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## Style, Discourse, and the Completion of the Vernacular Style in Modern Japanese Literature

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### Abstract

Many histories of modern Japanese literature see the "completion" of the modern vernacular style in the writings of Shiga Naoya (1883--1971), Mushakōji Saneatsu (1885--1976) and Takamura Kōtarō (1883--1956). Why and how this critical-historical perception of stylistic normalcy arose and still continues is better understood, I propose, through a close reading of key texts that identifies instances and patterns of creative manipulation of—as opposed to mere determination by or complicity with—certain philosophical, social, and historical discourses. How this creative manipulation plays out varies in prose and poetry and from text to text. In Mushakōji's Omedetaki hito (1911; The Simpleton), temporal and generic transitions establish a doubled discourse of sincerity that normalizes the genbun itchi prose into the background. In Shiga's An'ya kōro (1921--37; A Dark Night's Passing), certain syntactical and lexical innovations construct a new and rigid model of intuitive interiority. Takamura's Dōtei (1914; The Journey) reverses, to its own literary historical advantage, gendered discourses on the Japanese language and Japanese literary history.

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MA

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