The Imagination of the Defeated

by Norihiro Kato

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(The Imagination of the Defeated)
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A historical and theoretical critique of a culture emerging from defeat in war

By a multi-award-winning literary critic and former op-ed contributor to the *New York Times*

Includes legendary writers such as Kenzaburō Ōe and popular icons Hayao Miyazaki and Godzilla

"*Haisha no souzouryoku* (The Imagination of the Defeated) shouldn't just be for domestic readers. Rather, I can't help but think that it is precisely in places like the United States today, as far removed from the imagination of the defeated as any place could ever be, that this treatise should be read."

— Michael Emmerich, professor of Japanese literature at UCLA

ABOUT THIS BOOK

This book is a theoretical exercise and **groundbreaking reflection on postwar Japan** that highlights and contemplates "the imagination" as cultivated in the cultural space. Incisive critic and bestselling author Norihiro Kato delivers a robust follow-up to his *Haisengo-ron* (After the Defeat)* [unpublished in English, tentative title; see footnote below], a controversial essay that shifted Japan's understanding of "postwar" and reignited debate between liberals and conservatives, possibly even inspiring the historical revisionist movements of the '90s.

In 1945, Japan lost the war and was occupied by the Allies. In the three quarter-centuries since, has this unprecedented experience been confronted head-on? Has it been internalized in the being, processed in the mind? Japan's surrender in World War II engendered an identity as a defeated nation and led to its own trauma that has carried over into the literary and artistic landscape ever since. As Japan struggles to process and digest its history, cumulating into a large gap with the other Axis powers, it now faces questions that are **significant**

***Any work that is unpublished in English as of September 2022 appears with * when first mentioned in this document. The translated title (in parentheses) is tentative.**

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for all humans looking to restore and call upon their imaginative powers to overcome a deeply divided world.

Most of us are here today having lived a lifetime of setbacks, defeats, and failures. Surely, then, **"the imagination of the defeated" has a universality that far surpasses that of the victorious**. The way we face and come to terms with challenges, especially ones suffered collectively, necessarily shapes our entire view of the world and what possible futures we see in it.

Kato proposes that there is a kind of imagination that only those who have experienced defeat can possess. The defeated do not cry out for justice. They do not put faith in growth or responsibility. They do not place absolute trust in values like latest ideas or beautiful love… Still, the defeated can imagine, and their imagination is a productive one with potential to put forth new ideas and values for society. **Kato makes an appeal for Japan and the world overall to embrace "defeat" in its many forms,** because accepting that first will lead to progress and open up a future more meaningful than that achieved in trying to imitate "victory."

This is an insightful book by one of the best scholarly minds in Japan that brings together the genres of history and art criticism. Readers knowledgeable in post-World War II history will find that the spirit of the era is contained not in timelines of events, but in books and screens. Connoisseurs of literature and film will see how specific works fit into the larger narrative of man's postwar legacy. Those interested in Japanese culture in particular will be intrigued to learn **how this consciousness of defeat (i.e., the surrender and the Occupation), which escaped Japanese society as whole, stimulated individual creators and imbued their works with a unique "Japaneseness"** that attracts a worldwide audience to this day.

Haisha no souzouryoku (The Imagination of the Defeated) sheds light on the creative force that powers and flows through the literary works of Nobel laureates Kenzaburō Ōe and Kazuo Ishiguro, the beloved animations of Hayao Miyazaki and Studio Ghibli, the popular film icon Godzilla, the ideas of leading Japanese thinkers Takaaki Yoshimoto and Shunsuke Tsurumi, and more. What emerges is **a kaleidoscope of Japanese culture**, apt to forget but forever influenced by its undeniable history of war and defeat.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Norihiro Kato (1948–2019) was a literary critic and professor emeritus at Waseda University. After graduating with a degree in French literature from the University of Tokyo, he worked at the National Diet Library before going on to teach at Meiji Gakuin University and Waseda University. Though specializing in French, he was also well-versed in English and Anglophone culture; he visited the Université de Montréal's Centre for East Asian Studies during his time with the National Diet Library, and he gave lectures for study abroad students at Waseda University's School of International Liberal Studies. He was an incisive critic, most notably of leading

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Japanese novelists like Haruki Murakami and Kenzaburō Ōe. His theory on Ōe as recorded in this book was applauded by none other than Ōe himself, who called it, "the best and last critique." In 1995, Kato published *Haisengo-ron* (After the Defeat), a treatise on the war dead and Yasukuni Shrine that caused great sensation and split public opinion both within Japan and abroad. From then on, the postwar era became a central theme for Kato in parallel with his literary criticism. He continued to be an active and foremost voice in discussions on postwar Japanese society. In the 2010s, he contributed opinion articles to the *New York Times*. Over the course of his career, Kato wrote on a wide range of subjects—from literature and culture in general, to linguistic theory and philosophy—in a singular voice and style. He was a multi-award-winning writer, receiving the Shincho Gakugei Prize for *Gengo hyougenhou kougi* (Lectures on Linguistic Expression)*, the Sei Ito Literary Prize for *Haisengo-ron* (After the Defeat), the Takeo Kuwabara Prize for academic writing for *Shousetsu no mirai* (The Future of the Novel)* and *Tekusuto kara tōku hanarete* (Leaving the Text Behind)*. Other major works include *Amerika no kage* (In America's Shadow)* and *Murakami Haruki ierō peiji* (The Haruki Murakami Yellow Pages)*.

ENDORSEMENTS

"[I]t is precisely in places like the United States today, as far removed from the imagination of the defeated as any place could ever be, that this treatise should be read."
— Michael Emmerich, professor of Japanese literature at UCLA

"The imagination of the defeated liberates us from the Weltanschauung of a world shaped by victors to a world more prosperous."
— Munesuke Mita (sociologist)

"Unravels the maze of U.S. subordination that Japan has fallen into and points to a surprising way out."
— Shū Kishida, author of *Monogusa seishin bunseki* (Lazy Psychoanalysis)*

"Entrusts the future to the power of the defeated and comes with added philosophical depth. A mature theory on the postwar era."
— Takeshi Yōrō, bestselling author of *The Wall of Fools*

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BOOK REVIEW

THIS ARTICLE WAS ORIGINALLY WRITTEN IN JAPANESE. THIS ENGLISH TRANSLATION HAS NOT BEEN VERIFIED BY THE WRITER.

"The imagination of the defeated": A pervasive force in the cultural space of postwar Japan

By Michael Emmerich

I read Norihiro Kato's new book, *Haisha no souzouryoku* (The Imagination of the Defeated), in the Los Angeles sunshine. It is a powerful and curious book that really pulls you in. It is structured almost like a children's picture book, the kind of story where the main character meets a variety of animals and travels with them trailing behind in a long line. It includes everything and anything: Japanese literature from the Occupation period, *Niji no tori* (Rainbow Bird)* by Shun Medoruma, *Shin Godzilla* by Hideaki Anno, along with critiques of Masao Yamaguchi, Michitarō Tada, Takaaki Yoshimoto, Shunsuke Tsurumi, even *Spirited Away* by Hayao Miyazaki, and *Death by Water* by Kenzaburō Ōe. Works and names that we would otherwise never see in the same context are connected from the perspective of "the imagination of the defeated." In Kato's characteristic steady narrative, the cultural space of postwar Japan emerges from a variety of places.

Kato points out that "the imagination of the defeated" (also the title of this book) is a cultural consciousness that came particularly easy to Japan, who was reckoning with defeat "after the war" and who, since ancient times, had always been forced to be aware of other more powerful nations. However, "the imagination of the defeated" described in this book is not an exclusive sensibility, in that it can be acquired—and, by the same token, lost—by any community or individual in any kind of history. In fact, Kato worries in his book that the imagination of the defeated, which had been easy for Japan to possess, by virtue of history, is nowadays fading away.

Reading *Haisha no souzouryoku* (The Imagination of the Defeated) in the United States, I was reminded time and again of what President Donald Trump said in his campaign speech last year: "[W]e're going to start winning again. We're going to win so much… We're going to win with trade. We're going to win with borders… We're going to win, win, win. You're going to get sick and tired of winning. You're going to say to me, 'Mr. President, please, please. We don't want to win so much. It's too much.'"

Perhaps what lies at the heart of *Haisha no souzouryoku* (The Imagination of the Defeated) is a very decent rejection of and warning against this kind of profane, offensive attitude. It seemed a little out of place to read this book under the too-bright Los Angeles sun. Still, *Haisha no souzouryoku* (The Imagination of the Defeated) shouldn't just be for domestic readers. Rather, I can't help but think that it is precisely in places like the United States today, as far removed from the imagination of the defeated as any place could ever be, that this treatise should be read.

— Michael Emmerich, professor of Japanese literature at UCLA
"Reading Books," from the July 2017 issue of *Youth and Reading* (Shueisha)

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CHAPTER SUMMARIES

PREFACE

"Looking people firmly in the eye when speaking" and "expressing one's opinions clearly" are mannerisms of the elite class in powerful countries. In contrast, people who live in smaller countries tend to "avoid eye contact" and "smile ambiguously." This book is an attempt to illuminate, examine, and dissect the latter group's experiences and mentality, taking "the imagination of the defeated" as the keyword.

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INTRODUCTION: THERE IS A VERTICALITY TO IMAGINATION
— YASUJIRO OZU, *THE CULTURE OF DEFEAT*, KAZUO ISHIGURO

Why, after more than seventy years, has Japan's postwar period not ended? Some may retort that Japan regained its sovereignty with the end of the Occupation, but that was not as common an opinion in the past. As a matter of fact, for people in Okinawa, who still live daily exposed to the dangers of U.S. military bases, nothing has changed in essence. When the defeated continue to be defeated, perhaps they develop an imagination within this state of being. In this kind of experience and consciousness, one acquires a particular point of view, sensibility, way of thinking—which is called "the imagination of the defeated" in this book.

In Yasujiro Ozu's films, the characters drink *sake* with downcast eyes and smile only faintly. This "defeated" look, however, was appreciated even in the victorious countries like the United States and Canada. Defeat is a universal experience that transcends borders. In the modern age, war is increasingly going to be a game without victors. The knowledge of defeat is something that will open our doors into the future.

What separates World War II from previous wars, according to German scholar Wolfgang Schivelbusch, is that the victorious countries overpowered the defeated countries, namely Japan and Germany, so thoroughly that they were not even left with a "self-consciousness as a defeated nation." What, then, separates Japan and Germany today?

In *Never Let Me Go*, Kazuo Ishiguro questions the meaning of living through unfair, unjust experiences. The characters in the novel, who "accept injustice so obediently, without any resistance," are exactly like Japan after the war. Even contemplating this attitude—is this not filled with "the imagination of the defeated"?

PART I: JAPAN THE DEFEATED

CHAPTER 1: WHEN WE WERE THE OCCUPIED
— W. G. SEBALD, TATSUO HAYASHI, TAEWON PARK

For seven years following defeat, Japan underwent occupation. Not only did the occupying forces obscure it so that it was "hard to see," but also, we the occupied tried our best "not to see, not to accept" it. This cooperative system meant that Japan saw remarkably few novels written during and about the Occupation. France's Patrick Modiano and Germany's W. G. Sebald, for example, wrote about the Nazi occupation and the Allied air raids in their novels. Taewon Park, in the Korean peninsula under Japanese occupation, depicted in the modernist style the emotional experience of colonial rule. Meanwhile, in Japan, we have since been more concerned with the element of censorship, focusing primarily on rediscovering works that were lost during the Occupation. What about works that deal with the Occupation itself? We have no "Occupation literature" as such, a genre that arises out of and explores the very experience of being ruled by foreign peoples. What does such a lack of

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imagination mean?

Chapter 2: Literature under the Occupation
— The Third Generation of Postwar Writers, Ayako Sono, Kenzaburō Ōe, Shun Medoruma

After their defeat, Germany and Japan became the first countries in the world to accept a kind of occupation that was injected with the value of being morally "right." As a result, we the occupied lost the refuge of our own "righteousness" and became powerless. The few writers who confronted this "powerlessness" and produced what little "Occupation literature" we have are known collectively in Japan as "the Third Generation" of postwar writers.

Shōtarō Yasuoka, Nobuo Kojima, and Ayako Sono each depicted the "rudeness" of the occupying forces in their own ways. While Yasuoka and Kojima leave traces of "resistance" in their works, Sono captures them in a frivolous manner. Shintarō Ishihara inherited the latter's approach, and Kenzaburō Ōe the former. In *Ningen no hitsuji* (The Human Sheep)*, Ōe depicts a fictionalized occupation of Japan by the United States. Only by caricaturing it did our subordination become visible. And today, Okinawan-born author Shun Medoruma furthers the question of U.S. subordination by writing a novel that breaks the taboo of "killing Americans."

Chapter 3: Where does Godzilla go when he dies?
— Ishiro Honda, Roland Emmerich, Gareth Edwards

Why is it that in postwar Japan, the imperial ideology of the past is abhorred and vehemently denied, while the ideology of the former enemy, i.e., freedom and democracy, is easily espoused? Why is Japan not only friendly with the former enemy, but even accepting, without any misgivings, of their rule and suppression? Those in Japan who experienced the defeat firsthand harbor feelings of guilt toward those who died in the war. It can be said that Godzilla is an embodiment of the war dead; it is inevitable that Godzilla attacks Japan. For the Japanese people, the war dead are a multifaceted presence that evokes feelings of nostalgia, indebtedness, guilt, terror all at once. This complicated relationship is probably why the character Godzilla was born and so loved in Japan.

Today, we no longer imagine the war dead, nor do we have access to Godzilla in the original sense. In the first Hollywood version, Godzilla bears resemblance to King Kong and points to the feelings of guilt that American people carry for Native Americans (to parallel with that which the Japanese carry for the war dead). In the second Hollywood version, however, any connection to Japan has been scrupulously removed. What we see here is the loss of "the imagination of the defeated," but perhaps it is losses like this one that encourages reflection and the renewal of imaginative powers. In other words, the Hollywood interpretation of Godzilla serves to suggest new possibilities for a generation that still clings to the "glorious America" of the past and its ideals. What new values persist, after the big stories have been dismantled?

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INTERMISSION: A DISCUSSION ON *SHIN GODZILLA* (SPOILER ALERT)
— HIDEAKI ANNO

Shin Godzilla, the new Godzilla film released in Japan in 2016, follows in Hollywood's footsteps in its attempt to "pretend that Godzilla never existed." In this film, Godzilla's appearance is a metonymy for the Great East Japan Earthquake and nuclear accident that struck Japan in 2011; a new theme of "post-disaster" emerges and synergizes with the theme of "postwar" that Godzilla has symbolized since the first film. *Shin Godzilla* also has a "sci-fi anime" look, true to the style of general director Hideaki Anno (who created the *Neon Genesis Evangelion* franchise). Expert use of visual effects and media technology makes for a pioneering and convincing portrait of the horrors of nuclear disaster. The original Godzilla film was the first to depict the Japan Self-Defense Forces openly engaging in military activities. In *Shin Godzilla*, too, a "taboo" is broken when one of the characters openly says that "Japan is a dependency of the U.S." Most of Japan's entertainment works are regulated by a cultural code represented by Dentsū, the largest advertising agency in the country, but we see an implicit resistance to this near the end of the film, in the grotesque image of Godzilla frozen in a cold shutdown state. The film overall makes a cynical attempt at breaking the taboos of Japanese society.

So what is Godzilla in this film? In the past films, he was a symbol for the war dead. In *Shin Godzilla*, he represents the imagination of those who, like Anno, wage battle against taboos and continue to lose—in short, the imagination of the defeated.

PART II: POSTWAR FOR THE DEFEATED

CHAPTER 4: LOW ENTROPY AND "BIDDING DOWN"
— MASAO YAMAGUCHI AND MICHITARŌ TADA

In "*Haisha" no seishinshi* (A Psychological History of "the Defeated")* and *Zasetsu no Shōwa-shi* (A History of the Shōwa Era in Setbacks)*, cultural anthropologist Masao Yamaguchi sheds light on the stragglers cast out from the modern Japanese system and the defeated parties in the Boshin War. Describing their personal connections and the intellectual friendships established, he proposes a new "loserology," or the study of the defeated. Whereas Yamaguchi studied his subjects from the point of view of the systems in power, Michitarō Tada depicted them from their own side. Though a scholar of French literature in training and a literary critic by trade, Tada stepped out from the boundaries of traditional academia. He eschewed standing at attention, as he understood it (from wartime experience) to be the posture of punishment. Instead, he saw potential for resistance in "*beshimi*," a facial expression akin to a scowl that mimics but does not respond to authority. In a world dominated by authority and pressure, "responding" squarely means submitting and fulfilling "responsibility" means not resisting.

Bob Dylan demonstrated such *beshimi*-style resistance when he—instead of refusing it outright—did not

respond to receiving the Nobel Prize in Literature.

Chapter 5: Our thoughts as the bondsman of the world — Takaaki Yoshimoto and Shunsuke Tsurumi

In *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel advances "the lord-bondsman dialectic," in which two beings engage in a struggle for mutual recognition. One being, fearing for his life, loses and becomes the defeated bondsman. The other then becomes the victorious lord, but eventually he comes to depend on the bondsman for his life; the relationship is inevitably reversed. In this scenario, the defeated has a choice: Does he follow in the path of the victorious? Or does he carve out his own path as the defeated? Like Hegel's bondsman, Japan after the war was also at a "crossroads," faced with choosing between "postwar democratic ideology" and "postwar ideology." The former, which took after the Allies and their democracies, produced polemicists like Masao Maruyama and Shūichi Kato; the latter produced philosophers and thinkers like Shunsuke Tsurumi and Takaaki Yoshimoto.

After the war, most everyone in Japan was occupied with praising those "who did not err," i.e., people who did not support military imperialism and endured in their resistance. Yoshimoto, meanwhile, chose to focus on those "who did err," himself included, i.e., people who subscribed to imperial fascism during the war and converted after the war. Tsurumi was a student at Harvard University at the outbreak of war and was imprisoned on suspicion of anarchism while writing his thesis. Upon release, he returned to Japan before the end of war, out of a desire "to be in the country of defeat, when Japan loses this war." In their thinking, Yoshimoto and Tsurumi can be seen as living examples of "the lord-bondsman dialectic." And in their listening to the "underdog" for voices that cannot be borne of "the imagination of the victorious," they also align themselves with the ideas of Edward Said (*Orientalism*).

Chapter 6: We're not scared of "growth" — Hayao Miyazaki and Osamu Tezuka

What is the difference between Hayao Miyazaki's animated films, in particular *Spirited Away*, and Disney films? In *Spirited Away*, the main character endures hard labor and unfair treatment in order to rescue her parents and, managing to do so, returns to the world from which they came. Yet, after her return, she is as undependable as ever; nothing about her signifies the growth she underwent through this experience. Meanwhile, in Disney films, the main character faces adversity, triumphs over evil in the climax, and, in doing so, achieves personal growth. What is it that separates these two outcomes? Assuming an injustice exists in this world, the latter will seek absolute righteousness in vanquishing it with a new and lasting justice, while the former will accept it first and seek "justice" and "growth" in exploring what is feasible within its boundaries.

Legendary manga artist Osamu Tezuka drew a cartoon in his young, pre-professional days in which a main character, Tonkichi-kun, is shot down by machine gun fire from Mickey Mouse. This cartoon, *Shōri no hi made*

(Until We See Victory)*, is backed by his personal experience of wartime air raids and is notable for its inherent contradiction: while struggling against the world and culture represented by Disney, it is depicted with the style and technique of Disney. The earlier mentioned trope of a character who "doesn't grow" is also seen in Tezuka, namely in *Astro Boy*. The main character Astro Boy, a robot, is given "a body that never grows." Within the story, this becomes an early source of tragedy, as Dr. Tenma, who had created Astro Boy to replace his recently deceased son, gives him away after realizing that Astro Boy could never be human, given his inability to grow. Here, we see Astro Boy pressurized into growing and becoming an adult. In Miyazaki's works, however, the main characters accept that they can never be adults and strive to achieve their ideals in different ways. This contrast is analogous to that between "postwar democracy" and "postwarism" (Chapter 5) and points yet again to "the imagination of the defeated."

Chapter 7: The final years of Kenzaburō Ōe

Nobel Prize-winning author Kenzaburō Ōe declared he would quit writing on more than one occasion, but he truly quit novels after the trilogy he wrote in the wake of the Okinawa "Mass Suicide" Trial that befell him. Ōe had indicated in his nonfiction work, *Okinawa nōto* (The Okinawa Notes)*, that the Japanese military had forced civilians to commit mass suicides in the Battle of Okinawa. A retired officer and the brother of another retired officer sued Ōe for defamation in 2005, with support from the right wing. Within the right-wing camp, the above-mentioned Ayako Sono (Chapter 2) played a central role. She described the mass suicides as incidents that occurred "under the special circumstance of war" and suggested the civilians had chosen a "pure death" out of "a beautiful will to die for their country" and "the spirit of the times." In effect, she completely rejected the phrase, "too colossal a mass of sin," that Ōe uses in his portrayal.

Ōe, personally faced with the lawsuit, suffers from the ordeal, but also acknowledges that he, too, had been "a boy of the militaristic era, with absolute worship for the emperor" during the war. Bearing this in mind, he comes to think that it would be a grave sin to treat the mass suicides as "an expression of patriotism" and thus permute it into a question of "love." He then sets out to write *Death by Water*. Discussing this pivotal work would be important in understanding Ōe the writer, as well as postwar Japan overall.

Conclusion: Toward *Death by Water* — Kenzaburō Ōe and Okinawa

The Okinawa Mass Suicide Trial ended with the plaintiffs' claims being dismissed, that is, the courts found that Ōe's description of the coercive role that the Japanese military played in the mass suicides did not amount to defamation. Yet, two issues remained. One was the issue of fact: Were orders of suicide really given in concrete, identifiable ways? Separate from this, there was also the issue of belief: did the civilians have their own "patriotism" or "familial love" to be called upon in the act? Ōe wrote *Death by Water* to further contemplate this latter issue.

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In *Death by Water*, Ōe writes about the rape of an underage girl by a former bureaucrat, now leader of a conservative group. In the story, she is now an adult woman and confronts the man, who denies her claims. The act itself is not in dispute. Rather, at issue is the element of consent: the woman is adamant that the sex was not consensual and is determined to fight the man tooth and nail on this point. The confrontation goes on, and the night ends in her being raped by the man yet again. Naturally, the woman is shocked and shaken. However, she is determined to keep the child she may have conceived. She will give birth and raise the child—unlike last time, when she was forced into having an abortion that erased the very fact of her rape.

In this we see Ōe's attitude toward postwar democracy. That is, even if the ideology's origins—in this case, the prewar era's imperialist view of history and militarism—are thoroughly flawed, and even if one had subscribed to those flawed ideas, one should not meet that past with denial. Instead, one should accept it, then graft on a democracy of the postwar era and other new ideas that one believes in. Surely, only through this grafting process can "the spirit of the times" be renewed. And if, through that grafting process, postwar democracy becomes so faint it nearly disappears, then that must be the only way forward for this country of defeat. To reimagine and recast the words of Ernest Hemingway (*The Old Man and the Sea*), "Man is made for defeat. Yet, though he may be defeated, he cannot be destroyed."

POSTFACE

This book starts with a lighthearted first half that traces the common thread of "defeat" through foreign literatures and ideologies, Japan's Occupation literature, Godzilla, etc. The second half is a more rigorous one that discusses the early, raw talents who formed the backbone of postwar thought and culture in Japan. For the author personally, Ōe is the most important and inspiring novelist, and the theory on *Death by Water* as presented here seems worthy of the magnitude of the book's subject matter overall.

SAMPLE TRANSLATION

PREFACE

They say that "Westerners look people right in the eye when they speak."

As I became old enough to gain some understanding of the world and started getting somewhat cocky—it was around then that I began to feel that this assumption, that we should always look people in the eye when speaking, was rather silly. And then, when they started saying that this is how it's done overseas and learning to express our opinions clearly would be in line with "the international standard," it made me feel uneasy. Quite often I would think, "I don't like this society I live in. I want to run away."

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However, of course, I have not run away and still live here. I do—but lately, I have been feeling like society is getting stranger and stranger every day.

It was Michitarō Tada, a scholar of French literature who also appears in this book, who first told me that this assumption was not true.

According to Mr. Tada's observations, it is a mannerism of people living in powerful countries and, among them most especially, the elite like intellectuals and politicians. However, residents, intellectuals, and politicians of smaller countries are less likely to look people in the eye when speaking, even casting their gaze downward. It's like walking down a street with half-shuttered storefronts. It's rather picturesque.

That's what Mr. Tada said, almost muttering.

Hearing this made me want to travel to the places, small countries in Eastern Europe or around Asia for example, where such people live.

To avoid eye contact, to smile ambiguously

So, when the opportunity presented itself, I did. Hungary and the Czech Republic in Eastern Europe. Portugal in Southern Europe. When I visited these countries, I understood what Mr. Tada was saying. Or in Asia. While on a short stay in Chiang Mai, Thailand, I found myself nodding in agreement. I felt the same way when I visited Luang Prabang, Laos, just the other day.

It is this mentality, of these people with their downcast eyes, that forms the foundation of that which I call here "the imagination of the defeated." That, or the limitless expanse of a face that smiles ambiguously.

There is a certain logic, way of thinking, sensibility that is constructed by looking a person firmly in the eye. Stretching all around this solid building, however, are the logic, way of thinking, sensibility of the people who smile ambiguously, who smirk, who walk with their eyes downcast and shoulders hunched. Such countries and societies do exist.

People of such countries and societies usually have a history of being invaded by other powerful countries or colonized by other developed countries.

Japan, too, joined the ranks of such places for the first time after its defeat in 1945.

We have long forgotten, but, prior to the defeat, Japan's was not the kind of society to pay much attention to the imagination of the defeated. That made the presence of people like Yukichi Fukuzawa, who was a former

shogunate retainer and never forgot that he was one of "the defeated," all the more important. At the same time, there was little thought given to that which loomed behind him and connected us to the majority of people around the world: the nonvictor's gaze. Though this does not change Fukuzawa's experience or my respect for him, there is, at the end of the day, no way to know how, if at all, committed he was to living the identity of the defeated.

As I see it, there is unchartered territory for postwar Japanese society to explore here, and it takes the shape of the following question: how far can we develop, or even survive, this that might be called the imagination of the defeated? This is perhaps the challenge for those of us who live in this society—a society that has been branded with defeat—or a novel experience that should be examined for its rich possibilities.

This book is an attempt to shed light on the experiences of people in this society that have stood up to this challenge and to think about them in terms of the keyword, "the imagination of the defeated."

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PART I: JAPAN THE DEFEATED

CHAPTER 1: WHEN WE WERE THE OCCUPIED

— W. G. SEBALD, TATSUO HAYASHI, TAEWON PARK

Shōtarō Yasuoka, the Third Generation of Postwar Writers, the Occupation

Modiano's reflections and Sebald's segregation

French collaboration and the Nazi occupation / Describing war damage like natural history / The *Luftkrieg und Literatur* controversy and *Haisengo-ron* (After the Defeat)

Discussing Occupied Japan

Discussing Occupied Korea

Taewon Park's *A Day in the Life of Kubo the Novelist* / *Dainanakankai houkou* (Wanderings in the Realm of the Seventh Sense)* and reversed colonial rule

Going back to a past one never experienced

The war generation, the postwar generation, the '70s generation / Laurent Binet's *HHhH* / Recent research on the Occupation / A foreign novelist's curiosity for the occupation of Japan

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE UNDER THE OCCUPATION

— THE THIRD GENERATION OF POSTWAR WRITERS, AYAKO SONO, KENZABURŌ ŌE, SHUN MEDORUMA

The duality of defeat

The morally "right" occupation and the origins of the Third Generation

The innovativeness of "The Glass Slipper"

Harajuku and Angaur Island

My job is to wait.

"The American School" and "*Enrai no kyakutachi* (Visitors from Afar)*"

A shallow and glib woman

When we were the occupied, Ōe's version

Why Ōe was able to depict the humiliation of the Occupation

Shun Medoruma and the occupation of Okinawa

CHAPTER 3: WHERE DOES GODZILLA GO WHEN HE DIES?

— ISHIRO HONDA, ROLAND EMMERICH, GARETH EDWARDS

The imagination of the defeated and Godzilla

My dead friends, and me, alive / Godzilla and the imagination of the defeated

The Godzillas of the past

Why does Godzilla always come to Japan? / How can we mourn the war dead? / Why does the Godzilla series continue?

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