

## Descent into Agnosia? Rethinking “Post-earthquake Disaster Literature”

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### Abstract

Since March 11, 2011, the so-called “post-earthquake disaster literature” seems to have flourished. However, as Kimura Saeko points out in her seminal monograph *Shinsai bungaku ron*, it is generally believed that the works describing the society and daily lives of people after the earthquake have not been given fair critical evaluation. She further discussed as to why contemporary Japanese literature could not deal with the disaster of 3.11 and concluded that there are circumstances in which one would be required to have a strong sense of ethics in order to discuss the earthquake disaster in the work. However, can it really be argued that the people who are engaged in such literature have so-called *agnosia*? Instead, it should be said that they wrote very eloquently after the earthquake disaster, giving birth to numerous examples of “post-earthquake disaster literature,” and gradually turned silent as time passed. In my presentation, I will re-examine “post-earthquake disaster literature,” giving a precise outline of its development. Furthermore, I will discuss the difficulties authors faced after the earthquake and unlike Kimura Saeko, will not focus on ethics. In particular, I will examine the works of Takahashi Genichiro, an author who took the initiative to write “post-earthquake disaster literature,” along with attempting to clarify what caused his eventual silence.