</sup>, Japan was praised for its construction of building, since the earthquake with a magnitude of 8,9 (at that time it was said that the magnitude of the earthquake was 8,9, later it was revised to 9,0) did not destroy the buildings. Most of the damaged was caused by the tsunami. In other writings, compliments also were paid to Japanese who did not show even a slight feeling of uncomfot, worry or panic. People queued at supermarkets in the cold of winter in early March. The supermarkets' staff were alerted to set limits on the number of products purchased by customers. Also, they were not allowing the purchase of frozen food since the electricity was shut down and the frozen foods were going to spoil fast (Savitri 2011: 25). Even though the traffic lights were shut down after the disaster, cars moved orderly and neatly (Dewi 2011: 44). Although the electricity, communication, and transportation facilities were cut off, people moved orderly without showing panic.

In *Magnitudo 9*, in one article with the title “Gempa itu Terjadi” (That Earthquake Occurred), the writer stated that the horrifying news circulated in Indonesia caused panic among people who have relatives in Japan. The news gave an impression that the condition in Japan were bad all over the country (Zulmadji 2011: 28). Based on the news and writings that appeared in post-disaster, Indonesia mass media was quite consistent in giving compliments to Japan for its attempt to cope with this

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<sup>42</sup> “Skala Bencana di Luar Perkiraan”, *Kompas*, March 12, 2011, p.10.

<sup>43</sup> “Upaya Jepang Mengurangi Kerusakan dan Korban Jiwa”, *Kompas*, March 12, 2011, p.1.

disaster. Since early in post-disaster until the news related to this disaster almost disappeared in the mass media, the compliments were consistently given to the Japanese who were considered to be tough and to have a strong mind. It was also repeatedly said that there were no riots and no looting followed the disaster. In a similar way, almost all of the writings in *Magnitudo 9* praised the Japanese for its attitude in facing this disaster.<sup>44</sup>

The second point underlined is related to the accident happened in Fukushima NPP. The interesting thing is, in the early news related to Fukushima NPP, the topic was reported only as a small item. There was a sense that this accident was a minor disaster. *Kompas*, on March 12, reported that based on a preliminary report, there was no damage to the NPP caused by the earthquake and tsunami. However, the residents who lived within 2 km from NPP were requested to evacuate from the NPP area.<sup>45</sup> The news related to the Fukushima NPP crisis appeared for the first time on the front page of *Kompas* on 13 March, with the title, “PM Kan: Bencana ini Dahsyat” (PM Kan: This Disaster is Disastrous). It started with an announcement of the explosion that occurred in unit 1 on Saturday, March 20. The radiation-zone which was previously set as 10 km from NPP expanded to 20 km from NPP. Prime Minister Kan announced that the disaster occurred on March 11, 2011 was a major catastrophe that Japan had never before experienced.<sup>46</sup> On the next day, just as reported in *Asahi Shimbun* newspaper, *Kompas* also reported that Chief Cabinet Secretary, Edano Yukio stated that the explosion occurred in unit 1, and there is a possibility that the unit 3 might be in trouble as well. Meanwhile, there was also an indication that unit 2 experienced a leakage. The first indication of the possibility of a nuclear crisis followed a statement from PM Kan. The Prime Minister announced that it was the biggest crisis encountered by Japan over the past 65 years, or after World War II.<sup>47</sup>

*Kompas* mentioned that the day following the explosion happened in unit 1, another explosion occurred in unit 3, while unit 2 experienced a disruption caused by the cooling attempt with seawater. At this point the international world realized that there was a possibility that a nuclear crisis had occurred with a wide range of effects. The foreigners were reportedly leaving Japan, while the US aircrafts carrying aid supplies for the victims were asked to turn around. At this point, it was said that Japan had been hit by three disasters in rapid succession, namely the earthquake, the tsunami, and the

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<sup>44</sup> The compliments appeared in many parts of *Magnitudo 9*, such as “Orang Jepang hebat! Walaupun dalam kondisi darurat, mereka tetap antre dan tidak ada kerusuhan.” (The Japanese are great! Even in an emergency situation, they were still in line and there was no riot) (Savitri 2011: 25) Another expression was, “ Di sebuah persimpangan yang macet parah, mobil-mobil hanya dapat bergerak sekitar satu mobil setiap lampu hijau menyala, namun setiap orang saling memberikan kesempatan kepada yang lain dengan tatapan hangat dan senyum. Saya juga tidak mendengar bunyi klakson selama 10 menit, kecuali satu atau dua kali, itu pun berucap terima kasih karena telah memberikan jalan.” (At the snarled intersection, cars moved so slowly when the light turned green, but each person gave an opportunity for another car to move, with a warm look and a smile. I also did not hear a sound of the horn in 10 minutes, except once or twice, it was also the sign of thanking people for giving them the way) (Dewi 2011: 44).

<sup>45</sup> “Jepang Lumpuh Dihantam Gempa Dahsyat”, *Kompas*, March 12, 2011, p.1.

<sup>46</sup> “PM Kan: Bencana ini Dahsyat”, *Kompas*, March 13, 2011, p.1.

<sup>47</sup> “Pemerintah Berperan Besar”, *Kompas*, March 14, 2011, p.1.

nuclear meltdown.<sup>48</sup> The news on March 16, reported that an explosion occurred in unit 2 of the NPP and the red zone was extended to 30 km from the NPP area.<sup>49</sup> Meanwhile, the news on March 17, noted that a fire broke out in unit 4 causing 180 employees to be evacuated from the location. Also, on March 17, due to the high dose of radiation, the employees had to be evacuated from the NPP area but returned a few hours later. There was no explanation whether the fire eventually could be extinguished or not.<sup>50</sup>

In an article entitled “Nuklir Jepang Lepas Kendali” (Japanese Nuclear power plants are Out of Control) published in *Kompas*, a statement from the electrical company operating Fukushima NPP (TEPCO) was presented for the first time. TEPCO stated that the crisis is something “beyond expectations”. Since the government acted slowly and was no longer considered transparent regarding the crisis situation and was inaccurate in describing the current condition, it started being attacked by the public. Japanese media started to speculate that the current situation was far worse than it had been told. The reactors might have been gravely damaged. However, it was hidden from the public to prevent chaos and panic.

What was reported by *Kompas* after the fact of the melting reactors had been revealed to the public is that while the government kept asking people to remain calm, panic was not only experienced by local people but by the international community as well. Foreigners residing in Japan started to leave, even being asked by their embassies to leave immediately.<sup>51</sup> In the article entitled “Tangkal Radiasi Nuklir, Garam dan Pil Yodium pun Dicari” (To Prevent Nuclear Radiation, Salt and Iodine Pills are Wanted) published on March 18, it was mentioned that neighborhood countries such as China and South Korea started to panic. Therefore, many people went to shops and looked for salt and iodine pills since it was believed such pills could prevent the radiation effects.<sup>52</sup> In another article titled “Eksodus Massal Berlanjut” (Mass Exodus Continues) published on 19 March, it was announced that the government determined to evacuate residents living within 30 km around NPP from the residents. Meanwhile, Researchers from the United States stated that the safe place from Fukushima NPP was 80 km away from the sites.<sup>53</sup>

Based on the observations of news and writings circulated in Indonesia, it was assumed that since the news relating to the NPP crisis appeared, nuclear-related news were intensely exposed in mass media. As time passed by, it was reported that the trust crisis toward the government was growing stronger, the disappointment toward TEPCO was continuing and as a result, the Prime Minister announced his resignation and said that he would step down in August 2011.<sup>54</sup> Additionally, TEPCO

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<sup>48</sup> “Khawatirkan Ledakan Nuklir”, *Kompas*, March 15, 2011, p.1.

<sup>49</sup> “Warga Dilarang Keluar Rumah”, *Kompas*, March 16, 2011, p.1.

<sup>50</sup> “Nuklir Jepang Lepas Kendali”, *Kompas*, March 17, 2011, p.1.

<sup>51</sup> “Khawatirkan Ledakan Nuklir”, *Kompas*, March 15, 2011, p.1.

<sup>52</sup> “Tangkal Radiasi Nuklir, Garam dan Pil Yodium pun Dicari”, *Kompas*, March 18, 2011, p.1.

<sup>53</sup> “Eksodus Massal Berlanjut”, *Kompas*, March 19, 2011, p.9.

<sup>54</sup> “PM Jepang Mundur Agustus”, *Kompas*, June 6, 2011, p.10.

was being asked to pay for the loss caused by the triple nuclear meltdown in Fukushima.<sup>55</sup> Under Prime Minister Kan's command, the government was criticized for its slow response in handling this disaster.<sup>56</sup>

The news related to Fukushima's nuclear accident likely triggered the discussion related to the nuclear power plants in Indonesia. At that time, Indonesia was planning to build nuclear power plants in Bangka Belitung in order to supply 4-5% of electricity to Java, Madura, and Bali islands. In an article entitled "PLTN Indikasi Kuat Pengaruh Negara Kaya" (NPP Strongly Indicated as an Influence of Wealthy Nations), published in the column of Science and Technology of Kompas, 15 March, it was stated that NPP is not the best solution to solve the energy crisis. NPP use was also hard to be implemented because Indonesia was still depending on human resources from outside.<sup>57</sup> A different opinion was written in an article published in the opinion column of Kompas (17 March) entitled "Pesan dari PLTN Fukushima" (Message from the Fukushima NPP). It was stated that before the occurrence of a nuclear crisis in Fukushima, nuclear energy was being considered as a source for electricity because of its economic advantages. Nuclear energy was believed to help in reducing global warming. It was described how in the previous year, a representative from Japan's nuclear energy company came and gave a convincing presentation explaining how the NPP would be resistant to earthquakes. However, unexpectedly a year later, Japan's worst NPP's accident happened in Fukushima. In this article, it seems that the writer has a positive attitude toward NPP, where he convinced that the experts would try to be innovative and find ways to make the NPP resistant to earthquakes. However, the cost of research and experimentation would be increase, causing the economic advantages of nuclear energy to disappear.<sup>58</sup> In one of the article entitled "Indonesia Bebas Radiasi" (Indonesia is Free from Radiation) published June 17, it was mentioned that what was happened to Fukushima should end the debate relating to the importance of building nuclear power plants in Indonesia, since the answer is clear: based on the long term consideration, it is still not possible to build NPP in Indonesia.<sup>59</sup>

Correlated with the nuclear contamination issue, the radiation issue in Japan was also feared by some people in Indonesia. They were afraid that the contamination caused by radiation would reach Indonesia. As a result of that fear, the article entitled "Indonesia Relatif Aman dari Radiasi" (Indonesia Relatively Safe from Radiation) published in Kompas, March 16, gave a scientific explanation that there was a low possibility that the radiation would reach Indonesia. This article also dismissed the issue of "acid rain" which possibly could fall down following the radiation leaks. It was explained that instead of being triggered by nuclear radiation, the possibility of acid rain caused by coal combustion

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<sup>55</sup> "Jepang Perintahkan TEPCO Bayar Ganti Rugi", *Kompas*, April 16, 2011, p.8.

<sup>56</sup> "Posisi PM Jepang Rawan", *Kompas*, June 4, 2011, p.6.

<sup>57</sup> "PLTN Indikasi Kuat Pengaruh Negara Kaya", *Kompas*, March 15, 2011, p.13.

<sup>58</sup> "Pesan dari PLTN Fukushima", *Kompas*, March 17, 2011, p.6.

<sup>59</sup> "Indonesia Bebas Radiasi", *Kompas*, March 17, 2011, p.15.

was far higher.<sup>60</sup> There is one more article that captured attention, with the title, “Awat, Banyak Serangan Informasi Bohong” (Beware, Too Many Hoax Information) published in *Kompas* on March 16. The issue raised here was a couple of hours after the news of the Fukushima nuclear accident spread in public, there was information that urged people in Indonesia not to leave home for certain period of time. The reason was that the radiation dust was predicted to reach Indonesia within less than 24 hours. That information was written in convincing English. However, it contains an ambiguous explanation. It is assumed that the emergence of this kind of information was a result caused by the era this accident happened.<sup>61</sup> Since Higashi Nihon Daishinsai occurred in the time when public information is accessible to everyone, the information related to this disaster spread all over the world in a short period of time. People observe, interpret, and sometimes they are absorbed in the information without digesting it carefully. People have different abilities to perceive new information, sometimes they interpret it only in the way that they like. In the end, the “trueness” of information is not an important aspect for some people. Another questionable piece of information in post-disaster is a suggestion to bring an umbrella or raincoat when leaving home due to the fear that acid rain might be falling, and a suggestion to apply betadine to the neck since it is believed that it would protect the thyroid gland located in the neck which is considered to be the most vulnerable part to nuclear radiation.

Some articles, mainly published in *Kompas*, mentioned that since the Japanese government was too focused on handling nuclear accidents, the victims of the earthquake and tsunami were neglected. The relief goods came slowly because of lack of fuel. However, the victims were strong and resilient and said that they understood the difficulties faced by the government.<sup>62</sup> Based on the observation of news articles and writings related to Higashi Nihon Daishinsai in Indonesia, there is an assumption that the discussions in these media are put forward the emotional aspect of the articles and writings. These news and writings presented the suffering experienced by the victims and the miraculous stories where the victims have survived the earthquake and tsunami. These themes are also wrapped with astounding titles<sup>63</sup>.

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<sup>60</sup> “Indonesia Relatif Aman dari Radiasi”, *Kompas*, March 16, 2011, p.1.

<sup>61</sup> “Awat, Banyak Serangan Informasi Bohong”, *Kompas*, March 16, 2011, p.15.

<sup>62</sup> “Distribusi Bantuan Sulit”, *Kompas*, March 20, 2011, p.2.

<sup>63</sup> The examples of emotional and miraculous titles, quoted from *Kompas*, *Tempo*, and *Magnitudo 9* are as follows. For articles published in *Kompas*, “Keajaiban, Mereka Bisa Selamat dari Malapetaka”(Miracle, They can Survive from the Disaster) (14 March), “Hancur Digulung “Tembok Hitam Menderu””(Crushed Swallowed by “Roaring Black Wall”) (14 March), “Ketangguhan Jepang Memukau Dunia”(Japan’s Toughness Amazes the World) (16 March), “Kisah Para Korban” (Story of the Victims)(16 March), “Orang Jepang itu Masih Tersenyum” (That Japanese is still Smiling) (17 March), “Tsunami itu Datang Sebelum Sakura Mekar” (Tsunami Came before Sakura is Blooming) (18 March), “Suara yang Memanggil-manggil itu Lenyap”(The Voices that Kept Calling have Vanished) (18 March), “Kebersamaan yang Menguatkan Mereka” (Togetherness that Keep Them Strong) (19 March), “Bencana Menguatkan Rakyat Jepang”(Disaster Strengthens Japanese People) (21 March), “Hidup, Terkubur Sembilan Hari” (Alive, Buried for Nine Days) (21 March), “Apakah Kita Sekuat Jepang”(Are We as Strong as Japan) (23 March). From *Magnitudo 9*, “Jepang yang Dicinta dan Disayang” (The Dearest and Beloved Japan) and “Bangsa Yang Selalu Belajar”(The Nation that always Learns). Meanwhile for *Tempo* is, “Neraka Jumat Sore”(The Hell of Friday Afternoon).

The coverage of disaster-related news in Indonesia usually targets the emotional aspect of the audience. In Indonesia, when disaster occurs, normally television is full of sad songs and crying faces of the victims. This is followed by the advertisements presenting bank account numbers appointed for donation (it was mentioned in “Semangat “Gambaru” ” (The Spirit of Gambaru) published in Kompas, 18 March<sup>64</sup> and “Indonesia (Juga) Bisa” (Indonesia (also) Can) in *Magnitudo* 9). Meanwhile, in Japan, showing the spirit to revive is more important than showing sadness. The feeling to revive or to recover is represented in the word “*ganbaru*”.

The topic of “*ganbaru*” was mentioned and discussed in two articles entitled “Bencana dan Karakter Bangsa” (Disaster and The Character of Nation)<sup>65</sup> and “Semangat “Gambaru”” (The Spirit of Gambaru), both published in Kompas, 18 March. The topic also appeared in “Bulan Peralihan, Bulan Perjuangan” (The Transitional Month, The Month of Struggle) and “Save Japan Project” in *Magnitudo* 9. Many people wondered, where exactly the “*ganbaru*” spirit originated from and how exactly that resilient mindset admired by many people was formed. In the article “Bencana dan Karakter Bangsa” (Disaster and The Character of Nation), the contributor refers to a statement made by a college student who learned Japanese language and culture. The student shared how she perceived the character of the Japanese people. She said that she believed what made Japanese strong in facing this disaster is the spirit of “*ganbaru*”. The word itself means “to survive” and “to try hard”. The word contains two elements, “hard” and “tough”, which implies people have to be hard and tough when facing problems. Meanwhile, in an article entitled “Bencana Menguatkan Bangsa Jepang” (The Disaster Strengthened the Japanese People) published in Kompas, 21 March, an expert at Chiba University, Josaphat Tetuko Sri Sumantyo added that Japan, which is geologically unstable and poor in natural resources acquired its national character always under fretful conditions. They always try to be innovative and create something new to be ready to face challenges ahead. The key to this spirit is a sense of “togetherness”.<sup>66</sup> Meanwhile, in “Bangsa Jepang, Bangsa Pembelajar” (The Japanese Nation, The Learner Nation) published in Kompas, 22 March, Bambang Rudyanto, a professor in the Faculty of Economics and Business at Wako University said that the character of Japanese society is renewed by daily learning experiences and by careful attention to the needs of the community. They stick to the traditional values, for example, in *Bushido* they are taught how to have a strong mentality. Another term that is also used is “*gaman zuyoi*”, it means to be resilient when encountered by problems. That is the reason why they were strong in facing this disaster.<sup>67</sup>

Moving to the fourth point, many people have asked what would happen if a strong earthquake and tsunami, similar to that which struck Japan, struck Indonesia. Some people compared the Higashi Nihon Daishinsai with the Sumatra earthquake in 2004. The scale of the earthquakes is

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<sup>64</sup> “Semangat “Gambaru””, *Kompas*, March 18, 2011, p.6.

<sup>65</sup> “Bencana dan Karakter Bangsa”, *Kompas*, March 18, 2011, p.6.

<sup>66</sup> “Bencana Menguatkan Bangsa Jepang”, *Kompas*, March 21, 2011, p.1.

<sup>67</sup> “Bangsa Jepang, Bangsa Pembelajar”, *Kompas*, March 22, 2011, p.1.



almost same, magnitude 9,1 to 9,3 and the height of the tsunamis are also relatively the same, around 15-30 meters. However, the death toll was allegedly much higher on Indonesian side, which was around 170.000 (plus 250.000 in 13 other countries). This information was taken from Kompas in the article with the title “Berpacu dengan Kecepatan Tsunami” (Race against the Speed of Tsunami), published on 12 March.<sup>68</sup>

In another article written in *Magnitudo 9* entitled “Indonesia (Juga) Bisa” (Indonesia (Also) Can), the contributor presented a comparison between Indonesia and Japan in dealing with disasters. Meanwhile, in “Jepang, Simpati, dan Pembelajaran” (Japan, Sympathy, and Lesson Learned) published in Kompas, 14 March, the things that need to be learned from Japan as a similar country that is periodically struck by earthquakes are highlighted.<sup>69</sup> More specifically, in “Bangsa Jepang, Bangsa Pembelajar” (The Japanese Nation, The Learner Nation) published in Kompas, 22 March, underlined the differences between Indonesia and Japan when the earthquake, tsunami, and volcanic eruption are occurred in the last 6 years in Indonesia. It is clear that Indonesia was not ready to handle such disasters. This was shown in the infrastructure, the chaos in the post-disaster management, and the rampant looting that had happened.<sup>70</sup>

### **1.2.2 Different Sides of the Higashi Nihon Daishinsai’s Discourse in Indonesia**

Based on the four points that have been discussed in the previous section, there was an attempt to show different sides of the discussion that had been presented. By looking at the discussion that had been presented, it seems safe to say that there are several more points that need to be discussed from different perspectives. Yet here three major points that will be discussed from different perspectives. These three points, collected from the four points that had been mentioned above are: the comparison between Indonesia and Japan in handling the disaster, the “*ganbaru*” spirit which had been repeatedly mentioned in the media, and the fact that there was no looting in Japan during the post-disaster period.

For the first point, relating to the comparison between Indonesia and Japan, it is assumed that the comparison of one country to another when facing problems is unavoidable. However, the comparison of values in one country with those in another country cannot be categorized as black and white. It cannot be focused only on which value is correct and which value is not. The comparison also cannot be done without understanding the background, the conditions, and the cultures of the two countries that are compared. One more important thing to be remembered is, Japan which was a prominent country at that time, is a nation formed by various values and a synergized product of its people also. What has appeared in front of the public was not built in a short period of time. Based on the comparison shown in Indonesian mass media, there is a tendency to assume that disaster

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<sup>68</sup> “Berpacu dengan Kecepatan Tsunami”, *Kompas*, March 12, 2011, p.14.

<sup>69</sup> “Jepang, Simpati, dan Pembelajaran”, *Kompas*, March 14, 2011, p.6.

<sup>70</sup> “Bangsa Jepang, Bangsa Pembelajar”, *Kompas*, March 22, 2011, p.1.

management in Japan is a lot better than that in Indonesia when disasters occurred. What is not underlined in news circulated in Indonesian mass media was, Japan also had difficulties in dealing with the long-term effects of this disaster. In news circulated in Indonesia, there is an assumption that Japan had successfully recovered from the nuclear crisis. What is not raised in Indonesian mass media is the fact that the problems related to nuclear accidents have been rolling for years. Even now (2019) the nuclear disaster-related problems, such as decontamination and evacuation, are not solved yet.

The second point, “*ganbaru*” spirit which had been repeatedly mentioned in the Indonesia mass media, refers to the undeniable fact that Japan made its best efforts to overcome the domestic crisis caused by this series of disasters. The actions attempted by the government and many people deserve appreciation, and it is not surprising that “*ganbaru*” to be displayed in national and international’s newspapers, such as one in Indonesia. However, behind the term of “*ganbaru*” which had been echoed everywhere, behind the suggestion to keep “strong” and “resilient” for recovery, there is a possibility that “*ganbaru*” was intentionally highlighted to divert people from the real risk posed by nuclear radiation. In accordance with the information contained in news published in Indonesia, some important details of the nuclear accident had not been conveyed, either by the government or by TEPCO. The issues of the food radiation and the safe zone were presented without further confirmation from the government or TEPCO. One thing that is less likely to be highlighted in Indonesia news is, the topic of nuclear energy is, without a doubt, a very sensitive topic in Japan. Therefore, assuming that there is a possibility to divert public minds from radiation issues is logical.

In post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai, the image of Japan in the international world, or at least in Indonesia, is a country with extraordinary strength and toughness. Also, the country had a plan for disaster management. Based on an attempt to understand both of the discussions related to Higashi Nihon Daishinsai in Japan and in outside Japan, it is important to consider Japan as a normal country, with all of its problems as well as its difficulties and obstacles. The assumption that this country dealing with the disaster in perfect way is an illogical assumption. Some articles in Indonesian mass media mentioned that Japanese people have a high degree of trust in the government, because they believed the government would handle the nuclear crisis well. One article which mentioned it is “Apakah Kita Sekuat Jepang” (Are We as Strong as Japan), published in Kompas, 23 March.<sup>71</sup> In the same article, it is also mentioned that a few days after the nuclear crisis, public trust toward the government was declining. However, it was asserted that the declining of trust was caused by the rumors coming from outside Japan. When the government set the zone safe from radiation as 30 km away from the NPP site, American experts mentioned that the real zone safe from the radiation was 80 km away from NPP site. It caused confusion among public, and it was assumed that public’s trust toward the Japanese government was declining because the government did not provide clear information. Therefore, it was concluded that public trust had decreased due to the rumors from outside.

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<sup>71</sup> “Apakah Kita Sekuat Jepang”, *Kompas*, March 23, 2011, p.6.

However, that conclusion is still debatable. Since there is a possibility that the trust issue happened because of another reason, the causes that were not mentioned in the public. There is a possibility that the trust issue happened because of unpublished internal issues.

Next, the third point which is also the last point is related to the testimony that there was no looting in Japan during the post-disaster period. In the early post-disaster, praise and compliments came from many places, since it was believed that no reprehensible actions such as looting and theft took place, despite the post-disaster crisis. However, when the early post-disaster period passed, an article appeared in Kompas with the title “Pencurian dan Penjarahan Marak” (The Theft and Looting are Rampant) published on 23 March. It was explained that theft and looting occurred in the disaster areas, on relatively small scales.<sup>72</sup> The news circulated in Indonesia led the public opinion to believe that what had happened just small-scale theft and looting. Meanwhile, in the Japanese media, there was news announcing that the situation was worse than what had been published in Indonesia. One news item mentioned that the head of a volunteer group addressed the relief goods to his personal address. Therefore, he could manage the distribution of those items as well as use them for his own benefits<sup>73</sup>.

Three points that had been discussed before is an attempt to present the description that the post-disaster problems appeared in Japan are common to be found in the middle of society that had just been hit by major disasters. Therefore, at the end of this section, it is considered necessary to look at every event objectively and understand that what was appeared in front of the public was not a picture of the whole event. What is depicted in the public sometimes depends on the interests behind it. In accordance with what has been discussed in the previous paragraphs, the discussion of Higashi Nihon Daishinsai in Japan could not represent all the discussion related to Higashi Nihon Daishinsai. On the other hand, the discussion of Higashi Nihon Daishinsai outside Japan cannot stand alone and push aside the discussion of Higashi Nihon Daishinsai inside Japan. There are different understandings and different point of views of this disaster. The different result is obtained from the observation of news articles published in Indonesia and news articles published in Japan. The surprising fact is that in the news published in Japan and in the journals written by the experts in Japan, there were many topics that have not presented in Indonesian media. Some of those topics are; the stress experienced by evacuees, the case of commit suicide in elderlies due to the chronic stress, the theft and looting, and even the rape cases due to stress. The problems occurred because the victims encountered by many unfortunate situations. They lost their family and relatives, they had no access to electricity and clean

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<sup>72</sup> “Pencurian dan Penjarahan Marak”, *Kompas*, March 23, 2011, p.8.

<sup>73</sup> Kawamura (2013: 28) in his discussion on Ogino Anna’s book with the title 『大震災 欲と仁義』 (*Daishinsai Yoku to Jingi*) mentioned that in one part of her book, Ogino raised the issue of the misuse of relief goods by irresponsible people. A person allegedly addressed those relief goods to his/her personal address. Therefore, the donations from all over the country arrived in his/her residence. He/she then managed the distribution and claimed he/she had a right over those goods.

water, they did not get enough food, they had no proper place to live, there was no explanation of when they were able to go back home, and there was also no clarity who would be responsible for this disaster. The combination of unfavorable things has a bad impact on human's mental condition. The outsiders who flatter Japan for its extraordinary disaster management may give a big pressure on this country to perform perfectly in front of the world.

The discussion of the Higashi Nihon Daishinsai from Indonesian's point of view is assumed to provide an overview of how people outside Japan tried to interpret this disaster. The discussion in this section is also expected to be helpful in interpreting *Kentoushi* literary work. *Kentoushi* presents some prominent post-disaster opinions which are not presented in the discussion of this disaster by writer outside Japan. *Kentoushi* will be discussed in depth in chapter 4 of this research.

## CHAPTER II

### JAPANESE LITERATURE POST-HIGASHI NIHON DAISHINSAI

#### 2.1 Study of Literary Works Published after Higashi Nihon Daishinsai

Before going deep into the discussion of post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai's literary works, for just a reminder, Japan is one of the countries in the world which is frequently hit by earthquakes. It was documented that before the arrival of 2011's Touhoku earthquake (one of three disasters in Higashi Nihon Daishinsai), another strong earthquake hit Japan on September 1, 1923, precisely in the Kantou region. It caused an extensive destruction, mainly in the capital city of Tokyo and its surrounding areas. At that time, the earthquake struck in midday, precisely at the lunch hour. The earthquake was then followed by tsunami and firestorms which caused massive fires. The firestorms swept and burnt buildings and people within Tokyo and Yokohama regions. The death toll at that time was estimated at 140,000, including 44,000 people who had looked for a safe place in the Sumida river, but were tragically swept away by the expanding fires.<sup>74</sup> The earthquake completely devastated the capital city of Japan and it left trauma in the minds of many people. The disaster was later known as *Kantou Daishinsai* or The Great Kantou Earthquake.

72 years after the Great Kantou Earthquake, another strong earthquake hit the Hanshin region (Osaka and Kobe) on January 17, 1995. The casualties were recorded as 4,571 (recorded on December 22, 2005), while the injured victims numbered 14,678 (recorded on January 11, 2000). The victims who lost their homes and lived in temporary shelters were estimated to be 222,127.<sup>75</sup> This earthquake, later known by *Hanshin Awaji Daishinsai* or The Great Hanshin Earthquake was the strongest earthquake that hit Japan after The Great Kantou Earthquake (Somerville 1995: 49).

Higashi Nihon Daishinsai and two other disasters, Kantou Daishinsai and Hanshin Awaji Daishinsai are the three strongest earthquakes that hit Japan in the past 100 years. The destruction caused by these disasters was not only limited to the physical damage, it was also the cause of mental harm and trauma to the victims as well as the society. Besides physically and mentally damaging, natural disasters and man-made disasters always leave a question after it took place; people began to question how that disaster would have to be interpreted. A situation filled with trauma and confusion often trigger writers to examine the facts and give their responses to the phenomena that took place. In a post-disaster situation, writers are required to help in interpreting the disaster. Iida Ichishi once stated that writers are a kind of people who could not keep quiet and pretend that they are not affected

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<sup>74</sup> Joshua Hammer, "The Great Japan Earthquake of 1923", *Smithsonian Magazine*, May, 2011. <<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/the-great-japan-earthquake-of-1923-1764539/>> [accessed December 14, 2019].

<sup>75</sup> "The Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake Statistics and Restoration Progress", *City of Kobe*, January 1, 2009. <<https://www.city.kobe.lg.jp/safety/hanshinawaji/revival/promote/img/january.2009.pdf>> [accessed December 14, 2019].

by situations (Iida 2017: 9). Therefore, it is not a surprise that the writers appeared with the works that reflecting their thought about the disaster. In the post-Hanshin Awaji Daishinsai, Murakami Haruki came up as a representative writer who published his short stories collection with the title *Kami no Kodomotachi wa Mina Odoru* (All God's Children Can Dance)<sup>76</sup> in 2000 or five years after the disaster passed. In addition to Murakami Haruki, many other writers wrote about the disaster. However, post-Hanshin Awaji Daishinsai's literary works which representing the writers' thoughts about this disaster, began to emerge only after three years had passed. An academician, Dejima Yukiko mentioned that one of the reasons for these literary works to come late was that the writers needed more time to give an interpretation to this disaster (Dejima 2016: 94).<sup>77</sup>

In post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai, many writers consciously realized that they had a role to play in front of the public, conveying their opinions or responses regarding this disaster. In the early post-disaster, both the writers as well as the public were filled with questions regarding how to express the disaster in words. What kind of word is appropriate to be expressed and how this disaster has to be understood. Fujita mentioned that there was a feeling of inadequacy in people's minds when they tried to understand the post-disaster situation. Therefore people wanted to know how other people besides themselves perceived the situation. One way to answer the curiosity is through the reading of literary works, since literary works provide what people want to know through the "indirectness" (*kansetsuteki*) presented by them. Fujita assumed that people know how to understand the world through the "indirectness" presented by literary works (Fujita 2017: 26). Meanwhile, related to the same situation, Kimura stated that in a confusing and uncertain post-disaster situation, the work of *Houjouki*, written by Kamo no Choumei in 1212 was reappeared in the middle of public's confusion. *Houjouki* was a literary work describing a series of disaster, mainly focused on the strong earthquake in Kyoto in 1185. The public hoped that this work would give enlightenment to recover from the disaster (Kimura 2013: 62). Nevertheless, there were some questions regarding the role of *Houjouki* in the post-disaster recovery. Even though Higashi Nihon Daishinsai was a series of disasters triggered by an earthquake, the main incident of this disaster was not centered on the earthquake itself. Besides the earthquake and tsunami, there was a nuclear accident in Fukushima nuclear power plants. Instead of calling it as a "natural disaster" or *tensai*, it is more suitable to be called a "human-made disaster" or *jinsai* (Kimura 2013: 17).

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<sup>76</sup> 『神の子どもたちはみな踊る』 (*Kami no Kodomotachi wa Mina Odoru*) is a short story collection written by Murakami Haruki and published in 2000. It contains six short stories, where the main characters are directly influenced by Hanshin Awaji Daishinsai's disaster. Besides Hanshin Awaji Daishinsai, this collection also discusses the incident of sarin gas attack which was happened in 1995.

<sup>77</sup> Dejima in P.Karan and Suganuma mentioned that *Sora wo Nakushita Hi* written by Iwahashi Masami, and published in 1996, was the first literary response to the Hanshin Awaji Daishinsai's disaster. Iwahashi stated that after experiencing Hanshin Awaji Daishinsai, she realized that she was bounded by literary activities. The consciousness that disasters lead the writers to see something clearly and give them the power to write is in line with what had been said Yokomitsu Riichi in post-Kantou Daishinsai. However, it took three years for the writers to sublime their experiences into the literary works (Dejima 2016: 93-94).

The earthquake coupled with the tsunami which then triggered the nuclear-related accident is something new in the history of disasters in Japan. No similar disasters occurred in the past. Therefore no documentation could be used to deal with Higashi Nihon Daishinsai. The missing references led to the appearance of a new way of interpreting this disaster, which then led to the emergence of a new stream in literature. The new stream was assumed to have a strong correlation with the nuclear energy discourse, mainly the use of nuclear energy. The reason for that was because the incident of Fukushima NPP was a dominant theme in this disaster. Apart from its connection to the theme of the use of nuclear energy, the new stream was assumed to have a correlation with other themes that reappeared in post-disaster. Flashback to the disaster that happened on March 11, 2011 itself, the physical damage coupled with the long crisis gave certain effects to the Japanese society. The aftereffect of this disaster started to touch various aspects of human lives, such as the social aspect, the economic aspect, and even the psychological aspect. Among all of the aspects affected by this disaster, literature is one of them. In post-disaster, initially the Japanese writers thought that there was no time for literature, since Japan was busy recovering from this disaster. However, the writers started to give their responses in their own way. Just as it has been discussed before, social media perceived this disaster as a new form of disaster, since it happened at a time when social media exerted an important influence in human's lives. In the case of Higashi Nihon Daishinsai, social media's role was to convey the things related to this disaster to the world. Social media became the main source of information in the aftermath of this disaster. It summarized the responses as well as provided two-way communication regarding this disaster. The role of social media was not merely as a source of information but it also was a mediator for the distribution of relief goods. It was also used as a device for writers to express their responses or feelings regarding this disaster. One of the writers who took advantage of social media as a tool to express his thought is Wago Ryouichi, a poet based in Fukushima. In the early post-disaster, he published his collection of short poems through Twitter. Wago named the collection of his poems as *Shi no Tsubute* (Pebbles of Poetry) (Numano 2012: 2).<sup>78</sup>

As an initial description of the literary works published in post-disaster, there are two novels that widely mentioned in the post-disaster literary study. These two works, considered by many as representative works in the initial post-disaster period are *Umatachi yo, Soredemo Hikari wa Muku de* written by Furukawa Hideo and *Koisuru Genpatsu* written by Takahashi Genichirou. Furukawa Hideo visited Fukushima shortly after the disaster and he witnessed the destruction brought by the disaster with his own eyes. Based on his experience, Furukawa wrote a novel which is actually a mix of reality and fiction. Unlike Furukawa, Takahashi chose to illustrate the post-disaster situation in surrealist style.

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<sup>78</sup> Numano mentioned that right after the disaster, the poets were shown up and responded with clear and sharp words. Wago Ryouichi is a poet known for his difficult words and expressions in his poems. However, after the disaster he changed his expressions to be blunt. He published his works through Twitter and it gained a lot of attention. These works were difficult to be categorized as conventional 'poem', however he was able to move the readers because of his honesty (Numano 2012: 2).

*Koisuru Genpatsu* tells a story about a director of porn movies who was ordered to make a film for funding post-disaster's reconstruction (Numano 2012: 2).<sup>79</sup> The two novels will be discussed in the next section, along with other post-disaster literary works.

Correlated to the literary world, even though not responses in the form of literary works, some well-known Japanese writers expressed their opinions as well as criticisms regarding the Higashi Nihon Daishinsai, especially the nuclear accident. What they revealed touched the theme related to the use of nuclear energy for efficiency and economic profit. Two prominent authors whose opinions are also quite prominent in post-disaster are Oe Kenzaburo and Murakami Haruki. Oe Kenzaburo was a Nobel Prize winner in literature in 1994, while Murakami Haruki was also a candidate for the prize. In an article entitled "History Repeats" published in *The New Yorker* on March 28, 2011, Oe opened that the Fukushima accident was clear evidence of the risks brought by the use of nuclear energy. He added that along with the Fukushima incident, Japan had entered a new period, and the lesson to be learned was to not repeat the same mistakes. Oe expressed his hope for the Fukushima accident to be the tool to 'reconnect' with the victims of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. He also hoped this disaster would end an illusion of the benefit and efficiency brought by nuclear facilities. For Oe, the using and the building of nuclear facilities are forms of betrayal to the victims of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.<sup>80</sup> In line with Oe's opinion, in his speech, Murakami also mentioned the accident that happened in Fukushima while he was accepting the Catalonia International Prize in Barcelona in June 2012. He stated that Fukushima nuclear power plant incident was the second nuclear-related tragedy in Japan, after Hiroshima and Nagasaki. However, there was a difference in the Fukushima incident, which is no one dropped the bomb. In other words, the Japanese became the "perpetrator" of this incident. Murakami emphasized that the tragedy that happened in World War II was already forgotten, replaced by the word "efficiency". Murakami underlined the fact that people blamed electrical companies and government, when in fact they have to blame themselves for choosing "efficiency" and

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<sup>79</sup> Numano said that many considered the writing style presented in *Koisuru Genpatsu* is impolite and disrespectful. However, Numano added that Takahashi Genichirou deserves credit for not changing his literary style in post-disaster. Although it had been said that Higashi Nihon Daishinsai "opening and presenting the things that were previously hidden in Japanese society", certain taboos still persisted. Takahashi wanted to beat that taboo in his novel. (Numano 2012: 2).

<sup>80</sup> Oe divided Japan's historical period into three categories of people. The first category were people who passed away in the incident of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the second category was people who had exposed by radiation in Bikini Atoll accident in 1954, and the third category was people who became the victims of nuclear facilities. The Higashi Nihon Daishinsai itself represented two phenomena, the first one is how powerless Japan is in front of the earthquakes, and the second is how the risk posed by nuclear energy is presented. The first phenomenon is a reality which Japan had to deal with from long time ago, while the second one is more destructive than earthquake and tsunami since it was the result of human works. Japan should not recognize nuclear energy as a productivity scheme and the case of Hiroshima should not be regarded as a recipe for national growth. The Hiroshima accident has to be embedded in human memories since it was worse than a natural disaster because it was a result of human action (Kenzaburo Oe, "History Repeats", *The New Yorker*, March 21, 2011. < <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2011/03/28/history-repeats> > [accessed December 14, 2019]).



“convenience” over “safety”.<sup>81</sup> The statements by these authors can be interpreted as their firm belief that the nuclear incident that happened in Fukushima was entirely the result of a human crime, and it was triggered by too many glorifications of efficiency and productivity.

The statements by Oe and Murakami are representing some of the writers’ statements in post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai. These statements show and indicate that there is a dilemma faced by Japanese society, and it involves “the trauma of nuclear power” and “the needs for efficiency”. The dilemma then in line with what had been revealed by Kimura, in correlation with the incidents of Fukushima, Japan had experienced the darkest tragedy of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. A couple years later, the country also experienced the incident of Daigo Fukuryuu Maru.<sup>82</sup> It was then questioned, why Japan decided to use nuclear energy after all of the tragedies that happened in the past. The nuclear accident in Fukushima was something unsurprising, since at the bottom of Japanese people’s hearts, they already knew that this kind of incident would likely happen soon or later. Kimura added that there are guilts in the heart of people, since they have understood the consequences of using nuclear energy, yet they still prefer to use it. Kimura has an assumption that this guilt then manifested in the forms of literature (Kimura 2013: 64-65).

Higashi Nihon Daishinsai seemed to trigger the sensitive issue concerning nuclear energy and to bring it to the surface. Public awareness of the effects brought by the use of nuclear energy had long been repressed under the campaign of the safety of nuclear energy, but began to reappear after the disaster. Some anti-nuclear groups were accused of taking advantage of the situation by voicing their opinions against the use of nuclear energy. The nuclear energy-related issues that have been spread widely then were also raised in literary world. Since the theme concerning nuclear energy is considered taboo in the society, not many people have a privilege to talk about it. However, literature is an exception, it describes the things that are considered taboo, since literature is a product of imagination. Even though literature is a product of imagination, it still cannot be separated from facts and truth. Literature might be considered as a fiction, yet it has an essence of truth (Ajidarma 1997: 47).

Going back to the discussion of literature in post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai, before discussing the literary works that represented themes in post-disaster, it is necessary to present a brief discussion that is useful in imagining how the post-disaster literature is presented. Kimura described

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<sup>81</sup> In his speech, Murakami introduced a belief which is presumed to be correlated with disasters called 無常(*mujou*) which means “nothing lasts forever”. The acceptance of “nothing lasts forever” concept is a sign of surrender. Murakami asserted that in Japanese minds, disasters have been accepted as something unavoidable. He also stressed that Fukushima NPP is strongly correlated with Japanese ethics and norms. The ethics and norms had been forgotten, replaced by the word “efficiency”, therefore people who doubt the benefits brought by nuclear power plants are labeled as “unrealistic dreamers”. The operation of nuclear power plants is the symbol of Japanese defeat against ethics and norms (Haruki Murakami, “Speaking as an Unrealistic Dreamer”, *The Asia Pacific Journal*, July 19, 2011. < <https://apjif.org/2011/9/29/Murakami-Haruki/3571/article.html>> [accessed December 14, 2019]).

<sup>82</sup> Daigo Fukuryuu Maru was a Japanese tuna fishing boat that was exposed by nuclear radiation from American’s nuclear weapon test at Bikini Atoll on March 1, 1954.

a post-disaster literary work as a kind of work that has been reshaped to reawakening the era. The post-disaster literary works are born as a result of a difficult situation, hence it called “post-disaster literature”. The works with the label “disaster literature” are fighting against pressures and censors. Also, they are presenting the disaster theme thoroughly and deeply (Kimura 2013: 235-236). Furthermore, Iida Ichishi suggested that “post-disaster literature” or “*shinsaigo bungaku*” not only produced the works regarding the theme of tsunami and Fukushima accident on a small scale. It also produced the works which cover the issues of political conditions and psychological trauma in post-disaster situations (Iida 2017: 7). What was stated by Iida then broadened the description of post-disaster literature, since previously it was assumed that post-disaster literary works only covered the theme related to the disaster. That explained why some works that seem to have no correlation with Higashi Nihon Daishinsai are considered as post-disaster literature.

Some of the literary works that appeared in post-disaster will be discussed here. Some works mentioned the disasters and some works did not mention the disaster at all. One of the works which is considered as the first response toward Higashi Nihon Daishinsai (other than *Umatachi yo, Soredemo Hikari wa Muku de* and *Koisuru Genpatsu* which were previously mentioned) is *Kamisama 2011* written by Kawakami Hiromi. This work was previously appeared in Gunzou magazine in June 2011, later it was published in the form of book in September 2011. *Kamisama 2011* tells a story about the main character and a bear who were enjoying their stroll along a river. This story is filled with themes related to nuclear energy. It is illustrated in the form of a society that has received nuclear radiation as a part of everyday’s life. This work is the first that openly discussed nuclear energy-related themes in the early post-disaster. Another work that was published in the early post-disaster, as previously mentioned is *Umatachi yo, Soredemo Hikari wa Muku de*. This work was written by Furukawa Hideo, who is a writer born in Fukushima. The work was previously published in Shinchou magazine, in July 2011. The work was then published in the form of book in the same month. Broadly speaking, *Umatachi yo, Soredemo Hikari wa Muku de* tells a story about reaction and confusion during the post-disaster period accompanied by comparisons of ‘before’ and ‘after’ the disaster. Furukawa visited the disaster area in post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai. Therefore, what he wrote was as close to the documentation work as to the fiction work. The next literary work, which also had been mentioned before is *Koisuru Genpatsu* written by Takahashi Genichirou. This work had appeared in Gunzou magazine, in November 2011 before being published by Kodansha in the form of book also in November 2011. It tells about the project of making a pornographic movie where the revenue from the movie will be donated for the post-disaster recovery fund. The work was criticized for its storyline that was considered by many people as “imprudent” (*fukinshin*). Besides the issue related to the

problems arise in post-disaster period, this work also presents the themes related to the political problem and the restriction of freedom of speech together with Higashi Nihon Daishinsai's discourse.<sup>83</sup>

The responses toward this disaster have not only appeared in the literary works within Japan. There are some literary works that were published for people outside of Japan who have a concern or interest in Higashi Nihon Daishinsai's issues. In February 2012, *Soredemo Sangatsu wa, Mata*, a collection of short stories with Higashi Nihon Daishinsai-related themes, was published by Kodansha. In March of the same year, the English translation of the work with the title *March was Made of Yarn* was published. The English translation of the work is published in the United Kingdom and the United States, each with different subtitles *March was Made of Yarn: Writer's Respond to Japan's Earthquake, Tsunami, and Nuclear Meltdown* (for British publications) and *March was Made of Yarn: Reflections on the Japanese Earthquake, Tsunami, and Nuclear Meltdown* (for US publications). Kimura mentioned that an interesting thing about this work is, the story (with a form of short comics) entitled "Karasu no Shoujo" (The Crow Girl) was presented in the English version but removed from the Japanese version<sup>84</sup>. Kimura added that the English version has a slightly different essence compared to the Japanese version. The English publication only emphasizes the writers' responses toward the disaster, while the Japanese publication is raises optimism after the disaster in addition to giving emphasis to the writers' responses. Therefore, the Japanese publication is also seen as a symbol of the post-disaster's revival (Kimura 2013: 120). *Soredemo Sangatsu wa, Mata* consisted of 15 short stories and one poem with the themes connected to Higashi Nihon Daishinsai, even though not all of the stories mentioned that disaster specifically. Two of the stories with a strong correlation to the use of nuclear energy are "Kamisama 2011" written by Kawakami Hiromi and "Fushi no Shima" written by Tawada Yoko. These stories openly discussed the effects of nuclear energy use. The story of "Fushi no Shima" will be discussed in Chapter IV, since this story is included in *Soredemo Sangatsu wa, Mata* as well as *Kentoushi*, which is the main subject of this research. Meanwhile, "Kamisama 2011" will be discussed in detail in part 2.2.2.

Besides the nuclear energy-related issues, *Soredemo Sangatsu wa, Mata* also presents some prominent themes that have the potential to be discussed in post-disaster period. The short stories (from *Soredemo Sangatsu wa, Mata*) that are deemed to be appropriate in representing the post-disaster

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<sup>83</sup> Kimura asserted that even though *Koisuru Genpatsu* is considered by many as "imprudent" or *fukinshin*, Takahashi presented his story in a good way for the readers to reflect on themselves. In one scene in *Koisuru Genpatsu*, the word 「天皇」 (*Tennou*) which means 'emperor of Japan' had been mentioned. In this scene, the director of the movie said that he wants to make a pornographic movie where *Tennou* is presents. The person who heard that suggestions immediately responded by saying it was impossible, he added "Do you know that there is no such thing as freedom of expression in Japan?". Besides mentioning the word *Tennou*, Takahashi also presenting the word 「国旗」 (*kokki*) which means 'national flag' (Kimura 2013: 198).

<sup>84</sup> The reason for the removal of "Karasu no Shoujou" in Japanese edition was because this work considered as judging and cornering the victims of the disaster. It showed an assumption that 'the victims' of this disaster are actually 'the perpetrators', since the victims themselves are the people who agreed on the construction of nuclear power plants in Fukushima (Kimura 2013: 122).

literature's discussion are selected. It begins with the story of "Omajinai" written by Matsushige Kiyoshi. This story focuses on the theme of *kizuna* (bonds). It illustrated the different perceptions of this disaster by people living in big city (Tokyo) and people living in the disaster area. "Omajinai" presented the story of the main character who spontaneously came to the disaster area right after the disaster occurred. After "Omajinai", there is also the story entitled "Utsukushii Sobo no Seisho" written by Ikezawa Natsuki. It illustrated the story of the volunteer from Tokyo who met someone who decided to live in the disaster area after experienced losing his brother in the tsunami. Besides those two stories, there is also "Lulu" written by Ishii Shinji. It portrayed the post-disaster trauma through the children who lived in the trauma relief center. "Hiyoriyama" written by Saeki Kazumi described the situation of evacuation shelters, and the main character's doubt to keep living in the disaster area or move to another place. Turning to a different theme, there is also "Sangatsu no Keito" written by Kawakami Mieko. It did not explicitly discuss the subject of the disaster, yet it described the feeling of anxiety and uncertainty in safety after the disaster.

The literary works with the themes connected to Higashi Nihon Daishinsai continued to emerge until years after the disaster passed. In March 2013, *Souzou Rajio* written by Itou Seiko was published. *Souzou Rajio* is inviting the readers to pay more attention and listen carefully to the voices of the dead victims. It tells a story about the DJ (disk jockey) called DJ Ark who has his own radio broadcast. Not all people are able to hear this radio broadcast, since it is limited only to certain people. The fact is, DJ Ark himself had already passed away dragged away by the tsunami. However, he seemed to be a mediator between the real world and the world of the dead. The work highlights the value of the dead victims' voices. *Souzou Rajio* was considered controversial for its highlighted theme. However, it was nominated for the Akutagawa literary prize in 2013. The work did not receive the prize in the end, however, it was widely discussed as one of the important works in post-disaster.

In May 2013, Tsushima Yuko published her novel with the title *Yamaneko Domu*. It was first published in Gunzou in January 2013. The theme raised in this story is related to the life stories of biracial children born after World War II. *Yamaneko Domu* tells stories of three main characters who witnessed the death of their friend in their childhood. All of them are overshadowed by their friend's death even after they grew up. It described the historical events in the world that happened one after another until then Higashi Nihon Daishinsai's disaster that happened in Japan in 2011. *Yamaneko Domu* is the type of post-disaster work which is not explicitly focused on the theme of disaster. However, it has a strong correlation with the disaster.

Another work that is not explicitly focused on the theme of disaster is *Sweet Hereafter* written by Yoshimoto Banana and published in November 2011. The prominent theme of this work is the feeling of "lose someone". *Sweet Hereafter* illustrates the story of the main character who lost her fiancée in a car accident. This story dragged the readers into the experience of the main character who struggled to heal herself both physically and mentally after the tragedy that she had experienced. This

work is related to Higashi Nihon Daishinsai for two reasons. The first reason is, this novel is related to the feeling of loss experienced by the relatives of deceased victims, while the second reason is, Yoshimoto Banana stated that this work was dedicated to all victims of Higashi Nihon Daishinsai (Yoshimoto 2011:156-157). Yoshimoto Banana herself is one of the writers who gave a public statement regarding Higashi Nihon Daishinsai's disaster. In the German weekly magazine, *Der Spiegel*, Yoshimoto talked about the importance of assistance and support for the victims of the earthquake and tsunami.<sup>85</sup>

The literary work with a topic related to Higashi Nihon Daishinsai, which was considered new at the time when this research was being compiled (2018) is *Eiri* written by Numata Shunsuke. This work was awarded by Akutagawa literary prize in 2017. *Eiri* tells a story of people's lives after Higashi Nihon Daishinsai took place. The story begins with the description of the main character who is living in Iwate. The main character has a closed personality and he has only one close friend whom he knows from his office. The friend suddenly disappeared after the occurrence of Higashi Nihon Daishinsai. The hobby of this missing friend was fishing, therefore it is likely that he was going fishing when tsunami swept him away on March 11, 2011. However, there is another possibility that he had deliberately disappeared due to his personal problems. *Eiri* is a short and simple story, yet it includes the discussion related to Higashi Nihon Daishinsai and how this disaster used as a momentum to change people's lives.

Time continues to pass by after the occurrence of Higashi Nihon Daishinsai. The reverberation of this disaster was getting weaker as time went by. Nevertheless, the literary works discussing or linked to the disaster kept appearing even years after the disaster occurred. Post-disaster literature has the possibility to keep developing in the future. For completing the research regarding post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai literature, it is deemed necessary to make a list of literary works that fall into the category of post-disaster literary works. Based on the description of post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai literature by Iida Ichishi, which had been mentioned previously, the literary works included in the list are not limited to the works with a strong correlation to Higashi Nihon Daishinsai. There are also literary works that are considered to bring new elements and discussion in post-disaster. An effort to compile a list of literary works published after Higashi Nihon Daishinsai was attempted. The list consists of the collection of short stories and novels published from the initial period of post-disaster until the end of 2018. The compiling of the list was intended to provide information related to the authors, publishers, and an overview of the numbers of post-disaster literary works published in post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai.

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<sup>85</sup> "Ich mochte mein Lacheln nicht verlieren", *Der Spiegel*, March 18, 2011. <<https://www.spiegel.de/kultur/gesellschaft/japanische-starautorin-yoshimoto-ich-moechte-mein-laccheln-nicht-verlieren-a-751573.html>> [accessed December 14, 2019].

The discussion related to the post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai's literature is felt incomplete without a description of the themes that generally appeared in post-disaster's literary works. In-depth discussion of the literary works that represent these themes also needed to provide a clear picture of how the literature in post-disaster is actually depicted. In the next subchapter, a discussion related to the themes that are generally presented in post-disaster literature will be conducted. These themes will be discussed with references taken from the research by Japanese literary experts. The discussion will continue to the examine of the literary works which are considered proper to represent these themes.

## **2.2 Prominent Literary Works after Higashi Nihon Daishinsai**

### **2.2.1 Themes and Issues Reflected in post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai's Literature**

Various types of themes emerged in the literary works published after Higashi Nihon Daishinsai. Some of the themes are directly connected to the disaster, for example the themes of the nuclear energy and its contamination, the theme of the trauma experienced both by victims and non-victims, the theme of the *kizuna* phenomenon, and the theme of the evacuation and recovery in post-disaster. As it had been mentioned earlier, the post-disaster literary works are not limited to the works that only discuss the event of the disaster itself but also contain the themes related to the disaster, such as the theme of losing a close person in an accident, the theme of self-resignation, and theme of guilt. Concerning the theme of nuclear energy and the controversies surrounding it, Kimura stated that it was writers' duty to overcome the things that are considered taboo e.g., nuclear power and nuclear energy, and pick them as a theme, and discuss it. From that discussion, the post-disaster literature or "*daishinsai bungaku*" will be created. What is needed to create the post-disaster literature is an act of courage from the people who are part of the Japanese literary world to discuss this subject (Kimura 2013: 83).

As a response to the opinion expressed by Kimura, Japanese literary experts began to examine how the post-disaster themes are actually presented in post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai literary works, including how the nuclear energy-related themes are presented in the literary works. Many types of research were carried out and various papers were published to examine how this disaster was affecting the literary world. The observations of the themes that generally appeared in post-disaster were also conducted. In the opening part of the book *Higashi Nihon Daishinsaigo Bungakuron* (Higashi Nihon Daishinsai's Post Literary Theory), Iida Ichishi mentioned some phrases that appeared in the aftermath of the disaster, such as "me who cannot write" (*kakenai jibun*), "the powerless me" (*muryoku na jibun*), as well as "restriction of the freedom of speech" (*genrontousei*) and "voluntary resign" (*jishukisei*) (Iida 2017: 7). These phrases are influencing the writers to some extent, since some writers stated that they were unable to write in post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai. These phrases also influenced the themes picked by the writers in their works.

In his article, Iida Ichishi briefly explained that among the many works he examined, he found fifteen specific themes related to Higashi Nihon Daishinsai published during the post-disaster period. The list of his themes that are considered as “specific themes” is shown below.

Table 1 List of Prominent Themes in Post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai’s Literary Works by Iida Ichishi

1. ( <i>furusato to nikushin/yuujiin/tomodachi/chijin no souchitsu</i> ) lost of relatives and hometown/good friends/friends/acquaintances
2. ( <i>genpatsu mondai</i> ) problems of nuclear power plants
3. ( <i>houshasen ni yoru seibutsu no henyou</i> ) transformation of plants due to radiation
4. ( <i>hisaichi to hi-hisaichi no ondosa</i> ) differences in understanding of disaster between the place exposed by radiation and not exposed by radiation
5. ( <i>touhoku to toukyou no ondosa</i> ) differences in understanding of disaster between Touhoku and Tokyo
6. ( <i>seiken e no hihan</i> ) criticism toward political power
7. ( <i>shingi fumei no jouhou to kanjou no kouzui to shite no SNS</i> ) dubious/doubtful information and SNS full of sympathies
8. ( <i>kioku ya jikan kankaku no konran</i> ) memory chaos due to the disaster
9. ( <i>shisha to no taiwa</i> ) conversation with the dead
10. (“ <i>kakenai jibun</i> ” “ <i>muryoku na jibun</i> ” <i>e no fuokasu</i> ) focus on “me who cannot write” and “the powerless me”
11. ( <i>fukkyuu/fukkou</i> ) restoration/recovery
12. ( <i>genrontousei ya jishukisei</i> ) restriction of freedom of speech and voluntary resign
13. ( <i>distopia-ka shita nihon</i> ) dystopian Japan
14. ( <i>tero ya demo ya gunshuuhouki</i> ) revolt of the masses for terror and demonstration
15. ( <i>sensou bungaku to no setsuzoku</i> ) connection with war literature

(Iida 2017: 7)<sup>86</sup>

Some of the above are in line with the themes presented by Fujita Naoya in his research regarding the post-disaster literature. In the article titled *Doujidai to shite no Shinsaigo*, which was also published in Higashi Nihon Daishinsaigo Bungakuron, Fujita Naoya stated that after a long discussion with his fellow-observers of the post-disaster literature, he came to the conclusion that the themes which

<sup>86</sup> These themes in Japanese are as follows, 1「故郷と肉親・友人・知人の喪失」2「原発問題」3「放射線による生物の変容」4「被災地と非・被災地の温度差」5「東北と東京の温度差」6「政権への批判」7「真偽不明の情報と感情の洪水としての SNS」8「記憶や時間感覚の混乱」9「死者との対話」10「「書けない自分」「無力な自分」へのフォーカス」11「復旧・復興」12「言論統制や自主規制」13「ディストピア化した日本」14「テロやデモや群衆蜂起」15「戦争文学との接続」

generally appeared in the post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai literary works can be divided into fourteen categories. These categories of themes are described as follows:

Table 2 List of Prominent Themes in Post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai's Literary Works by Fujita Naoya

1. ( <i>shi, shisha, tomurai, mo</i> ) death, deceased, grief, mourning
2. ( <i>shuukyou/kami no tema</i> ) religion/subject of God
3. ( <i>genpatsu, kagaku</i> ) nuclear power plants, science
4. ( <i>shakaiundou</i> ) social movement
5. ( <i>kioku/kondaku</i> ) memory/chaos
6. ( <i>nettowaaku sore jitai no shitenka</i> ) network and the point of view of it
7. ( <i>nasshonarizumu/nasshonarizumu hihan</i> ) nationalism/criticism of nationalism
8. ( <i>kataru koto no konnan, chuuchou</i> ) the difficulty to speak, doubt
9. ( <i>sensou no yokan</i> ) ( <i>shingo=senzen kan</i> ) prediction of war, end of disaster = beginning of war
10. ( <i>distopia SF no kouzou no riyou</i> ) using the structure of dystopian science fiction
11. ( <i>nijuushikou (daburushinku) genrontousei</i> ) doublethink, restriction of the freedom of speech
12. ( <i>seishoku to idenshi</i> ) reproduction and gene
13. ( <i>toshi to chihou</i> ) city and countryside
14. ( <i>doubutsu/shokubutsu/kinoko (ningen igai no seibutsu)</i> ) animals/plants/fungi (creatures other than human)

(Fujita 2017: 29-30)<sup>87</sup>

Through the post-disaster themes mentioned by Iida and Fujita, it is evident that both writers arrived at similar or even the same themes. The first theme mentioned by Iida relates to “lost and death”, precisely the “lost of relatives and hometown/good friends/friends/acquaintances”. This theme was also mentioned by Fujita in his first point, precisely the theme of “death, deceased, grief, mourning”. The second prominent theme concerns to the “problems caused by nuclear energy”, it is mentioned by Iida as his second point, or the theme of “problems of nuclear power plants” and by Fujita as his third point, “nuclear power plants and science”.

In the post-disaster period, there were many discussions about how big cities like Tokyo tried to perceive this disaster. These discussions normally led to a comparison between people in the

<sup>87</sup> Those fourteen themes in Japanese are as follows, 1「死、死者、弔い、喪」2「宗教/神のテーマ」3「原発」「科学」4「社会運動」5「記憶/混濁」6「ネットワークそれ自体の視点化」7「ナショナルリズム/ナショナルリズム批判」8「語ることの困難、躊躇」9「戦争の予感」(「災後=戦前」感)10「ディストピアSFの構造の利用」11「二重思考」(ダブルシンク)、「言論統制」12「生殖と遺伝子」13「都市」と「地方」14「運動/植物/キノコ」(人間以外の生物)



cities and people from the disaster areas about how they accept and interpret this disaster. Iida mentioned it as his fifth theme, “differences in understanding of disaster between Touhoku and Tokyo”. Fujita includes it in his thirteenth point, “city and countryside”. From the political perspectives, Iida and Fujita seemed to agree that the theme related to politics also came up in post-disaster literature. Iida in his sixth point, “criticism toward political power” is similar to Fujita’s seventh point, “nationalism/criticism of nationalism”.

Regarding the topic of “censorship in the post-disaster period”, both of them seemed to agree that ‘censorship’ was a topic that came up in post-disaster literature. The censorship-related theme was mentioned by Iida in his twelfth point, “restriction of freedom of speech and voluntary resign” while it was also mentioned by Fujita in his eleventh point, “doublethink and restriction of the freedom of speech”. The topic related to the dystopian discourse illustrated in the future of Japan was also one of the post-disaster themes that has been mentioned by Iida in his thirteenth point, “dystopian Japan” while it was also mentioned by Fujita in his tenth point, “using the structure of dystopian science fiction”.

Apart from the similarity of the themes mentioned by Iida and Fujita, there are several themes that Iida did not mention, while vice versa, there are also some other themes that Fujita did not mention. For example, Iida did not mention the theme related to the “God or religion” which Fujita mentioned at his second point in the theme of “religion/subject of God”. On the other hand, Fujita did not mention the topic related to the “unclear information circulated in social media” while it was mentioned by Iida in his seventh point, or the theme of the “dubious/doubtful information and SNS full of sympathies”.

With the discussion of post-disaster themes examined by Iida Ichishi and Fujita Naoya as references, an attempt to search and observe the themes that appeared in post-disaster literary works will be conducted. All of the post-Higashi Nihon Daisinsai literary works listed in the attachment of this dissertation will be explored. The observation of the themes and issues that appeared in those literary works will be conducted for the purpose of giving an illustration of the themes and issues that appeared in post-disaster. It will be observed whether the themes that appeared are in line with those mentioned by Iida and Fujita, or whether there are other themes that can be categorized as post-disaster ‘general’ themes. The list of the themes and issues presented in those literary works as well as the works representing each of the themes will be discussed below. The temporary number of literary works that had been observed was 76 with the range of publication time between 2011 and 2017.

The result of the observation conducted on the post-disaster literary works was a list of themes divided into seven types of “major theme” and some other, which are labelled as “miscellaneous themes”. As it was mentioned before, the themes with a strong correlation to Higashi Nihon Daishinsai are included in the “major theme” group, while the themes with less correlation to Higashi Nihon Daishinsai are included in the “miscellaneous theme”.

The titles of the literary works which are presented in table 3, as representation of the themes, mostly not represent one particular theme from table 3. It can also represent two or more themes. For this reason, most of these titles appeared in several themes. Based on the observation toward the literary works published in post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai, here is the table of themes compiled with the works representing each theme.

Table 3 List of Prominent Themes in Post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai's Literary Works

I.	Nuclear power plants, nuclear radiation, future after the nuclear accident
1.	神様 2 0 1 1 ( <i>Kamisama 2011</i> )
2.	バラカ ( <i>Baraka</i> )
3.	光あれ ( <i>Hikari Are</i> )
4.	光線 ( <i>Kousen</i> )
5.	光の山 ( <i>Hikari no Yama</i> )
6.	ヤマネコ・ドーム ( <i>Yamaneko Doomu</i> )
7.	晩年様式集 ( <i>Bannen Youshikishuu</i> )
8.	ベッドサイド・マーダーケース ( <i>Beddosaido Maadaakeesu</i> )
9.	アトミック・ボックス ( <i>Atomikku Bokkusu</i> )
10.	そして、星の輝く夜がくる ( <i>Soshite, Hoshi no Kagayaku Yoru ga Kuru</i> )
11.	眠る魚 ( <i>Nemuru Sakana</i> )
12.	ボラード病 ( <i>Boraado Byou</i> )
13.	マダム・キュリーと朝食を ( <i>Madamu Kyurii to Choushoku wo</i> )
14.	アポロンの嘲笑 ( <i>Aporon no Choushou</i> )
15.	献灯使 ( <i>Kentoushi</i> )
16.	それでも三月は、また ( <i>Soredemo Sangatsu wa, Mata</i> )
17.	ゾーンにて ( <i>Zoon ni te</i> )
18.	待たざる者 ( <i>Matazaru Mono</i> )
19.	湖の音、空の青、海の詩 ( <i>Mizuumi no Oto, Sora no Ao, Umi no Shi</i> )
20.	象は忘れない ( <i>Zou wa Wasurenai</i> )
21.	青と白と ( <i>Ao to Shiro to</i> )
II.	Loss, hope, chaos, change, and life after the disaster
1.	恋する原発 ( <i>Koisuru Genpatsu</i> )
2.	裏影 ( <i>Eiri</i> )
3.	震災後 ( <i>Shinsaigo</i> )
4.	還れぬ家 ( <i>Kaerenu Ie</i> )
5.	俳魁 (はいかい) ( <i>Haikai</i> )

6. JR 上野駅公園口 (*JR Ueno Eki Kouenguchi*)
7. 馬たちよ、それでも光は無垢で (*Umatachi yo, Soredemo Hikari wa Muku de*)
8. 希望の地図 (*Kibou no Chizu*)
9. いちばん長い夜に (*Ichiban Nagai Yoru ni*)
10. 双頭の船 (*Soutou no Fune*)
11. 光の山 (*Hikari no Yama*)
12. そして、星の輝く夜がくる (*Soshite, Hoshi no Kagayaku Yoru ga Kuru*)
13. 二十五の瞳 (*Nijuugo no Hitomi*)
14. アニバーサリー (*Anibaasarii*)
15. また次の春へ (*Mata Tsugi no Haru e*)
16. 共震 (*Kyoushin*)
17. 初夏の色 (*Hatsunatsu no Iro*)
18. 晩年様式集 (*Bannen Youshikishuu*)
19. リアスの子 (*Riasu no Ko*)
20. 問いのない答え (*Toi no nai Kotae*)
21. 漁師の愛人 (*Ryoushi no Aijin*)
22. 眠る魚 (*Nemuru Sakana*)
23. アポロンの嘲笑 (*Aporon no Choushou*)
24. 空飛ぶ広報室 (*Soratobu Kouhoushitsu*)
25. ボランティアバスで行こう (*Borantia Basu de Ikou*)
26. スウィート・ヒアアフタ (*Sweet Hereafter*)
27. それでも三月は、また (*Soredemo Sangatsu wa, Mata*)
28. 雨に泣いてる (*Ame ni Naiteru*)
29. 桜の下で待っている (*Sakura no Shita de Matteiru*)
30. 待たざる者 (*Matazaru Mono*)
31. 湖の音、空の青、海の詩 (*Mizuumi no Oto, Sora no Ao, Umi no Shi*)
32. あの日ムーラーが (*Ano Hi Muuraa ga*)
33. 空にみずうみ (*Sora ni Mizuumi*)
34. あの日から (*Ano Hi kara*)
35. 冬の光 (*Fuyu no Hikari*)
36. ムーンナイト・ダイバー (*Muunnaito Daibaa*)
37. やがて海へと届く (*Yagate Umi e to Todoku*)
38. 象は忘れない (*Zou wa Wasurenai*)
39. 青と白と (*Ao to Shiro to*)
40. 海は見えるか (*Umi wa Mieru ka*)
41. 希望の海 (*Kibou no Umi*)

42. 調律師 ( <i>Chouritsushi</i> )
III. Memories of wars and disasters
1. 蝸の声 ( <i>Higurashi no Koe</i> ) 2. ヤマネコ・ドーム ( <i>Yamaneko Doomu</i> ) 3. 青い花 ( <i>Aoi Hana</i> ) 4. 指の骨 ( <i>Yubi no Hone</i> ) 5. 朝顔の日 ( <i>Asagao no Hi</i> ) 6. 憂国者たち ( <i>Yuukoku Monotachi</i> )
IV. Life and death (how the dead victims have been treated)
1. 想像ラジオ ( <i>Souzou Rajio</i> ) 2. 双頭の船 ( <i>Soutou no Fune</i> ) 3. また次の春へ ( <i>Mata Tsugi no Haru e</i> ) 4. 光の山 ( <i>Hikari no Yama</i> ) 5. ボランティアバスで行こう ( <i>Borantia Basu de Ikou</i> ) 6. JR 上野駅公園口 ( <i>JR Ueno Eki Kouenguchi</i> ) 7. そして、星の輝く夜がくる ( <i>Soshite, Hoshi no Kagayaku Yoru ga Kuru</i> ) 8. 屍者の帝国 ( <i>Shisha no Teikoku</i> ) 9. スウィート・ヒアアフタ ( <i>Sweet Hereafter</i> ) 10. 指の骨 ( <i>Yubi no Hone</i> ) 11. 朝顔の日 ( <i>Asagao no Hi</i> ) 12. ムーンナイト・ダイバー ( <i>Muunnaito Daibaa</i> ) 13. 死んでいない者 ( <i>Shindeinai Mono</i> ) 14. やがて海へと届く ( <i>Yagate Umi e to Todoku</i> )
V. Social Bonding ( <i>Kizuna</i> )
1. わたしがいなかった街で ( <i>Watashi ga Inakatta Machi de</i> ) 2. 大地のゲーム ( <i>Daichi no Geemu</i> ) 3. 初夏の色 ( <i>Hatsunatsu no Iro</i> ) 4. 漁師の愛人 ( <i>Ryoushi no Aijin</i> ) 5. ボラード病 ( <i>Boraado Byou</i> ) 6. アポロンの嘲笑 ( <i>Aporon no Choushou</i> ) 7. 避難所 ( <i>Hinansho</i> ) 8. 還れぬ家 ( <i>Kaerenu Ie</i> ) 9. 晩年様式集 ( <i>Bannen Youshikishuu</i> ) 10. アニバーサリー ( <i>Anibaasarii</i> ) 11. それでも三月は、また ( <i>Soredemo Sangatsu wa, Mata</i> ) 12. 桜の下で待っている ( <i>Sakura no Shita de Matteiru</i> )

13. あの日から ( <i>Ano Hi Kara</i> ) 14. 冬の光 ( <i>Fuyu no Hikari</i> ) 15. ムーンナイト・ダイバー ( <i>Muunnaito Daibaa</i> ) 16. 死んでいない者 ( <i>Shindeinai Mono</i> ) 17. 青と白と ( <i>Ao to Shiro to</i> ) 18. 希望の海 ( <i>Kibou no Umi</i> )
<b>VI. Future life, dystopia</b>
1. 幻影の星 ( <i>Genei no Hoshi</i> ) 2. いま集合的無意識を ( <i>Ima Shuugouteki Muishiki wo</i> ) 3. ベッドサイド・マダーケース ( <i>Beddosaido Maadaakeesu</i> ) 4. 新生 ( <i>Shinsei</i> ) 5. 屍者の帝国 ( <i>Shisha no Teikoku</i> ) 6. 太陽・惑星 ( <i>Taiyou Wakusei</i> ) 7. 大地のゲーム ( <i>Daichi no Geemu</i> ) 8. ヤマネコ・ドーム ( <i>Yamaneko Doomu</i> ) 9. 聖痕 ( <i>Seikon</i> ) 10. 献灯使 ( <i>Kentoushi</i> ) 11. それでも三月は、また ( <i>Soredemo Sangatsu wa, Mata</i> ) 12. モナドの領域 ( <i>Monado no Ryouiki</i> ) 13. 湖の音、空の青、海の詩 ( <i>Mizuumi no Oto, Sora no Ao, Umi no Shi</i> ) 14. 東京零年 ( <i>Toukyou Zeronen</i> ) 15. ドン・キホーテの消息 ( <i>Don Ki Hoote no Shousoku</i> )
<b>VII. Religion and belief, philosophy</b>
1. 教団 x ( <i>Kyoudan x</i> ) 2. 幻影の星 ( <i>Genei no Hoshi</i> ) 3. モナドの領域 ( <i>Monado no Ryouiki</i> )

Besides the categorization of the “major theme” in table 3, it is assumed that there are several themes that cannot be included in this group. These themes tend to be more general, presenting both the disaster and the post-disaster situation. However, the link to the Higashi Nihon Daishinsai is considered loose. In some of the works in this category, Higashi Nihon Daishinsai is just an additional factor for supporting the main theme. These themes are categorized as “miscellaneous themes” that are not able to be categorized as major themes. The “miscellaneous themes” with several works representing them are the following: “mystery and murder” represented by *Kyoujin no Hoshi*; “love story and betrayal” portrayed by *Madoromi no Umi*; “before-disaster story” also portrayed by *Madoromi no Umi*; “hometown” portrayed by *Ano Hi kara*; the theme of “events in memory”

portrayed by *Jimi Hendrikusu Ekusuperiensu*; and “psychology or trauma” represented in *Watashi no Shoumetsu*<sup>88</sup>.

The table of “major themes” (table 3) with a brief discussion of the “miscellaneous themes” which has been presented above is the result of the observation and attempt to classify the themes that generally appeared in post-disaster literature. The table and the discussion are completed with literary works that are considered to represent each of the themes mentioned. There are seven themes that are considered as “major themes” and six themes that are considered as “miscellaneous themes”.

The post-disaster list of themes by Iida and Fujita are the references for categorizing the “major themes” in table 3 and the “miscellaneous themes” in the explanation above. How the list of themes by Iida and Fujita took a role in the categorization of the “major themes” and “miscellaneous themes” is explained as follows. The first major theme presented in table 3 is “nuclear power plants, nuclear radiation, future after the nuclear accident”. Based on the observation of post-disaster literary works, the nuclear-related theme was often discussed by many writers. Therefore it was assumed that this theme was suitable to be included in the “major themes” category. Furthermore, this theme is in line with the nuclear-related themes mentioned by Iida (point 2) and Fujita (point 3).

The second theme mentioned in table 3 was “loss, hope, chaos, change, and life after the disaster”. This theme represented the situation in post-disaster and it was also correlated with the theme of “lost of relatives and hometown/good friends/friends/acquaintances” mentioned by Iida (point 1) and the theme of “death, deceased, grieve, mourn” mentioned by Fujita (point 1). Based on the classification that had been conducted, the literary works with this theme occupied a big portion of the literary works published in post-disaster. The reason was presumably this theme summarizes the transformations that occurred in post-disaster. This theme also considered some themes that are mentioned by Iida and Fujita such as loss, death, chaos in post-disaster condition, and the situation in post-disaster recovery.

The third theme mentioned was “memories of wars and disasters”. From the observation of the literary works published in post-disaster, it was found that themes related to the wars and previous disasters have appeared in some works though its appearance was not frequent as the two previous themes. The war-related themes are in line with what had been mentioned by Iida in “connection with war literature” (point 15) as well as Fujita in “prediction of war, end of disaster = beginning of war” (point 9).

The next theme mentioned in table 3 was “life and death (how the dead victims have been treated)”. The themes connected to the communication with the deceased or the reflection on death

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<sup>88</sup> The works representing “miscellaneous themes” in Japanese are 虚人の星 (*Kyojin no Hoshi*)、微睡の海 (*Madoromi no Umi*)、あの日から (*Ano Hi kara*)、ジミ・ヘンドリクス・エクスペリエンス (*Jimi Hendrix Experience*)、 and 私の消滅 (*Watashi no Shoumetsu*). Besides the “miscellaneous themes” that have been mentioned, there are also additional themes found in these literary works. These themes are strongly correlated with the themes of “legend”, “fantasy”, “gender”, and “politics and nationalism”.

were raised in many post-disaster literary works. It was as stated by Iida in the theme of “lost of relatives and hometown/good friends/friends/acquaintances” (point 1) and by Fujita in the theme of “death, deceased, grieve and mourn” (point 1). Since the theme related to the death was mentioned both by Fujita and Iida in their first theme, it seemed probable that the first association or the first interpretation of this disaster from the Japanese point of view was the “dead and loss” among many other aspects. In other words, the Japanese initial interpretation was how strong was the correlation of this disaster with “the dead” and “the feeling of loss”. Therefore this aspect must be presented at the beginning of the discussion related to the disaster. It is significant that both Iida and Fujita put this theme at the top of their post-disaster’s list of themes.

The fifth theme mentioned in table 3 was “social bonding (*kizuna*)”. Even though this specific theme had not been mentioned either by Iida or Fujita, the social bonding-related theme came up in many post-disaster literary works. The theme related to social bonding seems to have a connection with the theme of “dubious/doubtful information and SNS full of sympathies” mentioned by Iida (point 7).

Moving on, the next major theme was “future life and dystopia” or the prediction of Japan’s gloomy future. It was in line with the theme of “dystopian Japan” mentioned by Iida (point 13) and the theme of “using the structure of dystopian science fiction” mentioned by Fujita (point 10). The last theme in the “major themes” list was “religion and belief, philosophy”. It was correlated to the theme of “religion/subject of God” mentioned by Fujita (point 2). Furthermore, the additional “miscellaneous themes” were difficult to be included in the “major themes” list.

As it was mentioned previously, the discussion related to the post-disaster literature seemed incomplete without the discussion of prominent post-disaster literary works with the themes presented inside. In the next subchapter, there will be a discussion regarding the prominent literary works with the themes presented inside those works. Two literary works are presented. The selection of those works is based on the assumption that they are representative of post-disaster themes in literature. These works were also mentioned in many discussions regarding post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai literature as representative works of this disaster. These two literary works are “Kamisama 2011” written by Kawakami Hiromi and *Yamaneko Domu* written by Tsushima Yuko. “Kamisama 2011” was reviewed as representative of post-disaster literature, since its appearance was earlier than other literary works, and it took a theme related to nuclear energy that was considered a sensitive topic by public. Meanwhile, *Yamaneko Doomu* was also considered as an important work by many, since it took the nuclear energy-related issue and war-related issue in the story plot. In the categorization of post-disaster themes, in table 3, “Kamisama 2011” was put into the first category of major themes (nuclear power plants, nuclear radiation, future after the nuclear accident), while *Yamaneko Doomu* was included both in the first (nuclear power plants, nuclear radiation, future after the nuclear accident) and third (memories of wars and disasters) categories of major themes. The discussion of both stories

will include the summary of both stories, the themes highlighted, and quotations from the stories, with their interpretation.

### **2.2.2 Interpretation of Nuclear Discourse in “Kamisama 2011” by Kawakami Hiromi**

As it was mentioned earlier, the general themes by Fujita and Iida agree that nuclear energy-related topic is an important theme in post-disaster. Based on the observation of post-disaster literary works, it is evident that nuclear energy-related topic is one of the prominent themes in post-disaster. Fukushima NPP’s meltdown can be considered as the dominant theme in post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai, since the handling process was estimated to be longer than the earthquake and tsunami. The literary works carrying power plants-related themes present the nuclear energy-related issues which came up in post-disaster society. An interesting issue related to nuclear energy in post-disaster society is the attempt to make nuclear energy “a part of everyday life”. In post-Fukushima disaster, cleaning process of the radiation was conducted by “scattering” the nuclear waste over the land and in the sea. This process has been deemed as reckless. Presumably the government and TEPCO attempted to make radiation become “a part of everyday life” (Broinowski 2013: 6). The effort to deal with the nuclear accident seemed to be so difficult, that the attempt was made to get the people used to the presence of nuclear radiation in their lives.

“Kamisama 2011” was considered to have a strong correlation with the theme of making radiation as “a part of everyday life”. “Kamisama 2011” depicts a world where nuclear radiation has been accepted as a part of people’s lives. The acceptance was reinforced by the appearance of the word “protective clothing”, which means long-sleeved clothing that protects from radiation exposure. Even though it was not clearly stated what kind of “radiation” made people use protective clothing, it strongly suggested that it is a nuclear radiation. Toward the end of the story, it was shown how the main character measured the level of internal and external exposure every day using a Geiger counter. The depiction of that kind of world is seen as an attempt to illustrate how life after nuclear radiation will be. There is a prediction of how people will react and face the post-nuclear radiation world which seems difficult to avoid.

As it was mentioned in the previous discussion, “Kamisama 2011” was one of the most notable literary works in the discussion of post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai’s literature. Fujita Naoya mentioned that “Kamisama 2011” is a work that represents the theme of *genpatsu* and *kagaku* or the “nuclear power plants and science” theme, one of fourteen themes that he described as general themes in post-disaster (Fujita 2017: 31). Besides, Fujita also chose “Kamisama 2011” as a literary work that represents post-disaster literature, since “Kamisama 2011” clearly describes a post-disaster situation where radiation has been accepted as a part of daily life (Fujita 2017: 38).

Besides the statement mentioned by Fujita Naoya, an academician and literary critic Kawamura Minato stated in his analysis of post-disaster literature that Higashi Nihon Daishinsai



brought back the concept of “*sekai no owari*” which literally means “the end of the world”. What he meant by “*sekai no owari*” is a concept or a belief that Japan would become extinct because of some kind of disaster or war. Kawamura argued that the idea of “sinking Japan” was brought back in post-disaster. This belief has previously appeared and then portrayed in many literary works and films, where Japan has to face an apocalypse triggered by disasters or wars where nuclear energy was used. The nuclear-related accident that occurred in Fukushima reminded people that the world will probably end because of nuclear energy. Kawamura mentioned that “*Kamisama 2011*”, which tells the condition of how people living in the post-nuclear accident world is an example of a literary work depicting the theme of “*sekai no owari*” (Kawamura 2013: 41).

“*Kamisama 2011*” as a prominent literary work in post-disaster starts in June 2012, when *Gunzou* magazine published a short story with the title “*Kamisama 2011*” written by Kawakami Hiromi. It was the first short story published dealing with “the nuclear” energy and “the radiation” that appeared in public right after Higashi Nihon Daishinsai occurred. This story was considered a breakthrough since a theme related to “the nuclear” energy always caused people to remain silent and unable to find the proper word to define it; consequently, it was always avoided. The appropriate Japanese word for describing the condition is *Shitsugo Joutai*.

After published through the magazine, “*Kamisama 2011*” was published in book form or *tankoubon*. *Kamisama 2011*, appeared to open the door for other works with a similar theme.<sup>89</sup> In her closing remarks, attached to the book version, Kawakami stated that her purpose for writing that story was not to give some kind of warning against the nuclear power plant. She affirmed that she wrote the story in a state of shock since the ordinary life that she used to enjoy was changed drastically by a single event. She asserted that she had a “silent anger” described in Japanese as “*shizuka na ikari*” that kept haunting her since Higashi Nihon Daishinsai. That anger particularly made her realize that she, as a Japanese citizen, had also participated in pointing Japan towards that scenario.<sup>90</sup> That remark

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<sup>89</sup> Kimura said that she was surprised by the publication of Kawakami’s *Kamisama 2011*. The theme related to the nuclear power plants is a very sensitive topic; therefore, only few writers are willing to write about it. The discourse related to nuclear power plants and radiations always left people unable to pronounce the words correctly since they were afraid of saying something wrong (*shitsugo joutai*). It is difficult to say something about nuclear energy except for the anti-nuclear energy activists (Kimura 2013: 17-18).

<sup>90</sup> The original text follows: 「原子力利用にともなう危険を警告する、という大上段にかまえた姿勢で書いたのでは、まったくありません。それよりもむしろ、日常は続いてゆく、けれどその日常は何かのことで大きく変化してしまう可能性をもつものだ、という大きな驚きの気持ちをこめて書きました。静かな怒りが、あの原発事故以来、去りません。むしろこの怒りは、最終的には自分自身に向かってくる怒りです。今の日本つくってきたのは、ほかならぬ自分でもあるのですから」 (I have no intention to write and act as if I warned people about the dangers accompanying the use of nuclear energy. More than that, I wrote in full shock, because there is a possibility that everyday life can experience a drastic change because of some things. My silent anger, since the nuclear accident, has not faded away. In the end, the anger was directed at me. Because I’m the one who made Japan become like this) (Kawakami 2012: 78). Regarding the nuclear issue, Kawakami stated that she was considered as “never know” and “pretend not to know” something related to nuclear (Kawakami 2012: 75).

alluded to the dilemma between “the trauma of nuclear” energy use and “the importance of efficiency” mentioned by Murakami Haruki.

“Kamisama 2011” was more like the second edition of *Kamisama*, the debut work of Kawakami back in 1993. In broad outline, “Kamisama 2011” has eventually the same text as in *Kamisama*, except, that some parts were deleted, added, or changed. Kawamura stated that the text of both stories were mostly the same. However, the fundamental difference was “Kamisama 2011” mentions that since “that thing happened” (*ano koto*), “the world” (*sekai*) has changed. Broadly speaking, everything changed and it was not possible to return (Kawamura 2013: 41). Both were fantasy stories focused on two characters- the main character and the bear. It described a day spent by the main character and the bear along a river bank. Even with the same characters, the place and the time of “Kamisama 2011”’s story took place after a nuclear accident. Some words that did not appear in *Kamisama* showed up in “Kamisama 2011”, such as *bougofuku* that means “protective clothing” and *ano koto* that literally means “that matter” but in this context they referred to the nuclear energy related accident<sup>91</sup>.

The brief summary of “Kamisama 2011” is as follow:

During one afternoon, the main character and the bear took a walk together. They went on a picnic along the river bank. While staying there, the main character mentioned that she did not wear protective clothing. The river they went to used to be crowded with people but now it became a very desolate place. There were two men wearing their protective clothing. One of them said that he envied the bear for its resistance to plutonium and strontium. When the two men were gone, the bear told the main character that even though its resistance to radiation is higher than that of humans’ it does not mean that it is immune to the effects of nuclear radiation. From the river, the bear caught a fish and gave it to the main character with the added information that the fish ate the moss that grew at the bottom of the river and was probably contaminated by cesium. When the picnic was over, they did not forget to measure the level of radiation inside their bodies. Before returning home, the bear asked the main character for a hug. Even though she knew that the bear’s body has absorbed more radiation, the main character agreed to do it. The main character put the fish given by the bear in her shoe cabinet. Afterwards, she took a bath and before going to sleep recorded the level of radiation she has been exposed to during the day, just like what she always does every day.

“Kamisama 2011” was a simple story yet it covered some phenomena related to the nuclear energy issues. It portrayed people’s awareness about radiation effects in the post-disaster era, how they

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<sup>91</sup> Kimura said that until the end of the story it was not explained what the “*ano koto*” means. However, the word “*bougoufuku*” indicated that a nuclear energy related accident happened. The number 2011 inserted in the title, indicated *Higashi Nihon Daishinsai* which happened in the same year (Kimura 2013: 91).

became paranoid when confronted with radiation, and how lifestyles completely changed because of the single term “nuclear”. The “protective clothing” became interesting keywords to signify the paranoia and fear felt by the main character and the rest of the people living in this story. The quotation below is a depiction of how the word “protective clothing” is presented in this story. This quotation is taken from the beginning part, where the main character and the bear have just started their picnic day.

In the early spring day, I went to see a bird. But at that time, I did not wear protective clothing. In such a very hot weather like this, it is the first time I’m going out without protective clothing and also bringing my lunch. It is the first time since “that matter”.<sup>92</sup>

In the post-nuclear society, even the “protective clothing” can be a cause of discrimination. Since the “protective clothing” separated those who have been “exposed to radiation” and those who have “not been exposed to radiation”.<sup>93</sup> Furthermore, the quotation above also mentioning the word “that matter” which translated from the word “*ano koto*”, refers to something that had occurred in the past.

A sentence that indicated the discrimination toward those who have been “exposed to radiation” is presented in the quotation below. This sentence indicated that in post-nuclear society, there is a reluctance to come into contact with those who are exposed to radiation.

As I said, “Maybe they are keeping a distance because we did not wear our protective clothing”, the bear nodded vaguely.<sup>94</sup>

According to what had been said in the closing remarks, Kawakami wrote this story with a message that something in someone’s life could be changed dramatically for one reason. Nuclear facilities, even though they were built for the purpose of peace, still carry bad consequences and have the same effect as that with wars. They can create a mass destruction that will change everything drastically. This change appeared in the description of the river after “that matter” happened. The river was portrayed as a dead place without people and children. That river metaphor covers a meaning broader than its being merely “a river”. The changed river could be interpreted as one of the aspects of human life that also changed after the disaster.

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<sup>92</sup> Original text: 「春先に、鴨を見るために、防護服をつけて行ったことはあったが、暑い季節にこうしての服を着て肌をだし、弁当まで持っていくのは、『あのこと』以来、初めてである」(Kawakami 2012: 63).

<sup>93</sup> It was stated that the “Kamisama 2011” raised an important issue during the post-disaster era. The 差別(*sabetsu*) or “discrimination” issue was prominent after Higashi Nihon Daishinsai. In one scenario, the main character stated her fear for not wearing the “protective clothing”. From that statement, two camps between “those who wear protective clothing” and “those who don’t wear protective clothing” or “those who were exposed to radiation” and “those who were not exposed to radiation” were constructed (Kimura 2013: 95).

<sup>94</sup> Original text: 「『防護服を着てないから、よけていくのかな』と言うと、くまはあいまいにうなずいた」(Kawakami 2012: 65).

Before “that matter”, a lot of people came to swim, to catch a fish, and to gather while bringing their families. But now, in this area, there is no child at all.<sup>95</sup>

In the reports and news published in post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai period, it was described that the sea, rivers, and water sources were heavily affected by the nuclear accident. An article in *The Japan Times* mentioned that two years after the disaster occurred, the government finally allowed fishermen to do trials of fishing in the sea located near the leaked Fukushima nuclear power plants.<sup>96</sup> In other words, for two years the sea was untouchable by everyone and the seafood consumption was forbidden. This is proof that sea pollution could change people's lives, especially those who live around the sea and depend for their livelihood on marine products. The depiction of sea, river, and water sources in “Kamisama 2011” indicated how in post-disaster the water sources lost their function. The big change that happened in the water sources represents the human life that drastically changed after the disaster.

Furthermore, according to the radiation aspect in post-disaster, people's awareness of the level of radiation exposure in their bodies was high in post-disaster. Geiger counter were sold everywhere; almost all families in the radiation zone have one. “Kamisama 2011” seemed to illustrate those realities, by its narration of how the main character and the bear are unconsciously calculated their level of radiation every day.

When you are going to take a nap, wear this. It was just two hours since we left, therefore its radioactivity level is still low.<sup>97</sup>

At the end of the story, Kawakami depicted a situation where nuclear radiation has been accepted as part of a normal life. In this story, measuring the level of radiation inside one's body is a normal thing to do. There is a time when people had already given up on their fear of nuclear radiation effects; as a result, they tried to live together side by side with nuclear facilities. It was a depiction of life after the nuclear era, where the fear already has reached a dead end and the only way remaining is how to come to terms with nuclear radiation effects.

When I got back to my room, I put the dried fish above the shoe cabinet. Then I took a shower, thoroughly rubbed dry my body and hair. Before I went to sleep, I wrote a little in my diary. Lastly, just like I usually did, I estimated the radiation level that I got today. Today, based on the estimations, I got 30 microsieverts for external radiation and 19 microsieverts for internal radiation. Since the beginning of this year, until today,

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<sup>95</sup> Original text: 「『あのこと』の前は、川辺ではいつもたくさんの人が泳いだり釣りをしたりしていたし、家族づれも多かった。今は、この地域には、子供は一人もいない」(Kawakami 2012: 67).

<sup>96</sup> “Fukushima fisheries to resume trial fishing after samples prove safe”, *The Japan Times*, September 24, 2013. <<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2013/09/24/national/fukushima-fisheries-to-resume-trial-fishing-after-samples-prove-safe/#.Xh1oT8gzbD4>> [accessed December 14, 2019].

<sup>97</sup> Original text: 「昼寝をするときにお使いください。まだ出発してから二時間ですし、今日は線量が低いですが、念のため」(Kawakami 2012: 70).

based on my estimations, I had been exposed to as much as 2900 microsieverts for an external radiation and 1780 microsieverts for an internal radiation.<sup>98</sup>

The work of “Kamisama 2011” appeared to be a prediction of what could happen to the world with the continuing use of nuclear energy. In the post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai future, the literary works would not be notes or records of what happened in the year 2011, but instead, they would be a prediction of some events that could happen in the future<sup>99</sup>. In her closing remarks, Kawakami asserted “a silent anger” that existed inside her towards the use of the nuclear energy. Even though she stated that the reason that moved her to write this story was not because she wanted to warn people against the danger of the nuclear energy, yet unwittingly, Kawakami has awakened a consciousness against nuclear energy use.

Furthermore, she reminded people that the existence of nuclear energy use is very much associated with modern life. This close association has the potential to be dangerous in the future; moreover, it can possibly become more disastrous than what actually happened in Fukushima. “Kamisama 2011” was Kawakami’s expression of her “silent anger” which did not contain any warning message against nuclear energy related issues, yet it called to mind the presence of a nuclear matter and invited the readers to rethink about the dilemma that had arisen related to “the trauma of nuclear” energy effects and “the importance of efficiency”. This literary work became very special because it is the first work that tackled the nuclear energy issue after Higashi Nihon Daishinsai.

### 2.2.3 Discussion of Prominent Themes in *Yamaneko Doomu* by Tsushima Yuuko

This section will be a discussion of one of the most prominent post-disaster literary works entitled *Yamaneko Doomu*. *Yamaneko Doomu* is a 339-pages novel written by Tsushima Yuuko, a prominent writer in Japan. This work was first published in the form of a *tankoubon* (a book that is complete in itself and is not a part of series) by Kodansha in May 2013. Before being published independently, it was published in the literary journal called *Gunzou* in the January 2013 edition. Broadly speaking, the theme raised in this novel is related to the life stories of biracial children (called *konkentsukoji*<sup>100</sup>) born after World War II. In the last part of this novel, there is a review section written by Ishihara Nen, the eldest daughter of Tsushima Yuuko, titled *Mainoriti to shite Ikiru*. In the review she stated that the theme of minority was highlighted in the novel. Tsushima herself had an interest in the post-World War II’s theme. In her novel, she joined that

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<sup>98</sup> Original text: 「部屋に戻って干し魚をくつ入れの上に飾り、シャワーを浴びて丁寧に体と髪をすすぎ、眠る前に少し日記を書き、最後に、いつものように総被曝線量を計算した。今日の推定外部被曝線量・30  $\mu$  Sv、内部被曝線量・19  $\mu$  Sv。年頭から今日までの推定累積外部被曝線量・2900  $\mu$  Sv、推定累積内部被曝線量・1780  $\mu$  Sv」 (Kawakami 2012: 72).

<sup>99</sup> Kimura stated that the words that will last for a long period, like the words written in the literary works will be more necessary than words written in the reports. The “period” of literary works goes beyond the past and the present, and they will be oriented towards the future. Literary works should not be regarded as a “record” of what had happened; instead, it should be regarded as a “prediction” of what will happen in the future (Kimura 2013: 24).

<sup>100</sup> 混血孤児

theme to the theme related to the biracial children in the post-war era. Tsushima choose not to ignore their existence and decided to write about Japan from their point of view (Ishihara 2013: 342). This is in line with what was explained by Ishihara as follows: “When finally realizing their forgotten existence, the author decided to write about this country from their perspectives. They hated this country, and left it, but they could not forget about it. Their interest continued even from far away. Through their point of view, the author attempts to change the reader's perspectives of Japan, by destroying boundaries and race concepts, spreading those ideas to all of the world.”<sup>101</sup>

*Yamaneko Doomu* tells a story about the life of biracial children born to Japanese mothers and allegedly American fathers. Most of these children were more or less abandoned until somebody came and said that they were willing to take care of them. In the novel, the biracial children were presented, and the story of how these children struggled to survive in a harsh environment without anything that feels like a home for them. Some of them survived, and some chose to leave Japan.

The story of *Yamaneko Doomu* can be briefly summarized as follows. Two main characters called Micchi and Kazu are biracial children who were abandoned after the war. Micchi has a white complexion while Kazu has a dark complexion. Both lived in an orphanage until being adopted by a Japanese woman called Mama. One more main character is Yonko, a girl who was raised by her single mother. The three main characters are childhood friends who have known each other since they were very young.

The whole narration of this novel is based on a single tragedy. It occurred during the childhood of the three children, and none of them can forget it. One day (when Micchi and Kazu were 7 years old and Yonko was 6 years old), they saw their friend who was also a biracial child, usually being called Miki chan was drowning in the pond. These three young children could not remember clearly what had happened exactly on that day. All they could recall is that Miki chan died while wearing an orange colored skirt. That incident keeps haunting them even after they grew up, and it left many unspoken questions from people around them. They could not find answers related to that incident even after they became adults. They were never able to escape from the tragedy, since wherever they went, they always ended up being overshadowed by the incident. They felt guilty because they began to ask themselves whether they are the ones who really made Miki chan die.

One thing that Yonko remembers is, that she saw Miki chan standing by the pool, and there was a boy standing near to her. That boy is Taabo, a neighbor boy. The boy is always alone, he has no friends and he was raised by his single mother. Micchi, Kazu, and Yonko did not know what had happened, but when they heard the splash of Miki chan falling into the water, they ran back home with tears running down their faces. Taabo's presence later became the biggest fear for the rest of their lives. After Miki chan's death,

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<sup>101</sup> Original text: 「この忘れられた存在に気がついたとき、著者はこの国を、彼らの目を通して描きたいと考えた。彼らはこの国を憎み、逃げ出して、それでも忘れられず、遠い国から関心を持ち続けていたのだろう。彼らの視線は、読者のこの国の見方を変え、国境や人種などの概念を壊して、世界を広げてくれる」 (Ishihara 2013: 342).

at an interval of every six years, a murder of some young women occurred. All of the victims were wearing orange skirts. The murder cases keep continuing until Taabo committed suicide at the age of 51 years.

Because Micchi, Kazu, and Yonko were at the scene when the incident took place, a rumor that they were involved in Miki chan's death began to spread. Especially for Kazu and Micchi, which because of their complexions, suffered more intensely from the cruel rumors than Yonko. These vicious rumors then forced Mama to take drastic action by sending both Kazu and Micchi to England for two years. They were sent for the purpose of study. Kazu and Micchi who had not been accepted as part of Japanese society, faced other difficulties when they stepped foot in England. They were unable to fully understand the language and culture of the new environment. As a result of the language and cultural barriers, they returned to Japan before the two-year period had ended.

Next, the story tells how the children living in the orphanage were adopted one by one by American families. Most of them were taken to America and became American children. However, deep inside their hearts they never forget about Japan. When he grew up, Micchi decided to leave Japan and explore the world, while Kazu decided to stay in Japan. Throughout their lives, the three main characters never had the courage to reveal what they knew about Taabo. They were never brave enough to express their suspicion regarding Taabo and how everything seemed to be related to the murder of the women with orange skirts. Furthermore, they seemed to have a mental block about everything that happened on the day when Miki chan died. Even after decades passed and after Kazu died in an accident, no word was spoken about the accident or murders.

Micchi decided to set foot once again in Japan after the Higashi Nihon Daishinsai's incident. When he came back to Japan, he was 63 years old and Yonko was 62 years old, while Kazu had already passed away 10 years earlier. Micchi had a mission to take Yonko away from the radiation effect caused by the power plant's accident. The story of *Yamaneko Doomu* proceeds by going back and forth through the timelines. At the beginning of the story, it was narrated that Micchi had just set his foot again in Japan, and he is obsessed by the fear that radiation had already spread to Tokyo. Next, the narration jumps back to the event that occurred in the children's childhood. The story then keeps moving forward until the discussion about the Higashi Nihon Daishinsai appeared. In the final part of this story, it is shown how Micchi and Yonko decided to evacuate Taabo's mother from the area which was allegedly contaminated by radiation. The two of them persuade Taabo's mother to leave her house and go to a safe place with them.

This novel be read as a literary work with a perceptive message related to the nuclear power plants' accident which occurred in the Higashi Nihon Daishinsai's incident. The message was mentioned a number of times both explicitly and implicitly. Some of the prominent themes that appeared in post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai's literary works mentioned by Fujita Naoya were also shown in *Yamaneko Doomu*. These themes are: the theme related to the "death" (*shi, shisha, tomurai, mo*) is represented by the death of Miki chan, the theme related to the "nuclear power plants" (*genpatsu, kagaku*) is represented by the explicit depiction of Higashi Nihon Daishinsai's effect in the beginning and the end of a story, the theme related to

the “chaos in memory” (*kioku / kondaku*) is expressed by the chaos felt by the three main characters when they try to remember what really had happened on the day when Miki chan died, the theme regarding the “doubt to speak out” (*kataru koto no konnan, chuuchou*) is depicted by the silence of the three main characters regarding Taabo for years. One last theme to be mentioned is “nationalism” (*nasshonarizumu / nasshonarizumu hihan*) represented by the Japanese-American biracial children in this work. Even though not all of the themes mentioned above were deeply explored in this literary work, nevertheless the appearance of these themes indicates that *Yamaneko Doomu* is a serious work of literature that must be included in post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai’s literature.

At first reading, most likely the *Yamaneko Doomu*’s theme that sticks fast to the reader’s mind is the lives of Japanese-American biracial children born after the war. They faced many difficulties in life since they were not fully accepted as Japanese, nor, on the other hand, were they fully recognized as Americans. Therefore, they could never find a place to call home. That theme is explored deeply in this story and one of the quotes considered representative is as follows:

“If you were in Japan, people called you American child, but if you went to America, people called you a Japanese child. However, America is a country with a lot of immigrants, therefore those children will have a better place to live than in Japan”.<sup>102</sup>

The woman who spoke these words in the above quotation took care of biracial children and assumed that they would be better treated in America because it is a country with people from various background. Yet, those children still face many challenges in America. Some children could not find a “real home” in America. In a similar way, searching for a “real home” was a challenge for the refugees who were forced to leave their homes after the disaster of Higashi Nihon Daishinsai. Even if the refugees could not accommodate themselves to the new places and establish a “real home”, they could not return to their former home because of nuclear radiation.<sup>103</sup> In the end they were unable to find a “real home”, however in this case it was due to circumstances rather than the lack of acceptance from surroundings.

Even though the theme related to the lives of the biracial children is considered to be a prominent theme in *Yamaneko Doomu*, still the theme of Higashi Nihon Daishinsai’s nuclear power plant’s accident is no less prominent. The story of *Yamaneko Doomu* brought the reader back to the most important events

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<sup>102</sup> Original text: 「日本にいればおまえたちはアメリカの子どもだろう、と言われ、アメリカに行けば、おまえたちは日本の子どもだろう、と言われ、でもアメリカにはいろんな移民がいるから、日本よりはあの子たちの居場所があるにちがいない」 (Tsushima 2013: 114).

<sup>103</sup> The Okubo Fumio case is one of the cases related to post-disaster evacuation’s issues. Okubo, who was 102 years at that time committed suicide one day after government asked residents to flee from villages located within 30 km near the power plants. This suicide strongly suspected as consequence of refusing to leave the village where he had spent all of his live in. Okubo felt that he had not enough time to return someday, therefore he decided to die there rather than leaving. After Okubo’s death, the family members left demanded compensation money from TEPCO and they won in the court in February 2018 (“Compensation awarded over 102-year-old’s suicide amid Fukushima crisis”, *The Japan Times*, February 20, 2018. <<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2018/02/20/national/crime-legal/compensation-awarded-102-year-olds-suicide-amid-fukushima-crisis/#.Xhw3lczbD5>>[accessed November 13, 2019]).



in human's history, the lives of the characters in the story sent through several historical events in the world. For example, the main characters were witnesses of the history regarding the black movement's rise in America pioneered by Malcolm X and Martin Luther King. They were also witnesses of what had happened in the world when President Kennedy was assassinated. Furthermore, they saw the explosion of nuclear power plants at Chernobyl in newspapers and on televisions, and they saw the attack on the World Trade Center in 2001. Higashi Nihon Daishinsai's incident then is included as one of the important events in human's history. Unlike the previous events mentioned, Higashi Nihon Daishinsai takes a dominant part in this story. The story of *Yamaneko Doomu* began with a narration of conditions after Higashi Nihon Daishinsai's event and ended with the story of the remaining characters who ran away from the radiation caused by power plant's accident in Higashi Nihon Daishinsai's disaster.

At one point in the story, Micchi told the other two main characters that a fortune teller gave him three prophecies when he was in Brittany, France. The strange thing about those prophecies was that instead of calling them prophecies, it's more appropriate to call them curses. The scene where Micchi told his friends about these prophecies is an important scene in this story, since the three prophecies summarized three important events that happened in the story and they have a strong impact on the three main characters. The three prophecies told by the fortune teller were discussed and analyzed in several scenes in this story. First of the prophecies presented by Micchi is related to the death of one figure who had been the most feared by Micchi. As time goes by, this prediction became reality through the death of Taabo who took his own life by suicide. The second prophecy predicted that in the very near future, whether Micchi or someone close to him will suddenly die. This prophecy again became reality through the sudden death of Kazu, who had been an important person to Micchi. Lastly, the final prophecy was a prediction with a broader scope and requires a more thorough interpretation, stated as follows:

“Now, the last prophecy. For this prophecy, the scale is broader. One day, the Japanese islands, a place where I was born and raised will be swallowed by the sea, soon after, Japan will be occupied by a demonic creature with an unknown form”.<sup>104</sup>

It took a long time for the last prophecy to be interpreted correctly. When Higashi Nihon Daishinsai occurred, both Micchi and Yonko agreed that the disaster was the most accurate image for the interpretation of the third prophecy. Therefore, when Higashi Nihon Daishinsai occurred, all the prophecies given by the fortune teller had come true. The fact that Higashi Nihon Daishinsai was included in these prophecies, which are an integral part of this story, underlines the significance of the disaster throughout the whole novel. Therefore, besides underlining the importance of the theme of biracial children, *Yamaneko Doomu* also emphasizes Higashi Nihon Daishinsai's event notably the radiation caused by the accident at Fukushima nuclear power plants.

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<sup>104</sup> Original text: 「そして最後の予言。これはもっと規模がでかいんだ。いつの日か、おれの生まれ育った日本列島が海に呑みこまれ、その後、得体の知れない魔物が居すわることになるだろう」(Tsushima 2013: 62).

The next paragraphs will present an interpretation of the prominent themes found in *Yamaneko Doomu*. Some of these themes are generally found in the post-disaster literary works. The interpretation will be focused on four of the prominent themes. They are fear, insensitivity and sympathy, effects of false information (*fuhyouhigai*<sup>105</sup>), and nuclear power plants. This novel be read as a story with a strong correlation with Higashi Nihon Daishinsai, therefore it must be shown that the four prominent themes are associated closely with Higashi Nihon Daishinsai's disaster.

The first theme to be discussed is “fear” which mentioned repeatedly in several parts of the story. The description of “fear” in the novel is closely related to the character Taabo. There is one character with no explanation regarding his point of view or his role inside the story, aside from the fact that he appeared at the time of Miki chan's death. Despite his lack of appearance, he continues to be mentioned until the end of the story, even after he had already passed away. All main characters were afraid of Taabo. Nothing about Taabo was explained in detail, therefore the descriptions that are most representative are as follows:

“At that time, Taabo was nine years old. His messy hair looked gray. His downward slanting eyes gave him a sleepy expression. He never went to school except when he wanted to, and even when he came, he just wandered on the school grounds and skipped class a lot. Nevertheless, he ate his lunch provision. The students' mothers began to spread rumors, so it was because of that? He could not survive without eating his lunch provisions. His mother worked at night, so he must have been an ignored child. The mother and child came from mainland China, and they were being dumped by a man from China. Several irresponsible things were spoken, though not a single thing is clear. (...) Taabo, are you jealous of those kids? Even so, Taabo, you are so unlucky”.<sup>106</sup>

Taabo is a character who is always neglected when he appeared, though when he is not around, he is being talked about. In this story he is portrayed as one whose life is desolate. He never knew who his father was, he did not have a friend, he did not have a job and he lived together with his mother until the end of his life. Meanwhile, if this story is read as a story with a strong correlation with Higashi Nihon Daishinsai, both Taabo and the fears felt by the main characters toward him can be read as parables which require a deeper interpretation. The three main characters describe their fear of Taabo as a feeling that keep overshadowing them throughout their lives. They tried to avoid the fear, but no matter how far away they went, the fear keeps coming back to them, in fact it always stays in them. The fear is always present, nevertheless they had never been able to express it and kept concealing it from people around them. Even toward the “crime”

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<sup>105</sup> 風評被害

<sup>106</sup> Original text: 「あのとき、九歳だったター坊。くしゃくしゃになった髪の毛が白っぽく見える。目尻のさがった眼は、その顔をいつも眠そうに見せていた。学校には気が向いたときしか来なくて、せっかく学校まで来ても、校庭をうろうろするだけで、校舎に入ろうとしないことが多い。それでも給食は食べていく。そのためか、あの子は学校の給食で食いつないでいるそうよ、と生徒の母親たちにうわさされていた。お母さんは夜の仕事をしているから、ほったらかしなのよ、とか、あの親子は大陸からの引き上げ者で、中国人の男に見捨てられたんですって、とか、いろんな無責任なことを言われていたけれど、どれも曖昧なままだった。(中略) あの子たちがうらやましかったの、ター坊？それなのに、ター坊、あなたは運がわるすぎた」 (Tsushima 2013: 138-139).

allegedly committed by Taabo, they kept their mouths shut as to protect him, because they did not want to deal with him. If this story is being read deeply, the fear toward Taabo can also be interpreted as a Japanese society's fear toward the existence of nuclear energy. This fear of nuclear energy continued to overshadow humans and it is difficult to run away since the fear of it will always be exist. Obviously, this fear of nuclear energy could never be openly expressed in Japanese society. Therefore, it continues to be a hidden issue<sup>107</sup>. Some parties maintaining their action of keep shut up and protect the existence of nuclear power plants, although it has been proven that what they did also can be said as a "crime" against society and the environment<sup>108</sup>. The existence of Taabo's character in the story of *Yamaneko Doomu* can be interpreted as a symbol of nuclear energy itself.

One scene in the novel that strengthens the interpretation above occurs when Yonko reveals the fear she felt toward Taabo. She stated that the fear she felt did not go away as time went by, its existence keeps growing stronger instead. Her words are mentioned in the following quotation:

“As time goes by, and as far as we ran, what we fear, rather than disappearing, keeps growing bigger instead. Each of us is just maintaining a fear”.<sup>109</sup>

As mentioned before, the fear of Taabo is represents the fear toward nuclear energy, the quotation above can also be said to imply the fear toward nuclear energy. Nuclear power plants have been operating for quite a long time in Japan. However, the long length of the operating period does not make the fear towards it disappear. Some voices in society are vocal and continue to say that the existence of a nuclear power plant is dangerous. Other voices are quiet. Some of the quite ones, however, who keep their mouth shut are still “maintaining a fear” within themselves. What is clear about these things is that these fears will always be exist and cannot be eliminated. Even if sometimes the fear seems to go away, however it will come to the surface again when another accident occurs<sup>110</sup>.

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<sup>107</sup> Kimura states that discussions about nuclear power plants are considering taboo in Japanese society. In line with that, declaring suspicion toward nuclear power plants is something that cannot be forgiven. Someone who states about it will be considered “hysterical” and “consumed by misinformation” (*fuuhyouhigai*) (Kimura 2013: 184).

<sup>108</sup> Kingston states that after *Higashi Nihon Daishinsai*, the fears of nuclear energy spread throughout Japan. The poll conducted in 2012 showed that 70% of respondents expecting the use of nuclear energy to be reduced. However, big companies are immediately conducting political lobbies to prevent a reduction in nuclear energy supplies. The reason given was that the cost of importing fuel from overseas is very expensive, it caused a loss for business. Another reason mentioned was relating to the global warming, that if Japan does not use nuclear energy, the CO2 emissions produced will be exceeding the numbers allowed (Kingston 2012: 10).

<sup>109</sup> Original text: 「こわいことは時間が経てば経つほど、逃げれば逃げるほど、消えてくれるところか、もっと大きなこわい存在になっていく。みんなでこわさを育てていただけだったなんて」 (Tsushima 2013:57).

<sup>110</sup> Voices related to the nuclear power plants reemerging in the public after *Higashi Nihon Daishinsai* took place. A series of anti-nuclear demonstrations were carried out after the disaster. Six months after the disaster, the masses gathered in Meiji Park, Tokyo voicing their anger toward Fukushima nuclear power plant's crisis and demanding the termination of nuclear power plants. Oe Kenzaburo, who was a participant at the time stated that in fact Japan wants to continue the use of nuclear energy, therefore what the community could do is keep conducting meetings and demonstrations (Kazuaki Nagata, “Masses turn out to protest nuclear power”, *The Japan Times*, September 20, 2011).

For the next discussion, Yonko's statement when she was questioning herself for not helping Miki chan even after seeing her falling into the pond will be underlined. Yonko asked herself whether it was Taabo's presence which held her back from helping Miki chan and made her immediately run back home instead. She also wondered why everything could not be spoken even after four years gone by. Yonko's statements are as follows:

“At that time, what did we really see? Why did we not try to help Miki chan? Were we afraid of Taabo's presence and then ran away? Was that really Taabo? The question remained unspoken, even after four years passed”.<sup>111</sup>

The interesting thing in the quotation above is the final sentence, where it is stated that “the question remained unspoken even after four years passed”. Concerning the nuclear power plants, the danger of nuclear power had never been openly stated until unconsciously time passed by and nuclear power plants have been operating for a long period of time. The questions and doubts related to the nuclear power plants are buried along with the passage of time. It is possible that the people were afraid of questioning nuclear issues in order to avoid unnecessary confrontation with those who supported the continuity of nuclear energy. It is also possible that people are afraid to accept the reality that nuclear energy which is said to be a source of efficiency and which brings many benefits to many people is in fact brought a dangerous potential. That potential becomes real when nuclear accidents occur. The writer Murakami Haruki has pointed out that Japanese people are caught up in a dilemma, since they have a high dependency on efficiency brought by nuclear power plants while on the other hand they understand that the energy also bring a dangerous potential.<sup>112</sup>

Beside the fear toward Taboo, another form of “fear” is narrated in this story as follows. At the beginning of the story, the main character Micchi clearly expressed his fear of radiation while ordering food in Tokyo, since he was convinced that Tokyo had been exposed to radiation. Concerning about radiation

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<<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2011/09/20/national/masses-turn-out-to-protest-nuclear-power/#.Xh1wKcgzbD4>>[accessed November 13, 2019]). Meanwhile, in July 2012, more than 100,000 people walked to the center of Tokyo to put pressure on Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda regarding his nuclear energy policy. It was the biggest anti-nuclear demonstration carried out a month after the Prime Minister announced that he would reactivate nuclear power plants due to insufficiency of energy supply, which is considered dangerous and will affecting the economy (Aaron Sheldrick, “More than 100,000 protest nuclear power in Tokyo”, *Reuters*, July 16, 2012.

<<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-japan-nuclear-protest/more-than-100000-protest-nuclear-power-in-tokyo-idUSBRE86F0I120120716>>[accessed November 13, 2019]).

<sup>111</sup> Original text: 「ねえ、あのとき、わたしたちはいったい、なにをの？わたしたちはどうして、ミキちゃんを助けようとしなかったの？ター坊に気がつかれるのがこわくて、逃げだしてしまったの？あれはほんとに、ター坊だったの？だけど、言葉にできないまま、四年も経ってしまった」(Tsushima 2013: 99).

<sup>112</sup> During his speech, while receiving the International Catalunya Prize award in Barcelona on June 9, 2011, Murakami stated that Japanese people had already forgotten about the Hiroshima and Nagasaki disaster, due to the concept of *kouritsu* (効率) or efficiency introduced by the uses of nuclear energy. People who think that they can live without nuclear power are labeled as “unrealistic dreamers” (Haruki Murakami, “Speaking as an Unrealistic Dreamer”, *The Asia Pacific Journal*, July 19, 2011. < <https://apjif.org/2011/9/29/Murakami-Haruki/3571/article.html> > [accessed December 14, 2019]).

made him feel something different in the curry he ordered. He could not eat his food without being overwhelmed by fear. The scene is summarized in the following quotation:

“Micchi entered one of the shops. He ordered curry and coffee which he missed, then ate it in silence. He thought that maybe the radiation was also mixed inside the food, and besides, it tastes a little bit strange, he felt scared inside”.<sup>113</sup>

Food safety is one of the prominent issues in post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai. The worries over safety of vegetables and marine products originated from areas exposed to radiation were keep questioned. Since no official information regarding the food contamination’s was issued, rumors of food contamination began to emerge and cause fear. This issue later arose in *Yamaneko Doomu* as one of the effect caused by fear over radiation, the same kind of fear that hit Japan after Higashi Nihon Daishinsai.

The next theme which will be discussed is related to insensitivity and sympathy which implicitly unfolded in the story. The discussion of these themes to a certain extent depends on the war-related theme. In post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai some of the works with a theme related to the wars were published. Some of the outstanding works representing this theme are *Aoi Hana* (2013) written by Henmi Yo and *Yubi no Hone* (2015) written by Takahashi Hiroki. The discussions related to the theme of wars also appeared in the discussion of post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai’s literature. One of a discussion arise was the prediction of the next war, which is supposed to lead to the end of the world. Some other literary works dealt with wars that had happened in the past. In some literatures, the Hiroshima and Nagasaki’s nuclear destruction were associated with Higashi Nihon Daishinsai regarding the role of a nuclear energy in both disasters. *Yamaneko Doomu* presented themes related to post-war conditions, including the abandonment of biracial children after World War II. In one scene, the reality of war and the contradictions felt by children who were actually the victims of the war are shown in the quotation below:

“Since both of them have a darker skin than me, they were playing as American black soldiers. ‘Hey Jap!’ They would call while trying to imitate the sound of a chewing gum in a bad manner. Because of this play, we were scolded by Mama. She told us that there is a limit to insensitivity. (...) We are completely ignorant. Though we are also the children of the American soldiers. American soldiers who also did bad things to our Japanese mothers”.<sup>114</sup>

It was a scene where Mama caught them playing war. They played as soldiers in a war between America and Japan, where the darker skin children got the role of American Soldiers. The lack of sensitivity related to the topic of “war” was depicted through a scene in a child’s game which was simple, yet full of meaning.

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<sup>113</sup> Original text: 「ミッチはその店のひとつに入る。なつかしいカレーライスとコーヒーを注文し、黙々と食べはじめる。これにだって、放射能が混じってるんだろう、そういえば、妙な味がする、と内心びくびくしながら」(Tsushima 2013: 12).

<sup>114</sup> Original text: 「ふたりはぼくよりもっと色が黒くて、だから、アメリカの黒人兵になった。へい、ジャップ! と呼び、チューイングガムをくちゃくちゃ下品に噛む真似までして。そのことも、ママたちから叱られた。無神経にもほどがある。(中略) まったく、バカだよね。ぼくたち、アメリカ兵の子どもだっていうのに。それも、日本のお母さんたちにひどいことをしたアメリカ兵なのに」(Tsushima 2013: 92-93).

Mama's generation had experienced the war through direct involvement, and they felt that certain issues about war required sensitivity and respect. Naturally, children, who had not directly experienced war, could not understand the need for sensitivity and respect. Important to note in the above quotation is the statement "there is a limit to insensitivity". In the context of the story, the sentence refers to the insensitivity toward war. However, actually it can be interpreted with different meanings.

Insensitivity arises in society on various levels. For example, insensitivity in the post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai era can be related to nuclear power plants. In the beginning, nuclear power plants were considered to be an efficient solution to supply society with a huge amount of energy. Almost all the nuclear power plants operating in Japan were built in remote areas, i.e., not a central place for residency and business. However, those remote areas needed development in order to support and sustain the power plants. Consequently, when an accident happens, even though inhabitants of those areas are the main victims of the accident, they are accused because they had previously agreed to the construction of nuclear power plants. Some people made statements which were inappropriate and insensitive after the disaster<sup>115</sup>. Others stated that the news published in the mass media was insensitive since the disaster was deemed to be only a major disaster, without consideration of the many lives that had been lost and the large number of victims who lost their homes and relatives. The news media seemed not to appreciate the value of every single life. Furthermore, the issue of insensitivity also includes discrimination experienced by refugees who were clearly the victims in the situation. The phrase "there is a limit to insensitivity" above also can be read broadly as a call to build a sensitivity toward things that happen around us and that sometimes are forgotten.

The theme of insensitivity is closely related to the theme of "sympathy". In one scene of *Yamaneko Doomu*, Yonko expressed her feelings and thoughts about Micchi and Kazu who have a different background from hers. Micchi and Kazu are abandoned children of American soldiers, placed in an orphanage when they were still babies. Yonko, who was still too young at that time, finally realized that she would never be able to understand the feelings of abandoned biracial children, even though she felt deep sympathy for them in her heart. Yonko's feeling was revealed in the quotation below:

"No one expecting misfortune from them, even for mothers who gave birth to them, if they were able, surely they want to continue breastfeeding these babies. (...) Yonko wants to say that to them. However, these words could never be conveyed. Since maybe Yonko is the only one who feels happy, the feeling of abandoned mixed-blooded children, no matter how, Yonko will never be able to understand".<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> Kimura (2013: 86) responded to the statement mentioned by the former governor of Tokyo, Ishihara Shintarou. The statement spoken by the former governor was considered controversial and insensitive in the post-disaster period. At that time, Ishihara mentioned that *Higashi Nihon Daishinsai* was "a punishment from God" or in Japanese term is *tenbatsu* (天罰).

<sup>116</sup> Original text: 「だれも赤ちゃんの不幸を望んではいなかったはずなのだし、赤ちゃんを産んだお母さんにしてもできることなら、自分のおっぱいを赤ちゃんに吸わせつづけたかったはず。(中略) ヨンコはふたりにそのように言いたくなる。でも、こんな言葉はわざとらしくて、なかなか実際に言えるものではない。ヨンコだけが喜んでいるのかもしれないし、混血の捨て子の思いになど、諸全、ヨンコは近づくこともできないのかもしれない」 (Tsushima 2013: 74).

The interesting thing from the quotation above is the last sentence, where Yonko said that she would never be able to understand the feelings of biracial children abandoned by their mothers. This is in line with the feeling of victims in Higashi Nihon Daishinsai's disaster, where no one seems to be able to understand their trauma and feeling of loss. Biracial children in this story occupy the same position as the disaster victims; both were victims of inevitable situations. The victims of inevitable situations are always present in different forms, according to the time or era. They are victims, whose misfortune is unexpected. Yonko indicated this when she said in the first sentence that if they were able, the mothers of these abandoned children still wanted to take care of their own children. Similar to the biracial children who have to face difficulties in life and harbor confused feelings, disaster victims who lost their homes and were forced to flee to other places also had their own difficulties. These difficulties are coupled with discrimination experienced when they became refugees in other regions. The final sentence in the quotation above reminds the reader that sympathy for those who become "victims" through various unfortunate situations must be cultivated even though a comprehensive understanding of the victim's real feeling may never be reached.

The fourth theme that will be discussed is the effects of false information. After Higashi Nihon Daishinsai, the effects of false information, in Japanese *fuuhyouhigai*, spread. Higashi Nihon Daishinsai occurred in an open society, where access to information is easy, and information can be easily obtained from various parts of the world. The power plant accident in Fukushima was different from the accident in Chernobyl. That incident happened in a closed society, when Ukraine was still a part of the Soviet Union. In Chernobyl the accident remained unknown to the people for three days after the disaster occurred. The public did not know exactly what really happened at the nuclear power plant, since the only information given was that there was a fire at the nuclear power plant. At that time, the Soviet Union's government refused foreign aid from overseas so that the disaster could be completely covered up and hidden from the media and the international world.<sup>117</sup> This is contrary to the series of disasters that occurred in Fukushima. As we have seen, Higashi Nihon Daishinsai theme itself had spread over Twitter media in post-disaster period. At that time, even the social media had become a tool to provide information needed to deal with post-disaster situations. There was even a poet who published his series of poem through Twitter media, those poems are the writer's reflection on the disaster. The circulation of information is quick, and a large amount of information reaches the public quickly. Furthermore, this circulation of information is spread not just from one direction. Everyone who receives the information can respond. This two-way circulation has a positive side, since all of the people involved have the same opportunity to express their opinions. But on the other hand, this kind of circulation has the tendency to make the real message ambiguous and unclear. This unclearness then creates confusion. Each individual involved in this long information chain digests the news based on his/her ability and willingness. When a large amount of unclear information circulates in the public, it is the beginning of the emergence of false issues and news. That kind of information does

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<sup>117</sup> "Sharapova Mengenang Bencana Chernobyl", *Kompas*, March 17, 2011, p.8.

not provide clarity about the truth, but only causes an upheaval. The effects of the unclear news are actually extraordinary. In the beginning of post-disaster period, rumors regarding food contamination were widely circulated. For, some of vegetables and marine products cultivated around the disaster area were found contaminated by radiation. To cover the issue, the government promoted campaign with a message to eat products from *Touhoku*. A well-known Japanese music band was appointed to be an ambassador of this campaign.<sup>118</sup> The existence of this campaign is one example that rumors or false information do have a big effect on public behavior. Rumors related to the contamination, which spread in post-disaster period, also played a big role in the escalation of discrimination against victims who became refugees.

The story of *Yamaneko Doomu* summarizes how the effect of rumors and false information or *fuhyouhigai* has had a big impact on human life. In the story it was not revealed to the public how exactly Miki chan died. No one knew whether Miki-chan actually fell into the pond by herself, or somebody pushed her, or whether there was another cause. People only knew that when the accident happened, there were biracial children playing at the scene. The unclearness of what really happened, coupled with the appearance of children who are physically different from the Japanese people in general, creates psychological distance and adds confusion to the rumors and gossip that were spread. The cruel rumors had forced Mama to send Kazu and Micchi abroad for a while until the gossip stopped. The quotation of the scene is as follow:

“I thought that your mama could not escape from the rumors. That's why she decided to send her children abroad immediately. (...) The rumors are horrifying. People who proclaimed those rumors are daunting. We cannot confront them one by one”.<sup>119</sup>

The quotation above emphasized how the rumors have reached a horrifying level and strayed out of control. These rumors were psychologically destructive. Besides, the parties being hit by unclear rumors cannot confront people who spread it one by one. What is even more frightening is that the ambiguous rumors blur the thoughts in people's minds from the real issue. What really happened then is blurred in obscurity. The most disheartening thing is that what really happened will never be known. The rumors make reality meaningless. It is explained in the quotation below. There is one scene in *Yamaneko Doomu*, where Yonko's mother stated that for her, being suspected by the police is still bearable, but the most horrifying thing was what had happened on the day of Miki chan's death would never be known completely.

“Rather than being suspected by the police, the rumors circulating around are much more frightening. The shade of the rumors never disappeared. The rumors strayed independently and keep reproducing

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<sup>118</sup> After the disaster, the government promoted a campaign titled *Tabete Ouen Shiyou* or “Lets Support East Japan by Eating” which was made to encourage people to consume vegetables, fruits, fish, meat and products originated from Fukushima and the surrounding area. The campaign was allegedly aiming to restore public trust in Touhoku's products. This campaign also took the famous band TOKIO as its spokesperson (“Tabete Ouen Shiyou”, *Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries website*.< <https://www.maff.go.jp/j/shokusan/eat/>>[accessed December 14, 2019]).

<sup>119</sup> Original text: 「あんたたちのママはうわさからは逃げられない、と思ったの。それなら、子どもたちをさっさと逃がそうと思い決めたのよ。(中略) うわさがおそろしい。ゆがんだうわさを口にするひとたちがおそろしい。そのひとたちをひとりひとり相手にすることもできない」 (Tsushima 2013: 103).



themselves. And what is even more frightening, for Yonko's mother, also for the children, as well as Taabo, and even Miki chan herself, was the fact that what actually had happened would never be known".<sup>120</sup>

In the case of the Higashi Nihon Daishinsai's disaster, the large amount of unclear information also overshadowed the essential things. Since the early post-disaster period until now, the extent of the area contaminated by radiation as well as to what extent the handling of contamination had already been carried out cannot be known with certainty. Also, those who are responsible for this accident was remains unclear. Furthermore, questions regarding the future of the victims as well as the effects on the abandoned regions remain unanswered. In these uncertain situations, false information and ambiguous news or *fuhyouhigai* have the potential to create panic and division among the people.

The next theme that will be discussed, is probably the most dominant theme of this story. It concerns nuclear power plants and their effects. In this story, Higashi Nihon Daishinsai is described as an extraordinary disaster with an unexpected effect. The tsunami was already bad enough, though, coupled with explosions of four nuclear power plants in a row it was horrifying. The dreadfulness of the earthquake and tsunami has already been described by Tsushima as an apocalypse, nevertheless it still turned out to be worse than expected.

"An enormous tsunami's footage. It's enough with that only. When we assume that the end of the world has arrived, soon after, four nuclear power plants exploded".<sup>121</sup>

The main reason why nuclear power plants are a source of horrifying terror is the radiation that they emitted. The effect of a nuclear accident does not stop after the accident takes place, but its effect continues for a long period of time. Radiation itself is not a particle visible to the eye. Because it is invisible, people have difficulty to avoid it. This invisible radiation was the source of panic in the immediate post-disaster era. It was the reason for many foreigners residing in Japan to flee overseas<sup>122</sup>, and it was the reason also for some airlines to terminate flight services to Japan.<sup>123</sup> In the economic sector, radiation affecting Japanese

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<sup>120</sup> Original text: 「警察に疑われるよりも、近所のうわさのほうがずっとこわい。うわさの影は消えることがない。うわさは勝手にゆがみ、増殖していく。そしてもっとこわいのは、ヨンコの母にも、きっと子どもたちにも、た一坊にも、ミキちゃん本人にさえ、現実になにがおきたのかわからないということ」(Tsushima 2013: 147-148).

<sup>121</sup> Original text: 「巨大すぎる津波の映像。それだけでもじゅうぶん、この世の終わりだと感じていたら、つづけて、四つもの原子力発電の施設が爆発したという」(Tsushima 2013: 12-13).

<sup>122</sup> After the second explosion of Fukushima nuclear power plant (the explosion in the unit 3), foreign residents who were worried about the effects of radiation flee from Japan. Some European countries have asked their citizens to leave Japan until the situation is under control. US aircraft that carrying foreign aids were asked to return. The French government even urged its citizens to leave Japan within the next three days, if there is no urgent need ("Khawatirkan Ledakan Nuklir", *Kompas*, March 15, 2011, p.1).

<sup>123</sup> Five days after the disaster, various air flights from around the world, from Germany to Taiwan were avoiding flights to Tokyo. The United States does the same thing. There were several warnings of not visiting Japan emerged ("Krisis Bisa Memburuk", *Kompas*, March 16, 2011, p.8).

companies, caused the share market to fall<sup>124</sup>, while in the political sector it was believed to be the reason for the prime minister to resign.<sup>125</sup> Some people were not only unable to escape from the diffusion of radiation, they were also incapable of running away from other after-effects caused by the accident. What also seems clear is that people cannot escape from their own hysteria. *Yamaneko Doomu* describes how radiation is a particle that cannot be avoided by all beings. Everything is exposed to radiation even when their life has just begun. The new born larvae having been exposed to radiation because of the environmental surroundings are also victims of radiation. Besides, when they grew up into mosquitos, they helped to spread radiation to various parts of the world. The following is pertinent:

“The plants that cannot run with their own strength, the land that feeds plants, the water that flows underground, the water that falls down from the sky, all of them will be polluted by radiation. The larvae asleep underground will also be exposed (to radiation). Then, after coming out of the ground, it will eat the leaves contaminated by radiation, it will carry radiation-contaminated flower powder until somewhere unknown. The mosquitoes that have just begun to fly would never be able to escape from radiation”.<sup>126</sup>

A situation which leaves people in deadlock, and from which no one can escape is a cause for despair. The disaster victims found the situation psychologically hard. In post-disaster era, many victims were neglected since the government only focused on the contamination issues. The news media reported the nuclear accidents and how the government and TEPCO were trying to reduce the crisis. Meanwhile, aid came late to the disaster posts. Consequently, many victims lacked food and fuel during the freezing winter.<sup>127</sup> There was a scarcity on fuel source, coupled with electricity and water supply that haven't flowed as usually. In grave situations like this, the looting became rampant and depression afflicted victims.<sup>128</sup> The elderly

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<sup>124</sup> In the post-disaster period, the stock price of TEPCO and several companies related to nuclear technology were dropped. The stock of automotive companies such as Toyota, Honda, Nissan, Mitsubishi, and Isuzu were also reportedly dropped since the Touhoku area hit by the disaster was the center of production also the main distribution line for business (“Indeks Nikkei Anjlok”, *Kompas*, March 15, 2011, p.11).

<sup>125</sup> Prime Minister Kan Naoto escaped vote of no confidence held on June 2, 2011. Members of parliament who supported the vote of no confidence stated that Kan was considered less responsive to the crisis that took place after *Higashi Nihon Daishinsai*. Prime Minister Kan, who expressed his desire to resign the following year, since it would take time to resolve the problems caused by the disaster, was under pressure to step down faster, therefore he finally announced that he would resign in August 2011 (“PM Jepang Mundur Agustus”, *Kompas*, June 6, 2011, p.10).

<sup>126</sup> Original text: 「その場から自分の力で逃げられない植物たち、植物を養う土、土の下を流れる水、空から降りそそいでくる水が、放射能に汚されていく。土の中に眠っていた幼虫たちも汚染される。そして地上に出てから、放射能に汚された葉っぱを食べ、放射能に汚された花粉をどこにでも運ぶ。公園に早々と飛びはじめた蚊だって、放射能から無縁ではられない」(Tsunami 2013: 18-19).

<sup>127</sup> *Higashi Nihon Daishinsai* as a disaster happened at the end of winter, make it difficult for the victims to survive in contemporary residents without fuels. The aid distribution was acknowledged by the government as late due to the scarcity of fuels. As a result of this late distribution, the government began to be criticized for only focusing on handling the nuclear accidents although there were still many victims who were neglected (“Distribusi Bantuan Sulit”, *Kompas*, March 20, 2011, p.2).

<sup>128</sup> On March 23, 2011, *Kompas* reported that looting cases began to be found in the disaster area. The cases occurred including a looting of empty houses, an ATM looting, and a stealing of fuel from abandoned cars. Police stated that the looting started because people began lacking money and foods (“Pencurian dan Penjarahan Marak”, *Kompas*, March 23, 2011, p.8). Still relevant to looting cases, although this one was not done by victims, Kawamura (2013: 28) in his review of Ogino Anna book entitled 『大震災 欲と仁義』 (*Daishinsai Yoku to Jingi*) discussed one section where

victims are said to have been the most vulnerable people in this disaster. Despair continued with no clarity regarding the future of victims from this time forth. For people who made a living as farmers or fishermen, accepting the fact that the land and the sea which had given them livelihoods must be abandoned due to the radiation is a big burden. Starting a new life outside the place called home also requires a strong determination. For some people feeling that they still had a clear path in front of them, ran as far as possible from the disaster area is an alternatives choice. Nevertheless, the intention to run and start a new life was sometimes blocked by various things that needed to be considered. The dilemma of the victims' feelings after Higashi Nihon Daishinsai is illustrated in the quotation below:

“Because of the tsunami that had never been experienced before, the great damage occurred. No, the tsunami did not come to Tokyo, but not only that, it is nuclear energy, do you know that? I mean nuclear power plants, four nuclear power plants in Fukushima exploded, spreading radiation to surrounding areas. Many people were asked to escape immediately. Farmers had to abandon their cows, yes, they were desperate and said that they could not live longer, there were also people who died of suicide. Nuclear radiation is a very scary thing. I also want to go to a place where there are no earthquakes and radiation, however, there are responsibilities here. I cannot ignore the people whom I responsible for, right? They cannot live without us being here, right?”<sup>129</sup>

In the early post-disaster period, it had been said that people had complete trust that the government would be able to handle the crisis. However, due to indications that the crisis overwhelmed the government, and efforts to handle the situations were inadequate, also important information was kept hidden from people at large, the public began to direct their anger toward the government. Furthermore, the community also started to attack TEPCO (Tokyo Electric Power Company) which was considered as a negligent party in the nuclear power plant's operation. From TEPCO's side, it was stated that the accident which occurred at the Fukushima nuclear power plant was an “unpredictable” event. The president of TEPCO disappeared in the aftermath of the disaster and handed over the task to appear in public to his subordinates.<sup>130</sup> The settlement of this nuclear accident's cases has been rolling on for years. It took years to drag TEPCO

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Ogino raised the topic of misuse of disaster's aid by irresponsible parties. There was person who addressed the disaster's aid to his personal address so the aid from all over country would be delivered to his address. He then regulates the distribution of aid and gives himself a right to receive the aids.

<sup>129</sup> Original text: 「ほんとうに前代未聞の津波で、たいへんな被害だったんですから、いえ、東京に津波は来なかったですけど、それだけじゃなくて、原発、わかりますか？原子力発電所のことですよ、福島にある原発が四つも爆発して、放射能をまき散らしたんです、それでたくさんのひとたちが大急ぎで避難しろって言われて、酪農家は牛を置き去りにしなければならなくて、ええ、もうこれじゃ生きていけないって悲観して、自殺してしまった方もいらっしゃるんですよ、放射能はね、とてもこわいものらしいんですよ、放射能も地震もないところへ、わたしも逃げだしたいけど、責任上、こうしてわたしが担当しているみなさんを投げ捨てるわけにはいきませんし、みなさん、わたしたちがいなくなったら生きていけないですもんねえ、」(Tsushima 2013: 30-31).

<sup>130</sup> Question from Japanese citizens regarding who should be responsible for the accident and who would control the crisis caused by the accident were directed to the president of TEPCO, Shimizu Masataka who disappeared from the public after expressed his apology in March 13, 2011. From that moment on, the responsibility for appearing in public has been handed to his subordinate. This subordinate has no more words other than, “We still have to confirm this problem”. This statement only added the public's outrage (“Ujian Untuk Sang Pemimpin”, *Kompas*, March 21, 2011, p.11).

officials who were accused of being responsible for the accident to the courts.<sup>131</sup> These events raised public awareness that TEPCO may indeed have been protected by particular parties, just as nuclear energy matters have always been sealed and protected.

As stated earlier, Taabo's character in this story is a likely representation of nuclear energy itself. What reinforces that interpretation is because just as a nuclear energy, it is described in this story how Taabo continues to be protected by his mother, from the outside world as well as from those who suspected him of any wrongdoing. It is implied in the following quote:

“For a long time he did not appear at school, when the homeroom teacher who was worried about him investigated the situation, Taabo's mother crawled out of the house saying, ‘Please forgive this child. This child knows nothing at all.’ She said it many times with a tearful voice”.<sup>132</sup>

As Taabo's mother, she already knows that something is wrong with her child. Even though many suspicions were getting stronger as time went by, she still pretended not to know of any wrongdoing. She defended her son in front of the teacher and continued to defend him in front of the world, for decades. In the story, it is told how she learned that every six years her son behaved strangely. Every six years, there was always one day when her son went outside and returned home under a dark aura. Then he would lock himself up in his room, he would not go outside, nor eat or drink for a couple of days. Throughout her life, Taabo's mother had been trying to convince herself that in every six years, there was one day when her son “relapsed” since she believed that her son had “a rare disease”. She turned a blind eye to the fact that there were women wearing orange skirts died out there. Not much different from Taabo's mother, were the three main characters who believed that Taabo played a role in the deaths of Miki chan and the women with orange skirts, even though they did not have positive evidence. They knew these things, yet they had no intention to seek for proof. They were immersed in their own fears. They only waited for newspapers to carry the news of the death of a woman wearing an orange skirt. Yet none of them intended to say the things they knew. No one intended to speak of the coincidence they had observed between the death of Miki chan and how it relates to the murder of the women with orange skirts. This silence and denial are no different from how people reacted to nuclear power plants. Although many parties were aware of the potential “crime”

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<sup>131</sup> At the end of June 2017, the trial for three TEPCO officials in connection with the 2011's Fukushima nuclear accident held for the first time. The charge for them, one official and two vice presidents of TEPCO, were negligence caused the death of 44 people and many more injured. The three were accused of failed to predict a large tsunami that would come by not preparing nuclear facilities to be resistance of tsunami, thus caused the deaths of victims who were late to save themselves when accident happened. Most of the victims were patients of hospital in the surrounding area near nuclear power plants (Daisuke Kikuchi, “Ex-Tepeco plead innocent as 3/11 nuclear negligence trial kicks off”, *The Japan Times*, June 30, 2017. <<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/06/30/national/crime-legal/three-former-tepeco-executives-go-trial-311-fukushima-nuclear-disaster/#.Xh2UKcgzbD4>>[accessed November 13, 2019]).

<sup>132</sup> Original text: 「学校にも長いこと姿を見せず、さすがに心配になった担任の教師が様子を見に行くと、ター坊の母親が家の外に這いできて、許してください、あの子はなにも知りません、とくり返し涙声で言った」 (Tsushima 2013: 140).

carried by nuclear power plants, they choose to keep their mouths shut. Even when the “crime” had been proved in front of the public, various efforts were still made to offer protection from harmful allegations.

*Yamaneko Doomu* is a literary work full of messages related to the nuclear energy. However, in a long discussion associated to this theme, Tsushima as an author did not firmly express her stance toward the narration and the debate intertwined with this topic. Only at the end of this story, does Tsushima imply her disagreement with the use of nuclear energy. The author’s personal thoughts and opinions regarding nuclear energy seem to be poured out in the quotation below:

“We, and everyone, were all deceived by groups who adore the nuclear power plants. Thus, in the future they will continue to deceive us. Whether it is America or Japan, or even France, everyone is same! You really had to escape”.<sup>133</sup>

These words were uttered by a non-prominent character in the story. In the quotation above, the word “deceived” is used as an expression of disagreement toward nuclear power plants. The word “deceived” implies disappointment toward the object being discussed. It is said that the public had been deceived by a group of people who cherished nuclear energy. That kind of opinions was circulated throughout society and it became increasingly vociferous after Higashi Nihon Daishinsai took place. Long before the accident happened, campaigns promoting nuclear energy were approved in order to make people slowly accept nuclear energy as part of their daily lives. To reach a wider audience, even films and literatures were used as vehicle to promote nuclear energy as something close to the human life.<sup>134</sup> The mascots representing nuclear energy were displayed in adorable animation forms, so that people were distracted from the danger posed by this energy.<sup>135</sup> The electric company responsible for the use of nuclear facilities even sponsored promotional project overseas to show the international community that nuclear energy is an efficient safe alternative source of energy. Beside the efficiency, nuclear power plants were also proclaimed to be built with high resistance to earthquakes.<sup>136</sup> However, what had happened to Fukushima then led to the creating of public opinion which believed that people had been actually “deceived” about the nuclear facilities.

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<sup>133</sup> Original text: 「わたしたち、みんな、原子力の大好きな連中にだまされていたのよ。そして、これからもだまそうとしている。アメリカも、日本も、そしてこのフランスも同じだった！逃げてください、本当に」 (Tsushima 2013: 330).

<sup>134</sup> Kimura argues that there is a feeling of guilt in Japanese society who “despite knowing the consequences of nuclear energy but still enjoy the use of it” (Kimura 2013: 64-65). The guilt then manifested in the form of artwork, notably films and literary works. The film titled 『ゴジラ』 (*Gojira*) produced in 1954 illustrated that *genpatsu* (原 発) or nuclear power plants and *genbaku* (原 爆) or nuclear explosions are something close to the daily lives (Kimura 2013: 67).

<sup>135</sup> Kimura mentions that Tezuka Osamu's manga titled 『鉄腕アトム』 (*Tetsuwan Atomu*) which later was made in an anime version, was an attempt to introduce “nuclear for peace” to the public. The main character named Atom is a nuclear-powered cute robot which keep people away from the reality of the danger posed by nuclear energy (Kimura 2013: 70).

<sup>136</sup> In Kompas newspaper, dated March 17, 2011, it was stated that a year before Fukushima accident occurred, the Japanese nuclear company visited Jakarta in order to present the progress of nuclear technology in Japan. In their presentation, it was explained how the initial design of nuclear facilities would be able to resist high scale earthquakes.

Even though the fear and panic caused by nuclear power plant were narrated in this story, in the end of the story it seems as if the author wanted to say that even in a bad situation there would always be hope. Higashi Nihon Daishinsai is one of the worst disasters in the history of humankind, however it is contrary to Taabo's mother belief that this disaster leads to the end of the world, as she stated at the beginning of the story as follows: "The world is finally ended. It gave 'the end' to us. Everything slowly disappears. The end of the world has now arrived".<sup>137</sup> Contrary to her belief, the world is not yet over, instead it is still trying to recover. Since the world tries to revive, people also have hope to rebuild their lives even if it means leaving the old place and old memories behind. The message is conveyed in the quotation below:

"Let's get out of here. We cannot live in this place anymore. We cannot do anything except moving to a new place. After all, three of us are still survivors. Therefore, I want the three of us to move together".<sup>138</sup>

The quotation is taken from a conversation carried out by Micchi to Yonko and Taabo's mother at the end of the story. In the last scene, Micchi and Yonko decided to come to Taabo's mother residence which is described as being dense with radiation (Micchi described this density with a word *nikogori* in Japanese which actually means jellied fish or jellied meat broth). Micchi asked Taabo's mother permission to take her away to a safer place. Micchi said that the request was based on the reason that he once was Taabo's friend. The request to escape together can also be interpreted as the scene where Micchi and Yonko had abandoned their past, they overcame their fear of Taabo's presence by stepping into his residence and they forget the unpleasant past relationship between them. The dark history between them was defeated through the emergence of awareness related to humanity, where there was a belief that people should save each other and build a new future in a new place together. The last sentence that summarizes the doubts and concerns regarding nuclear energy in *Yamaneko Doomu* is found in the paragraph below:

"The thick radiation in fact moves aimlessly in a long period of time, then it sticks to the ponds, the rocks, the houses, and it also flows in the wind and the rain. It also sticks to the plants, to all kinds of animals, then it caused a silent yet cruel pain in humans. It was same with not being able to escape from the pain. Why is that?".<sup>139</sup>

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But what happened to Fukushima then raised questions regarding that claim ("Pesan dari PLTN Fukushima", *Kompas*, March 17, 2011, p.6).

<sup>137</sup> Original text: 「世界がやっと終わる。終わってくれる。なにかもが消えていく。世界の終わりが今ごろ、来たんだ」 (Tsunami 2013: 39).

<sup>138</sup> Original text: 「一さあ、ここから出ましょう。ここは、もう住めないんです。新しい場所に移るしかない。どういうわけか、おれたち三人が生き残っている。だから、三人でいっしょに動きたい」 (Tsunami 2013: 337).

<sup>139</sup> Original text: 「放射能の煮ごりが実際には、池に、石に、家々にこびりつき、風や雨に流され、途方もなく長い時間をかけて移ろいつづけ、草木も、鳥獣虫魚、そして人間たちにも静かで残酷な痛みを与え、その痛みから逃れることはできないのと同じように。なぜ？ どうして？」 (Tsunami 2013: 338-339).

The quotation one more time emphasized the fact that no one can escape from radiation. Radiation will move in all directions and stick to every object it encounters. Not only that, radiation will cause an invisible “pain”. At the same time, the question of why humans had to bear such situations will arise. That question seems to invite the reader to think about the same problem, which is why the world community had to bear the effects caused by radiation from the use of nuclear energy.

The series of Higashi Nihon Daishinsai’s disasters, which affected various aspects of people’s lives, has been portrayed in literature. It was assumed that to understand the themes portrayed in post-disaster literary works, in-depth interpretation of the literary works which had been published must be conducted. In this part, the novel titled *Yamaneko Doomu* was chosen to be interpreted. This work seems to discuss the theme concerning biracial children born in the post-war period. However, in-depth interpretation showed that a more dominant theme than biracial children is the theme that associated with nuclear energy and radiation. From the interpretation, it was assumed that *Yamaneko Doomu* had a close relationship with Higashi Nihon Daishinsai, therefore the interpretation was entirely related to Higashi Nihon Daishinsai’s disaster. Based on the in-depth interpretation, it was found that the prominent themes in *Yamaneko Doomu* were themes associated with fear, insensitivity and sympathy, the effect of false information, and the suspicion surrounding nuclear power plants. Based on the interpretation, it was found that among the various themes in the story, the theme concerning nuclear power plants was more dominant. The theme of minorities and biracial children is less prominent. At the end of the story, the author of *Yamaneko Doomu* also explained her personal opinion, namely that she opposes the use of nuclear energy.

## CHAPTER III

### THE LITERARY LIFE OF TAWADA YOKO

#### 3.1 Themes and Characteristics in Tawada Yoko's Literary Works

Before the discussion goes into the description of Tawada Yoko's literary world, which is related to the themes generally presented in her works and how the characteristic of her writings are quite different compared to other writers, it is necessary to mention Tawada's background which gives her influences in the way she express herself in her writings. Tawada Yoko is a writer born in Tokyo, Japan in 1960. She graduated from Waseda University, majored in Russian Literature and continued her master degree's education at the University of Hamburg with a major in contemporary German literature. Later, she pursued her doctoral education in German literature at the University of Zurich. Tawada debuted as a writer in 1987, later in 1991 she was awarded the Gunzou Award (*Gunzou Shinjin Bungakushou*), dedicated to the newcomers in literary world. She won this award through her work with a title "Kakato wo Nakushite". Tawada's literary career continued to rise when in 1993 she won the Akutagawa Literary Award (*Akutagawa Ryunosuke Shou*) for her work entitled *Inu Mukoiri*. Tawada's writing does not consist of fiction solely. Beside novels and short stories, she also writes drama scripts, poems, essays, as well as literary criticism. Furthermore, Tawada is also active in holding public lectures. The material of those lectures were published in book format afterwards. The field of Tawada's literary works are broad; however not all of her works will be discussed in this section. This section will try to focus on Tawada's fiction works, by discussing some of her prominent fiction works. The discussion of those prominent works will later lead to the discussion of several themes and characteristics that typically are presented in her fiction works.

Throughout her career as a writer, Tawada has received several prestigious awards, both from Japan and outside Japan. Some of these awards are *Gunzou Shinjin Bungakushou* and *Akutawaga Shou*, which were already mentioned above. In 1996, she received *Adelbert von Chamisso Award*, which is a German literary award, dedicated to the writers who are non-native speaker of German language. Tawada won another literary award in 2000, namely *Izumi Kyouka Bungakushou* for her work with the title *Hinagiku no Ocha no Baai*. Moreover, in 2003 she was awarded *Tanizaki Junichirou Shou* for her work entitled *Yougisha no Yakouressha*. Furthermore, in 2005 she won the *Goethe-Medaille* which is dedicated to non-Germans who contributed to the spirit of Goethe institution. In 2011, she received *Noma Bungei Shou* for her work entitled *Yuki no Renshuusei*, while in 2012 she was awarded *Yomiuri Bungaku Shou* for her work with the title *Kumo wo Tsukamu Hanashi*. Four years later, in 2016, she won another German literary award, the *Kleist Prize* for her contribution to the German literature. In the following year, or in 2017, Tawada was one of the women who received



*Warwick Prize for Women in Translation* award. This award is given to the prominent authors whose works had been translated into English. Tawada won this award for her work which had been translated into English, entitled *Memoirs of a Polar Bear*. She received the award along with Susan Bernofsky who translated her work. Moving to the next year, or in 2018, Tawada was awarded by *Carl-Zuckmayer-Medaille*, again for her contribution to German literature. The most recent award she collected was the *National Book Award* for translated literature category in 2018. She won this award for her work entitled *Kentoushi*, which was translated into English with the title *The Emissary*. She shared this award together with Margaret Mitsutani who translated this work.

One of the most prominent characteristic in Tawada's literary style is that she writes in two languages, Japanese and German. Tawada's inquiry for foreign languages had begun since she was studying Russian literature in Japan. Due to the uncertain political condition in the Soviet Union at that time, Tawada decided to try her luck with Germany. This decision then opened the door for her to study German language and literature. Tawada trained herself to read in more than five languages. She said that multilingualism was quite a "tricky" thing, and being only in the space between two languages, Japanese and German was enough for her.<sup>140</sup> In an interview regarding her work entitled *Yuuki no Renshuusei*<sup>141</sup>, Tawada admitted that both Japanese and German were important parts of her life. She described that the two languages were chasing one another inside her mind.

After publishing *Yuuki no Renshuusei* in Japanese, I translated it into German. Both Japanese and German have already become important things for me. I enjoyed the two languages that running parallel and following one another inside me.<sup>142</sup>

In another interview, Tawada stated that German and Japanese were inspiring each other and pushing each other. As a result, the two languages consistently influenced the way she wrote her fiction and non-fiction works.

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<sup>140</sup> In an interview with Alexandra Pereira published in *The Paris Review* 16 November 2018, Tawada stated, "Being multilingual is tricky. I feel more as though I am between two languages, and that feels like enough. To study that in-between space has given me so much poetry" ("Between Two Languages: An Interview with Yoko Tawada", *The Paris Review*, November 16, 2018. <<https://www.theparisreview.org/blog/2018/11/16/between-two-languages-an-interview-with-yoko-tawada/>>[accessed December 17, 2019]).

<sup>141</sup> *Yuuki no Renshuusei* was published in *Shinchou* between October to December 2010. In January 2011, the book version was published by *Shinchousha*. Tawada then translated this work into German by herself. The German version was translated again into English by Susan Bernofsky under the title *Memoirs of a Polar Bear*.

<sup>142</sup> The original statement published in *Nihon Keizai Shinbun* on April 18, 2017, was as follows, 「小説『雪の練習生』は日本語で発表後、ドイツ語に自分で翻訳した。日本語もドイツ語も私には大切なものになっている。二つの言葉が自分の中で並走したり、追い抜いたり、抜かれたりするを楽しんでいます」 ("Machi ni tadayou kodoku no kehai egaku", *Nihon Keizai Shinbun*, April 18, 2017, p.23).

German and Japanese inspire each other and push each other forward. The same interaction takes place between my critical and my poetic writings. I am not a poet who has distaste for scholars of German literature, and I am not a scholar of German literature who secretly despises poets.<sup>143</sup>

Through her novels, poetry, drama texts, as well as other types of writings, Tawada explored the aspects of multilingualism. She is not only incorporated her main languages (Japanese and German) in her works, but other languages as well.

Tawada's multilingualism then suggested a question about her true cultural and national identity. As a writer who lives between two languages and associated with two countries, Tawada's identity was an intriguing topic for many people. Tawada was also expected to respond to this question with an acceptable answer, yet different from many other writers who write only in one language. Concerning the issue of identity, without answering it straightforwardly, Tawada responded that humans were formed by endless changes, therefore what shapes humans are what they heard, what they read, and how they reacted to things. How humans exist at present is connected to their past.<sup>144</sup> Tawada seemed to refuse to associate herself with a rigid identity, she argued it was way more important to realize the real differences and how people try to reflect and resolve these differences.<sup>145</sup> Thus, Tawada indicated that she does not want her literary identity to be bounded by a rigid definition. Tawada embraces changes and considers these changes as a part of her identity. She wants her identity to be the writer who is not framed by the label of languages and countries. This constantly changing identity is also reflected in her works, which are always presenting a turbulence condition without being in a stagnant condition. Most of the characters presented by Tawada in her fiction works have to deal with various transformations in their lives. This transformation aspect is also reflected in her

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<sup>143</sup> This was Tawada's answer in an interview with Bettina Brandt. At that time, Brandt asked how Tawada tried to understand the relationship between her fiction and essay works. Tawada responded by associating it to the relationship between the Japanese and German inside her mind. At the end of her answer, Tawada added, "Both of those exist, and, though they try to keep it a secret, it always shows!" (Bettina Brandt, "The Postcommunist Eye An Interview with Tawada Yoko", *World Literature Today*, 2006, p.43.

<[https://www.academia.edu/1302127/The\\_Postcommunist\\_Eye\\_An\\_Interview\\_with\\_Yoko\\_Tawada](https://www.academia.edu/1302127/The_Postcommunist_Eye_An_Interview_with_Yoko_Tawada)>[accessed December 17, 2019]).

<sup>144</sup> In an interview with Brandt, in correlation with her cultural and national identity, Tawada answered as follows, "Nowadays, human existence is made up of continual, varied interchanges. What I refer to as "I" is made up of what I hear, what I read, what I see, and how I react to it (...) Of course, this current "I" has also something to do with the past, but my past, too, does not consist solely of Japan." (Bettina Brandt, "The Postcommunist Eye An Interview with Tawada Yoko", *World Literature Today*, 2006, p.43.

<[https://www.academia.edu/1302127/The\\_Postcommunist\\_Eye\\_An\\_Interview\\_with\\_Yoko\\_Tawada](https://www.academia.edu/1302127/The_Postcommunist_Eye_An_Interview_with_Yoko_Tawada)>[accessed December 17, 2019]).

<sup>145</sup> On the identity-related issue, Tawada seemed to emphasize that for her human identity is always changing and never in a fixed form. As she stated, "It is more important to think about existing differences, and to reflect upon how these are perceived and incorporated. We are constantly changing, and change is not a threat. It is much more difficult to try to understand this process of transformation than to hold on to a rigid, permanent shape." (Bettina Brandt, "The Postcommunist Eye An Interview with Tawada Yoko", *World Literature Today*, 2006, p.43.

<[https://www.academia.edu/1302127/The\\_Postcommunist\\_Eye\\_An\\_Interview\\_with\\_Yoko\\_Tawada](https://www.academia.edu/1302127/The_Postcommunist_Eye_An_Interview_with_Yoko_Tawada)>[accessed December 17, 2019]).

works, which are always full of variance, with different themes in each appearance. The discussion of the ‘continuous change’ in Tawada’s fiction works will be presented in the different parts of this subchapter.

The characteristics and themes presented by Tawada can be understood not only through the reading process of her works, but also through the responses and comments Tawada herself gave to her works, as well as the discussions regarding her literary works. Tawada vigorously participated in many interviews that discussed her works. She willingly shared how she reflected on her works, how she felt in the writing process, what kind of things she wanted to convey in her works, and what kind of mental state that she felt when she was writing any particular work. This subchapter will explore Tawada’s authorship and her fiction’s themes and characteristics through some of her prominent literary works entitled *Kakato wo Nakushite*, *Inu Mukoiri*, *Yuki no Renshuusei*, *Hyakunen no Sanpo*, and *Chikyuu ni Chiribamerarete*. The discussion of these literary works will lead to the discussion regarding the prominent themes and characteristics in her literary works.

In 1991, Tawada was awarded by the Gunzou award presented to the outstanding newcomer in the Japanese literary world. She won the award for her work entitled *Kakato wo Nakushite*.<sup>146</sup> This work tells a story about the main character who had an adventure while exploring a new place where she had never stepped into before. She came to the new place to meet her new husband. When she was just about to set foot in the new place, she stumbled and fell in the station. The main character was quite disturbed by how children laughed and looked at her feet while she was walking in the streets for the first time. They laughed at her as if there was something wrong with her heels. She felt people were watching over her in a bizarre look. However, she tried to ignore them and force herself to adapt to the new environment. She strolled around the city, tried to observe her surroundings, and even went to school to learn the norms of that place. She tried to fill her days while imagining what her husband actually looks like, since she never has seen her husband in the real world. She only met her husband in her dreams, and the husband would always put money on the table every day. The husband lives in another part of the house, he was always inside a room with a black door that is always locked. One day, the main character felt that she needs to go to see the doctor. The doctor then suggested that there was something wrong with the main character’s heels. Therefore, surgery was needed. Through an encounter with a nurse from the hospital, the main character was led to meet a locksmith in the town. The main character then asked the locksmith to break the black door where her husband was always hiding. The story ends when the main character found her husband in an unexpected form. This work took readers to Tawada’s imaginary world, where the readers are guided to digest Tawada’s unique plot and storytelling. Tawada’s unique style reappeared in her next work.

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<sup>146</sup> The story of “Kakato wo Nakushite” was published in *Sannin Kankei* (1992) by Koudansha. This work was later translated into English by Margaret Mitsutani and published in *The Bridegroom was a Dog* along with the translation of Tawada’s masterpiece, “Inu Mukoiri”.

Move to 1993, Tawada published one of her masterpieces, as well as a literary work that led her to the prestigious Akutagawa Literary Prize, *Inu Mukoiri*.<sup>147</sup> This piece of work tells the story of a unique teacher named Mitsuko. Mitsuko told her students about the story of the princess and the dog. It was said that the princess could not clean herself after defecating, and her maid was too lazy to help her, therefore the maid always called the princess' favorite black dog to help her. The maid told the dog that if he wants to lick princess' buttock after defecating, one day the princess would become his wife. The tale seemed to become half reality when one day, a man who acted like a dog came and then stayed in Mitsuko's house. The story then involved people around Mitsuko who were curious about the background of this man. At the end of the story, the man left with another man while Mitsuko herself left the city with one of her students.

Both *Kakato wo Nakushite* and *Inu Mukoiri*, each requires readers' broad imagination to be able to interpret the meaning of each scene, description, and storyline presented in the stories. Neither of the stories is happening in the real world. It requires the readers to wandering into Tawada's imaginary world to explore every meaning she intended. Two main characters appeared in these stories who have similar characters with several other figures presented in many of Tawada's fiction works. In *Kakato wo Nakushite*, the main character is a woman who came to a new environment, she tried to adapt to a new situation, she also has a big intention to learn new things and absorb them into her mind. In her learning process, the main character has to 'balance' her old customs with the new things that she encountered. One critic analyzing this literary work stated that Tawada described the process of losing the linguistic and cultural basis as a loss of 'heel' (Lacka 2009: 253). When the heel that becomes a stabilizer in the humans' steps is absent, the steps will be unbalanced. The loss of the linguistic and cultural basis is deemed as a fatal disadvantage. Therefore, losing those aspects is a parable for humans who lost their 'heels'. Meanwhile, in *Inu Mukoiri*, the main character is a woman who also came to a new place, she experienced turmoil with the appearance of new person in her life, and then she left for a new place. The characters created by Tawada's imagination move from one place to another effortlessly. They repeatedly enter new territories and adapted to the new cultural complexities. This kind of pattern is often raised in Tawada's fictional works, it can be interpreted as a manifestation of Tawada's own experiences in adapting and assimilating to new languages and cultures.

Moving far to the year of 2011, Tawada published her Japanese novel with the title *Yuki no Renshuusei*.<sup>148</sup> Inspired by the Berlin zoo's famous polar bear named Knut, Tawada presented the story of three generations of polar bears, consisted of Knut who was the star of Berlin zoo, his mother who was a circus bear named Tosca, and his grandmother who was born in Moscow. These bears

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<sup>147</sup> *Inu Mukoiri* (1993) was translated into English by Margaret Mitsutani in 1998 with the English title *The Bridegroom was a Dog*.

<sup>148</sup> In 2014, *Yuki no Renshuusei* was published in German with the title *Etüden im Schnee*, following in 2016, the English version translated by Susan Bernofski was published under the title of *Memoirs of a Polar Bear*.

jumped into human life. The grandmother bear was born in a communist country. She struggled until she became a best-selling book author. Tosca, the mother, was enjoying her life as a circus star in East Germany. Knut himself was a celebrity bear that increased the zoo's income since he draws attention of many people regarding the global warming issue.

One aspect that appear from this story is that Tawada seemed to show her curiosity regarding the issue of communism. It was highlighted in the places narrated in this work, namely is Russia and East Germany. Looking back at her past statements and her previous works, Tawada had shown her interest in socialism and the Cold War. In an interview with Bettina Brandt, regarding her views on post-communism, Tawada mentioned that several conflicts had taken place in this world, and when we consider that the Cold War was already over, it seemed that people were suddenly led to the conflict involving the Islamic countries. Tawada assumed that it could not be said accurately that one conflict has been ended and another begin. For her, conflicts are an interconnected entity. Also, she did not believe that the topic of communism has been resolved completely.<sup>149</sup> Tawada was consistent with her statement regarding communism as an unfinished topic that is worth to be discussed. After finishing her work in 2004 with the title *Das nackte Auge* (The Naked Eye) which tells a story of a Vietnam woman who was abducted when attending a conference in East Germany and forcibly taken to West Germany, Tawada then published *Yuki no Renshuusei* in 2011 which was still related to the theme of communism.<sup>150</sup> Besides the topic of communism that stick to these works, the writing process of *Yuki no Renshuusei* and *Das nackte Auge* were composed in two languages since the beginning. The writing process of these works can be described as an activity that completely explored Tawada's linguistic ability until she was able to produce the same work with different nuances, since it was written in two different languages.

For Tawada personally, the writing process of *Yuki no Renshuusei* was closely related to her exploration of writing activities. In an interview with Claudia Steinberg, Tawada expressed that the activity of writing was dangerous. By writing something, people are led to arrive at unexpected places.

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<sup>149</sup> The quotation from Tawada's statement is as follows, "Now we like to say that the Cold War is over and that, instead, we are in the middle of a conflict with the Islamic world. It is not accurate, however, to say that a conflict is over and another has begun. No, all conflicts are related. In my eyes, the Vietnam War is not over, and colonialism in Southeast Asia is not over either. I don't have the impression that communism, as a topic, has been resolved and that suddenly an entirely new issue has reared its head. That is simply not the way it is. Our present becomes more visible when we look at it from the perspective of that which is only supposedly over" (Bettina Brandt, "The Postcommunist Eye An Interview with Tawada Yoko", *World Literature Today*, 2006, p.45.

<[https://www.academia.edu/1302127/The\\_Postcommunist\\_Eye\\_An\\_Interview\\_with\\_Yoko\\_Tawada](https://www.academia.edu/1302127/The_Postcommunist_Eye_An_Interview_with_Yoko_Tawada)>[accessed December 17, 2019]).

<sup>150</sup> *Das nackte Auge* (2004) not only presented a communism-related theme, it was also questioning things related to the use of a language, the national boundaries, and the fragmentations. This work was not only appealing to the readers, but also it helped those who were interested in the themes of language, identity, and transition. (Ashwin Manthripragada, "The Naked Eye, Yoko Tawada, Translated from the German by Susan Bernofsky", *Transit.5(1)*, 2009, p.4.

<[https://www.academia.edu/4843690/The\\_Naked\\_Eye\\_Y%C5%8Dko\\_Tawada\\_Translated\\_from\\_the\\_German\\_by\\_Susan\\_Bernofsky](https://www.academia.edu/4843690/The_Naked_Eye_Y%C5%8Dko_Tawada_Translated_from_the_German_by_Susan_Bernofsky)>[accessed December 17, 2019]).

Writing will get people close to the things that are buried inside themselves and suppressed in their memories.<sup>151</sup> For Tawada, the memories that came back in the writing process of *Yuki no Renshuusei* were related to the fun things that happened during her childhood. She admitted doing those things for her own pleasure, while in fact, she probably did that to attract compliments and to please everyone around her.<sup>152</sup> This also correlates with the story of the lives of Knut and his mother, Tosca. As a celebrity bear and a circus star, they played a role not for themselves, but for the satisfaction and pleasure of people surrounding them. In this story, Tawada seemed to show an allegory of humans' life represented by these bears. This also might be related to Tawada's previous statement when she said that a zoo was an interesting place for her. Some people hate zoos in consideration of it seems like an unpleasant place, where people unconsciously associate their life to life inside a zoo. Based on her experience, Tawada concluded that life in the zoos is similar to life in the society where we live, except humans often assume to be superior to animals since they have the right to choose what they want to do or to be, when in fact it is not always the case.<sup>153</sup> It seems like Tawada wanted to emphasize that humans who were physically not bounded by anything were actually restricted by various things, mainly when they became a part of society. They were bounded by invisible chains that limited them from making decisions in life. Besides the themes related to communism and allegory of human life, *Yuki no Renshuusei* also presented the theme of life in a new place and how humans survive in a new environment. The theme of entering a new place and surviving in a new environment reappeared in Tawada's other work entitled *Chikyuu ni Chiribamerarete*.

In 2017, Tawada published her fiction work in Japanese with the title *Hyakunen no Sanpo*.<sup>154</sup> This literary work is a collection of stories contain ten short stories all set in Berlin, the city where Tawada lives. In every story, it seemed that Tawada tries to present and reveal every inch of the city of Berlin. Tawada traced the history of this city since the fall of the Berlin Wall. She passed through the streets, named after the world's famous thinkers such as Kant and Karl Marx and she also illustrated the elements of solitude and loneliness that hovering all over this city. Tawada admitted that to write *Hyakunen no Sanpo*, she strolled around Berlin and observed how this city reflected the mind of the people who live there. For her, in this kind of atmosphere, there are many things that probably happen.

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<sup>151</sup> The quotation regarding Tawada's statement of the writing activity is as follows, "With writing one enters an unpredictable place: in spite of having mapped the book, one never knows where one arrives. And one may very well discover something one didn't want to know about oneself, or encounter a long-suppressed memory. In that sense, writing is dangerous" (Claudia Steinberg, "The Fabulist Tawada Yoko", *Aesop*, October, 2017. <<https://www.aesop.com/nz/r/the-fabulist/yoko-tawada> >[accessed December 17, 2019]).

<sup>152</sup> Claudia Steinberg, "The Fabulist Tawada Yoko", *Aesop*, October, 2017. <<https://www.aesop.com/nz/r/the-fabulist/yoko-tawada> >[accessed December 17, 2019].

<sup>153</sup> Related to that topic, Tawada stated, "We recognize that existence (zoos) as terrible and unbearable, because we also live like that: it is familiar. Zoo and circus animals are much more like us than those in nature, even though we supposedly live the way we do by choice. I have studied prisons intensively, and I believe that everyone's lives resemble those in prisons and zoos." (Claudia Steinberg, "The Fabulist Tawada Yoko", *Aesop*, October, 2017. <<https://www.aesop.com/nz/r/the-fabulist/yoko-tawada> >[accessed December 17, 2019]).

<sup>154</sup> *Hyakunen no Sanpo* was previously published in a serial form in *Shinchou* between 2014-2016.

I took a leisure walk in town and observed things that I did not know. I like to imagine what kind of things the people that pass me by are thinking. The city reflected the desires of its inhabitants. The buildings were built, then they were destroyed. I realized that compared to the rural area, the incomprehensible things are more likely to happen here.<sup>155</sup>

While taking a walk, Tawada noted the events that happened or the interesting words that she heard. The notes then developed into a form of stories.<sup>156</sup>

Tawada has been living in Germany since 1982, however, she started living in Berlin from 2006. In *Hyakunen no Sanpo*, she indicated that she wanted to present the other aspects of Berlin that had not been explored yet. It seemed that Tawada wanted to show how Berlin was viewed from different perspectives. She was already familiar with the scenery and atmosphere surrounding that city, yet she felt that there were still too many sides to be explored and too many words to describe.<sup>157</sup> Tawada once said that the observation conducted to the particular object would produce different impressions when the observation is done in different periods of time. *Hyakunen no Sanpo* was Tawada's attempt to express everything that she saw in the form of the words.

For example, a painting in the museum that attracts our attention and which we observe for 20 seconds will look different if we look at it 3 minutes later. If we continue to look at it for 15 minutes, it will look like something that is completely different. It was like that, I keep looking until I felt empty, I wondered how if everything I saw in the city where I used to live was transformed into a novel. This is one experiment that I did.<sup>158</sup>

*Hyakunen no Sanpo* presents a character of 'watashi' (me) who keeps waiting for 'ano hito' (that person). At the beginning of this story, it was not explained in detail who the 'ano hito' was. In the last story of this book, it was finally revealed that the person was Mayakovsky, a famous poet from the

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<sup>155</sup> Original quotes: 「街をぶらぶら歩いて知らないものを観察し、すれ違う人が何を考えているか想像するのが好きです。都市は人々の欲望を反映している。建物が建ち、壊される。不可解なことが農村より、起こり得る気がします」 (“Machi ni tadayou kodoku no kehai egaku”, *Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, April 18, 2017, p.23).

<sup>156</sup> Regarding the writing process of *Hyakunen no Sanpo*, Tawada stated that besides taking a walk in Berlin, she also wrote in a note during the walk, 「気になる物事や見聞きした言葉を鉛筆でメモし、それをもとに書き進めた。」 (With the pencil, I wrote interesting things and the words that I saw and heard, then I developed my text through that) (“Machi ni tadayou kodoku no kehai egaku”, *Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, April 18, 2017, p.23).

<sup>157</sup> Tokou Kouji stated that the method Tawada chose in writing *Hyakunen no Sanpo* was “exploring the uncomfortable things in the usual things”, 「当たり前のことの中に違和感を見出すこと。」 (finding uncomfortable things in common things) (Tokou Kouji, “Berurin no juusousei no naka de kimama ni kabe wo kuguri nukeru”, *Book Bang*, 2017. <<https://www.bookbang.jp/review/article/529364>> [accessed December 17, 2019]).

<sup>158</sup> Original quotes: 「例えば普通は20秒も見れば見た気になる美術館の絵が3分後にまた違って見え、さらに15分貼ると全然違うものが見えたりするでしょう。そんな風に自分が空っぽになるまで貼りに貼り、住み慣れた町で目にしたものを全て小説化したらどうなるかという、一つの実験です」 (“Doitsu de mo hyouka wo ukeru berurin zaijuu chosha ni yoru gensouteki na rensaku chouhen”, *P+D Magazine*, 2017. <<https://pdmagazine.jp/today-book/book-review-251/>> [accessed December 17, 2019]).

Soviet Union.<sup>159</sup> From that point, the character of ‘watashi’ was seemingly transformed into the character of Mayakovsky himself and ‘watashi’ could feel all the chaos that took place in the poet’s head. *Hyakunen no Sanpo* is a mixture of reality and illusion, a familiar pattern in Tawada’s storytelling. It was not just the storytelling, like many of her works that profoundly discussing the issues happening in the world, Tawada also raised several issues in this book. Among them was an issue related to the immigrants’ problem in Europe<sup>160</sup> and the issue of whaling controversy in Japan (*hoge mondai*). Tawada also touched on some historical events that had occurred in the world, such as the nuclear accident in Chernobyl and the Fukushima nuclear accident in Japan. In accordance with her style, this work also focused on language exploration. Tawada created some new words and enjoyed the process of making them. In his response regarding Tawada’s wordplay presented in this work, Kawashima Takashi mentioned that at the first glance, Tawada’s wordplay seemed harmless, however, it actually relates to the sensitivity of social and political problems.<sup>161</sup>

Apart from the appearance of social issues and wordplay in her works, some reviews of *Hyakunen no Sanpo* stated that the most prominent elements in this work are the theme of solitude and loneliness. Regarding solitude and loneliness presented in her work, Tawada stated as follows:

By walking in the town, they could feel the loneliness. Even though they have family and friends, the loneliness still existed. They wanted to reach out to someone, but they could not find them. Even though they were in relationships, they did not know where the love was. I wanted to write all of the signs hovering all over the city.<sup>162</sup>

Kawashima Takashi, who wrote a review for *Hyakunen no Sanpo* stated that at the first impression, the title of this book reminds readers of the work of Gabriel Garcia Marquez with the title, *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. However, what seemed to be important in this work, namely the message behind this work, is that Tawada wanted to describe how the word “loneliness” (*kodoku*) and “leisure walk” (*sanpo*) are complementary to each other. In the closing part of his review, Kawashima wrote as follows.

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<sup>159</sup> Vladimir Vladimirovich Mayakovsky (1893-1930) was a poet, drama player, and famous actor from the Soviet Union. His works mainly supported the spread of the Communist Party’s ideology and the glorification of Lenin. During his life, Mayakovsky’s relationship with the Soviet Union was always complex and turbulent. Mayakovsky died at the age of 36 from suicide.

<sup>160</sup> Related to the issues of immigrants in Berlin, Tawada stated as follows, 「そもそもベルリン自体が歴史に翻弄された町なので、移民排斥的な空気も比較的薄い。人に何か言われる前に口を噤むようになったら、町も人もお終いです。」 (Basically, since Berlin is a city trifled by history, the rejection aura of the immigrants is relatively low. If someone’s mouth is closed before he/she says something, then the city and its people will be finished) (“Doitsu de mo hyouka wo ukeru berurin zaijuu chosha ni yoru gensouteki na rensaku chouhen”, *P+D Magazine*, 2017. <<https://pdmagazine.jp/today-book/book-review-251/>>[accessed December 17, 2019]).

<sup>161</sup> Takashi Kawashima, “Berurin no machi de mimi sumaseru”, *Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, May 13, 2017.

<sup>162</sup> Original quotes: 「街を歩くと、孤独だと思う。家族や友達がいるのに、孤独だと感じさせられる。誰かを求めて、でも会えない。恋をしているのに、どこに恋があるか分からない。街全体に漂うそんな気配を書きたかった」 (“Machi ni tadayou kodoku no kehahi egaku”, *Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, April 18, 2017, p.23).



From the perspective of a loner pedestrian, through a comfortable position in one single language, the hidden and invisible world will clearly show itself.<sup>163</sup>

This sentence seemed to correlate with Tawada's multilingualism, where her proficiency of Japanese and German became the door that revealed the things which were previously concealed, then these things later are manifested in her uniqueness that is presented in her works.

Moving to the next literary work, in 2018 Tawada published her new work entitled *Chikyuu ni Chiribamerarete*. It tells of adventures experienced by the main character named Hiruko. Hiruko lost her hometown when she was studying abroad. To survive in the new country, she gathered people and created a new language that was composed of daily language, called Pansuka language. In one of her essays, Tawada opened up the possibility of the creation of new languages. She raised the question of whether there is a possibility for European languages to be written in different forms. She asked about the possibility of these languages to be written in the shape of ideograms.

I am surely one of the few authors in Europe who often asks herself whether European languages couldn't also be written using different forms of writing. Writing with European ideograms would be an art project I haven't yet put into practice, but it's already had an influence on my writing.<sup>164</sup>

The question she asked herself then seemed to be answered in this work, where Tawada explored the form of languages, even when she did not replace the forms of writing these languages in the end. *Chikyuu ni Chiribamerarete* was written in Japanese, however, this work was full of words of other languages besides the main language itself. This story did not mention how Hiruko lost her hometown, or how the country suddenly disappeared. Neither was it mentioned that the lost hometown was in Japan; the word 'Japan' itself was not mentioned at all.

In an interview associated with *Chikyuu ni Chiribamerarete* with Gohara Kai, Tawada revealed her personal opinions regarding the languages in the world and how she defines the national boundaries. She assumed that in each language in the world, certainly there are elements that absorbed from other languages. To illustrate, the Japanese language formerly consisted of many languages, it was then met many other languages across the world, made Japanese language became a more diverse language<sup>165</sup>. Tawada has been developing her proficiency of multilingualism over decades. The long

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<sup>163</sup> Original quotes: 「「孤独な散歩者の視点から、単一の言葉に安住する立場からは見落とされてしまう世界が鮮やかに切り取られる」(Takashi Kawashima, “Berurin no machi de mimi sumaseru”, *Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, May 13, 2017).

<sup>164</sup> Tawada mentioned this topic in an essay with the title “The Letter as Literature's Political and Poetic Body” published in 2009 in *The Asia-Pacific Journal*. Tawada questioned why the countries using alphabet in their writing systems did not even once asking about how they need to preserve that writing system. She offered an idea for writing European languages with another system. (Tawada 2009: 8)

<sup>165</sup> In correlation with that topic, Tawada stated, 「それから一つの言語の中にも、もともといろんな言語が含まれているんじゃないかと思うんです。(中略) 日本語の内部に多様性がまずあって、それが更なる言語と出

learning process had influenced her creativity and she acquired an understanding of languages that only people who work for a long period time in the linguistic field can produce. As it was mentioned before, Tawada has spent almost half of her life in Germany, immersed the middle of the German language. Surrounded by the German language, she admitted that sometimes she made new Japanese words inside her head. She imagined that no one surrounding her understood Japanese. Therefore she dismantled the components of Japanese words, took only the important part; then she made a new Japanese word that was not bound by the structure of that language. Her thought was expressed in the quotation below.

(...) Sometimes, I who live in Germany make a few Japanese words in my head. When I speak in Japanese, for example at this time, even though I am bound by the Japanese peculiar expressions, when I speak Japanese in my mind and no one surrounding me understands Japanese, I dismantle the components in Japanese language and take only important parts. Then I made a new Japanese language and tried to convey it without being attached to the structure of Japanese language. I tried to make an understandable artificial language that is more international, more open, in other words, it is not the language that is used with friends, but the language used when talking to people who came from foreign cultures.<sup>166</sup>

That kind of thought seemed to resonate with the problem faced by foreigners in understanding the Japanese language. As Japan becomes more open to the global society, the possibility of misunderstanding between the Japanese people and foreigners residing in Japan is escalating. It probably happens due to language limitations as well as the gap in cultural understanding. The simple and practical Japanese language is needed to enable a good quality of communication that can fulfill the goals and objectives of both parties. Tawada said that the simplification in the Pansuka language could be identified as “utopia”. However, looking at how Japan is trying to open up to the global community, it is not impossible that kind of language will come into existence soon. There is a possibility that the Japanese language will transform into a simpler form that can be understood by people from different language backgrounds.

Tawada’s writing career is not only influenced by her multilingualism side, but also by her multiculturalism side. To express herself, Tawada refused to be bound by the limitations attributed to her as someone with Japanese nationality. She said that there was a kind of belief that people of

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会うことで、ますます多様になっていく。」(I thought that a single language formerly consisted of many other languages. (...) In the inner part of the Japanese language there is a diversity mixed, through the meeting with other languages, Japanese language became increasingly varied) (“Numa no naka kara saku hasu no hana no you ni”, *Dokushojin web*, May 18, 2018. <<https://dokushojin.com/article.html?i=3319>>[accessed December 17, 2019]).

<sup>166</sup> Original quotes: 「(中略) 私がドイツ語の中で暮らしていて時々頭の中で時々つくっている日本語でもあるんです。実際に日本語をしゃべっている時には、たとえば今もそうですが、日本語独特の言い回しとか流れに従っていますが、まわりに日本語を理解できる人がいない状態で心の中で日本語をしゃべっている時には、日本語の要素を解体して行って、一番大切なことだけを、日本語の仕組みとは関係ないところで伝えることが出来るような新しい日本語というのかな、もっと簡潔でもっと国際性のある、もっと風通しのいい、つまり仲間内言葉ではなくて、異文化から来た人と話すための国際的な日本語をめざして人工語を創っていたりするんです」 (“Numa no naka kara saku hasu no hana no you ni”, *Dokushojin web*, May 18, 2018. <<https://dokushojin.com/article.html?i=3319>>[accessed December 17, 2019]).

Japanese nationality should spend the rest of their life in Japan. However, when this belief is reexamined, the word “Japan” itself has no exact definition. As an illustration, someone who spent his/her life in an urban area of Japan would have a different experience compared to someone who spent his/her life in a rural area of Japan. The differences are not limited to the cultural differences, there is also a difference in the historical backgrounds. In the end, there is no exact definition that can fully describe Japan. That was one of the reasons why Tawada did not mention the word “Japan” in *Chikyuu ni Chiribamerarete*. Tawada suggested that the limitations based on the national boundaries will make many aspects become invisible.

I was made to realized that there is no “one Japan”. That was the reason why I decided not to use the word “Japan” easily in this novel. Because by doing so, there would be many things that became invisible.<sup>167</sup>

Tawada’s intention to avoid some attributions related to certain countries was also shown when she decided not to use kanji’s characters to name the characters presented in *Chikyuu ni Chiribamerarete*. Tawada stated that the use of alphabets will release them from their seals. She gave the example of her name which was written as “Yoko” in the alphabet. Writing her name in this way makes her name in Japanese unrecognizable. Even the word “Yoko” itself can be misinterpreted as not being a Japanese word.<sup>168</sup>

The work of *Chikyuu ni Chiribamerarete* presents a charm of language, and it enhanced Tawada’s reputation as an author who refuses to abide by the rule of boundaries based on national territories and languages. In the story, after losing her hometown, Hiruko was came into a decision to create a language that can be understood by people throughout the world. On her journey Hiroko met other five young characters who then became her partners in exploring the meaning of language. Tawada showed how the main character tried to create a new language by using the words that are commonly in everyday’s life, this was a reflection on her personal experience in absorbing and learning new languages.<sup>169</sup> Besides the topic related to the exploration of language that quite prominent in this work, *Chikyuu ni Chiribamerarete* also describe the journey of a group of young people, seeking the

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<sup>167</sup> Original quotes: 「一つの「日本」というものはないんだと実感させられました。だからこの小説を書くに至って安易に「日本」という言葉を使うのはやめようと思ったわけなんです。それによって見えなくなるものがたくさんあるから」 (“Numa no naka kara saku hasu no hana no you ni”, *Dokushojin web*, May 18, 2018. <<https://dokushojin.com/article.html?i=3319>>[accessed December 17, 2019]).

<sup>168</sup> Regarding the way of writing her name in kanji, Tawada revealed as follows, 「私の名前の葉子も、ドイツではアルファベットで Yoko と書いているわけですが、そうすると、葉っぱの葉子なのか、太平洋の洋子なのか、太陽の陽子なのか、もうわからない。それどころか日本語かどうかも確定できない。」 (Since my name is Yoko (葉子) which was written in German with the alphabet as “Yoko”, it was unrecognizable whether my name Yoko was written by the letter “child of the leaves” (葉子), or “child of the pacific sea” (洋子), or “child of the sun” (陽子). It might not even be recognizable whether it was Japanese or non-Japanese names) (“Numa no naka kara saku hasu no hana no you ni”, *Dokushojin web*, May 18, 2018. <<https://dokushojin.com/article.html?i=3319>>[accessed December 17, 2019]).

<sup>169</sup> “Kokoku ushinai douhou sagashi motomeru tabi”, *Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, May 19, 2018.

meaning of something important for them. This story presents six young people with different backgrounds, who eventually moved together as a group. In correlation with the theme related to the role of young people in society, Tawada expressed her opinion by saying that living in Europe made her realize that Japan seemed like has its own “fiction” side. Many young people tend to live in isolation (*uchimuki*), and Japanese youth are especially susceptible to live in isolation. Tawada’s work contains a “warning” (*kikikan*) against this tendency. In the article titled *Kodoku Ushinai Douhou Sagashimotomeru Tabi* which was published in *Nihon Keizai Shinbun*, Tawada’s said as follows:

By living in Europe, Tawada said that she could feel the “fictional aspects of Japan”. She said, “By living in a virtual and real-world, I have an image that many young people are living in isolation. Maybe the trend in the world has led to that behavior. However, Japan is the leading country that moves at a fast speed toward that tendency”.<sup>170</sup>

Besides the multilingualism and multiculturalism aspects, *Chikyuu ni Chiribamerarete* seemed to present Tawada’s concern on the movement of the young generation which she assumed is moving outside the normal norm. Before we deal with the problems faced by the young generation, it is first necessary to acknowledge that “living in isolation” (*uchimuki*) problem exists. Through her work that contains a “warning” (*kikikan*) against that tendency, Tawada helps to understand and recognize the existence of the social phenomena of the young generation.

In the fictional works that have been presented, Tawada Yoko’s readers will find certain similarities in her stories. There are similarities in the patterns, themes, and characteristics presented in her storytelling. The main thing that puts Tawada in a unique position compared to many other writers is her ability to write in two languages. Through her proficiency in two languages, Tawada entered the cultures of those languages which she wrote in. It put her in a position as an author with an expansive cultural and national identity. She can not be associated with one particular language nor with one particular culture. Her ability to use two languages and her familiarity with two cultures show Tawada’s flexible side, where she often portrayed her fictional characters going through continuous changes. In *Kakato wo Nakushite* and *Inu Mukoiri*, Tawada portrayed two main characters who entered new environments, or it can be interpreted that they entered new cultures. These two characters explored their new environments, tried to adapt, then left in the end. They experienced a transformation in their lives through the turbulent things that happened during their lives. How Tawada depicted her fictional characters reflect her personal experiences. Tawada Yoko’s name is generally associated with multilingualism and multiculturalism, and her fictional characters also often deal with language and cultural aspects. However, Tawada almost never exposed her understanding or idea related to the

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<sup>170</sup> In *Nihon Keizai Shinbun*, May 19, 2018, page 27, the contributor wrote Tawada’s opinion as follows, 「ヨーロッパで暮らしていると「日本にフィクション性を感じる」という。「バーチャルな現実の中に住んでいる、内向きな若者が多いイメージがある。それは世界傾向かもしれないが、日本はその先頭を走っているように見えます」 (“Kokoku ushinai douhou sagashi motomeru tabi”, *Nihon Keizai Shinbun*, May 19, 2018).

theory of languages and cultures. In some of her works, Tawada did not specifically mention the name of countries or regions. For example, in *Kakato wo Nakushite* she did not mention the place that the main character move to and in *Chikyuu ni Chiribamerarete* she did not mention the word 'Japan' at all. Tawada's point of view regarding language and culture was clarified in this statement:

Tawada is not providing a theory of race, racism, or racialization; to the contrary, words derived from "race" are absent in these texts. Yet experiences of racialization are fundamental to her texts' characters and their experiences (Weber 2015: 75).

Tawada's proficiency in Japanese and German languages led her to the deeper exploration of these two languages. She often presents and analyzes the elements of these languages in her works. *Chikyuu ni Chiribamerarete* is packed with the experimental language, it shows Tawada's observation as an attempt to create a new language inspired by the language that she mastered. Meanwhile, *Hyakunen no Sanpo* depicts a wordplay that became Tawada's weapon to touch the prominent sensitive issues at that time. Furthermore, a collection of stories entitled *Kentoushi* presents some artificial Japanese terms that apparently sound like humor, when in fact they actually have a serious meaning behind. One of the stories of *Kentoushi* with the title "Idaten Dokomademo" presents some Japanese metaphors in the storyline. She seemed enjoy every aspect of her language exploration and made them a source of inspiration for her writings. In one of her essays, Tawada gave an example that the Japanese language is a 'garbage of can' that means a treasure for her.

The Japanese spoken today seems to me like the garbage can of linguistic history, and this is one reason why I like the language so much. A garbage can is an important source of inspiration, because often we throw away what is most important. Without making the acquaintance of the German language, I never would have noticed that I am in possession of a garbage can that can be my treasure chest. (Tawada 2009: 10)

Furthermore, Tawada wrote many stories that seemed unrelated to the real world and she demanded readers' high imagination to be able to understand them. These works presented an imaginary world where peculiar things happened, as is depicted in *Kakato wo Nakushite* and *Inu Mukoiri*. Sometimes her stories depicted a combination of the real world and imaginary world, like *Hyakunen no Sanpo*. In other literary works, Tawada presented a human allegory, as it was depicted in *Yuuki no Renshuusei* where the bear characters were doing things that would not happen in the real world. It seemed that Tawada did not want her works to be limited by a 'normal reality'. She wanted her works to explore all possibilities even if that meant crossing the boundary between normality and abnormality.

Another characteristic in Tawada's writing was that she also tried to present her opinion regarding prominent issues in society. In her works, she depicted those issues both explicitly and implicitly. Some of her works that touched the highly sensitive issues were slightly blurred by her high ability in playing with words.

Based on the discussion of Tawada Yoko's literary themes and characteristics, it can be concluded that first, Tawada emphasized the use of mastery of two languages and her experience of living in two cultures. Second, Tawada presented continuous changes in her characters who move from one country/culture to other countries/cultures. Third, Tawada presented stories in the imaginary world, and she captured readers by the richness of her realm of imagination. And fourth, Tawada is an author with high sensitivity regarding the issues that took place in society. She is not reluctant to pour out her uneasiness about those issues in her literary works. Through her sensitivity, Tawada presented a new experience to her readers. The new experience is compounded through her broad perspective and her proficiency in two languages.

### **3.2 Tawada Yoko and Higashi Nihon Daishinsai**

Higashi Nihon Daishinsai enticed Japanese writers to express their opinions about the disaster. They seemed to be competing against each other in showing how this disaster was reflected in their works and how it had to be interpreted in writings. Among many authors who have reacted to this disaster, Tawada Yoko was quite vocal in voicing her opinions and criticism toward the Fukushima accident.

Tawada participated in several interviews regarding this disaster conducted by the foreign media. Moreover, Tawada was noted as a writer who had produced many works related to this disaster, both in fiction and non-fiction works. On the non-fiction side, Tawada published a compilation which consisted of her articles and interviews, and her lectures with the title *Yoko Tawada: Fremde Wasser* (Yoko Tawada: Foreign Waters).<sup>171</sup> Some texts in *Yoko Tawada: Fremde Wasser* were conceptualized before the Fukushima disaster. However, when the disaster happened, Tawada integrated several aspects of the disaster into the texts. In one of the lectures with the title "Dejima", Tawada who once wrote about Dejima showed her interest to come back to this topic and gave a discussion of this island in post-2011's disaster. In post-disaster, Dejima island was not only displayed as a stage where the cultural exchange happened, but it was also a tool to translate and communicate disasters. In "Dejima", Tawada focused on the geopolitical location of the island, where her text was then associated to how Japanese government "translated" this disaster and how the "translation" process played a role in shaping the government's domestic and foreign policy in post-disaster (Maurer 2016: 186).

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<sup>171</sup> *Fremde Wasser* (2012) presented three lectures given by Tawada with the titles taken from three islands in Japan, "Tanegashima", "Dejima", and "Uraga". These lectures were written by digging up the historical past of these islands. These islands were described as a 'door' for new languages and knowledge that came from outside. It seemed that Tawada made these texts as a door to reflect how far the words could describe the disaster experiences that are difficult to express. In her lectures, it seemed that Tawada wanted to state that the topography of these islands represented a space where the translating process and the knowledge exchange were possible to be carried out (Maurer 2016: 185-186).

The next non-fiction work is a journal with the title *Journal des jours tremblants. Après Fukushima* (After Fukushima. Journal of Trembling Days)<sup>172</sup>. This journal was divided into two languages. For the original edition, the beginning part was written in German while the ending part was written in Japanese. In the beginning part, Tawada discussed Hiroshima and Fukushima, noting that each of them included *shima* in its name; *shima* means “island” in Japanese. Besides similar names, Tawada also presented the tragedy of humanity that is associated with these places. The reason why Tawada used two languages in this work can be understood by looking at the audience she targeted. By looking at the Japanese section, it can be presumed that she specifically targeted the Japanese audience, in order to present a criticism toward the Japanese government regarding the nuclear policy issue. In this section, she was questioning why the country that had severely suffered from the damage due to the nuclear bombs could intentionally let its citizens be exposed to the radiation from the nuclear facilities (Kowalczyk 2014: 9).

Apart from the two non-fiction works that have been presented, Tawada also wrote some fictional works such as drama texts, poems, and several short stories. Tawada composed a drama text with the title *Still Fukushima: Wenn die Abendsonne aufgeht* (Still Fukushima: When the Evening Sun Rises)<sup>173</sup>, and the collection of poems entitled *Neue Gedichte über Fukushima* (New Poems on Fukushima). *Still Fukushima: Wenn die Abendsonne aufgeht* included dialogues involving some characters speaking about the Fukushima incident. This drama was divided into 10 plays where the characters are exchanging the dialogue about the Fukushima disaster. Some of the characters presented in this drama are the mother and the daughter, the raccoon and the *ramen* shop owner, and the writer and the wind. The characters presented were not limited to the human beings, it also included animals and even the wind. The similarity that binds these characters is that all of them are affected by nuclear radiation. One dialogue in this drama was about a mother who worried whether the vegetables she served her daughter were contaminated by radiation. The mother bought these vegetables from a place far away since she thought that the places close to her were dangerous, and the place farther from where she lives was the better and safer place. A few months after the Fukushima incident, people started to realize that the contamination due to the disaster would haunt them even years after the disaster took place. The contamination had already spread through soils, and it was feared that the

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<sup>172</sup> *Journal des jours tremblants. Après Fukushima* (2012) is Tawada’s reflection of Higashi Nihon Daishinsai incident. The catastrophe that occurred in Japan urged Tawada to question how Japan was really presented in the eyes of foreigners. This journal contains two types of material, the first one was a material related to people’s experience in the disaster, and the second one was an artwork material that depicting the disaster’s experience to be published and become historical discourses (Kowalczyk 2014: 4).

<sup>173</sup> *Still Fukushima: Wenn die Abendsonne aufgeht* was performed for the first time in 2013 at Lasenken Theater, Berlin. This drama was later performed in Japan, in the spring of 2014. It was then performed in Germany in June 2014. This drama has been performed in several theaters and cultural institutions in 2014.

vegetables grown near the disaster area would have absorbed the radiation from soils.<sup>174</sup> The government repeatedly asked people to consume the local products of Fukushima and they tried to convince the public that the products distributed to the market had been carefully inspected. However, both the customers and even the producers themselves found that it was hard to believe what the government said. Fukushima had been destroyed by people's perception. In her play, it seemed that Tawada wanted to raise the issues of wide spread contamination after the disaster and of the post-disaster lack of public trust toward the government.

Turning to the short stories that were published in the post-disaster period, the first short story was entitled "Fushi no Shima"<sup>175</sup>. It portrayed Japan as an isolated country due to the radiation as a post-disaster effect. Following "Fushi no Shima", the story of "Doubutsutachi no Baberu"<sup>176</sup> which was a drama script that presented the animal characters that survived after the big flood. Then followed "Higan"<sup>177</sup> which illustrated the possibility of Japanese people becoming evacuees after the disasters. In the same year, "Idaten Dokomademo"<sup>178</sup> which narrated the story of two women who survived the big earthquake was published. Then, in the same year, *Kentoushi*<sup>179</sup> which was Tawada's collection of stories written between 2011-2014 was also published.

Apart from the works that have been mentioned above, Tawada completed her fiction work with the title of *Kumo wo Tsukamu Hanashi*<sup>180</sup> before the disaster occurred. Before being published in the form of a book, this work was serialized in *Gunzou*, and after the disaster occurred, Tawada integrated several aspects of the disaster into this work. The main character of this story is 'watashi' (me), who lives in Berlin. One day, a man came to her house and asked her to lend him a book. Suddenly, the man said that he forgot his wallet so he would like to take it first. However, the man never came back. After a year passed, the main character received a letter from that man who said that he was arrested for an alleged crime on the day that he left. Through their correspondence, the main character who at first firmly believed that the man could not have done the alleged crime became

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<sup>174</sup> Mizuho Aoki, "Effect of contaminated soil on food chain sparks fear", *The Japan Times*, September 11, 2011. <<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2011/09/11/national/effect-of-contaminated-soil-on-food-chain-sparks-fears/#.Xh3Vusgzbd4>> [accessed December 17, 2019].

<sup>175</sup> "Fushi no Shima" was first published in a collection of stories with the title *Soredemo Sangatsu wa, Mata* in 2012, the story was then included in the collection of stories entitled *Kentoushi* in 2014.

<sup>176</sup> "Doubutsutachi no Baberu" was first published in *Subaru*, August 2013 edition. Later, it was included in *Kentoushi* which was published in 2014.

<sup>177</sup> "Higan" was first published in the autumn edition of *Waseda Bungaku* in 2014, it was then included in *Kentoushi* that was published in the same year.

<sup>178</sup> "Idaten Dokomademo" was first published in *Gunzou*, November edition of 2014. This work was then included in *Kentoushi*, published in the same year.

<sup>179</sup> *Kentoushi* was published in 2014, it consisted of five stories, the longest "Kentoushi", "Idaten Dokomademo", "Fushi no Shima", "Higan", and "Doubutsutachi no Baberu". The literary work of *Kentoushi* which is the main material for this dissertation will be discussed thoroughly in the next chapter.

<sup>180</sup> *Kumo wo Tsukamu Hanashi* (2012) was first published as a serialized story in *Gunzou* from January 2011 to January 2012 (except for the August 2011 edition). The book version was published by Kodansha in April 2012. *Kumo wo Tsukamu Hanashi* won the Yomiuri award in 2012.



doubtful. She began to think that there was a possibility that he committed the crime. From that scene, Tawada led the storyline to the emergence of the question, why it was only Japan who became a 'suspect' of the nuclear accident that happened in Fukushima (Kimura 2013: 138). Furthermore, in this story, Tawada presented a scene where the main character who traveled from Japan had a stopover in Bangkok, in order to enter London. In "Fushi no Shima", Tawada illustrated a scene where the discrimination was triggered by the Japanese passport. It was a scene at the airport. The airport officer seemed unpleasant when the main character showed her Japanese passport. In *Kumo wo Tsukamu Hanashi*, the discrimination occurred when the main character was brought to the "radiation level measurement" room since the passport she carried was marked by the stamp from Haneda airport. In these two stories, it seemed that Tawada wanted to discuss the issue of discrimination that could have been encountered by Japanese who traveled abroad in post-disaster period.

Regarding her own opinion of Higashi Nihon Daishinsai, Tawada admitted that she was in Berlin at the time when the disaster occurred. Therefore, she obtained the information of the disaster through the media and people around her. Tawada was sensitive in her reactions to the disaster-related questions addressed to her as a Japanese national. When the news of the Fukushima disaster has been widely circulated, the main question that came to her was, why did Japanese not escape from the disaster area.

Then, when the word 'meltdown' has been spread around the mass media here and there, the questions from the Germany people around me came to me like flying pebbles. This was not only happened to me. I think it was also experienced by many other Japanese people living in Germany. "Why they did not run away from Japan?" Why they don't run abroad?<sup>181</sup>

Tawada added that even if the people who lived around the Fukushima NPP were given a place to evacuate, it was likely that they would not necessarily agree to leave their hometown. The question of why they would be unwillingly to leave their hometown was not an easy question to be answered.

In another interview, Tawada stated that there was a belief in Japan, that in the post-disaster period, people were expected to stay in the disaster area and build the area together with other victims.<sup>182</sup> Tawada had always been open and opposed any sign of limitation in her works. Even though she did not directly express her opposition to that kind of belief, Tawada revealed her opinion

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<sup>181</sup> Original quotes: 「さて、「メルトダウン」という言葉がマスコミにちらほら現れ始めると、まわりのドイツ人たちの質問の礫がいっせいに飛んできた。これは、わたしだけでなく、ドイツに住む多くの日本人が体験したことだと思う。「どうして逃げないのか」なぜ海外に逃げないのか」 ("Kentoushi wo megutte Kentoushi cho Tawada Yoko", *Gendaishinsho*, November 15, 2014. <<https://gendai.ismedia.jp/articles/-/40935>>[accessed December 17, 2019]).

<sup>182</sup> Alexandra Pereira, "Between Two Languages: An Interview with Tawada Yoko", *The Paris Review*, November 16, 2018. <<https://www.theparisreview.org/blog/2018/11/16/between-two-languages-an-interview-with-yoko-tawada/>>[accessed December 17, 2019].

regarding how the people who opposed that kind of belief and chose to leave Fukushima have been treated by the society.

Even so, when I read a Japanese posting on the internet, I saw responses that provoked an uncomfortable feeling. It was a posting that attacked the families who decided to flee from around Fukushima (Tokyo included). They condemned the families who decided to move to Kyoto because they have children, how could they do that (...) Why should negative sentiments be directed to the people who use their money in a proper way to protect their children from radiation.<sup>183</sup>

Tawada assumed that Japanese society has a certain mindset that somebody who runs by himself is a coward. For her, if there is nothing that could be done to help in the post-disaster period, it was better to let those people leave and save themselves. These problems were quite bothering for Tawada until she decided to write the short story of “Fushi no Shima”.

The phrase “a person who runs alone is a coward” moves by itself. If someone stays and is able to save others, his existence is meaningful. However, if you cannot do anything, is it not better to let go of those who can escape? I am really confused about this problem. In my confusion, in the summer of 2011, I wrote “Fushi no Shima”.<sup>184</sup>

In another statement, Tawada admitted that “Fushi no Shima” was written as a representation of “Japan that cannot be visited anymore”. Tawada described a situation of post-nuclear disaster where all the ties to foreign countries were cut off, therefore Japan returned to the isolation system where the country was closed from any contact with the international world. One thing that was quite interesting from this work was Tawada’s prediction that Japan would not effortlessly abandon nuclear energy<sup>185</sup>, which

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<sup>183</sup> Original Quotes: 「ところが、インターネットで日本語の書き込みをみていると、もっと違和感を覚えさせられる反応が現れ始めた。福島付近（東京もその中に入るが）から避難した家族を攻撃する書き込みだ。小さい子供がいるから京都に引っ越したという家族を罵倒するなんて、一体どういう心理なんだろう（中略）なぜ放射能から子供を守るといふまともなお金の使い方をした人が、じめじめと暗い悪口を言われなければならないのだろう」（“Kentoushi wo megutte Kentoushi cho Tawada Yoko”, *Gendaishinsho*, November 15, 2014.

< <https://gendai.ismedia.jp/articles/-/40935> >[accessed December 17, 2019]).

<sup>184</sup> Original Quotes: 「「自分だけ逃げるのは卑怯」というセリフが一人歩きしていた。その場に残って他の人を助けられるなら残る意味はあるが、何もできないならば、逃げられる人から逃げた方がいいのではないのか。この問題にはずいぶん悩まされた。そんな中、2011年の夏に書いたのが、「不死の島」だった」（“Kentoushi wo megutte Kentoushi cho Tawada Yoko”, *Gendaishinsho*, November 15, 2014.

< <https://gendai.ismedia.jp/articles/-/40935> >[accessed December 17, 2019]).

<sup>185</sup> Kimura stated in her book, 「興味深いことに、福島第一原子力発電所の事故を受けて、ドイツがただちに脱原発にかじを切ったにもかかわらず、多和田葉子は日本が原発を手放さないだろうということをはじめから見通した作品を書いてきた。」(The interesting thing was, with the incident occurred in Fukushima nuclear power plant, even though Germany has abandoned the use of the nuclear power plants simultaneously, Tawada Yoko from the beginning has written a literary work that predicts Japan would not easily abandon the nuclear power plants) (Kimura 2018: 86). Tawada’s prediction was seemingly become reality when on July 1, 2012, the Ooi nuclear power plant unit 3 has been reactivated after it was shut down following the Fukushima incident. The reactivation of Ooi NPP was followed by the reactivation of Sendai NPP on August 11, 2015. It was then followed by the reactivation of Takahama NPP units 3 and 4 on January 29, 2016.

means nuclear power plants would still be operated, regardless of the incident that hit Fukushima in 2011.

Regarding the ‘nuclear accident’ that became the main topic of Higashi Nihon Daishinsai, Tawada assumed that what happened in Fukushima could not be considered an accident with short-term effects. What happened there was an incident with a compound effect that might explode with a small trigger. It seemed that Tawada strongly believed that even if nuclear power plants had not been reactivated yet, there were still many things that needed to be fixed.

I thought, instead of saying that nuclear power plants accident was a one-time big accident, it was more appropriate to say that it was kind of accident that could suddenly explode due to several mistakes that piled up for ten or more years. The most important thing to do now is not to reactivate the nuclear power plants. Apart from that matter, there are still many things to be worry about. The thought that it is not a big deal to let people die for economic benefits might cause something very bad in the future.<sup>186</sup>

Tawada expressed the opinion that the thought of sacrificing people for profit would bring terrifying results in the future. Her disapproval of nuclear power plants reactivation, as well as her concern that there would be many victims caused by the pursuit of economic profit, were clearly revealed in Tawada’s post-disaster works. It was depicted in “Fushi no Shima”, where Tawada tried to illustrate her belief that there were people who willingly made Japan an uninhabitable country. They were described as a part of an organization (*shuudan*) that was moving in secret, took over the nation’s power and economy while having no awareness that they were responsible for so many victims.<sup>187</sup>

“Fushi no Shima” was Tawada’s first short story that represented her responses and feelings of Higashi Nihon Daishinsai. Her visit to Fukushima in 2013 opened up the door for the creation of another post-disaster work with the title “Kentoushi”. In the summer of 2013, Tawada visited several evacuation places in Iwaki city. She stayed for four days and three nights, spending her time listening

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<sup>186</sup> Original quotes: 「原発事故は1度大きな事故が起こってしまった、というよりは、何10年もの間、積み重ねてきたいろいろな間違いが一気に噴火した感じでした。今現在はずっと原発を再稼働させないことが何より大切ですが、それ以外にも困ったことがいろいろあると思います。金儲けのためなら人が死んでも仕方ないという考え方そのものをどうにかしないと、多分ひどいことになってしまう」 (“Zenbei tōshōshū jūshū! Shinsaigo no nihon wo soukisaseru disutopia bungaku ‘kentōshi’ wo kataru”, *Kodansha Book Club*, December 18, 2018. < <http://news.kodansha.co.jp/7149>>[accessed December 17, 2019].

<sup>187</sup> Regarding that thought, Tawada revealed, 「ニッポンを人が住めない汚染された場所にしてしまおうとしている集団が存在しているような気がしてきて、むしうに腹がたった。この集団は、総理大臣も天皇も歯がたたない強力な陰の集団で、一般人の目に見えないところでずっと活動を続けてきた。世の中を好きなように動かせるだけの金と権力を手にいれなければ気がすまず、人が癌になったり、痛みに悶えたり、命を落としたりするのを見ても同情心を全く感じないだけでなく、むしろ喜びを感じるような、病的で危険な犯罪者たちの集団である。」 (I realized that there are people who wanted to make Japan become polluted and uninhabitable, and I am furious because of that. This group is hidden with the power that could not be defeated by the Prime Minister and the Emperor. They keep moving in a place unseen by ordinary people. They didn’t satisfy if they could not get the money and power to control the world. Not only do they have no sympathy seeing people got cancer, suffered from pain, and then die. On the contrary, they are happy for them, they are really dangerous crime organization.) (“Kentōshi wo megutte Kentōshi cho Tawada Yoko”, *Gendaiishinsho*, November 15, 2014. < <https://gendai.ismedia.jp/articles/-/40935> >[accessed December 17, 2019]).

to the evacuees' stories. In the beginning, Tawada planned to write a long version of "Fushi no Shima". However, after the trip ended, she began to write "Kentoushi", the story that she claimed as written unexpectedly.<sup>188</sup>

Regarding the incident of Higashi Nihon Daishinsai, Tawada expressed her opinion in two languages within her fiction and non-fiction works. Her thought regarding the disaster was not only directed toward the Japanese people who were directly affected by this disaster. She also presented it to the public in Germany who became the witnesses of one of the major incidents in history. Tawada explicitly expressed her criticism toward the Japanese government in her essays, while implicitly doing the same thing in her literary works. It seemed that she wanted to stay in the position as an observer, who was always open to new discussions related to this disaster. She decided to also write about this disaster in the German language in order to make this incident comprehensible from the Western perspectives. The fact that Tawada wrote about this disaster in German, created the assumption that she wanted to perceive this tragedy from a distant position. The use of the German language made her capable to rationalize her writings without being carried away by her emotions. By using German language in her writings, Tawada stayed in a neutral position, since she did not represent Japan or the victims. This method also gave her a chance to make the discussion of this disaster more open to the public (Kowalzyck 2014: 9).

Tawada, as an author with a high sensitivity to the issues raised in the public, was also using her prominent position to voice her concern regarding nuclear energy policies. In her non-fiction works, such as *Yoko Tawada: Fremde Wasser* and *Journal des jours tremblants. Après Fukushima*, she notably kept up her criticism toward those policies. Meanwhile, in her fiction works, such as "Fushi no Shima" and "Kentoushi", Tawada hid her criticism behind the portrayal of a seemingly unreal world, the world that became a prediction of the future due to the use of nuclear energy.

Many issues circulated in post-disaster, one of which was discrimination, both experienced by the victims of the Fukushima nuclear incident as well as by the Japanese people living outside Japan. Tawada proposed the discrimination issue conducted by international communities to Japanese people in *Kumo wo Tsukamu Hanashi* and "Fushi no Shima", through the scenes where the airport employee was reluctant to accept a Japanese passport and the existence of a 'radiation room' to measure the radiation level of passengers bodies. Meanwhile, through some of her interviews, Tawada brought up the discrimination issue against Fukushima evacuees. She reaffirmed her stance by rejecting the idea that the people leaving Fukushima to evacuate themselves have to be bashed by malicious words.

To conclude how the discussion above built a relationship between Tawada Yoko and Higashi Nihon Daishinsai, it can be inferred that Tawada is an author as well as a public figure who

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<sup>188</sup> "Kentoushi wo megutte Kentoushi cho Tawada Yoko", *Gendaishinsho*, November 15, 2014. < <https://gendai.ismedia.jp/articles/-/40935> >[accessed December 17, 2019].

has a deep sympathy toward this disaster. The first point, with her bilingual background, she presented this disaster as an incident that needs to be interpreted by national and international communities. Second, Tawada openly brought up her criticism toward the Japanese government. She could do this since she is not only represented the Japanese people but the international world as well. Third, she presented the discrimination issue which is considered to be one of the most prominent issues in the post-disaster period. Fourth, and last, Tawada depicted her prophecy of the post-nuclear world based on her imagination. She offered her works related to the disaster not only to the Japanese community but to the international community as well.

## CHAPTER IV

### READING TAWADA YOKO'S SHORT STORIES IN *KENTOUSHI*

#### 4.1 The Worst Effect of Nuclear Energy in “Fushi no Shima”

This section of the discourse will discuss the interpretation of the short story with the title “Fushi no Shima” written by Tawada Yoko. It was published for the first time in 2012 as one of the stories compiled in *Soredemo Sangatsu wa, Mata*. As it was discussed in Chapter III, Tawada Yoko is a Japanese writer who often voices her opinion regarding Higashi Nihon Daishinsai. This subchapter will discuss the interpretation of Tawada's first fictional work after the disaster with the title “Fushi no Shima”. The interpretation will focus on the worst effects of the nuclear energy use.

“Fushi no Shima” is a story that illustrated futuristic Japan where a nuclear accident happened causing several changes and chaos that ended up with the country's isolation from the outside world. After “Fushi no Shima”, Tawada wrote another story presumed to be the sequel to “Fushi no Shima” with the title “Kentoushi”. “Kentoushi” drew the scenario of an unnamed man or *mumei* who was sent outside Japan when it became an isolated country similar to the *sakoku* system practiced in the Edo period. Both of the stories have very strong connections. In this chapter; the discussion will be focused on “Fushi no Shima”'s story, the first work that accurately explained the background. The story of “Kentoushi” will be discussed in another part of this dissertation.

The “Fushi no Shima” story is summarized as follows:

The first section depicted a scene where the main character was inside the German airport. The airport employee hesitated to check her passport because it was a Japanese passport. At that time, everything that came from Japan was suspected of being contaminated by radiation. Thereafter, the main character narrated a series of events that happened in Japan after the Higashi Nihon Daishinsai incident. Since 2015, all flights headed to Japan were cancelled, meaning all information coming from Japan was unknown to the people outside.

In 2013, a live TV broadcast that should have presented the Emperor on the anniversary day of Higashi Nihon Daishinsai was hacked. The hacker announced that all nuclear power plants in Japan will be destroyed imminently. In the next scene the prime minister appeared in a television program announcing that all nuclear power plants will be shut down within one month. After delivering that message, the Prime Minister disappeared forever. In 2015, the Japanese government allowed the privatized company called a “Z group” to operate. The company took over television stations and eliminated compulsory education. The internet connection became weaker day by day, until one day,

it disappeared altogether. Letters sent to Japan were always returned with a note “no more delivery to Japan”.

After Japan lost contact with the outside world, a book written by a Portuguese who called himself Pinto was published. Having smuggled himself into Japan, Pinto narrated his personal experiences. In his book, he revealed a surprising fact, that there were some people aged 100 years old or more when the Fukushima accident happened and all of them were still alive. They were still alive even though they looked older than before. On the contrary, those who were children back when the Fukushima accident happened, appeared to be aging rapidly. It became harder for them to talk, to walk, and to see normally. They needed extra care and attention while the older generation still struggled to make a living, since the young generations who should be productive could not work as they were expected to do.

The Yokohama port that was once crowded with local and foreign ships became empty and dead. The sea water turned black, and the seafood became inedible. Electricity had been shut down and that meant no more television. The only entertainment left was a book. Every night, storytellers strolled around the town. When nights came, the doctors accompanied by fireflies’ light, conducted experiments trying to find a cure for radiation victims.

Even though this story exaggerates the effects of the disaster, “Fushi no Shima” presents several themes that are worth being discussed in the post-disaster period. This subchapter will discuss several themes that are explicitly or implicitly presented in this story. The first theme that emerged was about the scenario when the accident just happened. The feelings of compassion, sympathy and empathy were prevalent among the people. Many tried to show their compassion and high enthusiasm to contribute towards mental and physical reconstruction. The Higashi Nihon Daishinsai disaster awakened this particular consciousness inside the Japanese mind that transformed into a phenomenon called “*Kizuna*”. In this context “*Kizuna*” is an emotional relationship that ‘connects’ and ‘unites’ people from the same cultural background. Besides increasing empathy among the victims, the disaster also attracted sympathy from outside parties not directly affected by the disaster. The Higashi Nihon Daishinsai phenomenon reminded people that it was difficult to ignore how vulnerable and precious life is.<sup>189</sup> However, it seems that the euphoria only took place in the early post-disaster period. When the mourning time was over and the years passed, life began to return to its normal pace; sympathy turned into suspicion. Some literature suggested that in the early post-disaster period, Fukushima’s victims were flooded with sympathy, but in the end, many of them were subjected to suspicion and

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<sup>189</sup> “‘Kizuna’ takes many forms in post-disaster Japan, including marriage and infidelity”, *Japan Today*, January 17, 2012.

<<https://japantoday.com/category/features/kuchikomi/kizuna-takes-many-forms-in-post-disaster-japan-including-marriage-and-infidelity>>[accessed December 17, 2019].

discrimination. Tawada apparently wanted to voice her concern regarding sympathy that turned into suspicion in the paragraph below.

“I did not come to Japan since that time” I feel ashamed while emphasizing my innocence by saying that. In 2011, the word “Japan” brought sympathy, but after 2017 sympathy turned into suspicion.<sup>190</sup>

What had been written by Tawada seemed to correlate with the practice of discrimination against the Fukushima evacuees. The rumor regarding this topic spread in the aftermath of the disaster. Even though the evacuees were evacuated with a hidden identity, in the end, people could figure out where they came from. Children from Fukushima were bullied at schools, while adults were outcasted from society (see Chapter I subchapter 1.1). This discrimination was the direct opposite to the sympathy and support received by the victims at the beginning of the post-disaster period. What has been revealed by Tawada in the above quotation is straight to the point because several reports mentioned the existence of discrimination toward the victims after the period of sympathy had passed.

The next issue brought out in this story was a topic related to the contaminated food due to radiation. Rumors regarding the food contamination circulated widely after the news about the meltdown of Fukushima nuclear power plants leaked.<sup>191</sup> Nevertheless, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries with Consumer Affairs Agency tried to muffle these rumors by organizing a campaign supported by famous Japanese singers with the mission of urging the public not to be afraid of consuming food products from Touhoku.<sup>192</sup> In the end, there were not a few people who began to consume those allegedly contaminated products. The main point of the explanation was to show that even food became objects of discrimination. In her story, Tawada raised an outstanding and urgent issue about the food contamination. The world in this story depicted a period where goods coming from Japan were suspected of being contaminated by radiation. With her witty sense she added that even *nattou* (fermented soybean) could be presumed to be mutated by radiation.

If the contents are checked, that package with the Japanese letters will be confiscated because they were considered dangerous materials and will be sent to the radioactive disposal management facility. *Nattou* could also be regarded as beans that had undergone a rapid mutation due to radiation.<sup>193</sup>

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<sup>190</sup> Original text: 「『あれから日本へ行っていないよ』ということで我が身の潔白を証明しようとした自分  
がなさけなかった。「日本」と聞くと二〇一一年には同情されたものだが二〇一七年以降は差別されるよう  
になった」(Tawada 2012: 12).

<sup>191</sup> Mizuho Aoki, “Cesium contamination in food appears to be on wane”, *The Japan Times*, September 25, 2012.  
<[https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2012/09/25/reference/cesium-contamination-in-food-appears-to-be-on-  
wane/#.Xh3mbcgzbD4](https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2012/09/25/reference/cesium-contamination-in-food-appears-to-be-on-<br/>wane/#.Xh3mbcgzbD4)>[accessed December 17, 2019].

<sup>192</sup> The campaign phrased as *Tabete Ouen Shiyou* or “Let’s support East Japan by Eating” was created to encourage  
people to consume fruits, vegetables, fishes, meats, and other goods produced in Fukushima and the surrounding  
prefectures. This campaign hired the boy band TOKIO as its ambassador.

<sup>193</sup> Original text: 「中身を調べられたら、日本の文字がびっしり書かれた食品は危険物としてすべて抜き取  
られ、放射性物質処理場に送られてしまうに違いない。納豆などは、ピーナッツが放射性物質のせいで短  
時間で変形した物ではないかと疑われるかもしれない」(Tawada 2012: 13).



The food contamination was a hot issue in the post-disaster period. The contamination caused by Fukushima NPP's radiation allegedly not only hit the area around the power plant, but it reached also hundreds of kilometers away. The radiation was reported to pollute Tokyo's tap water. Food contamination had undeniably affected the farmers and fishermen from Fukushima. Therefore, the government launched a campaign to encourage people to consume Fukushima's local products without fear of radiation. However, the intention to get rid of the fear of radiation was suspected by some people (mainly researchers and experts) as an effort to divert people from the radiation-related issues. This campaign, with the motto of 'solidarity with Fukushima' was considered as an effort to make people forget the main problem in post-disaster, the problem related to the danger of radiation.

Regarding the Fukushima nuclear power plants, Tawada's suggestions could be interpreted as a support for the termination of their use. The condition in Japan during the post-disaster period was the dominant disapproval for continuing the use of nuclear power plants viewed from the people's perspectives. This disapproval was expressed by the main character through these words:

They should have closed all of the nuclear power plants in the year when the Fukushima accident happened. Why have they acted slowly even though they knew that the big earthquake will come again?<sup>194</sup>

In the next part of the story, the main character narrated how the government finally decided to end forever the use of nuclear energy. In 2015, the Japan Atomic Energy Relations Organization conducted a survey that revealed these results: 47.9% of the respondents stated that the use of nuclear energy should be reduced continually; while 14.8% said that the use should be terminated immediately. Meanwhile, 10.1% of respondents indicated that the use should be maintained, and 1.7% declared its use should be increased. The latest survey in 2016 also conducted by Asahi Shimbun revealed the result that 57% of respondents were against the reoperation of nuclear power plants even though they were satisfied with the new regulatory standards. Meanwhile, 73% of respondents supported a termination of the use of nuclear energy and 14% of respondents supported an immediate termination of the operation of nuclear power plants.<sup>195</sup> Tawada's brave statement that demanding the termination of the use of Fukushima nuclear power plant in "Fushi no Shima" seems to voice many people's opinions in post-disaster. It also confirmed Tawada's personal opinion that opposes the use of nuclear energy (Tawada's personal view of the Fukushima accident is discussed in Chapter III).

The middle of the story, "Fushi no Shima" described the impact of the government's decision to stop the use of nuclear energy on several aspects of human life. The policies related to the

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<sup>194</sup> Original text: 「福島で事故があった年にすべての原子力発電所のスイッチを切るべきだったのだ。すぐみた大きな地震が来ると分かっていたのに、どうしてぐずぐずしていたのだろう、」(Tawada 2012: 14).

<sup>195</sup> Tatsujiro Suzuki, "Six years after Fukushima, much of Japan has lost faith in nuclear power", *The Conversation*, March 10, 2017. <<https://theconversation.com/six-years-after-fukushima-much-of-japan-has-lost-faith-in-nuclear-power-73042>>[accessed December 17, 2019].

nuclear energy are vital policies that are strong enough to alter many other aspects. The decision to depend or not to depend continuously on the use of nuclear energy produced a specific impact on several other fields of life. Tawada described a world where the chaos that happened was rooted on a nuclear energy-related policy. She described the effect of the decision to stop using nuclear energy as a tremendous factor that can produce an extreme impact in all aspects of human life.

In 2015, after the prime minister disappeared and a period of chaos elapsed, the Japanese government was privatized. A group that named themselves “Z group” became the largest shareholder and they started to run the country like a company. The television stations were taken over and the compulsory education removed. From where I live in Berlin, I could observe what happened in Japan from news on internet or email from my friends. But then it was impossible to use the internet in Japan.<sup>196</sup>

With the disaster in 2011 as a trigger, Japan changed its policies drastically. The emperor lost power over the public, and the Prime Minister lost his authority. Everything that deemed to threaten the existence of the new authority was abolished, including the source of information (television and mass media) and the education system. At the same time, Japan was slowly closing itself off from the outside world. The unstable condition continued until the worst scenario happened, that was when Japan was excluded from the outside world and became an isolated country with no access to come in or to get out.

Since there was an announcement of the research conducted by German nuclear experts, who said the planes landed in Japan had been contaminated by nuclear radiation, there were no more planes that fly to Japan.<sup>197</sup>

With no access to enter Japan, this country officially became an isolated country, with the foreign countries no longer knowing what was really going on inside Japan. However, it did not stop with Japan becoming an isolated country. There was a scenario even worse than that. That bizarre condition was due to nuclear radiation. The older generation composed of those who were already 100 years old or more when the Fukushima happened were still alive. In contrast, children and some member of the young generation became sicker and weaker as if they were growing old rapidly. The dialogue in the quotation below illustrates the conversation between a character named Pinto and one of the older generation who was still alive and healthy since 2011. That person implies that the radioactive particles made him unable to die.

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<sup>196</sup> Original text: 「総理大臣が姿を消してから、混乱期を経て、二〇一五年、日本政府は民営化され、Zグループと名乗る一団が株を買い占めて政府を会社として運営し始めた。テレビ局も乗っ取られ、義務教育はなくなった。そのへんまではベルリンに住むわたしにもインターネットニュースや友達からのメールで詳しく情報が掴めたのだが、やがて日本ではインターネットが使えなくなったようだった」(Tawada 2012: 16).

<sup>197</sup> Original text: 「日本に着陸すると、放射性物質が機体に付着するという研究結果をあるドイツの原子物理学者が発表してから、飛行機も日本へは飛ばなくなった」(Tawada 2012: 16).

All the people who were already 100 years old or more when the accident in Fukushima happened in 2011, were still healthy. Miraculously, none of them had passed away. That did not happen only in Fukushima. A few years later it also happened at 22 places that became ‘hot spots’ in Chuubu and Kantou regions. The oldest victim at the time the disaster happened was 112 years old. Even though he is now more than 120 years old, he still looks very healthy. “You look very healthy” Pinto said through an interpreter. “I cannot die” apparently was the answer given. It did not mean that they are young again, but apparently, the radioactive material already took away their ability to die. They could not sleep at night. Even if they feel pain all over their bodies when they wake up in the morning; they had to get up and go to work. Those who were just children back in 2011, all got sick one by one. They were unable to work; more than that, they needed special care.<sup>198</sup>

Tawada wrote of an extremely reversed situation, where the younger generation of people who were expected to work productively and take up the burden for the older generation could not play their role properly. In contrast, the older generation of people who were expected to retire and stay at home was being forced to take up the burden for the younger generation. Within the passages of this book, it was described how the word “young” did not correlate anymore with productivity. Being “young” meant one is utterly “powerless”. The word “powerless” is normally attributed to the older generation of people. Yet in this story, the older generation of people who were usually presumed to be “powerless” in the real world turned into hero figures, the breadwinners who were willing to take care of the powerless younger generation. From this older generation of people, no complaint ensued because they had already ran out of strength for having to work every day.

The days when the term “young” has its youngness are already over. Being young means you cannot stand, cannot walk, cannot see, cannot eat, and cannot talk. (...) The older generation takes care of the young. With all of their might, they prepare food for their families; they don’t have strength anymore to lament or to be angry.<sup>199</sup>

The aforementioned description could be interpreted as a satire or critique for the outside world based on Tawada’s point of view. Tawada seemed to be trying to convey her opinion regarding Japan’s social condition from her own perspectives as a Japanese writer residing outside Japan. Her insinuating or covertly criticizing style of writing can be associated with the dystopian discourse.

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<sup>198</sup> Original text: 「二〇一一年、福島で被爆した当時、百歳を越えていた人たちはみな今も健在で、幸いにしてこれまで一人も亡くなっていない。これは福島だけでなく、その後数年の間に次々ホットスポットとなっていた中部関東地方の二十カ所についても言えることだった。被爆者の中で最高年齢者は当時百十二歳だったが、百二十歳を超えてもまだびんびんしている。「お元気そうですね」とピントが通訳を介して誉めると、「死ねないんです」という答えが返ってきたようだ。若返ったのではなく、どうやら死ぬ能力を放射性物質によって奪われてしまったようなのである。夜はよく眠れず、朝起きると身体がぐったり疲れているが、それでも起きて働くしかない。二〇一一年に子供だった人たちは次々病気になる、働くことができないだけでなく、介護が必要なのだ。何しろ毎日浴びる放射能は微量でも、細胞が活発に分裂していけば、あっという間に百倍、千倍に増えてしまう。だから年が若ければ若いほど危険なのだ」(Tawada 2012: 16).

<sup>199</sup> Original text: 「若いという形容詞に若さがあつた時代は終わり、若いと言え、立てない、歩けない、眼が見えない、ものが食べられない、しゃべれない、という意味になってしまった。」(中略) 「老人たちは若い人の看護をし、家族の食べる物を確保するだけで精一杯で、嘆く力も怒る力もない」(Tawada 2012: 19).

In the end of the story, Tawada illustrated a situation where modern Japan changed drastically due to the effects of the series of post-nuclear accidents. Japan returned to the primitive condition where electricity was not provided because energy sources had run out. Most of the life patterns returned to the Edo period's life patterns complemented with Japan's isolation from the outside world. It represented "the worst effect" that at that time was acceptable to Japan according to Tawada's point of view. The worst effect scenario could be different depending on the condition of the country. For the very modern Japan, the worst effect scenario was considered a nightmare by the citizens; it was going back to the pre-modern era complemented by an isolated condition.

For helping the radiation victims, the scholars conducted experiments day and night in the library with the help of a light coming from the back of fireflies that they have collected. They read a lot of reference books, conducted experiments, and tried finding the answers.<sup>200</sup>

The description of the post-nuclear accident in "Fushi no Shima" is a dire depiction of the post-nuclear world. The events that happened in the story are the worst effects arising from the use of nuclear energy either for the purpose of weaponry or for peace keeping. In this story, readers were invited to reflect on their positions if they happened to be trapped in isolated Japan. "Fushi no Shima" reminded us of the closeness of nuclear powers in our modern society. This closeness also has a potential to disrupt completely our orderly world. The effect described in "Fushi no Shima" is a satire from Tawada's point of view regarding the post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai situation. However, if one is to think about it deeply, it is very dubious that the post-nuclear accident scenario would be like the one depicted by Tawada in her story. At the same time, this story gave the readers a picture of the nuclear energy use that has the potential to create and generate widespread disastrous effects that could not be imagined by people at this moment.

"Fushi no Shima" was extreme in its depiction of the world after the disaster, with the climax of Japan becoming isolated from the outside world. The first issue raised in this story was sympathy turned into suspicion after the occurrence of the disaster. The next issue was food contamination, where it showed that for a period of time all products originating from Japan were suspected of being contaminated by radiation. Tawada also indicated her rejection of nuclear energy use through the main character's dialogue. She voiced her opinion on how strong nuclear energy was. The deactivation of nuclear energy use had an adverse impact on many things, such as government policies, state stability, and finally, the power to isolate Japan from the outside world. "Fushi no Shima" illustrated the worst scenario regarding nuclear energy use as well as covertly insinuating on the Japanese society's condition nowadays.

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<sup>200</sup> Original text: 「被爆した人たちを救うために昼も夜も医学の研究を続ける学者たちは図書館に蛍を集めて、その尻から出る光で文献を読みあさり、実験を重ね、答えを探している」(Tawada 2012: 21).

## 4.2 Nuclear Policy and Evacuation Issue after Higashi Nihon Daishinsai in “Higan”

### 4.2.1 Background and Overview of the Issues Portrayed in “Higan”

“Higan” by Tawada Yoko was first published in the autumn edition of *Waseda Bungaku* in 2014. After its first publication, this story was included in the collection of stories entitled *Kentoushi* published in the same year. *Kentoushi* is a collection of five stories with themes related to Higashi Nihon Daishinsai. Therefore, *Kentoushi* can be assumed as Tawada Yoko’s response toward this disaster.

Like the other four stories presented in *Kentoushi*, “Higan” presented a condition that was a continuation of the post-disaster situation. Higan’s storyline can be divided into two parts. The first part describes a fatal accident that caused a major disaster. This disaster was later identified as a nuclear disaster with an enormous effect. First it was illustrated how horrendous the disaster was, then it was further described how people who had survived the disaster had to be evacuated to places outside Japan. The scene related to the evacuation process closed the first part of this story and opened the second part. The second part illustrated how the evacuation process took place, starting from the shipping of evacuees until their registration in the destined place. The process of evacuation was illustrated side by side with the story of the main character named Sede Ikuo who was a former Japanese politician.

To interpret the story, a brief summary is necessary. “Higan” can be summarized as follows. One day, in a rural area in Japan, a plane crashed because a single bird entered the engine, resulting in the deadly accident. It was an American plane which was said to contain food materials. What made it worse was that the plane crashed right above the newly reactivated nuclear power plant. A series of disasters was preceded by a deafening explosion, which in turn was followed by all things and people in the surroundings area being burnt to ashes. As if it was not enough, along with the sound of the explosion, the sky was covered by a large brown umbrella cloud. Then, white powder described as a “death powder” fell from the sky and spread throughout Japan. The people exposed to the powder coughed hard until they died. Two large, wheel-shaped flames arose from the sea, one wheel moving toward northern Japan while the other moving toward southern Japan. People who suffered from burns suffered excruciating pains. The invisible wound was described as an iron stick that was stuck into the skin and placed near to the bone. The extraordinary disaster spread widely throughout the country. The victims described their wounds as extremely painful. The rumor emerged that the plane was not actually carrying food, as it was previously claimed, it was actually carrying weapons with the latest technology.

The victims instinctively went to the port, where they were transported to other countries since Japan has become uninhabitable. The main character Sede Ikuo appeared when the ship was departing from Japan. He is one of the passengers on the ship that left Niigata to enter China. Throughout the second part of the story, Sede’s uneasiness because he had to move to China was

illustrated. His main problem was that for his entire political career as a member of parliament, he mentioned many insulting statements toward China. These statements were received negatively by both the Japanese and the Chinese public. Sede worried about his security if he had to start a new life in the country that he always insulted. If there were people who knew that he was the politician Sede Ikuo, his life would soon be over. In fact, his insulting statements were made for his personal purpose. Sede thought that by issuing insulting statements toward a big country such as China, he could cure his impotence problem. Only by declaring insults to a big country, he felt that he could be a real man. Sede tried to cover his identity by paying a ship worker to exchange clothes with him. Furthermore, he tried to fill out the evacuation registration form by writing a fake name and a fake date of birth. His final attempt to avoid China as the final destination was asking the officer whether there was a possibility for him to be evacuated to Korea instead of China. The officer laughed and replied that there was no possibility to move to another country besides China. Sede who heard that felt the sweat running down from his forehead. He bowed his head in desperation, unable to lift it anymore. That was the scene that ended the story of “Higan”.

Broadly speaking, “Higan” illustrated a series of disaster along with the long-term effects that accompanied. However, both explicitly and implicitly, this story touched some issues that are quite prominent in society. In “Higan”, it was difficult to ignore the presence of Sede Ikuo, who was described as a corrupt politician. Sede was portrayed as an arrogant politician, who often made controversial statements and gave no reasonable argument for attacking the neighboring countries. Sede’s anecdotal figure that made people satirically laugh at him can be interpreted as Tawada’s criticism of the ongoing political system. In one scene, Tawada bravely mentioned that Sede’s frivolity, instead of ending his political career skyrocketed his name and ensured him reelection in the next period (Tawada 2014: 213). It showed how ridiculous the political world was for Tawada personally. As a writer who is quite sensitive to the social issues that take place in society, Tawada has her own style in expressing her views. The depiction of Sede’s character can be interpreted as a way to express her criticism regarding the political world through anecdotal text. Besides the criticism toward politics, this story also touched the topic of Japan’s relationship with the neighboring countries such as China, Korea, and Russia. Tawada made these three countries as destination places for the evacuees. Some of the sentences in this story also showed a sensitivity to Korea. At first glance, the Japanese social issues, such as Japanese companies’ high demand for their workers, consumerism, the problems related to NEET and Freeter were some topics that were presented here. However, of the many issues raised in this story, this text focused on those issues with a strong correlation to Higashi Nihon Daishinsai. Therefore, it would put aside other issues outside of that disaster.

In “Higan”, two major issues that were considered closely related to Higashi Nihon Daishinsai was found. Through her text, it seemed that Tawada wanted to express her own opinion as well as to criticize the nuclear policy adopted by the Japanese government in the aftermath of the

disaster. She also pointed out the issue of the evacuation of many victims in the post-disaster. The next section will discuss the nuclear policy issues and the evacuation issues depicted in the story.

#### 4.2.2 Criticism Regarding the Nuclear Policy in “Higan”

In the beginning part of “Higan”, it was stated that someone saw a plane fall like a fluttering leaf and disappeared far behind the hills. He thought that the plane had fallen into the sea behind the hills. This person described the presence of a mysterious building located in the hills in these sentences.

Since he entered the elementary school, the entire hill was made as a restricted area. Since then, there was no one who could go directly to the sea from the village. In the sea, there was no place to swim or to anchor fisher boats, but there were buildings in the form of half of the Fuji mountain that was cut from the top made of concrete material. It was standing in the field that built up on top of the sea. The appearance of the building was smooth, but it was a monster that hid eight thousand thorns under its skin.<sup>201</sup>

Through that incident, the readers were led into the core of the story, where the buildings were later known as newly reactivated nuclear power plants which triggered a disastrous accident described in this story. Like the general description of nuclear power plants around the world, the nuclear power plants depicted in this story also were constructed in rural areas which were isolated from people and outsiders were forbidden to enter.<sup>202</sup> Enormous subsidies were given to the regions that approved the construction and the development of nuclear facilities.<sup>203</sup> The existence of nuclear power plants were a breath of fresh air, for the rural and remote areas. However, the risks are high since there is a

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<sup>201</sup> Original text:「男が小学校に入った頃に丘全体が立ち入り禁止地区になり、それ以来、村から直接、海に出ることはできない。そこには海水浴場や漁港があるわけではなく、埋め立てによって拡大されたコンクリートの広い敷地に富士山の五合目から上を切って捨てたような形の建築物が建っている。肌はつるつるでも八千本のトゲを肌の内側に隠し持つ怪物である」(Tawada 2014: 202).

<sup>202</sup> Nuclear power plants around the world tend to be built in remote rural areas, in areas with weak economic capacities compared to the large cities. As it has happened to Fukushima, many historians and economists argued that northern Japan (Fukushima included) had long been exploited for its cheap food materials and cheap labor. Turning to modern times, the area was once more exploited to produce the electricity needed by the country.

<sup>203</sup> The subsidies for the regions that accepted the establishment of nuclear power plants given in an interesting method. The regions received a certain amount of money during the period of planning and development. However, this amount of money was stopped given when nuclear power plants began to operate. At the time when the nuclear power plants were operated, the number of other payments given was much higher. To get multiple benefits, the areas designated as locations for nuclear power plants will receive massive incentives if they agree to build additional nuclear reactors in the future (Kingston 2012: 8). To “make peace” with the areas used as a location for nuclear power plants, the electrical company spent an enormous amount of money. For example, during 1990-2010, TEPCO donated as much as 40 billion yen for the local communities in Fukushima, Niigata, and Aomori. Matsuyama Haruyuki, as an accountant specialized in public organization’s financial analysis, stated that the donation made by electrical companies can be considered as a bribe (“TEPCO’s secret 40 billion yen donations to local governments near nuclear plants –“We wanted to avoid criticism that we had collusive relations with local authorities””, *Enformable Nuclear News*, September 16, 2011. <<http://enformable.com/2011/09/tepcos-secret-40-billion-yen-donations-to-local-governments-near-nuclear-plants-we-wanted-to-avoid-criticism-that-we-had-collusive-relations-with-local-authorities/>>[accessed December 17, 2019]).

possibility that unexpected problems may occur. To make it close to reality, Tawada illustrated a village that was located near to the sea, as a setting place of this story.

Move to the continuation of “Higan”, the story began with the crash of the plane close to the nuclear power plants complex that has been described. The pilot thought that he fell on top of the ordinary factory buildings. However, the reality was far from what he was expected; it was described in the quotation below.

The building, which was thought to be an ordinary factory by the 18-year-old pilot, was actually a nuclear power plant that had been reactivated a month earlier.<sup>204</sup>

The quotation stated that what looked like an ordinary factory building was actually a nuclear power plant that had been reactivated not long before the accident took place. The word “reactivated” assumes that Tawada referred to the Fukushima accident when she described a reactivated nuclear power plant that was activated after a period of deactivation. It was widely known that after the Fukushima accident, all the nuclear power plants in Japan were shut down. Two months after the disaster, Prime Minister Kan Naoto ordered the deactivation of Hamaoka nuclear power plant in Shizuoka and he planned to make a renewable energy policy.<sup>205</sup> One year after the disaster, in May 2012, all of the fifty nuclear reactors in Japan were deactivated for safety reasons and the routine checks. All the reactors were examined for their feasibility to deal with the earthquakes and tsunamis. The reactivation process of these reactors required approval from the local government. At that time, for the second time after May 1970, when the Japanese nuclear power plants had to be shut down for five days, Japan had to face another day without nuclear power plants’ supply energy.<sup>206</sup> However, the days without nuclear power only lasted for a short period of time. Due to some complex problems, just a short time after all the nuclear reactors were deactivated, the first nuclear power plant was reactivated in July 2012.<sup>207</sup> The reactivation was allegedly carried out by ignoring the decontamination problems after the Fukushima disaster which were not completely resolved yet. Japan

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<sup>204</sup> Original text: 「十八歳のパイロットがただの工場だと思ったその建物は、一ヵ月前に再稼働した原子力発電だった」(Tawada 2014: 203).

<sup>205</sup> In May 2011, PM Kan ordered Chubu Electric to close the Hamaoka nuclear power plant since it was located at the confluence of two tectonic plates. It was labeled as the most dangerous power plant in Japan. PM Kan also supported the policy to reduce a dependency toward nuclear energy and approved the plan to subsidize a renewable energy project (Kingston 2011: 2-3).

<sup>206</sup> David Batty, “Japan shuts down last working nuclear reactor”, *The Guardian*, May 5, 2012. <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/may/05/japan-shuts-down-last-nuclear-reactor>> [accessed January 15, 2020].

<sup>207</sup> On July 1, 2012, the Ooi Nuclear Power Plant unit 3 was reactivated after Japan shut down all of its nuclear power plants following the Fukushima accident. The reactivation of the Ooi NPP was followed by the reactivation of the Sendai Nuclear Power Plant on August 11, 2015, which was then followed by the reactivation of Takahama Nuclear Power Plant unit 3 and unit 4 on January 29, 2016.



not only reactivated its power plants systematically in a row, but Japan also re-established its position as a leading player in this industry in a short period of time after the disaster.<sup>208</sup>

In the story of “Higan”, it was illustrated how nuclear power plants were successfully reactivated as a result of the assistance given by France companies. The security inspections had been carried out many times and people’s consent has been obtained.

“With excellent technical assistance from a French company, the use of the finest technology, repeated security inspections, and approval from the local residents, finally the reactivation could be conducted” said the newspapers. However, it was not clear who was giving approval, since there was only one resident left. His name is Yamano Sachio, a former poet and he opposed the reactivation of nuclear power plants. Meanwhile, the other residents, because of the exhaustion due to the family dispute triggered by the nuclear opposition movement, decided to leave the region.<sup>209</sup>

There are two interesting points in the quotation above that correlated with Japan’s post-disaster situation. In this quotation, Tawada stated that “repeated security inspections” had been conducted and “approval from the local residents” had been obtained. Thus, Tawada reminded people of the words that usually were used to convey to the public in the post-disaster period. The government, through the mass media often stated that the reactivation of nuclear power plants was based on strong reasons. The statement that nuclear power plants’ security system was safe and under control as well as the testimony that the people’s consent to the reactivation has been obtained were often presented to the public. However, as time passed by, since many facts were later revealed to the public, these statements were being questioned. In the aftermath of the disaster, many voices from the academic world questioned the security aspect of nuclear energy. One of them came from Madarame Haruki who in February 2012 expressed his opinion that the technology of nuclear security needed to be improved. Madarame asserted that there was negligence related to the lack of security and inadequacy in the post-disaster crisis management.<sup>210</sup> The distrust of the government’s security measurement did not suddenly appear in the post-disaster period. It accumulated from long before the disaster occurred

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<sup>208</sup> Just two years after the Fukushima disaster occurred, Japan signed a nuclear power project agreement with Turkey worth 22 billion US dollars. This proved that Japan was still a senior player in the nuclear industry (Laura Smith-Spark, “Japan signs deal with Turkey to build nuclear power plant”, *CNN*, May 4, 2013. <<https://edition.cnn.com/2013/05/04/world/europe/turkey-japan-nuclear/index.html>>[accessed January 15, 2020]).

<sup>209</sup> Original text: 「『フランスの優秀な会社の助けを借り、最高の技術を駆使し、安全性を何度も調べた結果、住民の賛同を得て、やっと再稼働に漕ぎ着けた』と新聞には書いてあった。実際のところ、誰の賛同を得たのかは明らかではない。なぜなら、そのあたりにはもう住民は一人しか住んでいなかったし、その一人は山野幸緒という名前の元詩人で、再稼働には反対していたからだ。他の住人たちは反対運動が原因で起こった家族内のもめごとに疲れ、この土地を離れていった」(Tawada 2014: 203-204).

<sup>210</sup> Madarame Haruki was a Chairman of the Nuclear Safety Commission served from 2010 to 2012. For years, he was actively participating in the promotion of nuclear energy’s safety to the public. In February 2012, he claimed that Japan’s nuclear security technologies were outdated. He added that the policymakers had missed many opportunities to update the security system. The security system itself has been minimally practiced and was essentially flawed (Hiroko Tabuchi, “Japan Ignored Nuclear Risks, Official Says”, *The New York Times*, February 15, 2012. <<https://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/16/world/asia/japanese-official-says-nations-atomic-rules-are-flawed.html>>[accessed January 15, 2020]).

since the facts slowly began to unfold in the public. Looking back to the year 2000, there was an accident where an informant provided information to METI.<sup>211</sup> The maintenance track record of the NPPs operated by TEPCO has been systematically falsified since 1980. The effect of the news was METI has no other choices besides closing all TEPCO's nuclear reactors and ordering an inspection. This may lead to the question of whether the inspection will be carried out if there was no information leaked to the public. Besides the above-mentioned information, in the aftermath of the disaster, it was revealed that to a certain degree TEPCO knew that Fukushima NPP was vulnerable to strong tsunamis. It was understandable by looking at the historical track record that tsunamis struck the Touhoku coast periodically. Despite knowing the truth, TEPCO refused to build a larger sea wall since the construction cost would be too expensive (Kingston 2012: 7). In "Higan", Tawada brought up the theme of nuclear facilities' reactivation by stressing the "safety" aspect. It can be interpreted as her personal opinion to question the very basis taken by the government to measure the safety of nuclear facilities. The fact that there was an indication of negligence and non-transparency in this topic, it is to be wondered why the government insisted that the nuclear facilities were safe.

Another issue mentioned above was the need of the "approval from the local residents" before any reactivation of NPP. There was a controversial event two months after the disaster. On June 26, 2011, METI held a public forum in Genkai<sup>212</sup> broadcasted on the internet and cable TV. In this forum, the nuclear power plant's employee gave a presentation to the local residents about the safety aspect of nuclear power plants. He also gave an opportunity for the listeners to give their responses. The comments from the listeners were broadcasted online. Then there were comments that were considered to be as representative of local opinion. These comments openly asked the government to re-operate the Genkai Nuclear Power Plant that had been deactivated. Not long after the comment was broadcasted, Kyushu Electric admitted that they had asked their employees to post that kind of comment to show support for the reactivation of Genkai NPP. It was an indication that the electrical company feared public sentiment toward them (Kingston 2011: 7). Worrying that the public votes could not be obtained, some organizations carried out false surveys. In front of the public, the surveys seemed to show concern toward people's voices. However, an allegation was made that the surveys were manipulated. Consequently, the mayor of Genkai withdrew his agreement to reactivate Genkai NPP. Kyushu Electric lost its credibility since almost half of the voters who supported the reactivation were unreal voters. Actually, the majority of the local residents opposed the reactivation of two Genkai's nuclear reactors (Kingston 2011: 7-8). The lack of transparency regarding the voice of the people is strongly correlated to Tawada's statement in "Higan", which she wrote, "It was not clear who

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<sup>211</sup> The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) is the ministry responsible for developing the policies regarding nuclear energy use in Japan.

<sup>212</sup> Genkai in Saga Prefecture is the location of the Genkai Nuclear Power Plant (玄海原子力発電所 or *Genkai genshiryoku hatsudensho*). This nuclear power plant consists of four nuclear reactors operated by Kyushu Electric Power Company.

gave the approval” for the reactivation of the nuclear power plant. It seemed that Tawada insinuated the statements circulated among the public were only an impression that people’s opinions and participation were important in the formulation of nuclear policies. It seemed that the voices outside of the ‘circle of power’ had no significant influence on the formulation of important policies.

Still, with a strong correlation to the theme of the “safety of nuclear facilities”, the socialization through media and other campaigns aimed to educate the public about the safety of nuclear facilities. Such socialization was often vocalized long before the Fukushima accident occurred. The efforts to socialize and build trust toward nuclear energy safety were later known as “safety myth”. In “Higan”, Tawada mentioned the tag lines that usually appeared in the safety issue as follows.

Suddenly, regarding the safety of the re-operation of nuclear power plants in Japan, an international conference was held three months ago in Paris. “As long as nothing beyond expectations happens, the re-operation of nuclear power plants is guaranteed to be safe” the conclusion said.<sup>213</sup>

With regard to the nuclear facilities, what was usually stated by the organizations representing nuclear facilities were the words “beyond expectations” (*souteigai*) and “safe” (*anzen*). What had happened in Fukushima should end the *anzen shinwa* (safety myth) which is a myth regarding the absoluteness of nuclear safety. This myth continues to be conveyed in society. It was repeated and nurtured to give exclusivity to the nuclear energy companies. The companies who have this exclusivity would ignore the safety issues, skip routine inspections, falsify data, and reduce the safety level to a minimum requirement (Geilhorn and Weickgenannt 2017: 4). Aside from *anzen shinwa*, the word *souteigai* (beyond expectations) is often used by the nuclear power companies to relinquish responsibility from their shoulders. This word was specially mentioned many times in the media after the Fukushima accident occurred. TEPCO which was charged with the responsibility regarding the damage stated that the Fukushima accident happened “beyond the expectations” since no one could predict that the earthquake and tsunami would later cause the damage of the nuclear power plant.

In Japan, the myth surrounding the safety of nuclear energy was guarded tightly. It seemed that there was an unwritten agreement that every text or written argumentation should not mention the nuclear-related issues. People concluded that the nuclear-related theme was taboo to be discussed. There was also an understanding that questioning even a few things related to the application of nuclear energy was considered against the general agreement. The general agreement applied in society was that anything related to the use of nuclear energy is taboo, not to be spoken out or even discussed (Kimura 2013: 22). The root of the myth has been too sturdy that it leaves no chance for people to uproot it. However, the momentum came exactly when the Fukushima accident happened. This incident was a big hit against the nuclear industry. After the occurrence of the Fukushima accident, the

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<sup>213</sup> Original text: 「突然、日本の原発の再稼働の安全性について、パリで国際会議が行われたのは三ヵ月前のことだった。『再稼働は想定外のことが起こらない限り絶対に安全だ』という結果が出た」(Tawada 2014: 204).

facts of nuclear energy were slowly revealed to the public. There was hope after the disaster for those who had long been vocal in their opposition toward nuclear energy. They finally gained their opportunity to demonstrate in hope that the government would change its mind regarding the application of nuclear energy policies. Therefore, what has changed after the disaster was that this disaster has been used as a tool to affirm the position against nuclear facilities (Kimura 2013: 22).

Higashi Nihon Daishinsai gave the momentum for writers to actively publishes works that mentioned this issue. Tawada is one of the authors who consistently voiced her criticism toward the nuclear policies in the aftermath of the disaster. In most of her literary works, Tawada concealed her criticism behind her satirical words. Going back to the quotation above, by using the words that were often mentioned in the media related to the *anzen shinwa* (safety myth), Tawada insinuates the word of “safe” which continuously reverberated in the public mind. Practically, in the use of nuclear energy, there was negligence and the lack of safety control which then led to the disaster. When the disaster happened, the authorities panicked and tried to cover their mistakes by mentioning that the accident happened “beyond expectations” while at the same time looking for ways to restrengthen the *anzen shinwa*’s principle.

It seems that nuclear energy still has its prestigious position in the eye of the policymakers and is still too profitable to be left behind. After the principle of *anzen shinwa* began to collapse in the aftermath of the disaster, another way to “reconnect” people with nuclear energy had been sought. In connection with the Tokyo Olympic which will be held in 2020, the question related to Japan’s capability and safety to host the grand event has been questioned. Responding to the question, Prime Minister Abe firmly stated that the Fukushima radiation was under control. The word “*anzen*” (safe) was repeatedly mentioned. It was a mark that the propaganda of “safe nuclear energy” has been encouraged again (Kimura 2013: 24)<sup>214</sup>. Prime Minister Abe is well-known for his political policy where nuclear energy is assumed as something needed for economic development. He had no preference to limit the development of new nuclear reactors (Geilhorn and Weickgenannt 2017: 5).

Looking back at the previous quotation, it seemed that Tawada wanted to mention that no matter what happened, there would always be a group of people who would soon find reasons when the things “beyond expectations” occurred. They could say that the accident happened “beyond expectations”. Therefore at the same time they could find ways to avoid responsibility if the same accident happens in the future. By saying exactly the words Tawada mentioned, which were “As long as nothing beyond expectations happens, the re-operation of nuclear power plants is guaranteed to be

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<sup>214</sup> In a speech delivered in front of the International Olympic Committee in September 2013, in correlation with the decision to make Tokyo as an organizer for this event, Prime Minister Abe said, “Some may have concerns about Fukushima. Let me assure you, the situation is under control. It has never done and will never do any damage to Tokyo” (“Presentation by Prime Minister Shinzou Abe at the 125th Session of the International Olympic Committee”, *Prime Minister of Japan and his Cabinet*, September 7, 2013. <[https://japan.kantei.go.jp/96\\_abe/statement/201309/07ioc\\_presentation\\_e.html](https://japan.kantei.go.jp/96_abe/statement/201309/07ioc_presentation_e.html) >[accessed January 15, 2020]).

safe” (Tawada 2014: 204), when an accident or unwanted thing happens, the only thing needed is those words. The problem that seems continuing in Japan is that while there is a group of people who want to break the *anzen shinwa* by pointing out the accidents happened caused by nuclear energy, there is another group of people who want to revive the safety myth of nuclear energy; as an example given with the Tokyo Olympic matter.

In the following next quotation, Tawada presented “the experts” who were dragged into the post-disaster discussion. In “Higan”, Tawada mentioned that there was a conference related to the nuclear policy. At the conference, the experts gathered and discussed important things. Later they issued a decision that was mutually agreed upon. In her story, Tawada seemed express her suspicion that the experts could be bribed and give a false statement to the public. The reason for this suspicion was that the experts’ decision considered too far from ideal.

The experts that participated in the conference came from twenty-two countries. Each of them has his/her own interest which conflicted with others. Although it was difficult to imagine that all of them had been bribed, the decision that came out as a result of the conference was neither objective nor scientific.<sup>215</sup>

In the above-mentioned quotation, Tawada seems to refer to the experts with their various opinions regarding the disaster. In the post-Fukushima disaster, many sources stated that the experts stood on government’s side by saying that the radiation leaked was still within the safe limit. However, many people were critical enough to assume that there was a possibility that experts probably had been bribed to support government’s interest. The assumption arose since many of the statements which came from the experts were considered unscientific. It was not only from the scientific side, since in the early post-disaster period, people assumed that information came from the experts could be used as a guideline to raise awareness against the level of radiation. However, the statements presented in the media actually escalated public confusion and they did not provide accurate information.<sup>216</sup> The ambiguity and inaccuracy of this information from the experts then caused suspicion that there might be an agreement behind the scene which no one knows. The assumption that there was something that public did not know in the above-mentioned quotation is an alternative answer to Tawada’s question of why the experts issued unscientific decisions.

At first glance, the next quotation that will be presented seem to have no direct relationship with the discussion on nuclear energy. However, it will become the window to understand what was

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<sup>215</sup> Original text: 「会議に参加した専門家たちは、お互い利害の対立する二十二カ国から集められていたので、その全員が買収されたとはちょっと考えにくかった。でも、だからと言って、会議で出た結果が客観的、科学的だとは言えない」 (Tawada 2014: 204).

<sup>216</sup> In the early post-disaster period, based on the suggestion of many experts, the government decided that a range of zone that has to be cleared from residents was 30 km from the power plants. However, different from that opinion, experts from America stated that the real safe zone from the threat of radiation was 80 km from the power plants (“Eksodus Massal Berlanjut”, *Kompas*, March 19, 2011, p.9).

happening behind the scene. The quotation below can be interpreted as having a strong correlation with the process of creating nuclear-related policies. It was presented right after the discussion of the experts who allegedly were bribed since they issued the non-objective and unscientific decisions. It appears that this quotation implying the political process that generally considered as corrupt, in fact, the political process presented was correlated to the theme of nuclear that was previously discussed. In this quotation, Tawada presented the issue of corruption which allegedly happening behind the scene in the formulation of nuclear policies. Tawada illustrated a world where the transactions and negotiations that took place were too advanced compared to the traditional form of corruption that we have ever known in the present day. She added that there were no experts that could prove the existence of these practices, even if a lot of people know that these practices were conducted.

In the current political situation, without any connection to the personal intentions, it is not time for the politicians and elite businessmen to gather in the traditional Japanese restaurants, poking an expensive fish with their chopsticks, while making dirty negotiations with small voices as it happened in the past. (...) Instead, they do it from brain to brain with the invisible signals that fly. That was how the subconscious agreement was made with certain people. With the agreed parties, automatically the profit will be transferred through bank accounts. That is the new system formed by the world economic system. At this time, neither the biologist nor economist can prove the existence of a new mechanism of corruption. Even so, there are quite a lot of people who assume that this kind of practice has been carried out, especially people among the poets.<sup>217</sup>

The above quotation can lead to an understanding of what is called a ‘nuclear village’. In the aftermath of the disaster, the ‘nuclear village’ term began to appear in the public. The public began to realize the existence of an organization. The nuclear village is a term used to refer to institutions or individuals who support the use of nuclear energy in Japan. Members of the nuclear village are nuclear vendors, bureaucracy, DIET (Japan’s parliament), financial sector, media, and academia.<sup>218</sup> In the quotation, Tawada mentioned that the people who gathered in the traditional Japanese restaurants and conducted “dirty negotiations” were politicians, intellectuals, and elite business leaders. The quotation can be interpreted as Tawada’s attempt to describe the existence of the nuclear village, since the organization consisted of important people in society. What was done behind the curtain by the nuclear villagers was described by Kingston in detail. Kingston mentioned that those who did not support the consensus built by the nuclear village would not be given a smooth road in their careers. It was applied to

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<sup>217</sup> Original text: 「個人の意志に関係なく動いてしまう最近の政治には、政治家と学者と財界人が料亭で高級魚を箸の先でつつきながら小声で行う昔風の汚職はもう存在しない。(中略) そのかわり、脳味噌から脳味噌に目に見えない信号が飛び、それが無意識のうちに特定の人々によって同意され、同意した者の口座には自動的に儲けが振り込まれるという新しい世界経済の仕組みがとっくに成立している。今のところ生物学者も経済学者もこの新しい汚職メカニズムの存在をうまく実証することができないが、なんとなくそういうことではないかと感じている人間は特に詩人たちの中にはたくさんいる」 (Tawada 2014: 204-205).

<sup>218</sup> In his explanation of the nuclear village, Kingston added that this “village” was formed without boundaries or resident cards. It was an imagined collective bond that formed through solidarity over promoting nuclear energy. Therefore, if they have a motto, it would be “Safe, cheap, and reliable” (Kingston 2012: 1).

researchers and journalists who criticized nuclear policies as well as to politicians and the media who need funds to sustain their continuity.<sup>219</sup> This discussion then correlates to the discussion of “the experts that have been bribed”. The strong and powerful existence of the nuclear village explained why the experts issued the decisions that were contrary to the facts and the public’s expectations. The quotation above also presented the practices of “advanced transaction” between the member of the group. It strongly correlates with the “transaction” among the members of nuclear support group. The nuclear village allegedly put strict financial restrictions and limited promotions to those who were in conflict with their interest regarding nuclear energy empowerment. On the other hand, it was stated that they provided large compensation to those who support them (Kingston 2012: 1).

#### **4.2.3 The Evacuation Aspect Correlated with Higashi Nihon Daishinsai’s Disaster in “Higan”**

The quotations that have been mentioned in the previous section have presented a discussion related to the issue of nuclear energy policies that brought up in “Higan”. Although Tawada presented this issue in a satirical style, she could interestingly illustrate the discussion of the nuclear power plants’ reactivation issue that presumably ignored the damage and chaos provoked by the nuclear accident itself. Besides, Tawada seemed to question the claim that safety inspections of nuclear power plants had been carried out before they were reactivated, because people saw many flaws and inaccuracies. She also doubts whether the people actually gave their consent for the re-operation of nuclear power plants. The doubt was represented by the existence of the character Yamano Sachio, who was the only person left in the village near the power plant site. He was the only person left and he clearly expressed his opposition toward the reactivation of power plants. By the illustration of Yamano Sachio, Tawada underlined her question of who exactly supported the re-operation of nuclear power plants, besides the government and the people who have ulterior interests. In addition, Tawada also presented the discussion related to the safety myth of nuclear energy (*anzen shinwa*) and the term that Fukushima accident occurred beyond expectations (*souteigai*). Through “Higan”, Tawada also tried to describe the existence of nuclear village, the organization that moves behind the curtain. Its existence could provide an answer to why many experts gave less scientific statements in the aftermath of the disaster.

In this section, the discussion of the evacuation issue described in “Higan” will be presented. In her story, Tawada illustrated that Japan was struck by a huge disaster triggered by the nuclear-related accident. As a result, people had to leave since Japan was no longer inhabitable. The evacuation topic brought in this story strongly correlates with the post-Fukushima evacuation topic. As it was mentioned in many sources, thousands of people were evacuated tens of kilometers away from the

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<sup>219</sup> Kingston said, “Researchers who don’t support the Village consensus on the need, safety, reliability and economic logic of nuclear power don’t get grants and are denied promotions. Journalists who criticize the nuclear village are denied access and other perks, while politicians seeking contributions, and media companies eager for a slice of the utilities’ massive advertising budgets, trim their sails accordingly” (Kingston 2012: 1).

nuclear power plant's site. This part will discuss several topics related to evacuation in post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai.

In the beginning part of “Higan”, it was described that the horrendous disaster triggered by the plane crash on top of the nuclear power plant site happened in Japan. The disaster was described by the appearance of a ring of fires from the bottom of the ocean, the falling of mysterious white powder from the sky, and the strong ground shaking that forcibly pull the trees from their roots. Meanwhile, the wounded victims felt such a burning wound that they have never experienced before. They were also exposed to the mysterious white powder which led them to death. On that day, tens of millions of people staggered walking to the rivers and lakes due to the unbearable heat. Some of them were burnt alive until only their shadows remained, reminiscent of what had happened in Hiroshima and Nagasaki when the atomic bomb fell and burnt people in a blink of an eye.<sup>220</sup> The people that survived the disaster then flocked to the nearest port. They later boarded a ship that sails to another country as an evacuation destination. Japan has been entirely polluted in the aftermath of the disaster. The evacuation process itself was described as a dramatic process, where evacuees had to face a storm and deal with the lack of food and water for days, some of them even losing their minds when they reached the destination.

Trusting their instincts, people went to the nearest port. The ships that docked at the port were not passenger ships, but fishing vessels and cargo ships. The ships transported passengers with burn wounds to the mainland. Among those who lived on the side of the Japanese sea, there were relatively people who have reached the mainland first. People who lived on the side of the Pacific Ocean were tested by the raging waves. They also spent days without food and water. Many people fell into a state of unconsciousness when they arrived on the land. Both inside the cabin and on the deck, young people looked at the small engine screens in their hands. But on the screens, there was nothing else except deep endless darkness.<sup>221</sup>

The young people who stared at the engine screens with endless darkness was a representation of evacuees' hopelessness regarding their uncertain future. In this quotation, Tawada tried to present how hard the evacuation situation was for the victims. In the midst of the hard process, they must face uncertainty regarding their future.

The evacuation issue presented in “Higan” can be assumed to have a strong correlation with the evacuation issue in post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai. The nuclear power plant incident was triggered

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<sup>220</sup> Tawada seemed deliberately linking this scene to the true stories during the time when the disastrous Hiroshima and Nagasaki incident happened. Even until now, Japanese people remember the term “shadows caused by atomic bombs” as proof of the brutality of the bombing that happened at that time.

<sup>221</sup> Original text: 「人々は本能的に一番近くにある港へ向かった。港に停泊していた船は旅客船だけではなく漁船も貨物船も、肌の焼けただれた人々を乗せて大陸に向かった。日本海側に住んでいた人たちの中には比較的早く大陸に辿り着くことができた人もいた。太平洋側にいた人たちは、荒波にもまれて、飲み水も食料も不足している船の上で何日も過ごし、大陸に着いた頃には意識の朦朧としている人もいた。船室でも甲板でも若い人たちは手の中の小さな機械のディスプレイを睨み続けたが、そこには深い闇があるばかりだった」(Tawada 2014: 209-210).



by the earthquake and the tsunami which then caused damage to the nuclear power plant. The damage of the power plant then brought many consequences that extended into complicated problems which lasted a long time. In the post-disaster period, radiation spread widely as a result of unmanageable explosions. People panicked and feared of radiation exposure, meanwhile, the information given by the government lacked accuracy. The complicated problem was compounded by the lack of synchronicity between the government and TEPCO. The accumulation of panic, obscurity, and chaos in the post-disaster period was later called by Prime Minister Kan as a the biggest crisis that occurred in Japan in the past 65 years, or after the World War II.<sup>222</sup> Many problems that needed to be resolved emerged, one of which that demanded an immediate resolution, since it was directly related to the lives of many people was the evacuation problem.

Initially, in the post-disaster period, as a result of the leaked radiation, the government set an evacuation zone (the area that needs to be cleared of people) for 20 km around the nuclear power plant. The residents who lived within that radius had been requested to evacuate. People were confused and felt uncertainty in the evacuation process. They questioned how long they were expected to leave their houses until the decontamination process was complete. Eventually, they learned that the evacuation was for a long and uncertain time. Japan may have been trained for the evacuation process caused by natural disasters. However, the evacuation caused by a nuclear accident was new to Japan. One thing that distinguished the natural disaster's evacuation and the nuclear disaster's evacuation is, the natural disaster's evacuation performed because of the damage to houses and infrastructure, while the nuclear disaster's evacuation was conducted to avoid the effects of radiation (Yamakawa 2017: 51). Since the evacuation caused by the nuclear disaster is relatively rare, government's response and people's response related to this type of evacuation were also different. As mentioned before, Japan may have been trained to deal with natural disasters, but it seems that they needed more time to understand how to deal with man-made disasters. It was reflected in the evacuation process, where the evacuees who were forced to leave experienced confusion.

The evacuation that occurred in the post-Fukushima disaster in 2011 was implemented without any warnings and preparation. Residents only got an order to evacuate without guidance. Therefore the situation was disorganized and full of confusion. It was hard also for the residents to believe that such disasters could happen since there was a belief that the nuclear power plant was absolutely safe (*anzen shinwa*). The evacuation took place without open communication between the people who ordered the evacuation and the people who were ordered to evacuate. There was no information on how long the evacuation would last. Nor was there any instruction on how far the evacuees had to go, to be safe from the radiation exposure. It was not openly published how dangerous the level of radiation was and how to protect oneself from the radiation. The inaccuracy of the

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<sup>222</sup> "Pemerintah Berperan Besar", *Kompas*, March 14, 2011, p.1.

information even caused some people to evacuate to areas with a higher level of radiation.<sup>223</sup> It began with the lack of information in post-disaster, coupled with the uncertainty of the period of evacuation. The fear experienced by the evacuees, which initially revolved around the fear of radiation, shifted into the fear of an uncertain future (Yamakawa 2017: 57).

In the quotation mentioned above, where the post-disaster evacuation process had been carried out using the ships that go to other countries, Tawada described a situation that recalled the post-Fukushima disaster. She described how humans tried to escape from nuclear radiation. In “Higan” also, Tawada described the difficulties experienced by the evacuees, which was associated with the difficulties faced by the Fukushima evacuees. After the Fukushima evacuation took place, the lack of food and other basic necessities was reported in many places.<sup>224</sup> There were many evacuees who experienced shock, notably the elderly. The scene of young people staring at the dark screen in the previous quotation seemed to correlate to the anxieties of dark and uncertain future faced by the Fukushima evacuees.

In “Higan”, Tawada illustrated that Japan experiences a catastrophic disaster that was beyond expectations. The effect of this series of disasters was “Japan was no longer an inhabitable place”. There was no other choice for the survivors except to leave Japan. The only way to stay alive was to become an evacuee and leave Japan, for perhaps forever, since there was no guarantee that they would be able to come back. It was unknown when Japan will become inhabitable again, because the anger of a monster called nuclear power plant (*genpatsu*) will continue to burn people who are trying to reach it.

At that time, it was right at the time when the phrase “there is more than one way to survive” was popular. But now, on the contrary, there is only one way to survive. And the way is to leave Japan. These islands were no longer inhabitable. The anger of a monster called nuclear power plants with its head splits, from now until a few thousand years later will continue to burn the skins of those who approach it.<sup>225</sup>

In the above-mentioned quotation, Tawada presented Japan as a contaminated place, where there is no hope of the future. The idea of Japan with a gloomy future, as an uninhabitable place that no longer can be visited, is characteristic of Tawada in her post-disaster works. The idea of Japan as an “unreachable” and a “finished” place correlates with Tawada’s other fictional work with the title of

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<sup>223</sup> “Fukushima report: Key points in nuclear disaster report”, *BBC*, July 5, 2012. <<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-18718486>> [accessed January 15, 2020].

<sup>224</sup> “Jutaan Orang Tanpa Pangan”, *Kompas*, March 14, 2011, p.1.

<sup>225</sup> 『『生き延びる方法は一つではない』という台詞がちょうどその頃、流行っていたが、今はその反対で、生き延びる方法は一つしかなかった。それは、日本を離れることだった。この列島にはもう住むことができない。頭をかち割られた原発という名前の怪物の怒りは、この先何千年、近寄る人間の肌を焼き続けるだろう』 (Tawada 2014: 209).

“Fushi no Shima”. Tawada admitted that “Fushi no Shima” born from her imagination and her desperation. It was an image of Japan that could no longer be visited (Kimura 2018: 86).

The understanding of Japan as an “unreachable” and a “finished” place is associated with the idea of “the end of the world” (*sekai no owari*) mentioned by Kawamura Minato. In post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai, the writings related to “the sinking Japanese archipelago” (*nihonrettou no chinbotsu*)<sup>226</sup> reappeared as a result of the disaster. These writings reappeared because for decades the theme related to nuclear disasters has been presented in film and literature as a sign of “the coming of the doomsday” (*mokushiroku*). The Fukushima disaster itself can be categorized as a severe accident (*kakoku jiko*) that only happens once in two million years. After the disaster, people waited for “the end of the world” and “the sinking Japanese archipelago”. However, the world did not end, Japan did not even sink.

In the discussion in his book entitled *Shinsai Genpatsu Bungakuron*, Kawamura discussed how the destruction that led to the end of the world was depicted in many films and literary works. Through this discussion, it can be seen that what unites the theme of “destruction” and “the end of the world” is the role of nuclear energy, both in war involving nuclear energy and in the use of nuclear energy in nuclear facilities. For decades, people have associated nuclear energy with “the end of the world” through the depiction of this theme in films and works of literature. Therefore, it was not surprising when the Fukushima disaster revived the idea of “the end of the world”. Tawada’s literary works in post-disaster, such as “Higan” and “Fushi no Shima” which highlighted the idea of “unreachable” Japan as a result of the nuclear radiation, can be interpreted as having a correlation with the idea of “the end of the world”.

The idea of “uninhabitable” Japan in this story correlates with the idea of uninhabitable Fukushima. Based on the opinions from many sources, it is said that the evacuation problems in post-disaster were a big hit on communities that had been formed in the disaster area. Japan is a country with strong ties in its communities. It seemed that the Fukushima disaster divided the communities into two groups, the group of people who want to stay in the disaster area, and the group of people who want to leave the disaster area. The effect of strong ties in the communities is the actions that considered not contribute to strengthening the community ties are contemplated as negative actions. A problem that came up later was, those who decided to leave and save themselves from the radiation were labeled as disloyal to the communities because they wanted to save themselves. These people got a negative stigma and were bashed by unpleasant words. Communities have a large influence on individuals in society. The decision to evacuate or stay (in the case of voluntary evacuation) was based on actions taken by people in the same community. Some people listened to what their neighbors

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<sup>226</sup> *Nihonrettou Chinbotsu* is the title of the film aired in Japan in 1972. It tells a story about a major earthquake that happened in Tokyo. The writing of the term “*nihonrettou chinbotsu*” might be used by the writer to put forward the idea of the “sinking Japan”.

suggested, they left if their neighbors said so, regardless of what the government said. The trust in the government was lower than the trust in the community (Horikawa 2017: 70). It turned out that the length of the evacuation period took a lot more time than it was expected. When in 2012 the government planned to attract evacuees back to the areas that had been decontaminated, the sentiment regarding communities reappeared. The communities were again divided into two groups, those who want to go back home and those who don't want to go back to Fukushima.

Another issue brought up in “Higan” with a strong correlation to the theme of “community” was the elimination of the difference between “perpetrators” and “victims” after the occurrence of the “event” that considered bad or negative. In her works, Tawada is almost never straightforward in illustrating what is inside her mind. She described one scene as unimportant while there is actually a special meaning behind it. She illustrated in “Higan”, anecdote story of a young man who was curious about how to fly a plane. The young man, who did not have a license as a pilot was determined to hijack a commercial airplane since he could not resist his desire and curiosity. He made up his mind and took action. The acrobatic maneuver he performed when he was in the air shocked all the passengers inside the airplane that he hijacked. Although there were no casualties in the incident, the word “aircraft hijacking” became taboo in the aviation world. What was more surprising was, those who suffered the consequences of the incident was not only the young man who flew the plane, but also all the passengers and crew. All passengers lost their jobs after the incident and they did not get a chance to look for other jobs. Then, Tawada questioned why passengers had to pay a big price for the consequences of the incident.

Even though the passengers were innocent, the strange thing was they all had to be blamed for this. It was because not only the perpetrator, but the victims also were affected by the stain left by this incident. Therefore, they all had to be expelled from the community. This conduct was probably came from old habits.<sup>227</sup>

In the quotation above, even though Tawada was discussing the passengers who were blamed for something that was not their fault, it can be interpreted that the quotation contained another idea.

In the post-Fukushima disaster, many sources mentioned that sympathy came from all over Japan. However, as time passed by, the sympathy turned into prejudice. The radiation-related discrimination toward Fukushima evacuees was growing stronger as time went by. The unfortunate fact is, Fukushima nuclear power plants never became a source of electricity in Fukushima. It was built to supply a huge electricity demand in Tokyo. However, when the accident occurred, the residents who never enjoyed the practical use of the nuclear power plants were asked to leave their homes. Moreover, many of them experienced discrimination. The accumulation of unfortunate things faced

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<sup>227</sup> Original text: 「乗客には罪がないのになぜそうなるのか不思議だが、これは、加害者だけでなく被害者にも事件そのもののケガレがつくので共同体から追い出す、という古い習慣から来ているのかもしれない」 (Tawada 2014: 207).

by the residents indicated that these victims also had to suffer for mistakes that they never made. On the other hand, the company that operates this nuclear power plant had been attacked by unpleasant treatments and words since they were considered as a “perpetrator”. It is considered as a common thing when the “perpetrators” have to pay for their “mistakes”. However, it is a big question when the victims that did not contribute to any mistakes also have to pay the consequences. It was reflected in the above quotation, “not only the perpetrator, but the victims also affected by the stain left by this incident (Tawada 2014: 207). It seemed that Tawada wanted to put forward the idea that in Fukushima disaster, both the “perpetrators” as well as the “victims” had to pay the “losses” caused by this disaster. The interesting thing from the quotation above is, it attracts the question of why do both parties had to share the consequences, when normally only the guilty party need to pay or to be blamed. Tawada mentioned in the quotation, “this conduct was probably come from old habits” (Tawada 2014: 207), which indicated her criticism toward a system that has long been applied in Japan. The discussion of Japan as a homogenous country seems to dominate the study of Japanese culture and society, the phrase of “the nail that sticks out shall be hammered down” seems to represent this idea. In the homogenous society, it can be assumed that people are expected to have commonness in their belief. The expectation of people sharing a common value is likely high in the community. Therefore, there is a possibility that people going “off the track” or “different from most people” need to be “straightened” or even “removed” from society. When there is an assumption that a disaster is an event that going “off the track” and “out of line”, it is understandable why all the people involved had to get the “stain” from this disaster.

The quotations that have been presented in this section have a correlation with the evacuation theme in the post-Fukushima disaster. The commonness between the evacuation in “Higan” and the evacuation in post-Fukushima disaster is that both happened because the disaster-stricken areas were uninhabitable as an effect of radiation. The first quotation alludes to the issue of the hard times faced by evacuees in post-disaster. The hard times described in this quotation were strongly correlated with the difficulties experienced by the evacuees in post-Fukushima disaster. The scene of young people looking at the dark screen was represented the evacuees’ dark future ahead and hinted at the future of Fukushima evacuees who were still unclear and in the dark.

The second quotation presented an idea of uninhabitable Japan. Tawada added that Japan would be uninhabitable because of nuclear power plants that would still be dangerous after a thousand years. The idea of “uninhabitable” and “unvisited” Japan is in line with another Tawada’s post-disaster story entitled “Fushi no Shima”. The “uninhabitable” and “unvisited” Japan seems to be Tawada’s prominent feature in her post-disaster literary works. This idea of “uninhabitable” Japan also correlates with the idea of “*sekai no owari*” mentioned by Kawamura Minato. It has long been believed that nuclear disaster is the beginning of the end of the world.

In the third quotation, Tawada used an anecdotal story about a man who hijacked a plane and its passengers. Both the perpetrator and the victims had to be removed from society. The idea that both parties involved in a “bad incident” had to pay the consequences seems to correlate with the idea that everyone involved in the Fukushima accident had to pay a big price. It was not just the perpetrator who ran the nuclear power plants, but the victims also who had to experience evacuation and discrimination due to radiation. Besides, it seemed that Tawada also criticized the political system that has been running for long time in Japan, which is referred to as “old habits”.

### **4.3 Higashi Nihon Daishinsai and the Depiction of the Post-disaster’s Worst Effect in “Kentoushi”**

#### **4.3.1 “Kentoushi”’s Background and its Correlation with “Fushi no Shima” Written by Tawada Yoko**

“Kentoushi” is the main story of five stories included in the collection of stories with the same title, *Kentoushi* written by Tawada Yoko and published by Kodansha in 2014. In 2018, Margaret Mitsutani translated “Kentoushi” into English, and it was published under the title *The Emissary*. *The Emissary* has won the National Book Award for best-translated literature (The Best Translated Book Award) in 2018. Similar to other stories in *Kentoushi*, “Kentoushi” described a detailed picture of Japan’s future in the aftermath of a “big catastrophe”. Based on its setting of place and time as well as its storyline, it can be assumed that “Kentoushi” is one of Tawada Yoko’s responses to Higashi Nihon Daishinsai, which occurred three years before this story has been published.

The story of “Kentoushi” centered on two main characters, the first of which is a man more than 100 years old, and the second character is his great-grandson who was not more than 10 years when the story began. “Kentoushi” is a simple story, with slow but heartfelt narration. Through simple everyday occasions, the relationship between these two characters had been built slowly. They complement and support each other to survive in the harsh world that doesn’t side with them.

To discuss “Kentoushi”, first of all, it is necessary to provide an overview and summary of this story. With unspecified time in the future, there is an isolated country called Japan. This country has been isolated for many long years and it has closed all possibilities of contact with other countries. The reason for Japan’s isolation was not explained, nor even mentioned until the end of the story. However, sources said that Japan became a country full of elderly people, most of whom live long even after passing the age of 100 years old. The unbelievable thing is, the elderlies remained healthy and productive even as they grow older. None of them are sick or need intensive care. They go to work every day and are productive all the time. Since the aged are considered ‘young’ at that time, the terms of “young elderly” and “middle-aged elderly” are used. However, the ‘productivity’ and ‘youth’ bestowed upon the elderlies have to be paid for a high price. As if replacing the elderlies who have an ‘eternal youth’, the young generation born and grew up in a weak physical condition. Their bodies are

vulnerable and sensitive to outside stimulants. The most miserable thing from the young generation is, they could not survive without the elderlies who took care of them full time.

In such circumstances, the first main character, Yoshiro, an elderly writer who is still healthy and capable of doing normal activities entered the scene. Yoshiro, who was abandoned by his wife, child, and grandson, was then given the responsibility to take care of his only great-grandson named Mumei<sup>228</sup>. Mumei, like all children in his generation, has a very weak physical condition. His body is unable to accept normal food, he needs to eat soft crushed foods and his body is unable to absorb calcium at a normal level. His teeth did not grow strong. One time the teeth just slipped from his gums, draining blood from his mouth. Yoshiro picked him up immediately and rushed him to the hospital. The children who need special care must have a routine check up every month. All the pediatricians can do is examine the extent of the physical damage happening in the children; they can not do anything to prevent the damage. In a difficult situation, Yoshiro took care of his great-grandson. As a writer with abundant knowledge of words, he taught Mumei the words that were no longer used and had become extinct. He also held a picnic inside the house, since the children at that time did not have an opportunity to play outside like the previous generations. Yoshiro tried to provide facilities and opportunities that he thought Mumei deserved, while at the same time he felt guilty and helpless because he was unable to provide a bright future for Mumei.

Besides Yoshiro's daily life in raising Mumei, the story of "Kentoushi" illustrated the condition and situation that took place in Japan at that time. Foreign languages are said to have been eradicated and saying something in a foreign language could lead a person to prison. Consequently, people lived in fear and never mentioned anything in a language other than Japanese. The censorship is strictly enforced, Yoshiro even rescinded his intention to publish his book that was filled with the names of foreign countries and foreign terms. Even though there is no case of detention due to this reason, people do not want to take risks since the law enforcement at that time is difficult for common people to understand. Someone could be imprisoned without a prior trial. Besides mentioning the words in foreign languages, singing in other languages and distributing translated novels would also be punished. Economically, Japan became a privatized country. The bank system collapsed with all the banks going bankrupt. Customers were in a rage since their money was never returned. No explanation came from the banks, which hired men who were hourly paid to apologize and bow in front of the outraged customers. Similarly, the education system also collapsed. A criticism of the inappropriate scheme that misused parents and students' psychological conditions came up in public discussion. The parents are blamed for being proud to pay expensive tuition fees in order to avoid people from thinking that their children are unemployed or doing nothing in their lives. From another aspect, the extreme weather is spreading throughout Japan. The drastic climate change included weather that could change in a second within a day and the impossibility to predict how the weather

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<sup>228</sup> In Japanese written as 無名(Mumei) which literally means "no-name".

would be on the following day. From the legal aspect, criminal acts no longer exist, and even the words related to a crime vanished. In the aspect of technology, cars are no longer used and other machines disappeared since people consider that their lives are better without them. The only machine-related thing left is the refrigerator. The refrigerators use solar power for their operation.

The accumulation of such condition created despair and helplessness everywhere. Yoshiro spent his days struggling for both his and Mumei's lives. Instead of considering it a blessing, Yoshiro thinks that his life is more like a curse, given the fact that he could not die. In the middle of the story, Yoshiro's memories went back to the time when he met his wife, Marika, for the first time. They met in the middle of a demonstration since both of them were quite active in organizations at that time. When Marika got pregnant, they decided to get married and after some time, their daughter, Amana was born. Amana grew up, got married, and gave birth to Yoshiro's grandson, Tomo. In Yoshiro's memories, Tomo was a rebellious kid who sometimes bothered him. However, he could not stop took care of him. Even after Tomo disappeared without a word, leaving his baby, Mumei for Yoshiro to take care of. Having the experience of raising his daughter and grandson, Yoshiro discovered something different in Mumei, a kind of maturity that he had never seen in ordinary children. Mumei was born and raised in an unfavorable condition, but he never blamed his fate. Yoshiro assumed that Mumei does not understand the meaning of 'suffering', since the boy considers that what happened to him was only a part of his life that he should let go.

When the story goes into the description of Yoshiro's wife, Marika, the fact that she works in an organization that is responsible to send children abroad as *kentoushi* was revealed. The term *kentoushi* refers to selective Japanese children who are secretly sent abroad, precisely to Madras, India to be physically examined. The research of their physical condition is expected to provide enlightenment in the healthcare industry, so that children will have an opportunity to live longer in the future. *Kentoushi*'s candidates must pass a strict selection process. Marika realized that Mumei was a most suitable candidate to become a *kentoushi*. However, she did not want the organization's committee to be aware of her great-grandson's presence. All she wanted for Mumei was, for him to spend his days peacefully and happily under Yoshiro's guidance.

Even though Marika had tried to hide Mumei's presence, it turned out that there was another person who had an eye on Mumei. It was Mumei's homeroom teacher named Yonatani. As a part of the secret organization where Marika also is a member, Yonatani has the same responsibility to spot outstanding children who deserve to be *kentoushi*. Yonatani thought that Mumei is a most suitable candidate, but he decided that he had to wait for a couple of years to see Mumei's progress.

One day, when Yonatani was giving a lesson about the world map, Mumei fell and lost consciousness in the class. The setting time of the story then jumps far ahead, when Mumei was already fifteen years old. At the age of just fifteen, Mumei was unable to walk on his feet, his hair had turned completely grey, and he could not speak through his original voice. A machine helped him to



speak. He also perfectly understood that in the next few years he would need help from the machine to breathe normally. A few days after Mumei's fifteenth birthday, Yonatani showed up at Yoshiro's door. With Yoshiro's permission, Yonatani invited Mumei to talk. It was during their conversation that Mumei heard about *kentoushi* for the first time. What was more surprising is that Mumei had been informed that he was selected as a *kentoushi* to represent Japan. Yonatani explained that a study of Japanese children's physical condition has been conducted to provide a reference if the same conditions occurred in other parts of the world. Actually, the *kentoushi* system itself is a form of rebellion over the isolation policy imposed in Japan. Yonatani added that what Mumei had to do next is to go to Yokohama port and board the ship that would take him out of Japan. Mumei accepted his huge responsibility as a *kentoushi*, but when it was almost the time to leave, his mind was heavy by the thought of Yoshiro's presence. He wondered, what would be left for Yoshiro if he also went away. The way he thought about Yoshiro was exactly the same as what Yoshiro thought about him. Yoshiro would always be worried about how Mumei would live his life if he is not around to help.

The final scene in "Kentoushi" is Mumei's reunion with a little girl who once became his neighbor. The girl suddenly disappeared when Mumei was still a boy, and he never saw her anymore until that day. The girl's name is Suiren. This reunion is depicted as half real and half imagination. During the meeting, Mumei and Suiren spent their time lying together on the sand, in front of the sea. Suiren invited Mumei to cross the ocean together with her. Even though Mumei had agreed to go with her, in fact he had his own plan to go alone. As Mumei began to lose his consciousness, Suiren's appearance seemed to shift from a girl into a boy. Suiren's pair of eyes seemed to turn into a pair of lungs, it then turned again into a pair of beans, finally it turned into two faces, Yonatani's worried face in the left and Yoshiro's worried face on the right. The next thing that happened, which is also the last scene of this story, is the darkness reached Mumei's brain, and he fell into the deep darkness.

Based on the broad outline and the summary that has been presented, there is a question regarding Mumei's destiny, whether he is dead at the end of the story or whether something else happened to him. "Kentoushi", as an unfinished story, does not make it clear how Yoshiro coped with Mumei's departure. It was not explained how the relationship between Yoshiro and Mumei ended also. There was no description of what Mumei did to contribute to his role after being elected as *kentoushi*. This story invites many questions and at the same time it opens up many possibilities. If "Kentoushi" is considered as a story related to Higashi Nihon Daishinsai, the 'unfinished' element presented is strongly related to the disaster itself. Eight years have passed since the disaster occurred, but many things related to it are still 'unfinished' in the minds of the victims as well as the witnesses. There are still a lot of problems that have not yet been completely resolved. Similar to the disaster that left a lot of speculation and assumptions, this story also invites various interpretations of what happened to Mumei and Yoshiro as well as why Japan's condition was described in the story. The interpretation of

“Kentoushi” in this discussion will focus on how Tawada depicted the elements of Higashi Nihon Daishinsai in “Kentoushi” and how she described the worst effect of nuclear accidents.

“Kentoushi” did not clearly mention the reason behind the isolation of Japan. However, the word ‘contamination’ is repeatedly mentioned.<sup>229</sup> This story actually has a strong relation to the work of “Fushi no Shima”, which was Tawada’s first fictional work in response to Higashi Nihon Daishinsai. With similarity in the background story, where “Fushi no Shima” described a series of event happened since 2011 until the isolation policy was implemented, “Kentoushi” that illustrated events that happening in the ‘isolated Japan’ can be considered as the sequel of “Fushi no Shima”.<sup>230</sup> “Fushi no Shima” stated that the radiation caused by the disaster in 2011 caused an uncommon effect on humans’ bodies. The people who were elderly at the time when the disaster occurred, were living healthy even years later. It looked as though they became immortal and could not die. Meanwhile, those who were young or even children at the time of the disaster, grew up sick and weak. In the end, the young generation that is expected to support the lives of the elderlies cannot even support themselves. Without a choice, they had to rely on the elderlies to support them.<sup>231</sup> If “Kentoushi” is read as a

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<sup>229</sup> Some of the mentionings of the word ‘contamination’ in “Kentoushi” are as follow: 「(中略) 土が汚染されていた場合、汚染度は高いよ。」(When the soil is contaminated, the level of contamination will be high) (Tawada 2014: 30), 「ただしその骨は地球が還元不可能なところまで汚染される前に生きていた動物のものでなければいけない。」(But the bones must belong to the animals that lived in the earth before it became a place that could not be fixed due to radiation) (Tawada 2014: 30), 「(中略) 汚染度が高いと言われる魚を無名に食べさせる気にはなれなかったので湯豆腐と組み合わせてみた。」(Because he (Yoshiro) did not want to feed Mumei fishes that claimed to have a high level of contamination, he tried to mix it with tofu) (Tawada 2014: 65).

<sup>230</sup> With the setting of Japan that had become a victim of nuclear energy and closed all of contacts with international world, and the depiction of the elderlies that can not die due to the effect of radiation, Kimura stated that “Kentoushi” can be considered as a sequel of “Fushi no Shima” (Kimura 2018: 87). Meanwhile, Tawada herself stated that her visit to the evacuation area in Iwaki inspired her to write “Kentoushi”. Initially, she planned to write a long version of “Fushi no Shima”, but after her visit she wrote “Kentoushi”, the work that was born unexpectedly (“Kentoushi wo megutte Kentoushi cho Tawada Yoko”, *Gendaishinsho*, November 15, 2014). < <https://gendai.ismedia.jp/articles/-/40935> >[accessed December 17, 2019]).

<sup>231</sup> The quotation which summarizes an explanation of the elderlies who cannot die and the young generation who is always sick in “Fushi no Shima” is as follows: 「二〇一一年、福島で被爆した当時、百歳を越えていた人たちはみな今も健在で、幸いにしてこれまで一人も亡くなっていない。これは福島だけでなく、その後数年の間に次々ホットスポットとなっていった中部関東地方の二十ニヵ所についても言えることだった。被爆者の中で最高年齢者は当時百十二歳だったが、百二十歳を超えてもまだびんぴんしている。「お元気そうですね」とピントが通訳を介して誉めると、「死ねないんです」という答えが返ってきたそうだ。若返ったのではなく、どうやら死ぬ能力を放射性物質によって奪われてしまったようなのである。夜はよく眠れず、朝起きると身体がぐったり疲れているが、それでも起きて働くしかない。二〇一一年に子供だった人たちは次々病気になる、働くことができないだけでなく、介護が必要なのだ。何しろ毎日浴びる放射能は微量でも、細胞が活発に分裂していけば、あっという間に百倍、千倍に増えてしまう。だから年が若ければ若いほど危険なのだ。」(The people who were already 100 years old or more when the accident in Fukushima occurred in 2011, remained healthy. Miraculously, none of them had passed away. That did not happen only in Fukushima, a few years later it also happened at 22 places that became ‘hot spots’ in Chuubu and Kantou regions. The oldest victim at the time of the disaster was 112 years old. Even though he is now more than 120 years old, he still looks very healthy. “You look very healthy” Pinto said through an interpreter. “I cannot die” apparently was the answer given. It did not mean that they are young again, but apparently, the radioactive material took away their ability to die. They could not sleep at night. Even if they felt pain all over their bodies when they woke up in the morning; they had to get up and go to work. Those who were just children back in 2011, got sick one by one. They were unable to work; more than that,

continuation of “Fushi no Shima”, even though the causes of abnormality that happened to the young and elderly are not specifically mentioned, it can be assumed that the elderly’s immortality and the young generation’s fragility were due to an accident in the past that led to radiation. These radiation particles caused the abnormal situation depicted in the story.

#### 4.3.2 Restriction of the Freedom of Speech in “Kentoushi”

“Kentoushi” did not mention anything that had happened before in Japan. It gives the impression that what had happened in the past was so long ago that it is not worth to be remembered. There is a distance between the characters and the past stories. No one explicitly questions something or blames someone in this story. No one demands an answer as to why the world’s situation is so far from ideal. People became more ignorant of each other, the flow of information was limited and the information could not provide what people needed. The narration of the story flows smoothly as if what happened in the past is just something that should have happened, as part of a normal life. At that time, everyone is indifferent about their surroundings and pretend that everything is normal. There was just one scene that mentioned the past and demanded the truth of what had happened actually in Japan. In the scene, Yonatani, Mumei’s homeroom teacher, was giving a lesson using the map of the world. The conversation between Yonatani and his students goes as follows.

“Why were we pushed away from the land?”

somebody asked. Out of curiosity, Mumei turned his head to see who was asking, but with his stiff neck he could not turn his head.

“My great grandfather said that because Japan did something bad, the land then hated it” Tatsugoro said as if he was proud of himself. On hearing this, Yonatani nodded with a wry smile.

“Look at this. In the middle of the world, there is a large sea. This sea is called the Pacific Ocean. Located in the middle of the sea are the Eurasian and African continents on the left and American continent on the right. The planks that sink in the bottom of the Pacific Ocean sometimes slide strongly. At such times, a large earthquake happened at the edge of the plank, and sometimes tsunamis come. There is nothing humans can do to change it with their strength. The earth works like that. However, it was not due to the earthquake and tsunami that it became like that. If it was only because of the natural disasters, we should be able to get through it. It was not because of natural disasters. You understand?”

As soon as he said that, the fire alarm began to ring loudly. Yonatani approached the red colored machine and turned the switch off.<sup>232</sup>

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they needed special care. Since they were exposed to radioactive material every day, the body’s cells divided rapidly into one hundred parts or even thousands part in a short time. Therefore, the younger the person was, the more dangerous it became) (Tawada 2012: 18) .

<sup>232</sup> Original text: 「どうして大陸から突き放されたんですか？」

と誰かが訊いた。誰だろうと思って無名は振り返ろうとしたが、首が硬くなっていて、まわらなかった。「日本はわるいことをして大陸から嫌われたんだって、曾おばあちゃんが言った」と、龍五郎君が得意になって言うと、それを聞いて夜那谷は苦しげな笑いを浮かべて頷いた。

「ほら、見てごらん。世界の真ん中には大きな海がある。これが太平洋だ。この海をはさんで、左にユーラシア大陸とアフリカ大陸、右にアメリカ大陸がある。太平洋の海の底に沈んだ板が時々大きくずれる。するとその板の縁で大きな地震が起こって、津波が来ることもある。それは人間の力ではどうにもならないことだ。地球というのはそういうものなんだ。でも、日本がこうなってしまったのは、地震や津波のせ

It was not clearly mentioned what made Japan the way it was described in the story. However, Yonatani said, “*jishin ya tsunami no sei jyanai*” (it was not due to the earthquake and tsunami) and “*shizen saigai de wa nai n da*” (not because of natural disasters). If it is interpreted that the earthquake and tsunami mentioned in the dialogue were the two elements of Higashi Nihon Daishinsai, it can also be interpreted that these two statements refer to another element in Higashi Nihon Daishinsai, or the nuclear accident.

The readers are led to be sufficiently sensitive to realize the existence of the ‘nuclear energy’, even though not a single word related to this topic is mentioned in this story. Regarding the depiction of nuclear energy without mentioning the word ‘nuclear’ itself, Tawada as a writer seems to obey the unwritten rules, where it was understood that the nuclear-related theme is not mean to be discussed openly. The discussion itself is not allowed, nor is it permitted to ask the question regarding the safety of nuclear energy (Kimura 2013: 22). The conversation between the teacher and student that was presented in the above quotation, accompanied with Yonatani’s reaction when he wanted to express what he knew but was unable to say it directly, can be interpreted as Tawada’s approach to describe how the nuclear-related theme had been repressed for a long time. As it had been previously explained in the discussion of “Higan”, the nuclear energy campaign had been introduced to the public for decades. Because of safety myth-related campaigns, works of literature, and films distributed by mass media and electronic media, the safety myth (*anzen shinwa*) of nuclear energy has been built up over decades until it left no space for other opinions and counter-arguments.<sup>233</sup> In post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai, the discussion related to the use of nuclear facilities had reappeared in public, triggered by the Fukushima nuclear accident. It seems that this accident was the momentum to express people’s opinions and criticisms toward nuclear energy. These opinions and criticisms were voiced by many people, including the people in the literary world and anti-nuclear groups who were previously facing difficulties in expressing their disapproval. Those who had long opposed the existence of nuclear energy voiced their opposition by holding demonstrations in the hope that the government would change the nuclear energy-related policies in the post-disaster period (Kimura 2013: 22). In the above quotation, the sound of the alarm ringing shows Yonatani’s inability to clearly state what he has in mind regarding something that was not ‘the earthquake’ and ‘the tsunami’. It can be interpreted that

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いじゃない。自然災害だけなら、もうとっくに乗り越えているはずだからね。自然災害ではないんだ。い  
いか。」

夜那谷がそう言った途端、教室の火災警報がけたたましく鳴り始めた。夜那谷は赤い機械に近づいていっ  
て、スイッチを切った」(Tawada 2014: 142-143).

<sup>233</sup> Previously, there were many who thought that Higashi Nihon Daishinsai was able to break the *anzen shinwa* belief surrounding nuclear energy use. However, it seems that the roots of that belief have been built up for decades, and they are still standing strong. Kimura mentioned that to promote nuclear energy after Higashi Nihon Daishinsai, the word ‘*anzen*’ (safe) reappeared and the propaganda that “the use of nuclear energy is safe” was re-encouraged (Kimura 2013: 24).

in this part, Tawada tried to describe a situation that when the theme of nuclear energy came up in the public, there will be a kind of ‘alarm’ that holds back the discussion regarding this matter. Practically, in the Japanese society, the vocal voices related to the use of nuclear energy could invite many unfavorable consequences, as it was explained in the discussion of “Higan”, or the explanation about the organization called “nuclear village”.<sup>234</sup>

The limitations in the discussion of the nuclear energy-related theme created a system where people automatically become afraid to touch the theme that relates to the long-term effects of nuclear energy use. Through the implicit narration in “Kentoushi”, it can be interpreted that Tawada considers the restriction put on the nuclear energy theme, coupled with a legal system that is difficult to be understood by ordinary people, make people feel paranoid, which then causes them to take a step back from this topic in order not to be involved in something that lays beyond their controls.

“Kentoushi” presented an illustration of an isolated society with a closed system. Accompanying the isolation system, the information circulated in the public was strictly regulated, and human relations became increasingly loose and distant. No one ever knows for sure what is happening in the other parts of Japan, or what people have been experiencing there. Everyone feels enough and comfort just by caring about their own lives and being indifferent to what is happening outside themselves. It is mentioned in the story that Yoshiro has no friends, he has never been close to his neighbors, and he considered it as something normal. At that time, most of the systems known in the present day society had already collapsed, including the law enforcement system that experienced a drastic change. In one scene, it was described that Yoshiro is going through a dilemma. As a writer, he has an inspiration to write about a certain theme. He wanted to write about an airport located in Tokyo which he had not visited for a long time. The airport itself had long been abandoned because of no more flights to Japan or out of Japan. However, his paranoia that came from realizing that he was stepping into something that he did not know held him back from carrying out his intention. Yoshiro who has long been living in a restraining system, automatically stopped when he felt that he was entering an area where he should not be.

However, writing about the condition of an airport that no one ever visited anymore is dangerous. He assumed that there is a hidden secret of the state there, therefore the government purposely keeping it off from the public. Yoshiro had no desire to sneak into a forbidden place and dig into the secret of the state. However, if he publishes work that depicts the image of the airport inside his mind, and if by chance the

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<sup>234</sup> As explained in the previous discussion related to the story of “Higan”, the ‘nuclear village’ is a term that refers to those who support the use of nuclear energy. This huge non-formal organization is claimed to have a role in providing ‘consequences’ to those who oppose the use of nuclear energy, as mentioned by Kingston, “Researchers who don’t support the Village consensus on the need, safety, reliability and economic logic of nuclear power don’t get grants and are denied promotions. Journalists who criticize the nuclear village are denied access and other perks, while politicians seeking contributions, and media companies eager for a slice of the utilities’ massive advertising budgets, trim their sails accordingly” (Kingston 2012: 1).

description corresponds too closely to reality, it is possible that he will be arrested and charged for leaking state secrets.<sup>235</sup>

What made Yoshiro feel unease was the assumption that what he might describe in his writings would correspond to the actual condition in the airport. He felt paranoid because there is a possibility that he might be arrested for leaking state secrets. The real problem is, no one knows for sure what is actually happening in the airport, due to limited information. The lack of information and the ignorance caused by limited information made people feel overly paranoid.

How Tawada illustrated that ignorance caused by the limited information could produce paranoia corresponds to the post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai situation. In the aftermath of the Fukushima incident, fear and panic spread mainly among the residents who lived near the nuclear power plant. At that time, there was a claim that the authorities did not give enough information related to the incident. Therefore, people trapped in their confusion related to the radiation level in the air. This confusion came from ignorance, which then produced fear, mainly among the families that have young family members. In the end, driven by paranoia, many took the initiative to evacuate, even when they did not get mandatory orders to leave. Some of them even went to places with higher radiation levels due to the ignorance and unequal distribution of information. In the above quotation, Tawada alludes to how the limitation of information imposed in post-disaster produced fear which then led to the wrong decision. The theme was discussed through the description of Yoshiro, who made a decision not to write his book due to the paranoia caused by the limitation of information.

Move to the next quotation, where the description of the “restriction of freedom of speech” is presented. As it was described previously, “Kentoushi” presented a completely isolated Japan. This isolation includes the ‘physical isolation’, where people are not allowed to leave or enter Japan, and the ‘isolation of information’ where all sources of information such as internet, telephone, or even letters are banned. How precisely the isolation took place in Japan is described in the quotation below. At first glance, the quotation insinuates that some countries use other countries’ poverty and chaos to be the source of their income. However, this quotation also illustrated how Yoshiro felt an urge to state his honest opinion regarding the isolation policy.

“We can get oranges from Okinawa, right?” Mumei said after taking a sip.

“That is right.”

“Can we get it further south than Okinawa?”

Yoshiro swallowed his saliva. “Well, I’m not really sure.”

“Why don’t you know?”

“Because of the country’s isolation system.”

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<sup>235</sup> Original text: 「しかし、誰も行く人のいない空港の様子を書くのは危険である。仮にそこに何か国家機密が隠されていて、誰も行けないように工夫が凝らされているとする。義郎は、禁じられた場所にうまく潜り込んで秘密を探り出すつもりなど全くない。しかし、自分の空想の中の空港を綿密に描写して作品として発表し、たまたまそれが事実と一致した場合、国家機密を漏らしたのと同じことだと言いがかりをつけられて、逮捕されてしまうかもしれない」 (Tawada 2014: 37)

“Why?”

“Every country has its own serious problems, in order to keep those problems from spreading all over the world, they decided that each country will solve its own problems. Do you remember that I took you to the Showa Heisei museum? Each room is separated by an iron door, so that if there is a fire in one room, the room next to it will not get burned.”

“Is it better that way?”

“I don’t know if it is better or not. But, if the isolation is implemented, at least the danger of Japanese companies benefiting from exploiting other countries’ poverty will be reduced. I think the danger of having foreign companies take advantage of the Japanese crisis will also be reduced.”

Mumei put in a face as if he both understood and not quite sure at the same time. Yoshiro tried to not directly express his disapproval of the country’s isolation policy to his great-grandson.<sup>236</sup>

The above quotation summarized a dialogue between Yoshiro and Mumei, where Mumei questioned whether the oranges he ate could be found farther away than Okinawa. This question then led to a discussion of the ‘isolation policy’ that is highlighted in this story. As an answer to why the isolation policy has been carried out, Yoshiro said that the policy is implemented to avoid the problems spreading from one country to another. However, the reason given is actually not enough, maybe it is even not the answer which came from Yoshiro’s inner heart. Because at the end of the quotation, Yoshiro stated that he was being careful to not directly state his disapproval of the isolation policy. Yoshiro hid his disapproval because he realized that it was too risky to express a different opinion from the authoritarian voices. Tawada depicted a world full of restraints, where the different opinion could turn into a source of problems, and therefore it is always avoided.

In “Kentoushi”, Tawada illustrated that the implementation of restriction of the freedom of speech was forcing people to repeatedly think of their words before they come out of their mouths. Regarding the theme related to the ‘restriction of freedom of speech’ or in Japanese is called *genrontousei*, Fujita Naoya mentioned that this theme is categorized as one of fourteen themes he classified as the general themes that came up in post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai literary works (Fujita 2017: 30). The emergence of the *genrontousei* theme in post-disaster literary works may be provoked

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<sup>236</sup> Original text: 「「オレンジは沖縄でとれるんでしょ」と一口飲んでから無名が訊く。

「そうだよ。」

「沖縄より南でもとれる？」義郎は唾を呑んだ。

「さあ、どうだろうね。知らない。」

「どうして知らないの？」

「鎖国しているからだ。」

「どうして？」

「どの国も大変な問題を抱えているんで、一つの問題が世界中に広がらないように、それぞれの国がそれぞれの問題を自分の内部で解決することに決まったんだ。前に昭和平成資料館に連れて行ってやったことがあったんだろう。部屋が一つずつ鉄の扉で仕切られていて、たとえある部屋が燃えても、隣の部屋は燃えないようになっていただろう。」

「その方がいいの？」

「いいかどうかはわからない。でも鎖国していれば、少なくとも、日本の企業が他の国の貧しさを利用して儲ける危険は減るだろう。それから外国の企業が日本の危機を利用して儲ける危険も減ると思う。」

無名は分かったような、わからなかったような顔をしていた。義郎は自分が鎖国政策に賛成していないことを曾孫にははっきり言わないようにしていた」(Tawada 2014: 53-54).

by an awareness that there had been topics that hidden and not delivered to the public. In “Kentoushi”, it seems that Tawada wanted to emphasize that *genrontousei* is a theme that worth attention in post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai. Following the disaster, Japan’s ranking in the index compiled by Reporters Without Borders, an organization support the freedom to get transparent information, rapidly declined due to the restriction of transparent coverage on the Fukushima nuclear accident-related information. Japan’s ranking has declined again in 2013 because the Act on the Protection of Specially Designated Secrets had been implemented. This is a new law that makes possible the imprisonment of whistleblowers who spread state secrets or journalists who spread information that has been obtained illegally (Geilhorn and Weickgenannt 2017: 6). This statement supported the idea that Higashi Nihon Daishinsai clearly influenced the theme of *genrontousei*. This theme is relevant to “Kentoushi”, since this work is one of the stories that responded to Higashi Nihon Daishinsai.

Back to “Kentoushi”, to the last quotation in the discussion of freedom of speech. When it was decided that the isolation policy would be implemented, many people were surprised, including Yoshiro and his wife, Marika. However, no one openly expressed their shock. On the other hand, many critics competed against each other to give positive responses to the newly implemented policy.

It was not only Yoshiro and Marika who were stunned by the fact that the isolation policy would be implemented. For the time being, no words came out of their mouths other than exclamation words. “The Edo period was a good time, therefore the isolation policy is not a bad thing” such words filled the newspapers evenly. The critics who wrote those words, even if they personally opposed the isolation policy, felt humiliated by the policy which was decided without their knowledge. It made them feel like their faces were covered in mud. Besides, if they honestly conveyed what they were feeling, they would be considered as stupid as everybody else, and it would not be profitable for the business. Therefore, they gave pathetic excuses that were obvious like, “Actually, from the beginning, we have agreed on the isolation policy matter, we even intended to submit it to the government”. It would have amazed even the Aesop’s grape loving fox. Yoshiro once sent an essay to the newspaper which stated that “Isolation policy did not exist”, but the essay was not published. He intended to write how in the Edo period, the cultural exchanges were carried out on a massive scale through Holland and China. The reason why the essay was not published was because an expert who had influence over the newspaper refused to give his stamp of approval. If he was asked by an editor of a public magazine to write an essay, Yoshiro decided to submit this essay. He waited for the opportunity with full preparation. However, strangely enough at a time like that there was no request that came to him.<sup>237</sup>

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<sup>237</sup> 「鎖国政策が決定し、結果だけを知らされて啞然とし、しばらくの間、感嘆詞以外の言葉が口から出なかったのは、義郎と鞠華だけではなかった。『江戸時代はいい時代だった、鎖国は必ずしも悪いことではない』という意見が新聞を一色に染めた。そんなことを書いている評論家たちは、実は自分も鎖国に反対だったのに、何も知らされずに勝手に鎖国を決められて屈辱の泥を顔に塗られたことに耐えられず、かと言って、そんな気持ちを正直に告白したのでは庶民と同じく馬鹿をみたことになり商売にならないので、「実は自分は初めから鎖国には賛成で近々政府に提案するつもりだったのだ」という葡萄好きの狐も呆れるような見栄見栄の負け惜しみを吐くのだった。

義郎は一度、『鎖国はなかった』というエッセイを新聞に投稿したが、載せてもらえなかった。江戸時代にどれほどオランダや中国を通して全世界との交流が盛んだったかを書いたつもりだった。載せてもらえなかった理由は、新聞社が世話になっている専門家が太鼓判を押してくれなかったからだと言われた。それなら総合雑誌にエッセイを依頼された時にこの原稿を出してやろうと手薬煉引いて待っていたが、不思議なことにそういう時期には全く依頼が来ない」(Tawada 2014: 104-105).



The beginning part of the quotation illustrated a claim that the Edo period where the isolation policy was implemented was a good time. Therefore, as if there was an intention to repeat the golden period that ever existed, the promotion and campaigns to support the re-implementation of isolation policy were spread everywhere. However, there was a doubt that the call for the glorious Edo period did not sincerely come from the hearts of those people who called for it. In this part, once again Tawada mentioned the lack of freedom of speech in society. Whether it is driven by shame or fear, there was a reluctance to say something that would be different from the voice of majority. As if it is strange to say something contrary to the others, most people chose to voice the universal opinion. It seemed that there was an unwritten rule that the opinion expressed had to be in line with the majority voice. If it is not the same, it is better to be kept unspoken. This kind of behavior has a strong correlation to the *genrontousei* topic. It can be interpreted that Tawada was implicitly tried to illustrate how the restriction of freedom of speech is implemented in society.

The same quotation can be interpreted as Tawada's effort to show a similarity between the "opposition to the isolation policy" in "Kentoushi" and the "opposition to the use of nuclear energy" in Japanese society. In "Kentoushi", it was illustrated that expressing the opposition to the implementation of isolation policy would lead someone into danger. Meanwhile, in Japan, expressing disagreement or even the doubt related to the use of nuclear energy is avoided since it would put someone also into danger. Both of the topics, even though the first is presented in the fiction work, and the second is a situation that claimed to have happened in the real world, both are the example of the difficulties faced by people who want to be straightforward of their opinions. At the end of the quotation, Yoshiro stated that his essay with the theme related to the "isolation policy that did not exist" was rejected. At that part, it seemed that Tawada tried to show how the different opinions would have no decent place in the community. Yoshiro who touched the sensitive topic and clearly stated his opposition to the common belief had to accept the consequences, his idea was not accepted in society and his manuscript was rejected. On the other hand, the opinions related to nuclear energy have no place in Japanese society, they were replaced by the slogans of 'anzen' and 'souteigai'<sup>238</sup> which summarizes the opinion of the safety of nuclear energy, as long as nothing unexpected happens. Therefore, there is a correlation between the theme of the 'isolation policy' in "Kentoushi" and the theme of 'nuclear energy' in Japanese society, since both topics are difficult to be mentioned and are avoided as much as possible.

#### **4.3.3 The Nuclear Radiation and its Effects Depicted in "Kentoushi"**

It was previously cited that the word 'nuclear' or 'nuclear energy' had not been mentioned in "Kentoushi" at all. Even if those words were omitted in this story, the word 'radiation' was repeatedly

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<sup>238</sup> 'Anzen' means 'safe', while 'souteigai' means 'beyond the expectation'. Both are words used to legitimate the absolute safety of the nuclear facilities or 'safety myth'.

mentioned. In post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai, the word ‘radiation’ was capable to direct people’s minds to assuming that this word relates to nuclear radiation.<sup>239</sup> Tawada’s choice of words indicated that there was a radiation phenomenon caused by the using of nuclear energy in this story, even though it was not clearly stated. This section will discuss the quotations that mentioned or implied the topic of radiation. The discussion will be divided into two parts, where the first part is a description of the radiation phenomenon and the second part is a depiction of radiation effects on the lives of the characters in this story.

The discussion will start with the depiction of the radiation phenomenon in “Kentoushi”. The radiation phenomenon was interpreted from two chosen quotations. The first quotation, as presented below, illustrates a debate between two groups. These groups are debating whether the dandelions should be categorized as chrysanthemums if their size is changed or not. This debate led to the accusation of the use of an inappropriate term in society. Besides, this quotation also illustrates the plants that change their size naturally to adapt to a new environment.

“The large dandelions are not chrysanthemums, they are nothing more than mutated dandelions” that is what is asserted by the opposition. However, another fraction said, “the word of ‘mutation’ is a discriminating term”, which then adds a spark in the debate. In fact, the word ‘mutation’ is rarely used anymore, and it is replaced by the word ‘environmental adaptation’ that later became popular. While other wildflowers growing bigger, if it is only the dandelions that get smaller, it will be like a marginalized person. To survive in today’s environment, dandelions change their size. On the other hand, there are plants that chose to survive by getting smaller.<sup>240</sup>

The above quotation is presented in the beginning of “Kentoushi”, as if it leads readers to the radiation theme that becomes the main theme of this story. The quotation has not specifically mentioned that the radiation crisis has occurred. However, the fact that the dandelions growing larger than its original size, and some plants getting smaller than they should be, invites an interpretation that there is a specific condition that triggered that kind of abnormal phenomenon. A word that indicates the presence of nuclear radiation that triggers the abnormal situation in this story is the word *totsuzen zeni* which

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<sup>239</sup> It is understandable that the word ‘radiation’ cannot be associated only with nuclear energy-related radiation. Radiation is described as an energy that travels through the air. It is often encountered in humans’ daily life. The example is the radiation from the sunlight or medical device machines (“What is radiation?”, *World Nuclear Association*, 2019.<<https://www.world-nuclear.org/nuclear-basics/what-is-radiation.aspx>>[accessed January 15, 2020]). However, based on the used references, the word ‘radiation’ is widely used in post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai’s writings and it mainly refers to nuclear radiation.

<sup>240</sup> Original text: 「「大きなタンポポは菊ではなくタンポポの突然変異に過ぎない」と反対派は主張したが、「突然変異は差別語だ」という反論が出て論争に火が付いた。実際、「突然変異」という言葉はこういう文脈ではもうほとんど使われておらず、かわりに「環境同化」という言葉が流行っていた。野の花たちの多くが巨大化していく中で、自分だけ小さければ日蔭者になってしまう。タンポポも今の環境で生き残るために大きさを変えたのだろう。しかし、逆に自分だけ小さくなるという戦略をとった植物もある」(Tawada 2014: 14).

means “mutation”. Even though the word “mutation” cannot be fully associated with nuclear radiation, it encourages people to think that nuclear radiation is the cause of the “mutation” phenomenon.<sup>241</sup>

In relation with the previous discussion, the word ‘mutation’ presented here is deemed to be a discriminating word. This claim shows that there is a restriction on the freedom to use language and to express something within one’s mind. Similar to the previous discussion, it seemed that Tawada wanted to illustrate that the statements contrary to the popular belief are considered as something taboo. Besides the word ‘mutation’, Tawada also presented a unique natural condition. Tawada illustrated the plants that change their size in order to adapt to a new environment. In the last part of the quotation above, or the sentence, “*ima no kankyō de ikinokoru tame ni*” meaning “in order to survive in this environment”, Tawada indicated that something has changed from the ‘previous environment’ to the ‘new environment’. The ‘previous environment’ was a place where plants live and grow at a normal pace, while the ‘new environment’ is a place where they have been forced to fit in. The interpretation in this part leads to an assumption that in her imagination related to the post-radiation condition, Tawada believes that there is a condition in which all creatures are forced to adapt to the new environment and plants are included in it.

The second quotation that shows a fact about radiation happened in this story can be seen in a quotation taken from the scene where one-day Mumei’s teeth fell from his gums, covering his mouth with blood. Yoshiro who saw Mumei covered in blood rushed him to the hospital and arranged a meeting with the dentist. During the examination, the conversation between Mumei and the dentist is presented as follows.

“Do you like milk?” he asked with a sincere voice. Without hesitation, Mumei answered “I like worms better”. Yoshiro, who could not find a connection between milk and worms looked out the window with confusion. Meanwhile, the dentist calmly said, “Is that so? Then you’re not a calf but a baby bird. Calves are raised by drinking their mother’s milk, while baby birds eat worms their mother bring them. But worms live on the earth, so when the earth is contaminated, its contamination level will be high. That is why birds rarely eaten worms lately. That is also the reason why worms have become easy to catch. When the rain stopped, many worms coming out, squirming on the roads. But don’t eat those worms. You better catch a fly in the air and eat it.”<sup>242</sup>

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<sup>241</sup> A mutation is an evaluation that occurs because DNA fails to adjust accurately. The external factors that cause mutation are radiation and certain chemicals exposure (Understanding Evolution 2019). The radioactive material that derived from nuclear radiation endanger humans’ body in two ways, it kills cells directly or causes DNA mutation (Rachael Rettner, “How does Nuclear Radiation Harm the Body?”, *Live Science*, March 15, 2011. < <https://www.livescience.com/13250-radiation-health-effects-japan-nuclear-reactor-cancer.html> >[accessed January 15, 2020]). Based on that information, the word ‘mutation’ is strongly correlated to nuclear radiation which is one cause of the mutation.

<sup>242</sup> Original text: 「(中略)「君は牛乳が好きか」と真剣な声で訊いた。無名は迷わず、「ミミズの方が好きです。」と答えた。義郎には牛乳とミミズを繋ぐ線が見えず、内心うろたえて窓の外に視線を逃したが歯医者には平然として、「そうか、それじゃ君は子牛ではなくて、ひな鳥だな。子牛はお母さん牛のお乳を飲んで育つが、鳥の雛は親鳥がとってきてくれたミミズを食べて育つ。でもミミズは土の中に住んでいるから、土が汚染されていた場合、汚染度は高いよ。最近の鳥があまりミミズを食べないのはそういうわけだ。だからミミズは余っていて獲りやすい。雨の降った後なんか、ミミズがたく

Through the conversation started by Mumei's confession of his fondness for worms, the doctor made comparison of Mumei and baby birds. This simple allegory led to the earth contamination theme presented in this story. The doctor's dialogue, "*Tsuchi ga osensaretara baai, osendo wa takai yo*" meaning "When the earth is contaminated, its contamination will be high" indicated the fact that earth has indeed been contaminated, even though the words used are "*osensarata baai*" meaning "when the earth is contaminated". What reinforces the fact is the doctor's call to not eat the worms that live on earth. The above-mentioned quotation presented the topic of earth contamination and the reluctance to be exposed to that contamination. It was not clear what caused the earth contamination, but it can be interpreted that the cause is nuclear radiation.

The emergence of the earth's contamination issue is a clue that relates this story with post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai situation, mainly with the post-nuclear accident situation. In post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai, the earth contamination topic was a complicated issue. A few months after the incident, people started to realize the main threat of nuclear radiation was earth contamination. People feared that the cesium attached to the soil would be absorbed into vegetables through the roots and therefore cause contamination. This was a serious threat since Fukushima's main economic resource focused on agricultural activities.<sup>243</sup> At that time, since people had not paid much attention to the earth contamination issue yet, the residents bought Geiger counters on their own initiative, also they have confronted the government employees, while the local employees cleaned the lands without assistance from the central government.<sup>244</sup> The earth contamination issue has long consequences, even up to eight years after the disaster. Many efforts to decontaminate the lands around the nuclear power plant site are still carried out. Tons of contaminated soil were put in sacks which then stored in temporary shelters. Nobody will touch these sacks for the next thirty years, or until the radiation levels lower considerably. Even though the decontamination process has been carried out, only a few residents have returned home, even though in some areas the evacuation orders have been revoked. Two of the many issues related to the earth contamination in post-disaster are, first, even though the government has promised to remove the contaminated soil from Fukushima since the residents do not want their land to become a disposal site for nuclear waste, no other regions have given consent to accommodate these nuclear waste.<sup>245</sup> Second, there was opposition to the idea of recycling this contaminated soil into a

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さん道路に出たのたうちまわっていることもある。でも君は余っているミミズなんか食べるな。空を飛んでいる羽虫を捕まえて食べるんだ」と言った」(Tawada 2014: 29-30).

<sup>243</sup> Mizuho Aoki, "Effect of contaminated soil on food chain sparks fears", *The Japan Times*, September 11, 2011. <[https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2011/09/11/national/effect-of-contaminated-soil-on-food-chain-sparks-fears/#.Xh6oNn\\_7TIV](https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2011/09/11/national/effect-of-contaminated-soil-on-food-chain-sparks-fears/#.Xh6oNn_7TIV)>[accessed January 15, 2020]).

<sup>244</sup> Ken Belson, "Japanese Find Radioactivity on Their Own", *The New York Times*, July 31, 2011. <<https://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/01/world/asia/01radiation.html>>[accessed January 15, 2020]).

<sup>245</sup> Justin McCurry, "Fukushima grapples with toxic soil that no one wants", *The Guardian*, March 11, 2019. <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/mar/11/fukushima-toxic-soil-disaster-radioactive>>[accessed January 15, 2020]).

road foundation placed under big roads. When the trial of this recycling idea had been planned to be carried out in Nihonmatsu, the residents firmly refused because there was no guarantee that the roads would not collapse if heavy rain or an earthquake occurred.<sup>246</sup> The illustration of the contaminated land in “Kentoushi” is relevant to the nuclear radiation topic in post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai. The soil contamination shows that a long time is needed to pay the consequences of nuclear radiation.

How the radiation phenomenon depicted in “Kentoushi” has been discussed through the two quotations mentioned above. This discussion continues with the description of how nuclear radiation affected the lives of the characters in the story. The discussion will be represented by three quotations. The first quotation described a scene where Mumei was drinking his juice, served by Yoshiro. It illustrated the fragility of Mumei’s body, since swallowing food or drinking water is not an easy task for him. In his attempt to drink the juice, Mumei choked and coughed. Once he starts coughing, it is difficult for Mumei to stop it. Yoshiro, who could not bear seeing Mumei so much in pain, immediately rushed and hugged his great-grandson. It was the moment Yoshiro realized that the situation of the world is changing the younger generation’s mindset and personality, as he found in Mumei.

“Mumei, are you alright? Does it hurt? Can you breathe?” Yoshiro asked as tears welled up in his eyes. He patted Mumei’s back gently and held his head in his arm, pressed it to his chest. Even though Mumei looked very miserable, he looked calm. (...) Mumei did not seem to understand the meaning of “suffering”. If he felt like he wants to cough, he just coughed. If food rises from his throat, he would just vomit it out. It is painful for sure, but this is different from the pain Yoshiro knows, accompanied by the complaint, “Why am I the only one who has to experience misfortune like this?”. What Mumei feels is pure pain. Maybe it was a treasure given to his generation. Mumei did not understand how to pity himself.<sup>247</sup>

In the quotation, seeing Mumei’s behavior that never complained of any single misfortune he had encountered, nor blamed the circumstances around him, Yoshiro concluded that the world where they are living was forcing Mumei to be tough, to be a person who never complained of anything that happened to him. It seems that tough Mumei is blind to the meaning of “suffering”. He was born and raised in an unfortunate situation, his presence invites empathy from his surroundings, but he chose to live strongly and not feel sorry for himself.

Based on the setting of the story, the world in “Kentoushi” is Japan after the occurrence of a “big disaster” that was not clearly mentioned in detail. However, if it is assumed that the “big disaster”

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<sup>246</sup> Tai Kawabata, “Lingering effects of 2011 disaster take toll in fallout-hit Fukushima, experts warn”, *The Japan Times*, January 31, 2018. <[https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2018/01/31/national/social-issues/lingering-effects-2011-disaster-take-toll-fallout-hit-fukushima-experts-warn/#.Xh6r43\\_7TIV](https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2018/01/31/national/social-issues/lingering-effects-2011-disaster-take-toll-fallout-hit-fukushima-experts-warn/#.Xh6r43_7TIV)>[accessed January 15, 2020]].

<sup>247</sup> Original text: 「『無名、平気か、苦しいか。息できるか』と義郎は自分の方が目に涙を浮かべながら、無名の背中を軽く叩いたり、頭を腕で巻いて胸に押しついたりしている。無名は苦しそうに見えながら、どこか平然としている。(中略)無名には、『苦しむ』という言葉の意味が理解できないようで、咳が出れば咳をし、食べ物が食道を上昇してくれば吐くというだけだった。もちろん痛みはあるが、それは義郎が知っているような『なぜ自分だけがこんなにつらい思いをしなければならないのか』という泣き言伴わない純粋な痛みだった。それが無名の世代の授かった宝物なのかもしれない。無名は自分を可哀想だと思う気持ちを知らない」(Tawada 2014: 44-45).

is a catastrophe caused in same way by nuclear energy, therefore the world in “Kentoushi” is a post-nuclear world, or the world that has been exposed to nuclear radiation. That kind of world would greatly influence its inhabitants.

The post-nuclear world that Tawada tried to present, can be interpreted as a world where people accept any misfortune that comes to them. People are illustrated as if they are willing to accept the consequences of a mistake that they did not even make. The submission act was illustrated through the depiction of Mumei, who did not contribute to his misfortune, yet had to pay the consequences of an act that he clearly did not do. The existence of the radiation in “Kentoushi”, changed Mumei to be stronger and immune to suffering. It also forced him to pay the consequences for something that he did not do.

The situation Yoshiro and Mumei faced in the story corresponds to the situation in post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai. Tawada acknowledged that she went to the disaster area, precisely Iwate, in summer 2013. By visiting the disaster area and observing the post-disaster situation, she felt a profound sympathy over the disaster. She said that instead of writing a work describing the loss felt by the victims, she chose to illustrate the great damage caused by the radiation (Kimura 2018: 88). As a result of the visit, “Kentoushi” was born. It gave a description of the strange effects of radiation. During the visit, it was most likely Tawada witnessed how the situation developed in post-disaster. The hard situation may require more than obstinacy and a feeling of surrender to overcome.

In Higashi Nihon Daishinsai, the earthquake and tsunami alone had taken tens of thousands of lives. However, as if it was not enough, there was also the frightful accident that occurred in the Fukushima nuclear power plant. After the accident, some sources mentioned that the government allegedly had not provided clear and reliable information. Therefore, people started to panic since they did not know how bad the radiation would affect their health. The caregivers abandoned their patients because of the fear of radiation, and the doctors outside of the disaster area could not provide assistance for the patients. The Red Cross withdrew its workers, ignoring the victims of tsunami and earthquake who gathered in hospitals and temporary shelters. The relief goods from Tokyo had not arrived, since allegedly no one wanted to deliver the goods to the contaminated areas. During the next few years, the decontamination process in the affected areas was still being carried out. Many residents were still not allowed to go home, while those who had been allowed refused to go back to Fukushima because they were still full of doubt about the decontamination process. Most of the residents are haunted by the uncertainty of when exactly they can set foot back in Fukushima.<sup>248</sup> The areas affected by the disaster have tried to revive in post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai. Some of them had to start from ‘zero’, however, indeed Fukushima as a place where the nuclear disaster happened had to start from ‘minus’. Fukushima

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<sup>248</sup> Justin McCurry, “Fukushima grapples with toxic soil that no one wants”, *The Guardian*, March 11, 2019. < <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/mar/11/fukushima-toxic-soil-disaster-radioactive>>[accessed January 15, 2020]).

which experienced the worst damage in the post-disaster period, is the only prefecture of three affected prefectures that still has cases of disaster-related death.<sup>249</sup> With the long crisis that happened, it is difficult to consider that this disaster is already over. Looking at how this crisis affected the people involved, it can be assumed that it is difficult not to be “immune to suffering” when dealing with this kind of situation.

Back to Mumei, he is forced to bear the consequences of an action that he had never done. This relates to the residents of the disaster areas, mainly Fukushima, who bore a long consequence of the nuclear disaster. Even though there were some people who had agreed with the construction of the Fukushima nuclear power plant, the majority of the people did not have a role in the decision-making process. When the accident actually happened, the majority of people in the area had to bear the ill consequences, even though not even a slight amount of the electricity produced by the Fukushima nuclear power plant went to the local residents, because everything was sent to supply the huge electricity demand in Tokyo (Geilhorn and Weickgenannt 2017: 7).

The next quotation is taken from one of the conversations between Yoshiro and Mumei, a scene where Yoshiro was squeezing an orange to be consumed by Mumei. This is Yoshiro’s routine. Considering Mumei cannot eat and swallow properly, Yoshiro serves the fruit in the form of orange juice. Yoshiro always gives a big portion of the food to Mumei. It made Mumei wonder, why his great-grandfather always does that for him.

When Mumei asked, “Why did you not drink great-grandpa?”, Yoshiro replied, “Because we could not get more than one. Children have to live for a long time, therefore everything must be prioritized for children”. “But even if children die, adults can live. But if adults die, children cannot live”. Mumei said it in a singsong voice, it made Yoshiro speechless.

Every time he tried to imagine Mumei’s life after his own death, Yoshiro always turned his face to a wall. There is no such thing as time after death. For all the old men like himself, with a gift of the body that cannot die, are burdened with a frightening task to see their great-grandchildren die.<sup>250</sup>

The quotation illustrated how Mumei sees Yoshiro’s world. An old man like Yoshiro is willing to give everything that he can to make sure that his great-grandson will survive in the world. However, Mumei, with his innocent voice made Yoshiro realize the fact that he’s been trying to forget for too long. The

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<sup>249</sup> Former Fukushima University President Toshio Konno in Tai Kawabata, “Lingering effects of 2011 disaster take toll in fallout-hit Fukushima, experts warn”, *The Japan Times*, January 31, 2018. <[https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2018/01/31/national/social-issues/lingering-effects-2011-disaster-take-toll-fallout-hit-fukushima-experts-warn/#.Xh6r43\\_7TIV](https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2018/01/31/national/social-issues/lingering-effects-2011-disaster-take-toll-fallout-hit-fukushima-experts-warn/#.Xh6r43_7TIV)>[accessed January 15, 2020]).

<sup>250</sup> Original text: 『どうして曾おじいちゃんは自分では飲まないの』と無名に訊かれて、『一個しか買えなかったんだ。子供はこれからもずっと生きていかないとだめだから、なんでも子供優先だ』と答えた。『でも子供が死んでも大人は生きていけるけれど、大人が死んだら子供は生きていけないよ』と歌うように無名が言い、義郎は黙り込んでしまった。自分の死んだ後、無名が生きていかなければならない時間を想像してみようとする、いつも壁に突き当たる。自分の死んだ後の時間なんて存在しない。死ねない身体を授かった自分たち老人は、曾孫たちの死を見送るという恐ろしい課題を負わされている」(Tawada 2014: 47-48).

fact that Mumei will not be able to survive without his help, while he himself always wants to die but he can not.

This quotation illustrated an unusual effect of radiation, where the old generation loses their fate to die, while the young generation is fragile and helpless. Yoshiro's eternal life might be a dream of many people, but through the portrayal of Yoshiro, being eternal is no more than tragic and heartbreaking. In that kind of world, Yoshiro and Mumei could not escape from their tragic destiny. Tawada's post-nuclear world depicted in "Kentoushi" presents something unique, a condition where the roles of the young and old generation are inverted. In "Kentoushi", the older generation who are usually attached to the image of 'fragile' and 'reliant on others' is shown as heroes who sincerely care for the young generation and willing bear all the burdens placed on them. In "Kentoushi", it seems that the radiation portrayed as a medium to put forward the older generation's superiority. It is in contrast to what is considered as normality in society, that as people grow older, the more they become dependent on younger people.

Radiation is described as an element that changes many things, including the natural structure of human life. In a world where every condition is contrary to the situation in the real world, the older generation regained their roles and their superiority. However, even though the older generation became superior, the lives of both Yoshiro and Mumei's as presented in the story shown that in the end, no one is happy due to the radiation. Toward the end of the quotation, Yoshiro implied his helplessness because of the immortal body given to him. At a quick glance, his eternal life, completed with a healthy physical condition is the ideal picture of human life. However, along with the gift, there is a heavy task to carry. In the end, the promising eternity is nothing more than mortality. The mortality described in "Kentoushi" is corresponding to the use of nuclear facilities that later led to the incident in Fukushima. Nuclear energy was once described as a promising source of energy as well as an answer to the high electricity demand. However, as time passed, people began to see how this promising source of energy might have a bad impact in the future. When the nuclear accident occurred, the effect spread massively, involving people from many different backgrounds. A long period of time is needed to fix problems that arise from a nuclear disaster. Therefore, most of the things that seem beautiful and promising on the outside, contain a bitter fact inside. The bitter consequences that must be carried seem reflected through Yoshiro's helpless life, where he is trapped in his miraculous physical condition that he never ever expected. In that condition, he must also see his great-grandson slowly die.

The next quotation is taken from a scene where Marika sent a postcard discussing how Yoshiro's 108<sup>th</sup> birthday will be celebrated. Yoshiro is not enthusiastic to celebrate his birthday for two reasons. First, he is afraid of hurting Mumei's feeling, who as a member of the younger generation has a vulnerable physical condition. He does not even know whether or not Mumei can celebrate his own



108<sup>th</sup> birthday in the future. Second, he found nothing special about being older, therefore there is nothing to celebrate.

It is still unclear whether or not Yoshiro's generation will live forever, but it is clear that they have been robbed of death. When they reach the limit, and they become obsolete human beings, physically have reached their limits, maybe in their immobile flesh, their consciousness will continue writhing forever. Yoshiro thought that there is no point in celebrating the long life of his generation. Although he is grateful for being alive, there is no point in celebrating, because it is normal for the elderly to be alive. What should be celebrated is the fact that children survive through another day, given the high child mortality rates. He wants to celebrate Mumei's birthday not only once a year, but every season. He wants to celebrate a winter that had passed without Mumei's getting frostbite. He wants to celebrate the arrival of autumn without Mumei suffering from a hot summer.<sup>251</sup>

Having a correlation with the previous quotation, this quotation also underlined the effect of radiation where humans are robbed of their natural state, and even of death. The paradox of eternity is also emphasized, where eternity became a heavy burden to bear. The tragic thing is when people get older, they feel that their lives have become empty and meaningless. Life no longer offers passion and ambition. As an expression of his feeling regarding his body's condition, Yoshiro said that even when his body could no longer function, his awareness probably would live forever.

Immortality due to the radiation depicted in "Kentoushi" is tragic and taken readers to the depth of Yoshiro's broken psychological side. Yoshiro is a living proof that humans can arrive at a situation where they no longer can expect anything more, nor are they grateful for their lives. The life that they have been living is no longer a gift. While the elderly are getting healthier as they get older, the young generation is more vulnerable from day to day. Any external stimulus could threaten their lives. They cannot see the beauty of winter because it is threatening, while summer also is threatening in different ways.

The depiction of the lives of both the old and the young in this story resonates with the issue surrounding the elderly and young in post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai. Based on the information collected from several sources, the elderly and the children are claimed to be the most vulnerable victims in Higashi Nihon Daishinsai. The majority of the dead victims are elderly, they are also vulnerable to shock and depression due to the post-disaster's pressures.<sup>252</sup> Meanwhile, the young

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<sup>251</sup> Original text: 「義郎の世代が本当に永遠にいきなければならないのかどうかは不明だが、とりあえず死を奪われた状態にあることは確かだった。肉体が末端まで使い古されて生物としての限界が訪れたら、動かなくなった肉の塊の中で、しつこく消えない意識だけがいつまでももたえ続けるのかもしれない。自分の世代の人間は長寿を祝う必要なんかないのだと義郎は思う。生きていることはありがたいが、老人は生きていて当たり前なのだから祝う必要などない。むしろ死亡率の高い子供が今日も死ななかったことを祝うべきだろう。無名の誕生日ならば年に一度ではなく、季節ごとに祝ってやりたいくらいだった。凍傷にかからずに冬をひとつ超えることができたことを祝ってやりたい。夏ばてしないで秋を迎えることができたことを祝ってやりたい」 (Tawada 2014 108-109).

<sup>252</sup> *Gaman* (defense) and *ganbaru* (fight) which have been practiced in Japan as a response to the grief that came from the disaster attacked the victims psychologically and lead them to extreme behavior, such as suicide. The powerlessness

generation is claimed as the most vulnerable victims in dealing with the radiation. Therefore, many young families made the decision to evacuate because of the presence of children or infants.<sup>253</sup> “Kentoushi” with a description of the suffering experienced by both young and old seems to resonate with the description of the suffering of the older and younger generations in Fukushima in post-disaster.

#### 4.3.4 Despair and Powerlessness in Post-disaster Portrayed in “Kentoushi”

The situation and conditions described in “Kentoushi” are contradictory to the real world. Many things are not ordinary if observed from a “normal” perspective. What is depicted in “Kentoushi” is far from the normal situation commonly encountered in everyday life. The immortality of the elderlies, the weak physical condition of children, the strict censorship imposed on information and foreign languages, and the complicated law enforcement system, all of them take a toll on psychological health. When complaints and pain cannot be expressed anymore, all that is left are only despair and helplessness. The final part of the discussion of “Kentoushi” will present an interpretation of the post-nuclear world with its desperation and powerlessness. The interpretation will be represented by three quotations that are presented below.

The first quotation came from the scene when Yoshiro and Mumei were waiting for a dentist’s appointment. In the waiting room, Mumei flipped through a children’s book about a canine tooth adventure. Yoshiro went silent and recalled that he once wanted to write a children’s book for Mumei. However, he thought that the writing process would not be easy.

At that time, he was right in the middle of writing a children's book. He wanted to write a book that Mumei could read, but at the same time, Mumei’s presence made it difficult to write children's stories. Since he writes about how to treat everyday problems, the lack of solutions will only result in frustration. He could not fix these problems because he only wrote books. Even though he wanted to describe the ideal world, it does not mean that Mumei who reads it immediately can change his circumstances.<sup>254</sup>

The reason why it was difficult for Yoshiro to write a book that Mumei could understand is the surrounding reality made it too difficult to change. It is not easy to fix everything just by one’s own strength. All their efforts meet innumerable obstacles. People who look for answers or a change only

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in the aftermath of the disaster leads the victims, mainly the elderly victims to end their lives. The reports regarding the practice of suicide among elderlies were appearing in media (Blaxell 2011: 12).

<sup>253</sup> Horikawa described how the decision of the voluntary evacuation taken. A voluntary evacuation is an evacuation taken based on the personal decision without an order from the government. In some of the cases, the presence of young family members is an important factor in the decision of evacuation. The parents who evacuate with their children generally looking for a guarantee for their children’s health and future education (Horikawa 2017:76).

<sup>254</sup> Original text: 「自分でもちょうど児童向けの作品を書いているところだった。無名の読めるような本を書いてみたいと思う一方、無名が身近にいるせいでかえって童話が書きにくい。日々抱えている問題をナマで扱っても、答えが出ないことにいらだちを感じるだけで、本だからこそ可能な境地に行き着けない。理想の世界を描いてみたい気持ちもあったが、それを読んだ無名がすぐに自分の環境を変えられるわけではない」 (Tawada 2014: 22).

find frustration. The reason is that there are too many unanswered questions and too many things that are far from “ideal”. Yoshiro’s attempt to write a book that shows how the everyday’s problems have to be solved portrays him as a hypocrite. He wanted to show those children that some problems can be fixed, while he does not even know how to fix them. Yoshiro’s predicament indicates how much he hopes for something “ideal”. The hopelessness that comes from the worst world condition leads to the hope for something better, something that Yoshiro described as “ideal”. The description of “ideal” from Yoshiro’s perspective is debatable, but from his inner most thought that is illustrated in “Kentoushi”, it can be interpreted that the “ideal” condition means a condition where all of his questions are answered. Move to the post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai’s condition, there are many questions that remained unanswered, mainly those related to the post-nuclear accident condition. There are problems related to the decontamination process and when exactly the residents can go back home. Besides, there is also a fundamental question of who will accept responsibility for the accident and crisis that has occurred. The desire for answers in an “ideal” world in “Kentoushi” seems to correlate with the need for answers in post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai. Both of them can be interpreted as a form of hopelessness and powerlessness in an oppressive situation.

The second quotation came from the scene where Mumei had decided to accept an offer as a *kentoushi* who will represent Japan. As the time of his departure approached, Mumei recalled the time he has spent with Yoshiro. Yoshiro has been a major part of his life, therefore it is not easy for him to let everything go and move to a new chapter in his life. His memories came back to the conversation between him and Yoshiro regarding the “silver head alliance”. The quotation below illustrated an emotional dialogue between Yoshiro and Mumei. It depicted how despair and helplessness have become an inseparable part of their world, and these two things consume them slowly.

Mumei’s hair color has faded, it has been three years since his hair turned gleaming silver in a short period of time. Mumei stared at himself in the mirror, then said, “We look like twins with the same hair color”. He said that to make Yoshiro laugh, but Yoshiro hugged Mumei tightly, then shed tears while stroking his great-grandson’s hair. Mumei said immediately, “Grandfather, let’s form a silver head alliance. This hair color will be a sign of our membership. Because you lived a good life with silver hair for more than fifty years, I will definitely be fine for more than fifty years ahead”. Yoshiro’s tears stopped immediately like a miracle, and a silver smile broke out in the corners of his eyes.<sup>255</sup>

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<sup>255</sup> Original text: 「無名の髪の毛が色を失い、みるみるうちに銀色に光り始めたのは三年ほど前のことだろう。無名はうっとりして鏡の中の自分を見つめながら、「僕たち、髪の毛の色がいっしょで双子みたいだね」と言って義郎を笑わせようとしたのに、義郎は無名を胸に抱きしめ、曾孫の髪の毛をやさしく撫でながら涙を流した。無名はあわてて、「曾おじいちゃん、僕たち二人で銀色同盟を結ぼう。この髪の毛の色が会員証のかわりだ。曾おじいちゃんだってもう五十年以上も銀色の髪の毛で元気に暮らしてきたんだから、僕だっってこれから五十年以上、元気でいられるよ」と言い放った。すると義郎の涙は奇跡のようにとまって、目元に銀色の微笑みが浮かんだ」(Tawada 2014: 153-154).

It is illustrated that Mumei's health condition is deteriorating, followed by the premature aging process that cannot be stopped. His hair turned silver in a short period of time, his physical condition is dramatically deteriorating, in contrast to his age that had just turned 15. Observing Mumei's poor physical condition and realizing that he can do nothing to change it, Yoshiro's despair and helplessness are expressed through his tears.

Meanwhile, Mumei who knew for sure that his situation would never change for the better, accepted his fate with a big heart. Even when he realized that he would never lead a normal life, he was still trying to encourage Yoshiro not to pity him. He gave promises and hopes that he would still be alive after fifty years, even though he himself realized that the promise would be difficult to keep.

In "Kentoushi" it seems that Tawada tried to illustrate that there will be nothing, except despair and powerlessness coming from a world exposed to radiation. The portrayal of nuclear radiation in this story, as admitted by Tawada herself <sup>256</sup>, is a unique and extreme picture. But this picture evokes an imagination of the possibility that Japan could face an extreme situation in the future due to the use of nuclear facilities. Even though the effects depicted in "Kentoushi" are extreme compared to the real situation, given the fact that the effects of Fukushima's accident continue even after years, Tawada's illustration seems to provide a clear picture of what will be the result of the nuclear energy use, namely despair and powerlessness. Such despair and powerlessness might be different from what had been pictured in literary works, but the essence will be the same.

The third and last quotation is taken from a scene when Yoshiro was riding his bicycle with rage. It happened on the morning when Mumei was still in the second grade of elementary school. What made Yoshiro so consumed in his own rage had not been mentioned specifically. That morning, everything that happened around him had agitated Yoshiro. Everything seemed to heat up his emotion. Yoshiro's mind roamed to the past mistakes that he had ever made. Yoshiro felt that those mistakes, piled up from time to time, trapped him in this kind of unpleasant situation. He tried to laugh to ease his pain, but it did not make him feel better. The quotation below is an expression of his inner heart, where the stress had piled up, and all of the frustrations exploded in a full force.

Hiding behind bushes, holding tight to the law, the privatized *oyakusho* (government office) is no different than *oyakuso* (rubbish). Yoshiro wanted to squeeze them tightly and throw them away. His great-grandson always said that he wanted to have a picnic in a field. Whose fault was it that such a simple dream cannot come true? What was wrong so that the grass in the field became polluted? What are we going to do about it? Status and wealth are not even worth a single blade of grass. Listen, listen, listen, listen carefully, dig up all the excuses that are like earwax and sharpen your ears, hear me out. At that moment, a small stone flew from the front wheel of his bicycle and hit his shin. It hurts! "Shit, shit, shit" he almost let out loud the bad words but swallowed it down along with his saliva. It was already late when he realized that Mumei was not there, so it was not a problem to spit bad words. Yoshiro thought that in fact, he is a temperamental man

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<sup>256</sup> Tawada stated that after she visited the affected areas, she shared a deep sense of loss with the victims. Instead of writing a story reminiscent of the loss, she preferred to write about the extreme effects of radiation (Kimura 2018: 88).

that covered in verbal filth. If Mumei had not been there, his life would have rotten away from all the bad words thrown from his mouth.<sup>257</sup>

The quotation above is a representation of pressure and despair that had reached a peak. The things that raged in Yoshiro's head is an expression of frustration that had been accumulating for a long period of time and then exploded in a huge gush of anger. Yoshiro felt a wave of unstoppable anger, but he did not know for whom the anger had to be directed to. He felt that everything around him was a thread of error, it entangled one another until it was impossible to be realigned anymore. He felt that he was boiling with rage and he resented the government who played with the law. He was also frustrated that he was not able to fulfill his great-grandson's wishes. He felt depressed about the "polluted" environment. Although there was no explanation of the cause of pollution, readers are led to conclude that the presence of nuclear radiation is the cause.

This quotation illustrates how tormenting life was at that time because nothing could be done to change the situation. Everyone swallowed their pain and buried everything within their hearts, waiting until it explodes. However, the explosion of pain and anger could not be directed at anyone. For Yoshiro personally, life gets harder every day, but he has no other choice except to live with it. In that kind of depressing situation, Yoshiro found that his only solace lays in Mumei.

The above-mentioned quotation is the peak of the difficult situation described in this story. In "Kentoushi", it was gradually revealed how miserable the lives of the characters are. The final quotation is a summary of the pressures built up over a long period of time, that finally explode with tremendous energy. However, what is more depressing is that even Yoshiro's cursing words were unable to change anything.

The above condition is a picture of the accumulated frustration that needed to be expressed. However, it is not clear towards whom those negative feelings have to be expressed. Yoshiro's tormented feelings resonate to the feelings of Higashi Nihon Daishinsai's victims, the direct as well as indirect victims. There are questions that remain unanswered, and it is unclear who is responsible or who is to be blamed for this disaster.

In the last quotation, Tawada described how painful it is when disaster takes everything, and no one can be blamed for it. Even in some cases, no one wants to be blamed for it. People can try to rebuild their lives. However, when the negative feelings remain without being released, everything

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<sup>257</sup> Original text: 「藪の中にこそこそ隠れて、法律ばかりいじっている民営化されたお役所はオヤクソだ。クツシャクツシャにまるめて捨ててやりたい。野原でピクニックしたいって、曾孫はいつも言っていたんだよ。そんなささやかな夢さえ叶えてやれないのは、誰のせいだ、何のせいだ、汚染されているんだよ、野の草は。どうするつもりなんだ。財産地位には、雑草一本分の価値もない。聞け、聞け、聞け、耳かきで、耳糞みたいな言い訳を掘り出して、耳すまして、よく聞けよ。その時、自転車の前輪に躍り込んだ小石がはねかえされて義郎の脛を打った。痛い！「くそくそくそ」と大声で悪態をつこうとして唾とっしょにのみこみ、無名が側にいないのだから汚い言葉を吐き出してもいいんだと気がついた時にはすでにしらけていた。自分は実は気が短くて汚い言葉にまみれた男なのだ、と思った。もし無名がいなければ、自分の投げる腐った果物のせいで生活まるごと臭くなっていたらろう」(Tawada 2014: 155-156).

will linger and stay unfinished. It seems that Tawada wanted to insinuate the absence of personal responsibility in society. Such a system throws the victims deeply into powerlessness and despair.

## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSION

Higashi Nihon Daishinsai occurred on March 11, 2011. Although eight years have passed, the reverberation of this disaster has not stopped even until now. The problems related to the Fukushima nuclear power plant incident (such as decontamination and evacuation) still remains. It can be concluded that Higashi Nihon Daishinsai became such a big disaster because of the nuclear incident. Based on the observation of Japan's initial reaction to this disaster, it appears that Japan was surprised by the occurrence of the nuclear disaster following the earthquake and tsunami. It was seen in the unclear reports and news coverage of this disaster. It seems that the government also tried to cover up for the occurrence of the nuclear incident (in the initial period of post-disaster) when actually four of Fukushima's nuclear power plants were in trouble.

The Fukushima incident was a shock to people's trust in nuclear energy. The government's efforts to stop public criticism regarding the handling of this disaster seemed to meet obstacles. Various issues arose in the process of handling this nuclear disaster, including the issue related to the evacuation, the discrimination experienced by the evacuees, the restriction of information, and the victims' repressed psychological condition. By observing the government's reaction toward this disaster, it is apparent that Higashi Nihon Daishinsai was an 'unexpected' disaster for the government. It is not in line with the term 'unexpected' or *souteigai* used by TEPCO to avoid the responsibility of the nuclear crisis. This disaster was 'unexpected' for the government because it diminished the government's control over a well-organized society, since people began to voice their opposition toward the use of nuclear energy and even to organize demonstrations to convey their sentiment. It is clear that for Japan, the Higashi Nihon Daishinsai is a new kind of disaster and the government was overwhelmed with problems in handling it.

In the reportage of this disaster, the coverage of Higashi Nihon Daishinsai was not limited to the domestic media. The coverage also appeared in the international media. The way the Fukushima disaster had an influence on Indonesia, can be seen from the discussion of nuclear power plants that appeared in the post-disaster period. These discussions involved both the people who agree and disagree with nuclear use in Indonesia. It seems that Indonesia learned about this matter from Japan because nuclear energy was a new topic in Indonesia at that time. In addition, the news coverage of Higashi Nihon Daishinsai in Indonesia seemed to prioritize the emotional aspect compared to the news coverage in Japan. While most of the news coverage in Japan focused on what was happening in the field and contained information regarding the nuclear radiation or the handling of the disaster, the news with sensational headlines appeared in Indonesia's mass media. These news reports included testimonies of the victims who survived the disaster, and they tended to be emotional. Through the observation of news coverage in Indonesia, it appears that for Indonesia, Japan is a role model in

coping with disaster. Japan is seen as a country capable of resolving its internal crisis in an orderly and controlled manner. Indonesian objectivity in assessing Japan's competence in dealing with this disaster seemed to be blurred because of the strong Indonesian image that Japan had already been trained in handling disasters.

Apart from how strong the disaster impacted the Japanese literary world, it is clear that this disaster exerted influence on the literary world. Literary works with themes related to the disaster have appeared years after the disaster. Some of them even received awards or were nominated for literary awards. Ito Seiko's *Souzou Rajio* was nominated for Akutagawa literary prize in 2013, while Numata Shunsuke's *Eiri* received the Akutagawa prize in 2017. *Kentoushi*, written by Tawada Yoko, won the National Book Award for Translated Literature in America. The huge amount of published literary works accompanied by several literary awards proved that post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai literature was appreciated and has a place in the minds of the public.

Since the literary works with a correlation to this disaster have continually emerged, the experts began to conduct research on the themes that generally appeared in post-disaster literary works. Based on previous research, the discussion of the themes that were considered prominent was presented in subchapter 2.1. From that discussion, it was concluded that most of the post-disaster literary works raised the themes related to the use of nuclear energy or to life after the disaster (including the loss of hope, the chaos, and the differences between before and after the disaster). The reason for the huge emergence of these two themes is presumably that these themes are most capable to represent Higashi Nihon Daishinsai. Every writer has a unique approach to express his/her thoughts regarding this disaster. One of common methods of expression is to directly correlate the literary works to the nuclear-related themes or to post-disaster life's themes to make it easier to be digested by the readers.

As representative of the literary works that are considered prominent in the post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai, the main themes in "Kamisama 2011" and *Yamaneko doomu* were discussed. "Kamisama 2011" illustrates how nuclear radiation has been accepted as part of daily life and how life continued in the post-nuclear disaster world. Meanwhile, *Yamaneko doomu* depicted a childhood trauma which correlated with the trauma experienced in post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai. These two stories both illustrated how the trauma that came from a traumatic event continues to be experienced even after many years passed since the event occurred. It was in line with what Caruth and Crownshaw mentioned, namely that the trauma was not felt right after the traumatic event occurred, but it was felt long afterward. The main character in "Kamisama 2011" is paranoid and always wears 'protective clothing' when leaving her house and always measures the radiation levels in her body after going outside. This paranoia can be understood as an effect of trauma, experienced after the nuclear-related accident that had occurred previously. The nuclear-related accident moment that became a traumatic event did not end after the event passed, but it continued to be experienced even years afterward by



those who exposed to it. It resonates with what has been mentioned by Caruth, that trauma makes people who suffered it possessed by an event or an image over a long period of time. Meanwhile, *Yamaneko Doomu* is a literary work with trauma as the main theme. This work clearly depicted the trauma experienced by three main characters as a result of witnessing their friend's death. The event that happened in their childhood continued to overshadow and haunt them in their entire lives. The interesting thing in this story is the depiction of childhood trauma that is related to the trauma caused by the Fukushima nuclear accident.

The literary work of "Kamisama 2011" is important to help in imagining a world that might be constructed by the use of nuclear energy. The world in "Kamisama 2011" could become real in the future, as people are become increasingly dependent on modern energy (including nuclear energy). Meanwhile, *Yamaneko Doomu* illustrated how the Japanese's fear of nuclear energy is in line with the fear experienced by three main characters toward the character named Taabo in the story. This story can be read as a story that did not directly describe how human beings live in a post-nuclear disaster world, as in "Kamisama 2011". However, this story depicted a fear of being chased by trauma and by something that has no form but is clearly threatening. In "Kamisama 2011", the writer (Kawakami Hiromi) stated that her intention to write "Kamisama 2011" was not to criticize the use of nuclear energy. Even though *Yamaneko Doomu*'s writer (Tsushima Yuuko) did not clearly mention the reason behind the writing of *Yamaneko Doomu*, the way she showed her thoughts in this work can be interpreted as a form of disapproval to the use of nuclear energy.

Meanwhile, the uniqueness of *Kentoushi* cannot be separated from the role of its writer, Tawada Yoko. As a fictional and non-fiction writer, Tawada has different perspectives compared to other Japanese writers. She crafted her literary style while being influenced by two languages and two cultures that she understands at the same level. Friction with the culture and language outside of someone's own, will make him/her become more objective and open in expressing his/her mind. The reason is that he/she will consider other aspects and viewpoints that come from outside his/her own environment. Tawada's association with other languages and cultures made her became more objective in discussing Higashi Nihon Daishinsai. She was not absorbed in her own nationalism when describing Higashi Nihon Daishinsai, but she interpreted Higashi Nihon Daishinsai as it might be portrayed by foreign observer. Despite having an 'outside perspective' in her writing, Tawada does not lose her 'Japanese perspective'. She was able to present her nationalistic side while also maintain her objectivity. In her fictional works, Tawada used to present a unique world, a world that is a combination of reality and illusion. The scenes that she depicted are usually bizarre and make the readers question, what is the real meaning behind those scenes. Tawada is also a master in playing with words and she once mentioned that words and languages are objects that she had always been interested in. She repeatedly reveals her enthusiasm for experimenting with languages. She often introduced new words or terms in her works and she also wrote the fictional story that contains a new

language that she made (the work of *Chikyuu ni Chiribamerarete*). Besides the aspect of language exploration found in her writings, Tawada also showed her concern about the social problems that arose in society. She usually uses satire in her writings. She disguises her real meaning behind anecdotes and behind a humorous illustration that at first seems funny and silly but actually has other meanings. It seems that she indirectly invites readers to explore her works and try to interpret the meaning of each word and scene that she presents. The readers who are already familiar with Tawada's style may conclude that there is nothing wasted from each scene that she describes. Even though some scenes seem to be frivolous at first glance, it is almost certain that those scenes symbolize something. One thing that becomes Tawada's positive trait is that she is not limited in her expression in her works. She is independent and free, and she is not bound by the rigid rules of writing. She does not even mind if her works presenting impolite or rude words. It can be said that she writes her works without fear of censorship, either in the language expression or in the discussed themes. In the case of Higashi Nihon Daishinsai, she was one of the few writers who openly criticized the use of nuclear energy. She did not even avoid the use of some words that could stir controversies, such as the words 'emperor' or 'prime minister' in "Fushi no Shima". She also openly put the blame on the policymakers who were later accused to be the perpetrator of the Fukushima accident. This kind of courage strengthened Tawada's position as a real writer who is fearless of criticism and chose to express her voice loudly.

Besides the discussion of its prominent themes, *Kentoushi* can be studied by examining the performative aspect of this work. According to Bennett and Royle, the performative side of a literary work can be seen through how the work is not merely describing something, but doing something to the readers. And literary work did something by saying it. Because literary works are capable of describing emotions, *Kentoushi* speaks to the reader through the emotional dialogue and events that touch people's feelings. It conveys the idea of a 'post-nuclear world' and made readers experienced how it feels to be inside that kind of world. The idea of the 'post-nuclear world' in *Kentoushi* is different from the depiction of the Fukushima disaster in the news coverage on media. The idea of the 'post-nuclear world' in *Kentoushi* is delivered through the description of how this disaster affected the characters in the story. It is difficult for people to experience being in a 'post-nuclear world' if they only get the information regarding the disaster from the news coverage in the media. The reason is that the media only reveals what happened in front of our eyes. It presents only the visible things that cannot be felt or experienced. Without 'experience', the world that is affected by nuclear incidents will only feel like a distant and untouched place. It will not affect our lives in any case. It is a different story when the idea of a 'post-nuclear world' touches people's emotions. They will be more understanding because they can feel and sympathize. The idea of a 'post-nuclear world', of how dangerous are the effects from the use of nuclear energy, and how the effects can result in long-term pain are accurately depicted in *Kentoushi*. The opposition against nuclear energy will be conveyed

concretely in literary works compared to mere words or campaigns against it, because literary works touch human hearts. Therefore, *Kentoushi* with its performative side is able to speak to human hearts.

In the initial period of this research, it was believed that the big theme of Higashi Nihon Daishinsai was solely a nuclear incident that took place in Fukushima. However, after the research was completed, it can be concluded that the post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai's literary works were not only strongly associated with the nuclear energy-related themes. These literary works also introduced some prominent themes that appeared in post-disaster, such as trauma and conflict related to the evacuation process. Therefore, this disaster is also related to other communities that have never known or experienced a nuclear accident, because the themes appeared are the common problems that arise in places that have just experienced a disaster. The scope that is offered in post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai's literature is broad. Therefore, it can correlate with society outside of Japan. From the way it can be interpreted, Higashi Nihon Daishinsai not only belongs to Japan but also to the people outside Japan who can relate to the problems that arise from the disaster.

As an instrument to transfer ideas, literature has a role to share and communicate the things happening in the world. In performing its role, literature emphasizes the conveyance of the emotional aspect compared to journalism that emphasizes the factual aspect. Literature becomes an important instrument in describing condition or event because it is capable of delivering more than just facts. Literature is able to represent the feelings and emotions of people involved in a certain circumstance or event. Journalism describes what is happening in front of the eyes, but sometimes it is unable to picture the real problem behind the condition or event itself. Because literature has an ability to convey something that is not visible to the eyes, it has an advantage over journalism in the role of transferring ideas. People who read literary works will have a better understanding of the unseen and hidden problems. They will also be more sympathetic to the characters presented in literary works (these characters usually represent the characters in the actual events). By understanding the real problem, people can express their opinions accordingly and respond appropriately. Therefore, literature has a great and indispensable role in transferring ideas. For that reason, literature continues to exist from ancient times until present days to respond to every historical event that occurred in the world.

Based on the research of post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai's literature that has been conducted, it is believed that the post-disaster literature topic should get more attention because literary works are able to reveal the real problems that lie behind the event itself, not just the fact that appears on the surface. Writers are expected to write more about disasters because the scope of the disaster is very wide, there are still many themes that have not been explored and need to be discussed. In the post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai, many writers refused to write about this disaster because they were fearful that they would be offending and hurting the victims. Writers are the kind of people that are expected to give their responses when major events occur in society. Therefore, the competent writers are those

who complete their duty by boldly and openly conveying, expressing, discussing, and interpreting the real problem behind particular events.

For the development of research regarding the post-Higashi Nihon Daishinsai literature, it is expected that the exploration of the themes that have not been discussed in this dissertation can be conducted. Some of the themes that are interesting yet have not been discussed are; the differences between 'Touhoku area' and 'non-Touhoku' area in responding to this disaster, how the relationship between 'the post-disaster literature' and 'the war literature' is constructed, and how this disaster reestablished the understanding of 'the death' and emphasized the importance of the voices of deceased victims. In addition, a comparative study involving the post-disaster Japanese literature and post-disaster 'outside of Japan' literature is deemed necessary for the purpose of enriching the understanding of the post-disaster literary genre. It is also expected that more Japanese post-disaster literary works be widely translated and published outside Japan. Finally, this research indicated that to do more research on the Japanese writers with an intercultural outlook such as Tawada Yoko will enrich the insight about the position of Japanese literature on the global stage.

## Appendix 1

### Literary Works Published after Higashi Nihon Daishinsai (東日本大震災後出版品)

No.	作家	作品	出版社	出版日
1.	Furukawa Hideo (古川日出男)	Umatachi yo, Soredemo Hikari wa Muku de (馬たちよ、それでも光は 無垢で)	新潮社	2011年07月01日
2.	Hase Seishuu (馳 星周)	Hikari Are (光あれ)	文藝春秋	2011年08月26日
3.	Kawakami Hiromi (川上弘 美)	Kamisama 2011 (神様2011)	講談社	2011年09月21日
4.	Furui Yoshikichi (古井由吉)	Higurashi no Koe (蝸の声)	講談社	2011年10月28日
5.	Fukui Harutoshi (福井晴敏)	Shinsaigo (震災後)	小学館	2011年10月31日
6.	Takahashi Genichirou (高橋 源一郎)	Koisuru Genpatsu (恋する原発)	講談社	2011年11月17日
7.	Yoshimoto Banana (よしも とぼなな)	Suuiito hiaafuta (スイート・ヒア アフタ)	幻冬舎	2011年11月23日
8.	Shiraishi Kazufumi (白石 一文)	Genei no Hoshi (幻影の星)	文藝春秋	2012年01月16日
9.	Tanikawa Shuntarou & Associates (谷川 俊太郎)	Soredemo Sangatsu wa, Mata (それ でも三月は、また)	講談社	2012年02月24日
10.	Kanbayashi Chouhei (神林長 平)	Ima Shuugouteki Muishiki wo, (いま 集合的無意識を、)	早川書房	2012年3月9日
11.	Shigematsu Kiyoshi (重松清)	Kibou no Chizu (希望の地図)	幻冬舎	2012年03月09日

12.	Higuchi Takehiro (樋口毅宏)	Nijuugo no Hitomi (二十五の瞳)	文藝春秋	2012年05月30日
13.	Shibasaki Tomoka (柴崎友香)	Watashi ga Inakatta Machi de (わたしがいなかった街で)	新潮社	2012年06月29日
14.	Murata Kiyoko (村田喜代子)	Kousen (光線)	文藝春秋	2012年07月12日
15.	Arikawa Hiro (有川浩)	Sora Tobu Kouhoushitsu (空飛ぶ広報室)	幻冬舎	2012年07月27日
16.	Nonami Asa (乃南アサ)	Ichiban Nagai Yoru ni (いちばん長い夜に)	新潮社	2013年01月01日
17.	Ikezawa Natsuki (池澤夏樹)	Soutou no Fune (双頭の船)	新潮社	2013年02月01日
18.	Saeki Kazumi (佐伯一麦)	Kaerenu Ie (還れぬ家)	新潮社	2013年02月01日
19.	Kubomi Sumi (窪美澄)	Anibaasarii(アニバーサリー)	新潮社	2013年03月01日
20.	Itou Seikou (いとうせいこう)	Souzou Rajio (想像ラジオ)	河出書房 新社	2013年03月02日
21.	Shigematsu Kiyoshi (重松清)	Mata Tsugi no Haru e (また次の春へ)	扶柔社	2013年03月09日
22.	Genyuu Soukyuu (玄侑宗久)	Hikari no Yama (光の山)	新潮社	2013年04月01日
23.	Tomoi Hitsuji (友井羊)	Borantia Basu de Ikou (ボラエンテイアバスで行こう！)	宝島社	2013年04月10日
24.	Taguchi Randy (田口ランディ)	Zoon ni te (ゾーンにて)	文藝春秋	2013年05月23日
25.	Kumagai Tatsuya (熊谷達也)	Chouritsushi (調律師)	文藝春秋	2013年05月24日
26.	Tsushima Yuuko (津島祐子)	Yamaneko Doomu (ヤマネコ・ドーム)	講談社	2013年05月24日
27.	Tsutsui Yasutaka(筒井康隆)	Seikon (聖痕)	新潮社	2013年5月31日
28.	Henmi Yo (辺見庸)	Aoi Hana (青い花)	角川書店	2013年06月1日

29.	Aiba Hideo (相場英雄)	Kyoushin (共震)	小学館	2013年07月23日
30.	Wataya Risa (綿矢りさ)	Daichi no Geemu (大地のゲーム)	新潮社	2013年07月31日
31.	Hashimoto Osamu(橋本治)	Hatsunatsu no Iro (初夏 (はつなつ) の色)	新潮社	2013年08月30日
32.	Ooe Kenzaburou (大江健三郎)	Bannen Youshiki Shuu (晩年様式集)	講談社	2013年10月25日
33.	Kumagai Tatsuya (熊谷達也)	Riasu no Ko (リアスの子)	光文社	2013年12月04日
34.	Nagashima Yuu (長嶋有)	Toi no nai Kotae (問いのない答え)	文芸春秋	2013年12月09日
35.	Mori Eto (森絵都)	Ryoushi no Aijin (漁師の愛人)	文藝春秋	2013年12月16日
36.	Sato Yuya (佐藤友哉)	Beddosaido Maadaakesu (ベッドサイド・マダーケース)	新潮社	2013年12月19日
37.	Ikezawa Natsuki (池澤夏樹)	Atomic Box (アトミック・ボックス)	毎日新聞社	2014年02月4日
38.	Sena Hideaki (瀬名秀明)	Shinsei (新生)	河出書房新社	2014年02月05日
39.	Mita Kan (三田完)	Haikai (俳魁 (はいかい))	講談社	2014年02月27日
40.	Kumagai Tatsuya (熊谷達也)	Madoromi no Umi (微睡 (まどろみの海))	角川書店	2014年03月07日
41.	Yuumi Ri (柳美里)	JR Ueno Eki Kouen Guchi (JR上野駅公園口)	河出書房新社	2014年03月19日
42.	Bandou Masako (坂東真砂子)	Nemuru Sakana (眠る魚)	集英社	2014年05月19日
43.	Yoshimura Manichi (吉村萬巻)	Boraado Byou (ボラード病)	文芸春秋	2014年06月11日
44.	Kobayashi Erika (小林エリカ)	Madamu Kyuri to Choushoku wo (マダム・キュリーと朝食を)	集英社	2014年07月14日
45.	Nakayami Shichiri (中山七里)	Aporon no Choushou (アポロンの嘲笑)	集英社	2014年09月05日

46.	Tawada Yoko (多和田葉子)	Kentoushi (献灯使)	講談社	2014年10月31日
47.	Mayama Jin (真山仁)	Soshite, Hoshi no Kagayaku Yoru ga Kuru (そして、星の輝く夜がくる)	講談社	2014年11月03日
48.	Itou Keikaku x Enjou Tou (伊藤計劃 x 円城寺)	Shisha no Teikoku(屍者の帝国)	河出書房 新社	2014年11月6日
49.	Ueda Takahiro (上田岳弘)	Taiyou Wakusei (太陽・惑星)	新潮社	2014年11月27日
50.	Nakamura Fuminori (中村文則)	Kyoudan x (教団 x )	集英社	2014年12月15日
51.	Kakiya Miyu (垣谷美雨)	Hinansho (避難所)	新潮社	2014年12月22日
52.	Mayama Jin (真山仁)	Ame ni Naiteru (雨に泣いてる)	幻冬舎	2015年01月30日
53.	Takahashi Hiroki (高橋弘希)	Yubi no Hone(指の骨)	新潮社	2015年01月30日
54.	Ayase Maru (彩瀬まる)	Sakura no Shita de Matteiru (桜の下で待っている)	実業之日 本社	2015年03月12日
55.	Tsutsui Yasutaka (筒井康隆)	Monado no Ryouiki (モナドの領域)	新潮社	2015年3月12日
56.	Kanehara Hitomi (金原ひとみ)	Matazarumono (待たざる者)	集英社	2015年04月24日
57.	Kumagai Tatsuya (熊谷達也)	Mizuumi no Oto, Sora no Ao, Umi ni Shi (湖の音、空の青、海の詩)	NHK出版	2015年07月24日
58.	Takahashi Hiroki (高橋弘希)	Asagao no Hi (朝顔の日)	新潮社	2015年07月31日
59.	Akagawa Jirou (赤川次郎)	Toukyou Zeronen (東京零年)	集英社	2015年08月05日
60.	Fujitani Osamu (藤谷治)	Ano Hi, Muuraa ga (あの日、ムーラーが)	朝日新聞 出版	2015年08月07日
61.	Takiguchi Yuushou (滝口悠生)	Jimi Hendrix Experience (ジミ・ヘンドリクス・エクスペリエンス)	新潮社	2015年08月31日



62.	Saeki Kazumi (佐伯一身麦)	Sora ni Mizuumi (空にみずみ)	中央公論 新社	2015年09月24日
63.	Shimada Masahiko (島田 雅彦)	Kyojin no Hoshi(虚人の星)	講談社	2015年09月25
64.	Michimata Tsutomu (道又 力)編集	Ano Hi kara Higashi Nihon Daishinsai Chinkon. Iwate Ken Shusshin Sakka Tanpenshuu (あの日 から東日本大震 災鎮魂岩手県出 身作家短編集)	岩手日報 社	2015年10月11日
65.	Shinoda Setsuko (篠田節子)	Fuyu no Hikari (冬の光)	文藝春秋	2015年11月11日
66.	Miwa Tarou (三 輪太郎)	Yuukoku monotachi (憂国者たち)	講談社	2015年11月11
67.	Tendou Arata (天 童荒太)	Munnaito Daiba (ムーンナイト・ダ イバー)	文藝春秋	2016年01月23日
68.	Takigawa Yuushou(滝口悠 生)	Shindeinai Mono(死んでいない者)	文藝春秋	2016年1月28日
69.	Ayase Maru (彩 瀬まる)	Yagate Umi e to Todoku (やがて海 へと届く)	講談社	2016年02月03日
70.	Yanagi Kouji (柳 広司)	Zou wa Wasurenai (像は忘れない)	文藝春秋	2016年02月08日
71.	Hodaka Akira (穂高明)	Ao to Shiro to (青と白と)	中央公論 新社	2016年02月24日
72.	Mayama Jin (真 山仁)	Umi wa Mieru ka (海は見えるか)	幻冬舎	2016年02月25日
73.	Kirino Natsuo (桐野夏生)	Baraka (バラカ)	集英社	2016年02月26日
74.	Kumagai Tatsuya (熊谷達也)	Kibou no Umi (希望の海)	集英社	2016年03月04日
75.	Nakamura Fuminori (中村 文則)	Watashi no Shoumetsu (私の消滅)	文芸春秋	2016年06月18

76.	Numata Shinsuke (沼田真佑)	Eiri (影裏)	文芸春秋	2017年07月30
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## Appendix 2

### List of News Articles in *Kompas* and *Tempo*

**KOMPAS NEWSPAPER**  
**12 March 2011-11 June 2011**  
**(News articles related to Higashi Nihon Daishinsai)**

Saturday, 12 March 2011

HEADLINE

“ Jepang Lumpuh Dihantam Gempa Dahsyat” p. 1 continues p.15

“ Upaya Jepang Mengurangi Kerusakan dan Korban Jiwa” p.1 bersambung p. 15

OPINION

“ Kepanikan Setelah Gempa Jepang” p. 6

INTERNATIONAL

“ Bagi Jepang, Bencana Kali ini Berbeda” p. 8

Gambar “Gempa dan Tsunami” p. 9

“ Skala Bencana di Luar Perkiraan” p. 10

“ Perusahaan Asuransi Gamang” p. 11

EDUCATION AND CULTURE

“ Miyagi sering Mengalami Tsunami” p. 12

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

“ Berpacu dengan Kecepatan Tsunami” p. 14

GENERAL

“ Siaga Hadapi Tsunami” p. 15

ECONOMY

“ Ekspor ke Jepang Akan Terganggu” p. 17

PEOPLE AND EVENTS

Jusuf Kalla “Gempa Dahsyat” p. 32

**12 Articles**

Sunday, 13 Maret 2011

HEADLINE

“ PM Kan: Bencana ini Dahsyat” p. 1 continues p. 11

GENERAL

“ Kedutaan Buka Posko Darurat” p. 2

## NATIONAL

“Tsunami Capai Jayapura”

p. 3

**3 Articles**

Monday, 14 March 2011

## HEADLINE

“Jutaan Orang Tanpa Pangan”

p. 1 continues p. 15

“Pemerintah Berperan Besar”

p. 1 continues p. 15

“Keajaiban, Mereka Bisa Selamat dari Malapetaka”

p. 1 continues p. 15

“Proyek Metropolitan Mungkin Tertunda

p. 1

## OPINION

“Jepang, Simpati, dan Pembelajaran”

p. 6

## INTERNATIONAL

“Hancur Digulung “Tembok Hitam Menderu””

p. 8

“Empat WNI Dipastikan Hilang”

p. 9

“KBRI Jepang Buka Posko Bencana”

p. 10

“PMI Siap Diberangkatkan ke Jepang”

p. 10

“Ekonomi Jepang Surut Akibat Bencana”

p. 11

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

“Belajar dari PLTN Fukushima”

p. 14

Gambar “Mengecek Tingkat Radiasi”

p. 14

## ECONOMY

““Tsunami” Proyek Jepang”

p. 17

## NATIONAL

“Keluarga TKI di Jepang Khawatir”

p. 21

“Daerah Siaga Tsunami”

p. 22

## SPORT

“Jepang Tidak Batalkan Liga Persahabatan”

p. 30

## PEOPLE AND EVENTS

J-Rocks “Sedihkan Tsunami di Jepang”

p. 32

**17 Articles**

Tuesday, 15 March 2011

## HEADLINE

“Khawatirkan Ledakan Nuklir”

p. 1 continues p. 15

“Dikejar Tsunami dari Aceh hingga Jepang”

p. 1 continues p. 15

“Eskpor Komoditas Indonesia bisa Merosot”	p. 1 continues p. 15
“Proyek Metropolitan Tetap Berlanjut”	p. 1
OPINION	
“Implikasi Ekonomi Bencana Jepang”	p. 6
“Eskpresi Solidaritas atas Jepang”	p. 6
INTERNATIONAL	
“Tiga Hari Setelah Bencana”	p. 8
“Diguncang Krisis Kemanusiaan”	p. 8
“Doa Bersama di Bekasi untuk Korban Bencana di Jepang”	p. 8
“Indeks Nikkei Anjlok”	p. 11
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY	
“Dampak Bencana itu Bagi Indonesia”	p. 13
“PLTN Indikasi Kuat Pengaruh Negara Kaya”	p. 13
ECONOMY	
“Jepang Kurangi Impor LNG”	p. 18
SPORT	
“Duka Atlet Jepang”	p. 30

**14 Articles**

Wednesday, 16 March 2011

HEADLINE

“Warga Dilarang Keluar Rumah”	p. 1 continues p. 15
“Indonesia Relatif Aman dari Radiasi”	p. 1 continues p. 15
“Ketangguhan Jepang Memukau Dunia”	p. 1 continues p. 15

INTERNATIONAL

“Kisah Para Korban”	p. 8
“Krisis Bisa Memburuk”	p. 8
“Tsunami juga Timpa Ekonomi”	p. 9
“Krisis Nuklir Diprediksi Sudah Lewat”	p. 9
“267 WNI Belum Diketahui Nasibnya”	p. 10

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Dampak Radiasi “Sebabkan Kanker dan Mandul”	p. 14
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GENERAL

“Awat, Banyak Serangan Informasi Bohong”	p. 15
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ECONOMY

“Indonesia Siap Pasok Kebutuhan Rehabilitasi	
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dan Rekonstruksi” p. 18

NATIONAL

“Wisatawan Jepang Batal ke Bali” p. 21

“Empat TKI Dinyatakan Hilang” p. 22

NAMA DAN PERISTIWA

(Iklan) Asa Untuk Jepang p. 32

**14 Articles**

Thursday, 17 March 2011

HEADLINE

“Nuklir Jepang Lepas Kendali” p. 1 continues p. 15

“Kabur dari Tokyo, Carter Jet Pribadi” p. 1 continues p. 15

OPINION

“Pesan dari PLTN Fukushima” p. 6

INTERNATIONAL

“Salju Tebal Mempersulit” p. 8

“Sharapova Mengenang Bencana Chernobyl” p. 8

Gambar “Berlindung dari Awan Nuklir” p. 8

“Solidaritas Pemuda di Jepang” p. 9

“Pekerja Magang Asal Indonesia Diliburkan” p. 9

“BOJ Pasok 700 Miliar Dollar” p. 11

ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH

“BPPT Pantau Langsung Tsunami Untuk Pertama Kali” p. 13

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

“Radiasi ada di Sekitar Kita” p. 14

GENERAL

“Indonesia Bebas Radiasi” p. 15

ECONOMY

“Seluruh TKI Selamat” p. 19

NATIONAL

“Orang Jepang itu Masih Tersenyum” p. 22

METROPOLITAN

“Mereka Mengandalkan Internet dan Mengabarkan  
Kerasan” p. 27

**15 Articles**

Friday, 18 March 2011

## HEADLINE

“ Krisis Nuklir Kian Memburuk” p. 1 continues p. 15

“ Tangkal Radiasi Nuklir, Garam dan Pil Yodium  
pun Dicari” p. 1 continues p. 15

## OPINION

“ Bencana dan Karakter Bangsa” p. 6

“ Semangat “Gambaru”” p. 6

## INTERNATIONAL

“ Tsunami itu Datang Sebelum Sakura Mekar” p. 8

“ Mencegah Terulangnya Chernobyl” p. 9

“ Baru Tiga Kota yang Dukung Perlucutan” p. 9

“ Suara yang Memanggil-manggil itu Lenyap” p. 10

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