

Intersex Figures in Modern Japanese Literature and Art



Leslie
Winston

HIMITU

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Intersex Figures in Modern Japanese Literature and Art

Leslie Winston

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*For my mother, Rosalie Frances Winston (1928–2009),
who taught me a love for literature, language, and grammar.*

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Abbreviations

- JZ* *Jogaku zasshi*
SZ *Shikin zenshū*
TZ *Tanizaki Jun'ichirō zenshū*

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In 1978 I met two people who changed my life. Kyung-wha Kang introduced me to a visiting professor from Japan, who offered me a job I wasn't looking for. But Kyung-wha encouraged me to take it and move to a country I knew nothing about. While working on the final chapter of this book, I visited Kyung-wha in South Korea, where she took me to the summit of Noja-san. From there I grasped a view of Japan, the country I could begin to understand with a mind that had distilled over forty-five years.

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A Note on Japanese Names and Terms

Throughout this book, Japanese names are noted in Japanese order, with family name first and given name last. Japanese words used frequently throughout the text are italicized on first use only. All translations are mine unless otherwise indicated.

Introduction

However, if the ability of the myth of the androgyne to reflect so faithfully the preoccupations and experience of widely differing epochs and individuals is due to its extreme simplicity, the fact that it does indeed reflect those things is explained by its universal presence. For no specialized knowledge is necessary for acquaintance with the myth of the androgyne—indeed knowledge of the myth presupposes no education whatsoever, for the androgyne is not only present on all sides in the exterior world, but it also exists in the depths of the human unconscious.

—A. J. L. Busst, “The Image of the Androgyne in the Nineteenth Century”¹

Charles Darwin (1809–82) believed that human beings descended from a common intersexual (“hermaphrodite”) progenitor² and that intersexuality (“hermaphroditism”) was ubiquitous in the natural world. We have always told tales to explain the phenomenon of male and female characteristics in one body and then more tales to express a variety of emotions, from anxiety to joy, about this scientific reality. In spite of Darwin’s declaration that we are all, more or less, intersexual, the power complexes of modern Western nation-states and the new nation-state of Japan trapped the *futanari* (intersexual) in a web of interrelated state apparatuses, such as military, industrial, and medical, from which there was no escape, neither as a citizen, nor as an imperial subject. That is, subjectivity demanded nothing less, and nothing more, than a single sex.

In Japan karma has been responsible for the *futanari* historically, and the negative view of *futanari* over the centuries persisted into the Meiji period (1868–1912), further fueled by sexology (*seikagaku/seigaku*), the

1. Alan J. L. Busst, “The Image of the Androgyne in the Nineteenth Century,” in *Romantic Mythologies*, ed. Ian Fletcher (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967), 86.

2. Charles Darwin, *The Descent of Man* (Prometheus Books, 1998), 167.

study of sexuality at the end of the 19th and early 20th centuries. Sexology was guided by the belief that sexual behavior was based on biological laws, and the medical profession should be responsible for its regulation.³ The ultimately hegemonic form of knowledge about sex promoted by these sexologists did not gain ascendance without a struggle, however. This book is an examination of the use of the trope of the futanari as a counter-discourse to this polarized female-male paradigm.

My purpose in investigating the trope of the futanari in art and literature is to demonstrate the provocative discourses that defied a sexual regime that was imposed upon society as the nation-state advanced its national and imperial designs. From the 1890s to the mid-1920s, as Japan consolidated state power, colonized neighbors, built and strengthened the military, and continued industrialization, the futanari emerged to signal the direction in which the state and its medico-scientific apparatus were driving society. That is, as sexologists and medical practitioners continued reinforcing and instantiating categories of the “male” and “female,” “normal” and “pathological,” the futanari gave the lie to the dimorphic sexual paradigm. The futanari in modern Japan garnered attention because the modern subject had to be male or female; anything else was unintelligible.

A nomenclature was created in European sexology and largely informed the Japanese one. Both reinforced the polarized paradigm's tenets by their very language. In other words, the system reified its denial of “true hermaphroditism” (*shin, shinsei han'in'yō*) [真性半陰陽] and reinforcement of heterosexuality through the lens used to examine it. The terms “male pseudohermaphrodite” (*danseikari han'in'yō*), “female pseudohermaphrodite” (*joseikari han'in'yō*), and “true hermaphrodite” (*shin han'in'yō*), bespeak of phoniness, behind which lurks a “true sex,” and of “truth.” But the false premises of that so-called “truth” are exposed over the years, by the advance of science and the prejudices of medical men. Still though, truth and falseness are at the heart of the modern approach to the treatment of futanari subjects and the concern for heterosexuality, from the dawning of the modern age until now, in the language and the determination to *cure* the subject of a disease.

Today in medical terminology a “true hermaphrodite” is an individual who has at least one ovotestis, an organ with both testicular and ovarian attributes. A “male pseudohermaphrodite” has only testicular tissue, and a “female pseudohermaphrodite” has only ovarian tissue. Despite the ova-

3. Gregory M. Pflugfelder, *Cartographies of Desire: Male-Male Sexuality in Japanese Discourse, 1600–1950* (University of California Press, 1999), 244.

ries, however, the “female pseudohermaphrodite’s” external genitalia are “masculinized.” For example, the clitoris may appear to be more like a penis. This is because the fetus was exposed to high levels of androgens due to a variety of issues. Androgens are hormones produced by all sexes and are necessary to sex development. Testosterone is a kind of androgen, the most common kind.⁴

The definition of futanari in the Meiji period was based on the gonads. The presence of both testicles and ovaries meant a *shin han'in'yō* (“true hermaphrodite”). If a person had ovaries, no matter what else, she was a woman; testicles, no matter what else, meant a man.⁵ Yet, this interpretation flummoxed medical authorities when they encountered inexplicable bodies, and in the current period, chromosomal analysis and the presence of tissue with testicular and ovarian attributes, regardless of functionality, do not resolve concomitant issues.

Futanari in today’s parlance is intersexual, a person who has male and female organs or tissue, ovotestis. However, we find continuing use of the term, “hermaphrodite,” in the medical field and elsewhere. Alice Dreger uses the term “hermaphrodite” for “subjects of anatomically double, doubtful, and/or mistaken sex” in her incisive book, *Hermaphrodites and the Medical Invention of Sex*,⁶ though she qualifies the term in a co-authored article afterwards. Although the word is considered offensive or frightening today, according to Emi Koyama, of Intersex Initiative⁷ and others,⁸ the categories of male, female, and futanari were changeable at the turn of the last century. However, futanari, the English word, “hermaphrodite,” and the French word, “hermaphrodite” were the primary terms used during the historical period under study here. “Hermaphrodite” is a heavily freighted term that can invoke histories of maltreatment, discrimination, forced surgery, and the suffering that would follow.

The Japanese word, futanari, has a different painful history. In the pre-modern era, futanari was stigmatized as an illness and the result of bad karma. It was vernacular for intersexual in the Meiji period, though sev-

4. Alice Domurat Dreger, *Hermaphrodites and the Medical Invention of Sex* (Harvard University Press, 1998), 37.

5. Dreger, *Hermaphrodites and the Medical Invention of Sex*, 11.

6. Dreger, *Hermaphrodites and the Medical Invention of Sex*, 30.

7. For US: <http://www.intersexinitiative.org/>

For Japan: <http://www.intersexinitiative.org/japan/index.html>

8. Alice Dreger, Cheryl Chase, Aron Sousa, Joel Frader, and Philip Gruppuso, “Changing the Nomenclature/Taxonomy for Intersex: A Scientific and Clinical Rationale,” *Journal of Pediatric Endocrinology and Metabolism* 18 (2005): 732.

eral other terms were in use as well, such as “*hannannyo*,” “*otoko-onna*,” “*han’in’yōsha*,” and “*niniwari/haniwari*.”⁹ Futanari continues to be used now, but mainly without knowledge of its history. It does, however, have an erotic referent in *manga* (graphic fiction), anime, and video game subcultures. Nevertheless, I use futanari in this study as the *default term* for intersexual because this is a study of Japanese literature, art, and culture. Additionally, I use “*futanarisa*,” for intersexuality or “hermaphroditism.” When discussing Western literature and medical developments of the past, however, I use the word, hermaphrodite, as opposed to intersexual, in order to maintain historicity. The reader should imagine quotation marks around the word. Additionally, when the Japanese language text under discussion uses a specific word other than futanari, I note that word. As for pronouns, I use “they” and “them” to refer to a person who identifies as both sexes, neither sex, or whose identity is unknown. For the reflexive pronoun, I use “themselves” for a single futanari individual, and “themselves” for more than one.

The Japanese term, *ryōseiguyū* [両性具有], means having the genitalia of both sexes. It is not only stiff and academic sounding but ambiguous, for the term included homosexuality as well.¹⁰ Moreover, it encompasses both *ryōsei* and *chūsei*, as Jennifer Robertson defines them, though I mainly discuss individuals having characteristics of both sexes (*ryōsei*). Yet, an individual caught in between, violating the norms of maleness and femaleness (*chūsei*), lends itself to my interrogation in figurative terms. *Chūsei* “emphasizes the erasure or nullification of differences.”¹¹ Since it was believed that “biological sex” determined behavior, the neutral body refers to the discrepancy between gender markers, such as hair or clothing, and so-called sex. The concept of difference underlies the necessity of both terms. Not only is the category of “female” the other of “male,” but *ryōsei* is an additional *other* necessary to the naturalized binary of male and female. The categories of both *ryōsei* and *chūsei* allow for the othering of those who violate the biological sex-determines-behavior rule. Whether *ryōsei* or *chūsei*, I would like to be clear that the terms “hermaphrodite,” “intersexual,” and “DSD” (disorders of sex development) are all problematic, and activists and intersexed persons today do not agree on the use of these terms.

9. Miyatake Gaikotsu, *Hannannyokō*, in *Miyatake Gaikotsu Chosakushū*, vol. 5, eds. Tanizawa Eiichi and Yoshino Takao (Kawade shobō shinsha, 1986), 325.

10. Shirasu Masako, *Ryōsei guyū no bi*. (Shinchosha, 1997), 17–18.

11. Jennifer Robertson, *Takarazuka: Sexual Politics and Popular Culture in Modern Japan* (University of California Press, 1998), 50.

As mentioned, futanari denotes ovotestis in a single body. It is the *body* that is of two sexes, not *desire*. Desire is the very thing that troubles societal norms so deeply. That a person who appears to be a particular sex feels desire for someone of the same sex, vexes the logic of heteronormativity and its concomitant pathologizing of same sex desire, which is at the root of sexologists' refusal of "true hermaphroditism."

In sum, I employ three pillars of infrastructural support for my thesis. First, the medical definition of futanari has changed since the Meiji period until now; second, there has been consistent confusion of terms and misunderstanding of intersexuality; and third, I discuss metaphorical futanari in art and literature. I elaborate on these three below. In examining the work of writers, Shimizu Shikin (1868–1933) and the young Tanizaki Jun'ichirō (1886–1965), and artist Takabatake Kashō (1888–1966), I interrogate how the futanari is deployed for pragmatic or aesthetic purposes, thereby complicating the trajectory of the dominant sexological ideology. However different the motives and approaches of Shikin, Tanizaki, and Kashō were, in the end, the futanari figure served their agendas and expressed views that challenged or contradicted the dominant discourse.

Dreger traces the debate on and search for the so-called "true sex" of the intersexual in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. She calls the period from 1870 to 1915 the "Age of Gonads," when the "true" sex of an individual was determined by one thing: "the anatomical nature of the gonadal tissue as either ovarian or testicular."¹² Even when they were thwarted by missing testicles or ovaries or organs whose identity could not be confirmed, medical and scientific men persevered in denying "true hermaphroditism." However, in 1915 Doctor William Blair-Bell, of the Royal Infirmary at Liverpool opined that a (so-called) dysfunctional sex gland was inadequate as the sole marker of sex. Despite Blair-Bell's evidence and pronouncement that the gonadal criterion did not make sense, the belief in only two true sexes continued. Moreover, the medical doctor in the era that followed, would be the interpreter or the creator of one true single sex per individual.¹³ Dreger et al. elucidate why the system found deficient by Blair-Bell and explained by gynecologist and sexologist Habuto Eiji (1878–1929) in Chapter One "is scientifically specious and clinically problematic"¹⁴; yet it exists to this day.

12. Dreger, *Hermaphrodites and the Medical Invention of Sex*, 29.

13. Dreger, *Hermaphrodites and the Medical Invention of Sex*, 166.

14. Alice Dreger et al., "Changing the Nomenclature/Taxonomy for Intersex: A Scientific and Clinical Rationale," 729.

Essayists, Novelist, Poet, and Journalist Enter the Fray

Also in the early 20th century, an English-language book entitled *The Intermediate Sex* (1908) by philosopher and poet Edward Carpenter (1844–1929) exacerbated the confusion. Feminist socialist Aoyama (later Yamakawa) Kikue translated an abridged version of the book into Japanese in the magazine *Safuran* (*Saffron*) in 1914 and subsequently in book form in 1919. Aoyama translates Carpenter's title as *Chūseiron* (*On the Intermediate Sex*), though she changes the title to *Dōseiai* (Same-sex Love) for the 1919 version.¹⁵ The change was perhaps a step in the direction of clarity in understanding same-sex love, though doubtlessly did little to mitigate the confusion surrounding futanari. Certainly, Carpenter is not talking about the category of the intersexual; his book is an apologia for homosexuality.

Carpenter states that women may have “a strong dash of the masculine temperament” and there are men with a “feminine sensibility.”¹⁶ He cites Karl Heinrich Ulrichs (1825–1895),¹⁷ who theorized that because attraction to a male is a female trait, an “Urning” (male homosexual) had a female psyche in his male body. Carpenter rendered it as, “. . . there were men, for instance, who might be described as of a feminine soul enclosed in a male body.”¹⁸ Consequently, such people would fall in love with others of their own sex. This was Carpenter's purpose, to explain and justify homosexuality, which may have entailed depicting male and female features in one body. Additionally, he describes “intermediately” sexed people stereotypically, that is contravening hypostatized ideals: males may be timid, gentle, and emotional; females are bold, active, and fiery.¹⁹ Whether

15. See Michiko Suzuki, “The Translation of Edward Carpenter's *The Intermediate Sex* in Early Twentieth-Century Japan,” in *Sexology and Translation: Cultural and Scientific Encounters across the Modern World*, ed. Heike Bauer (Temple University Press, 2015), 204.

16. Edward Carpenter, *The Intermediate Sex: A Study of Some Transitional Types of Men and Women* (George Allen & Unwin, 1908), 17.

17. Ulrichs was “the most resolute and influential pioneer of homosexual emancipation.” (Volkmars Sigusch, *Karl Heinrich Ulrichs: Der Erste Schwule der Weltgeschichte* [*Karl Heinrich Ulrichs: The First Gay Man in World History*], (Verlag Rosa Winkel, 2000), 18). Ulrichs began publishing in the 1860s and unsuccessfully fought until the end of his life against the Prussian anti-homosexual law that came into effect in 1872 and was not abolished until 1994.

18. Carpenter, *Intermediate Sex*, 19.

19. Carpenter, 26.

extreme and exaggerated or of a “normal” type, they belong to “the Intermediate race”²⁰ (*chūseiteki shuzoku* in Aoyama’s translation).²¹

Both Carpenter’s book in English and Aoyama’s abridged translation in Japanese were broadly influential. In addition to the example of Aoyama, the popular writer Yoshiya Nobuko (1896–1973) used Carpenter’s ideas to support her views on romantic love between girls.²² Reluctant to call physical, erotic interaction between girls “sexual,” Yoshiya edged closer to the idea, influenced by Carpenter.²³

In addition to Yoshiya, the widely celebrated poet Yosano Akiko (1878–1942) entered the conversation. She writes in an essay, “Onnarashisa’ to wa nanika” (“What is ‘Femininity?’” 1921), which I mention also in Chapter Two, that certain people complain of women becoming “androgynized,” or “sexually intermediated” (*joshi no chūseika*) after probably having read Aoyama’s translation.²⁴ Therefore, the web of terms and ideas referring to futanari in Japanese and a similar complex of notions in the West reinforce the imprecision and misunderstanding of the concepts.

Adding to the mix, in 1922, journalist, publisher, and satirist Miyatake Gaikotsu published a book entitled *Hannannyokō* (*Thoughts on Hermaphroditism*), a collection of newspaper articles from the early 1700s to the early 1920s on futanari, along with his remarks and explanations. Gaikotsu uses the term “*han’in’yō*”²⁵ for intersexual, coined after futanari. He explains in the preface that he uses the title *Hannannyokō* based on a series of books, *Wu tsa tsu* (*Five Miscellanies*) written in China at the end of the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644). *Wu tsa tsu* mentions a person who is a man fifteen days of the month and a woman for the other fifteen days, echoed in one of the entries in *Disease Names and Explanations* (*Byōmei ikai*, 1686). I explicate the entries in the next section.

Language was not consistent in signifying categories of (sexed) sub-

20. Carpenter, 29.

21. Aoyama Kikue, “Chūseiron,” *Safuran*, May 1914, 16.

22. Michiko Suzuki, *Becoming Modern Women: Love and Female Identity in Prewar Japanese Literature and Culture* (Stanford University Press, 2010), 37.

23. Sarah Fredericks, “Yamakawa Kikue and Edward Carpenter: Translation, Affiliation, and Queer Internationalism,” in *Rethinking Japanese Feminisms*, eds. Julia C. Bullcock, Ayako Kano, and James Welker (University of Hawai‘i Press, 2017), 189.

24. Yosano Akiko, “Onnarashisa’ to wa nanika” (“What is ‘Femininity?’”), in *Tekkan Akiko zenshū* Vol. 21, ed. Itsumi Kumi (Bensei Shuppan, 2021), 217–24.

25. Hiraga Seijirō, in *Kanmei hōigaku* [*Concise Forensic Medicine*] in 1911, and Ishikawa Kiyotada and Hasegawa Tai, in *Jitsuyō hōigaku* [*Practical Forensic Medicine*] in 1902 all use the term *han’in’yō*.

jects, and the subjects themselves were not well understood. With the above descriptions of futanari in mind, the trope refers to subjects that embody, literally or figuratively, features of both sexes or neutral sex. For example, Shikin invokes a futanari with the genitalia of both sexes in an essay but uses tropes of the futanari in her fiction. Tanizaki's protagonist in "Konjiki no shi" ("The Golden Death," 1914) appears to be male but exhibits a range of female normative behavior and female markers. Ultimately, they assume a neutral (*chūsei*) position. And Kashō's subjects frequently exhibit the features of both sexes (*ryōsei*), particularly his ostensibly male subjects. The representations of these subjects have different goals in the work of these artists.

Similar to Europe's proliferating sexual discourses, as Michel Foucault (1926–1984) has famously written about the modern period,²⁶ Japan grappled with terminology, while it transformed its sexual economy. With discourses and sexualities multiplying, the power of the state was consolidated as it regulated and policed sex. Foucault notes that in nineteenth-century Europe "the homosexual was now a species" and so too were "peripheral sexualities" and "minor perverts." Likewise, in Japan the "homosexual" was now categorized, medicalized, and psychologized, and the futanari, who had had two sexes up until this point, was now revealed to have one "true" sex. The medico-scientific authorities took responsibility for digging out what that sex was.

Sex gripped Shikin, Tanizaki, and Kashō, too. In an essay published in 1896, women's equal rights advocate Shikin imagines a hypothetical *ryōseiguyūsha* (futanari) in their "perfectly formed body" and uses this figure as the paradigm for several characters in her short stories. Shikin severs the causal link between sex and gender, thereby refuting the popular notion that behavior is rooted in the sexed body. In his early work, Tanizaki demonstrates a keen interest, intellectually and aesthetically, in the European Decadence movement, including the sexual freedom and exoticism intrinsic to it. Stories such as "The Secret" ("Himitsu," 1911) and "The Golden Death" valorize and preserve sexual possibilities that a strictly bifurcated sexual paradigm precluded. And in spite of, or perhaps because of the increasing domination of sexological thought into the 1920s, the subjects of the popular magazine illustrator, Kashō, exhibit a fluid sexuality, illustrating the male in the female and the female in the

26. Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, trans. Robert Hurley (Vintage Books, 1988), 146.

male. These artists' representations reinforce a flow of sex in bodies that refuse subjugation. The trope of the futanari is a figure, or a literary device, that agitates an oppressive sexual regime.

The survey of occurrences of futanari in pre-modern culture in the following section is not exhaustive. Rather, the examples are indicative of attitudes and notions about futanari from the distant past. This sample also contributes to understanding the metaphor I deploy in reading Shikin, Tanizaki, and Kashō. An equally crucial aspect of the futanari metaphor, however, is subjectivity. I lay out my approach to the sexed subject based mainly on the work of Judith Butler.

Glimpses of Futanari History

In a twelfth-century Japanese picture scroll (*emakimono*) called the *Scroll of Diseases* (*Yamai zōshi*), futanarisa is depicted as one such disease or deformity. The condition is explained as one of a number of “strange diseases” (*kibyō*), such as albinism (*hakushi*), pyorrhea, lice, a black nose, or an abnormally small tongue. The accompanying text reads:

Recently in the capital there was a man who hung a drum around his neck and told fortunes. Although he appeared to be a man, he also resembled a woman. Concerned about this, some people secretly looked under his robe when he fell asleep one night and saw the genitalia of both sexes. This is a futanari.²⁷

Based on the writing style of the notes and the picture style, Komatsu Shigemi conjectures that the author, believed to be the Buddhist priest Jakuren, and the artist, Mitsunaga Kasuga, take up the topic of strange diseases (*kibyō*) that had occurred throughout various regions of the archipelago.²⁸ The *Scroll of Diseases*, of which there are several versions, along with the *Scroll of Hells* (*Jigoku zōshi*), and the *Scroll of Hungry Ghosts* (*Gaki zōshi*) were thought to comprise one set from the Buddhist Six Paths (*rokudō-e*), which refers to six states of existence. Humans, beings in hell, and hungry ghosts are three of these states. Some scholars, however, chal-

27. *Yamai zōshi*, in *Gaki zōshi; Jigoku sōshi; Yamai no sōshi; Kusōshi emaki*, eds. Komatsu Shigemi and Ken Akiyama (Chūō Kōronsha, 1977), 82.

28. Komatsu, *Yamai zōshi*, 77.

lenge the notion that the *Scroll of Diseases* belongs to this group because, among other reasons, there is no scriptural basis for the scroll, nor is there any mention of religious thought at all.²⁹

In this exhibition of suffering people, the attitude of the bystanders portrayed in the image and accompanying notes is worth comment. They lack sympathy and oftentimes even mock the unfortunate victims. Miya Tsugio concludes that it may just be the sensibility of modern people to consider this display inhumane. As one of the scrolls of the Buddhist Six Paths (*rokudō-e*), Miya explains, it points to the anguish in the human realm, and serves to strengthen the prayer to be reborn in paradise. Strange or incurable diseases were thought to be a result of karma, misdeeds from a previous life. Therefore, the unsympathetic attitude of the bystander is understandable, opines Miya.³⁰

In the picture under discussion, a person steals into the room and pulls up the futanari's robe, gleefully exposing the secret parts to an onlooker he has brought along. The futanari is painted with a penis, vulva, vaginal introitus, and clitoris. Since the penis and clitoris are the same organ developmentally, this is tantamount to having two phalluses or two yonis.³¹ Lack of knowledge on this topic is to be expected; yet lack of knowledge does not preclude judgment on character and behavior associated with futanari. No doubt the creators of this work had never seen a futanari. Whether this well-known scroll is a collection of Buddhist lessons or not, the futanari is represented disdainfully and deserving of ridicule.

A tale thought to also date from the twelfth century,³² *Torikaebaya monogatari* (*The Changelings*), features a half-brother and sister pair who both identify with sexes inconsistent with their bodies. As if it were a prototype, the work's topoi and tropes appear in the twentieth-century art and literature that I discuss in the following chapters. These motifs include the exquisite beauty of the futanari subject,³³ their otherworldliness, and male and female as mirror images of each other. In addition, calling the

29. John Teramoto, "The *Yamai no Sōshi*: A Critical Reevaluation of its Importance to Japanese Secular Painting of the Twelfth Century" (PhD diss., University of Michigan, 1994), 94–97.

30. Miya Tsugio, "Chūsei jinsei emaki: Yamai mo jigoku mo osoroshikunai [Tokushū]," *Geijutsu shinchō* 33, no. 11 (1982): 22–23.

31. I am indebted to Alice Dreger for confirmation of this in an email message, March 26, 2009.

32. Rosette Willig explains the complicated dating and authorship in an introduction to her translated version.

33. This is not to say that such exquisite beauty isn't found in non-futanari characters, e.g., Genji, with his androgynous beauty.

phenomenon of mismatched bodily sex and behavior “unnatural” is a default modifier in twentieth-century literature. However, Rosette Willig’s translation of *ayashiki* as “unnatural” at different moments in the text, not consistently, reflects a cultural and sexological history that conjures a misleading notion now that is not necessarily intended in the word *ayashiki* in *Torikaebaya monogatari*. In Chapter One, I discuss the freighted word “unnatural,” which emerges from centuries-long, religious commentary in the West.

As children, Himegimi rushed to play kickball (*kemari*),³⁴ compose poetry, and play musical instruments with the boys, while Wakagimi played with dolls and was more comfortable staying inside. They knew they were different from others. Soon they began presenting as each other’s sex, in dress and hair style and gear, and conduct. The narrative frequently refers to this as fate determined by their previous lives (*karma*). Himegimi laments, “Oh why was I fated to such an unusual condition.” “*Ayashiki no waga mi no arisama ya.*”³⁵ They commiserate with each other. Wakagimi agrees that they share an unusual (*mezurashi*) fate and feels wretched (*asamashiku*).

The turning point in the tale occurs when Himegimi becomes pregnant by means of rape, thereby flinging them into a state of misery and confusion. The reality of the pregnant body forces Himegimi into seclusion, and after the birth Himegimi eventually changes roles with Wakagimi. Becoming a woman for Himegimi means losing the freedom and intellectual engagement they had enjoyed as a man, but they have no way out of the predicament. “Though he looked like a woman now, his [Himegimi’s] heart—the heart of a man—was resolute”³⁶ (*otoko ni nara-inishi, mikokoro wa uchiomitorite*).³⁷ Wakagimi must train for their transition, as they were neither interested in nor inclined toward studying or engaging in public life. Himegimi has to instruct Wakagimi in affairs of state, calligraphy, and playing the koto and flute. Wakagimi emulates Himegimi’s hand and their musical prowess. Here and throughout the tale, the narrative presents sex as performance. Finally, Wakagimi states, “I was male and drawn to behaving femininely, so I lived that way” (*Otoko no mi to narioki ni shimi no, okinakarishi hodo koso, kokoro hiku kata ni*

34. Kanagaki Robun denounces “poison woman” Oden as a futanari for behavior like this. See Chapter One.

35. Suzuki Hiromichi, ed., *Torikaebaya monogatari no kenkyū: kōchūhen kaidaihen* (Kasama shoin, 1973), 114.

36. Willig, *The Changelings*, 126.

37. Suzuki, *Torikaebaya monogatari no kenkyū*, 128.

makasetemo sugoshi shika).³⁸ However, now they must change, they say, out of concern for others, such as their father. Both siblings throughout the text refer to themselves as unusual and strange. They would be much happier if they could be “normal” (*yo no tsune ni*),³⁹ but they couldn’t deny their feelings and proclivities.⁴⁰

Torikaebaya monogatari offers a prototype script for the mutability of sex. And the combination of sexes in these bodies boldly demonstrates the operations of the sexual economy in which they negotiate their subjectivity. Himegimi, as the Middle Counselor (Chūnagon), marries a woman, Yon no Kimi because, besides loving her, Himegimi sees herself as male, or perhaps a futanari male. Himegimi and Wakagimi endeavor to secret themselves into a system that is psychically uncomfortable for them, but they do not try to change it. They adhere to normative expectations in their assumed roles. *Torikaebaya monogatari* reinforces the sexual paradigm of Heian aristocratic society, laying it out plainly. Bodies determine gender roles, though the siblings contradict the logic of that belief and prove it inefficient; sex is mutable; and desire is mysterious. The narrative mentions innumerable times that longtime friend, Saishō, is attracted to both Himegimi and Wakagimi, which speaks not only to same sex desire, but also questions what we are attracted to in a person, the person themselves or someone reminiscent of the person. Complicating desire is the theme of the ideal human as the vessel of two, mirroring sexes. “When Naishi no Kami [Wakagimi] came before him, her father rose, turned up the lamp, and looked at her. It was as though Chūnagon’s [Himegimi’s] radiant figure had been reproduced in another.”⁴¹ Hand in hand with their mirror images, Himegimi and Wakagimi themselves, as well as their beauty, are otherworldly (*kono yo no mono to mo miezu*),⁴² (*yo no mono narazu*).⁴³ The twentieth-century artists in Chapter Four use these topoi creatively to achieve various effects.

38. Suzuki, *Torikaebaya monogatari no kenkyū*, 129–30.

39. Suzuki, *Torikaebaya monogatari no kenkyū*, 21.

40. Readers and commentators of *Torikaebaya* and a text of literary criticism, *Mumyō zōshi* (1196–1202), were not concerned with the morality of the tale, though it became a major concern for critics later. By the time Ryūtei Takehiko referred to *Torikaebaya* in the preface to his 1807 story about a male and female disguising themselves as other sexes, the tale was considered erotic and decadent. Scholars during both the Meiji period, who found it repulsive, and the 1960s and 70s, continued the attack on its morality. Rosette F. Willig, “Introduction,” in *The Changelings: A Classical Japanese Court Tale*, trans. Rosette F. Willig (Stanford University Press, 1983), 1–2.

41. Willig, 150.

42. Suzuki, *Torikaebaya monogatari no kenkyū*, 15.

43. Suzuki, *Torikaebaya monogatari no kenkyū*, 104.

In this study neither same-sex desire nor non-gender normative appearance, in itself, should be construed as futanarisa. The sexed body determines neither sexual desire nor sexual practice. The subject's feelings and point of view are paramount to the gaze and assumptions of others. Continuing this survey, I clarify the sort of non-heteronormative, medieval figure that is not futanari, the *chigo* (Buddhist acolyte). This negative example works toward creating a vision of the subject of this book—the figurative and/or actual futanari represented in literature and art from the 1890s to 1920s. In some cases, the figurative futanari is analogous to the contemporary concept of transness except for entirely different sociocultural and historical conditions. I use the word “vision” with purpose, as it is not unusual for the representations to have a phantasmic quality to them. Rarely does anyone witness the physical endowment of the futanari, such as one does of the figure in the *Scroll of Diseases*. Another example of a specter is the monstrous futanari in the novel, *Ringu* (*Ring*, 1991) by Suzuki Kōji, which I discuss in the final chapter. More often than a physical description of futanarisa, the figure's behavior contravenes what is assumed to be a male or female sexed body. Futanari are seen superficially in the literature I examine, with an emphasis on the passive “seen.” However, a constitutive aspect of the futanari in this study heeds the vision of themselves as sexed subject, acknowledges their perspective of self in the narratives. The futanari here narratologically sees and voices their sex(es), second sexes. After a brief discussion of *chigo monogatari* (acolyte tales), this overview continues to the Edo period (1603–1867).

A subgenre of *otogi zōshi*, or medieval “companion tales” mainly from the Muromachi period (1336–1573), *chigo monogatari* minimally contain an acolyte or a Buddhist priest who has a *nanshoku* (male-male sex) relationship with a younger man who is not an acolyte, according to Sachi Schmidt-Hori.⁴⁴ In her analysis of fourteen extant acolyte tales, she determines that “[t]he interlocking structure of love and religious awakening is the essence of the *chigo monogatari* genre . . .”⁴⁵ It may be revealed at the end of these tales that the *chigo* is an avatar of a bodhisattva (a being that delays reaching nirvana in order to save others). None of the tales that follow the second oldest existing *chigo monogatari*, *Chigo kannon engi* (*Kannon's Manifestation as a Youth*), written in the late Kamakura period (1192–1333), focus on the master-acolyte dyad.⁴⁶ Rather, the sexuality of the pair

44. Sachi Schmidt-Hori, *Tales of Idolized Boys: Male-Male Love in Medieval Japanese Buddhist Narratives* (University of Hawai'i Press, 2021), 47.

45. Schmidt-Hori, *Tales of Idolized Boys*, 73.

46. Schmidt-Hori explains why a flaw in the *chigo* system would have acolyte tale authors avoid focusing on the sexuality of the master-acolyte duo. *Tales of Idolized Boys*,

is obscured, while readers focus instead on the acolyte's romantic affair with someone else.⁴⁷

Nonetheless, the androgyny of the *chigo* in the tales appears to be based on two aspects: 1) their feminine beauty and 2) that they are the insertee in same sex practice. Regarding the first point, feminine beauty on a male face was the pre-modern standard of beauty. Schmidt-Hori writes,

. . . within the premodern Japanese literary tradition, an author's attempt to create a character with nonbinary gender was achieved by compounding the 'beautiful feminine face' with a masculine guise (masculine hairstyle and attire) rather than the other way around (i.e., combining a masculine face with a feminine guise).⁴⁸

This sort of non-normative gender or same-sex sexuality, too, should not be interpreted as a figure of *futanari*.

At the end of the Muromachi period and into the Edo period, *futanari* was still associated with illness. A medical dictionary entitled *Byōmei ikai* (*Disease Names and Explanations*, 1686) lists *futanari* using two different Chinese-character idioms, both pronounced the same, *futanari*. The first uses the characters for “two” (*ni*) [二] and “shape” or “figure” (*katachi*) [形] in the vernacular, the same character compound that is used in the *Scroll of Diseases*. The second compound uses the character for “person” (*jin*) [人] and “chronic illness” (*a*) [痲]. The entry explains that a *futanari* is a man with incomplete male reproductive organs. Another source in the entry describes the *futanari* as a male and female combined and appears in three varieties: upon meeting a man, the person becomes a woman, or the person becomes a man when meeting a woman; the second is a person who is male and has a penis for half the month and is a woman and has a vagina for half the month; and the third type can be a wife but cannot be a husband.

The absence of scientific understanding of *futanari* continued uninterrupted to the nineteenth century, when another theory of the origin of *futanari* can be seen in an 1826 series of woodblock prints called “Ehon Otsumori sakazuki,” vol. 3, by Utagawa Kunitora (?–1868). A couple prays to their guardian deities (*ujigami*) for a child, the wife praying for a girl

69.

47. Schmidt-Hori, *Tales of Idolized Boys*, 72.

48. Sachi Schmidt-Hori, “Nonbinary Genders in *Genji*, the *New Chamberlain*, and Beyond,” in *The Tale of Genji: Norton Critical Edition*, ed. Dennis Washburn (Norton, 2021), 1286.



Figure 1.—Otsumoriz woodblock print.

and the husband, a boy. After the wife becomes pregnant, it is prophesied that she will have twins, a boy and a girl. Therefore, the couple prays for one baby instead, and a futanari is born.⁴⁹ This provides a metaphysical explanation to the phenomenon of futanari.

In another print in the series (figure 1), the futanari baby grows up to be a beautiful woman in appearance. She has gone into service as an attendant to the daughter of a lord (*daimyō*). The famous scene of Prince Genji and Tō no Chūjō dancing the “Waves of the Blue Ocean” appears on a screen in the room to reinforce the daughter’s status as a cultured young lady.⁵⁰ The beautiful woman-presenting attendant, however, reveals her real nature (*honshō/honsei*), or “real sex,” to the daughter, and every night they have wild, passionate sex. The futanari in the print

49. Kobayashi Tadashi and Shirakura Yoshihiko, eds., *Shunga to nikuhiitsu ukiyoe* (Yōsensha, 2006), 234.

50. This is from the “Momiji no ga” (“An Autumn Excursion”) chapter from Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*. v.1, trans. Edward G. Seidensticker (Tuttle, 1978), 134. I am grateful to Satoko Naito for reminding me of this iconic scene.

is dressed in women's apparel, including hair and make-up, while a large phallus protrudes, as if to signal what the two have been doing. The heteronormative sexual exploits of the iconic Prince Genji contrast with the salacious, "abnormal" sex of a futanari; one is genteel, while the other may have the trappings of gentility but is actually "indecent." Heteronormative anxiety adds a layer of "othering" the futanari by representing them as lewd. The narrative assumes the existence of a true or originary nature, which corresponds directly to the subject's genitalia. In this case, the futanari ostensibly has a true sex, and circumstance enables them to reveal it. As we have already seen, this is not always the case in depictions over the centuries.

Both childbirth and futanari are unusual in woodblock prints.⁵¹ *Makura bunko* (*Pillow Book Collection*, 1822)⁵² features more such anomalous prints, by Keisai Eisen (1790–1848). This medical and sex manual presents a range of topics, including the female reproductive organs and erogenous zones, futanarisa, and masturbation. In "Henjō nanshi" (figure 2), the futanari clearly has a penis, vulva, vaginal introitus, and clitoris, a phenomenon that cannot occur, as mentioned earlier.

Futanari Subjectivity

Yet what is equally important to the material body and behavior is the mind. How the subject identifies matters, as well as inclination. Therefore, the feelings and proclivities of half-siblings, Wakagimi, the boy, and Himegimi, the female in *The Changelings*, are essential to my conception of futanari subjectivity. How the subject views themselves must not be ignored or denied. Gregory Pflugfelder declares that "Just as Himegimi and Wakagimi are not androgynes, neither are they hermaphrodites."⁵³ Suzuki Hiromichi, one of the *Torikaebaya* scholars from the 1960s and 70s, also discussed by Pflugfelder, chooses to label the sister and brother pair "pseudo-hermaphrodites" (*ruiji handanjo*).⁵⁴ He cites Miyatake Gai-

51. Kobayashi Tadashi and Shirakawa Yoshihiko, *Shunga to nikuhitsu ukiyoe*, 234–35.

52. Some illustrations are listed in Shibui Kiyoshi, *Ukiyo-e Naisi* (Taihokaku shobō, 1932), 51–52.

53. Gregory Pflugfelder, "Strange Fates: Sex, Gender, and Sexuality in *Torikaebaya monogatari*," 359.

54. Suzuki Hiromichi, *Heian makki monogatari ron*, Dai 1-han. Vol. 62 (Hanawa Shobō, 1968), 135.



Figure 2.—
Keichū kibun/
Makurabunko
woodblock print,
“Henjō nanshi.”
Collection of the
Honolulu Museum
of Art. Purchase,
Richard Lane Collection,
2003 (2016-56-033).

kotsu’s *Hannannyokō* (*Thoughts on Hermaphroditism*), in which Gaikotsu explains that “pseudo-hermaphrodites” have a penis and vagina, but the “female pseudo-hermaphrodite” has ovaries, and the “male pseudo-hermaphrodite” has testes. Clearly, Suzuki does not declare the Himegimi and Wakagimi “pseudo-hermaphrodites” based on the definition but on the so-called inconsistency among sexed bodies, dress, and behavior.

In my approach, I listen to the voices of the subjects themselves, not other characters or commentators speaking for or interpreting them. I read their words, images, or symbols and see their actions. Himegimi and Wakagimi represent a futanari model that echoes in the figures deployed by the modern authors discussed in later chapters. The body, behavior, and self-identification form the sexed subject, and their perspective and self-gaze are paramount.

Judith Butler writes that sex is a normative ideal that materializes in the body “through a forcible reiteration of those norms.” The norms of sex

are produced and reproduced performatively “to materialize the body’s sex, to materialize sexual difference in the service of consolidation of the heterosexual imperative.”⁵⁵ The process of “assuming” a sex, by which the subject is formed, requires the “production of a domain of abject beings,” those “repudiated,” or denied by the subject. This process is based on the notion of the “abject,” outlining the border or margin of what comprises the subject. Abject positions are what corresponding normative, hegemonic positions are not. Butler explains that the subject maintains its domain by repudiating abject “zones of social life” in order to protect its legitimacy and acceptance.⁵⁶

One of the key concepts to my approach is the notion of “sexed position.” Butler elaborates the process of abjection and repudiation in terms of a heterosexual matrix and abjected homosexuality. She writes, “Lacan maintained that sex is a symbolic position that one assumes under the threat of punishment, that is, a position one is constrained to assume, where those constraints are operative in the very structure of language and, hence, in the constitutive relations of cultural life.”⁵⁷ The symbolic realm demands assumption of a sexed position that is constructed through kinship relations as well as through other symbolic demands. “The symbolic is defined as the realm of the Law that regulates desire in the Oedipus complex,” which is based on the prohibition against incest.⁵⁸

The formation of the subject, “I,” by assuming a sex, is not accomplished in a single event but through “iterable practice.” In assuming a sexed position, the subject “cites” or mimics norms that anchor its position. Through citing the norm, the subject both interprets and exposes it.⁵⁹ The exclusionary, negating logic that underpins “sexing the subject” may be extrapolated to the hegemonic subject-position of maleness. In the strategy or system of abjection, certainly some of the same struggles occur between those in the normative, hegemonic position (heterosexual, male)

55. Judith Butler, *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of “Sex,”* (Routledge, 1993), 2. Butler first articulates the notion of performativity in *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (Routledge, 1990). The gendered self is “produced by the regulation of attributes along culturally established lines of coherence . . . Gender proves to be performative—that is, constituting the identity it is purported to be. In this sense, gender is always a doing, though not a doing by a subject who might be said to preexist the deed” (24–25).

56. Butler, *Bodies that Matter*, 3.

57. Butler, *Bodies that Matter*, 96.

58. Judith Butler, *Antigone’s Claim: Kinship Between Life and Death*. (Columbia University Press, 2000), 18.

59. Butler, *Bodies that Matter*, 108.

and those in the subordinate positions (homosexual, female, futanari). The shifting and jarring that ensues leave fissures in an array of female positions, from the firmest reinscribed position to the most unstable and abject. Abjection of a position assumes an identification with that position, says Butler. The heterosexual imperative permits particular sexed identifications and disallows others. The abjected outside of the subject is “after all, ‘inside’ the subject as its own founding repudiation.”⁶⁰ Busst speaks to this idea in the epigraph to this introduction when he says that “the androgyne is not only present on all sides in the exterior world, but it also exists in the depths of the human unconscious.” The futanari is in the outside, “‘uninhabitable’ zone of social life,” while “‘inside’ the subject as its own founding repudiation,” as Butler writes.⁶¹

The futanari in the period under study could not participate as anything other than an *abjectional* other. Neither male nor female, despite identifying with one sex or the other, the futanari was abjected and objected to, and their desire was always undermined by some organ or tissue in the body. For example, if they desired a woman, the presence of breasts would contradict it; if they desired a man, the presence of testicular tissue would subvert it.

As Foucault most splendidly outlined, the history of sexuality is the history of discourse.⁶² To be clear, there was no rupture, or discontinuity, in the history of the futanari in Japan. The discourses became legal and medicalized in the modern period because of the creation of the nation-state and its subsequent needs. The negative view of the futanari persisted from the pre-modern era to the modern, but now the figure was implicated in a network of power interests (state, military, medical, scientific) in the historical moment. That discourses arose to contradict or perturb authoritative dicta accords with Foucault’s refutation of the “repressive hypothesis,” in which, “Power operated as a mechanism of attraction; it drew out those peculiarities over which it kept watch. Pleasure spread to the power that harried it; power anchored the pleasure it uncovered.”⁶³ The futanari represented in the work of the artists here are cast in a positive light or as passionate or joyful. Agents of power centers, such as sexologists, took pleasure in exercising

60. Butler, *Bodies that Matter*, 3.

61. Butler, *Bodies that Matter*, 3.

62. Others, of course, have demonstrated the same idea, and in detail. For example, Thomas Laqueur’s *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (1992) and Anne Fausto-Sterling’s *Sexing the Body: Gender Politics and the Construction of Sexuality* (2000) make it clear that “knowledge” about sex and the body constantly changes.

63. Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, 45.

their authority to observe, examine, monitor, and penetrate unproductive sexualities. If not pleasurable, it must have been gratifying for Shikin, Tanizaki, and Kashō to resist and provoke those power centers in their representations of abjected sexualities.

The pleasure reaches a pitch in the 1920s, as if it knows the crash is coming. Donald Roden writes in his frequently cited “Taishō Culture and the Problem of Gender Ambivalence”⁶⁴ that the spirit of the 1920s was enthralled by gender ambivalence. Berlin, Paris, New York, London, and Tokyo all witnessed this fascination in middlebrow and high cultures, he observes. A network of factors, including the titillation of non-normative sex, energized perhaps by the growth of sexology, along with avant-garde art, contribute to this embrace of androgyny. The expression of fascination with gender ambivalence and the arousal of it intertwined. The sites of cultural production Roden mentions to support his claim provide a fine example of the push and pull that Foucault speaks of between power and pleasure. The expression of gender ambivalence in the 1920s seems joyous.

However, the seeds of pleasure and sexualities that sprouted and flourished in the 1920s demand more attention. For one reason, the artists who wrote about or invoked the futanari before the 1920s have not been given adequate attention in regard to their resistance to power that “produced and determined the sexual mosaic.”⁶⁵ Relatively little has been written on Shikin in English, although that has changed in the last several years. Moreover, the women who inherited Shikin’s legacy of activism for women’s rights barely acknowledged her.⁶⁶ Tanizaki, of course, is one of the most important twentieth-century authors, but his early work is not as appreciated as it should be in Japan or elsewhere. Finally, Kashō, who was beloved by readers of magazines for adolescents, is largely unknown today.

Secondly, it is important to acknowledge the continuities of this play of power with sex. The writer Hiratsuka Raichō (1886–1971) could more easily “attack” the institution of marriage because Shikin already had done so. Raichō and the women of *Seitō* (*Bluestocking*, c. 1911) stand on her shoulders. Yumiko, in Kawabata Yasunari’s *Asakusa kurenaidan* (*The Scarlet Gang of Asakusa*, 1929–30), for all her charm and androgynous allure, owes a great deal to Tanizaki’s futanari characters.⁶⁷ The admonitions

64. Donald Roden, “Taishō Culture and the Problem of Gender Ambivalence,” in *Culture and Identity: Japanese Intellectuals during the Interwar Years*, ed. J. Thomas Rimer (Princeton University Press, 1990), 37–56.

65. Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, 47.

66. I discuss this further in Chapter Two.

67. Interestingly, Kawabata translated *Torikaebaya monogatari*, discussed earlier, into modern Japanese at the end of the Pacific War.

about the masculinization of women and the feminization of men were not new to the 1920s.

In order to further contextualize cultural production of the period under study, in Chapter One, I observe the futanari figure in nineteenth-century French literature. My purpose is to show one source of inspiration for Tanizaki's Decadent literary leanings, as well as to highlight the artistic exchange between France and Japan. Additionally, I discuss Herculine Barbin, a hermaphrodite who died in 1868 and whose memoir Foucault published in 1980. For the sake of contrast, I also include a brief description of a novel by the American, Julia Ward Howe called *The Hermaphrodite*. Her present-day editor believes she started writing it in 1846–47. We can see the position of the futanari in Foucault's and Howe's works alongside Kanagaki Robun's (1829–1894) use of the figure in his sensational account of “outlaw” Takahashi Oden in 1879. Finally, I devote time to French author Joris-Karl Huysmans (1848–1907), whose 1884 novel *À Rebours* (variously translated as *Against the Grain* or *Against Nature*) is central to the Decadence movement. The exchange and sharing of cultures and esprit among Japan and Western nations during this period, profoundly shape Shikin, Tanizaki, and Kashō in their work. They defied “the power that harried” them in their portrayals of futanari subjects in worlds of greater sexual and interpersonal possibilities.

In Chapter Two, sex is political, and the political is personal. Atop the platform of *Jogaku zasshi* (*The Woman's Magazine*), writing essays and short stories, Shikin agitated for women's equality. At the same time, she also had to struggle with the demands of publisher Iwamoto Yoshiharu vis-à-vis women's proscribed roles and place in society. The stories I explicate dramatize her goal of cleaving the body from gendered behavior and attitude so that women are capable of everything men are and vice-versa. By the few means open to her as a woman and as a “woman writer,” she endeavored to communicate the humanity, rationality, and dispassionateness of equality between the sexes. By dint of boldness and imagination, Shikin deploys the trope of the futanari to dramatize that conduct and manner belie sexed bodies, thus landing the argument.

In contrast to Shikin, Tanizaki had all the privilege that accrues to the male sex and male writer. He became a twentieth-century literary master, who cared about the *art* of writing and not describing, reflecting, confiding, or mediating “truth” through writing, as many Naturalist writers were doing during the same period. Joris-Karl Huysmans's embrace of decadence, his innovative creation of it, and his rejection of Naturalism echo in Tanizaki's juvenilia, “Himitsu” (“The Secret,” 1911), “Konjiki no shi” (“The Golden Death,” 1914), and “Suterareru made” (“Until Abandoned,” 1914),

which I read in Chapter Three. Themes of heterodox and futanari sexualities evocative of French Decadence adhere to the formal properties of the novel in terms of structure and plotting. Tanizaki's use of conventional practices complicates his so-called anti-Naturalist stance since Naturalist literature also adheres to many of these same conventions. His work can aptly be described as hybrid in his embrace of Decadent themes and protagonists while deploying them in a classic novel structure. Tanizaki's negotiation of these disparate interests in this early work is revealing of his art.

In Chapter Four, I analyze how Kashō disturbed the notion of dimorphic sex through his art, mainly his magazine illustrations. Similar to Huysmans, Kashō wielded great influence on those who followed him but today is largely unknown by non-specialists. The style in which he drew the female in the male and the male in the female has been consequential in the evolution of manga in the postwar period in Japan and around the world.

Finally, in Chapter Five, I concisely examine the status of the futanari figure in contemporary Japan through two novels, *Ringu* (*Ring*, 1991) by Suzuki Kōji, and *Kataomoi*, (*Unrequited Love*, 2001) by Higashino Keigo. I explore the progress made toward redeeming the individual with two sexes to a sexed subjectivity that has agency and recognition. Additionally, I look at how these two writers deploy the figure of the futanari in their stories. Those familiar with the popular horror film, *Ringu* (1998), directed by Nakata Hideo, based on Suzuki's work, will know that the futanari body of the monster is erased from the story.

What has changed in the depiction of futanari in Japanese literature and art over more than a century? In my discussions of Shikin, Tanizaki, and Kashō, I contemplate how their work challenges the dimorphic paradigm that governed their lives. However much they may cast characters of differing sexualities in a positive or neutral light, do they simultaneously reinforce ideals of female and male? Does their art serve to dismantle the paradigm? My brief sample of two works in Chapter Five hardly allows for sweeping statements about change, but it provides clues into sexual anxieties that persist, like a thumping sound “in the depths of the human unconscious.”

1

Intersections

France and Japan and the Modern Sexed Subject

In France the nineteenth century was the century of the hermaphrodite.¹ And Paris was the “capital of the nineteenth century” (in Western culture).² The image of the hermaphrodite appeared more frequently in France during this period than in any other European country.³ Because of the relationship of French literature and art with that of Japan in the Meiji and Taishō periods, assaying this French preoccupation is illuminating. In the case of Tanizaki’s work, French Decadent allusions and tropes appear, along with the decadence native to Japanese culture. Certainly, France and the West existed in the Japanese imagination, as Japan existed in the imaginations of many European cultures. It has been well documented how influential Japanese woodblock art and aesthetics were on nineteenth-century French art. Jan Walsh Hokenson claims that Japanese art did nothing less than turn the French art world upside down. Moreover, writers such as Emile Zola, Joris-Karl Huysmans, and the brothers Goncourt, Edmond and Jules, tried to somehow incorporate these Japanese art principles into their writing. Indeed, the Goncourts’ *Manette Salomon* has

1. As explained in the Introduction, I use the word hermaphrodite for futanari or intersexual when historical accuracy demands it. The word was evocative of images of beautiful Greek gods, as well as Judeo-Christian gods. I wish to convey this resonance and imagery, as well as the hypocrisy when individuals were treated poorly because of their sex.

2. Walter Benjamin, “Paris, Capital of the Nineteenth Century,” in *Selected Writings, Volume 3: 1935–1938*, eds. Howard Eiland and Michael Jennings (Belknap Press, 2006), 32–49.

3. Busst, “The Image of the Androgyne in the Nineteenth Century,” 10.

been called “literary *japonisme*.”⁴ Huysmans, for his part, “made things Japanese part of his own poetics of decadence,”⁵ which in turn became influential in Tanizaki’s and other Japanese writers’ work. Moreover, Kashō and other Western-style Japanese artists were influenced by Art Nouveau and the vibrant colors of Impressionism.

As frequently as hermaphroditic images appeared in France, associations with them varied and changed over the century. A. J. L. Busst observes that the hermaphrodite symbolized optimism at the beginning of the 1800s when confidence permeated the air. Yet, by the end of the century, the hermaphrodite became a symbol of pessimism, which suffused the landscape at this time in French history.⁶ Throughout the nineteenth century alone, the hermaphrodite was associated with virginity, homosexuality, decadence, sadism, masochism, prostitution,⁷ and more. That hermaphroditism can take on so many associations says much about writers and the production of symbols and nothing about the hermaphrodite themselves. Whatever the symbols and associations, the understanding of hermaphroditism would take on a different hue with the development of sexology and the medicalization of it, but its exotic valence would persist.

Busst cites scholars who observe that “androgynous men and gods figure prominently in almost every religion and mythology of practically every country and age.”⁸ The important religious source for France and elsewhere was the androgynous Adam (prelapsarian) of the Judeo-Christian tradition.⁹ According to the Saint Simonians and others, not only Adam, but Christ, too, was androgynous. In this context then, the unification of the male and female principles is redemptive.¹⁰ Midrashic

4. Jan Walsh Hokenson, *Japan, France, and East-West Aesthetics: French Literature, 1867–2000* (Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2004), 66.

5. Hokenson, *Japan, France, and East-West Aesthetics*, 93.

6. Busst, “The Image of the Androgyne in the Nineteenth Century,” 10–11.

7. Léo Taxil, who wrote about contemporary prostitution in France in 1884, posits that having aspects of both female and male sexes made the hermaphrodite inclined toward prostitution. His prolix depiction of the third-century Roman emperor Elagabalus, whom he refers to as a hermaphrodite and a monster, has no equal in utter debauchery and depravation, at the time and among the literary representations in the following pages of this book. Taxil, too, conflates hermaphroditism with same-sex practice and desire. *Contemporary Prostitution: Study of a Social Question*, trans. Jack Parker (self-pub., IngramSpark, 2024).

8. Busst, “The Image of the Androgyne in the Nineteenth Century,” 4.

9. Leah DeVun, “Heavenly Hermaphrodites: Sexual Difference at the Beginning and End of Time,” *Postmedieval: A Journal of Medieval Cultural Studies* 9 (2018): 132–46.

10. Regarding Genesis commentary in the medieval period, DeVun rejects any strict

literature, as well as Kabbalistic readings, concurs. J. Edgar Bauer quotes Rabbi Yirmiyah ben Elazar, who writes that the Holy One created Adam as androgynous.¹¹

In Busst's timeline, the hermaphrodite emblemized social equality in the aftermath of the French Revolution.¹² After 1850, the hermaphrodite as social symbol, however, appears much less regularly. The belief in human solidarity and goodness gave way to despair. The symbol of virtue transforms into a symbol of vice, especially homosexuality, onanism, "cerebral lechery," sadism, and masochism.¹³

This disillusionment can already be found in the German Romantics and those of France. Later it appears in Symbolism, Decadence, and other movements affirming "art for art's sake." What follows here is not an exhaustive inventory of notable novels containing hermaphroditic protagonists but texts that influenced others thematically or literarily, or were profound in establishing the hermaphroditic character.

Théophile Gautier (1811–1872) was one such Romantic litterateur who espouses "*l'art pour l'art*," and transcends the unattractive aspects of reality by celebrating beauty in his novel (and preface to) *Mademoiselle de Maupin* (1835), among other works. The narrative of *Maupin*, as well as the poem "Contralto" from Gautier's collection of poetry *Émaux et Camées*, esteems the artistic beauty of the sleeping Hermaphrodite, a Greek marble, Roman copy statue from the second century CE. In this epistolary *tour de force*, various narrators gradually reveal that Madelaine de Maupin is a "cross-dressing" woman, who has everyone believe she is a gallant cavalier. Both Chevalier d'Albert and Rosette, who are having an affair with each other, fall madly in love with Madelaine in her persona as Théodore de Sérannes, d'Albert thinking himself a monster for this "reprehensible," "unavowable love" he feels for a "man," and Rosette bursting with the hope that true love inspires. Madelaine/Théodore confuses matters by referring to herself as a man and as a woman at different times in letters to her dear friend Graciosa. Additionally, the notion of a "psychic hermaphrodite" functions as a physical hermaphrodite with Maupin as a symbol of beauty that can be loved by a man and a woman. I use the term "psychic hermaphrodite" advisedly and anachronistically to express more of the

distinction between the terms androgyny and hermaphroditism. DeVun, "Heavenly Hermaphrodites," 133.

11. J. Edgar Bauer, "Adam the Hermaphrodite and the Liberatory Aims of the Stone-wall Era," *Dia-noesis: A Journal of Philosophy* 9 (2020): 30.

12. Busst, "The Image of the Androgyne in the Nineteenth Century," 9.

13. Busst, "The Image of the Androgyne in the Nineteenth Century," 38–39.

confusion among sex, gender, and sexual desire during this period and up through the turn of the century. Richard von Krafft-Ebing (1840–1902), an Austro-German psychiatrist whose *Psychopathia Sexualis* was so influential in Japan, uses the term “psychical hermaphrodite” to mean a homosexual who also has a weaker, sexual desire for the opposite sex that manifests sporadically.¹⁴ Beauty transcends contingencies of sex symbolically; ultimately, the narrative of *Mademoiselle de Maupin* condemns same-sex desire. D’Albert, who perorates throughout the novel on the subjects of beauty and love, declares, “Woman is the queen of creation.” But in the golden ages of Greece and Rome, the model was male, he declaims. “There is hardly any difference between Paris and Helen. And so, the hermaphrodite is one of the dreams most ardently caressed by idolatrous antiquity.” Referring to Salmacis and Hermaphroditus,¹⁵ he says, “You can’t imagine anything more ravishing in the world than these two bodies, both of them perfect, harmoniously fused together: these two beauties, so equal and so different, which now form only one which is superior to them both, because they moderate and set off each other.”¹⁶ Shikin echoes the notion that the futanari embodies the perfect form in her essay mentioned above, and “woman” as the quintessence of beauty resonates in Tanizaki’s work, as we shall see in the following chapters.

As if to underscore the confusion of *Mademoiselle de Maupin*’s “real” sex (“I am no longer a woman, but I am not yet a man . . .”¹⁷; “I belong to a third sex, a sex apart, which has as yet no name . . .”¹⁸), her sexual preference is also unclear. By “confusion,” I mean for a contemporaneous reader of the story, as desire was expected to be for the sex “opposite” to the body one inhabited. That time has passed. Now we more widely acknowledge that sexual desire has nothing to do with the sexed position we assume.

Mademoiselle de Maupin narrates her desire as emanating from a “dual nature.” She loves Rosette “more than a woman loves a woman,”¹⁹ but also wants the experience of sex with a man. Equivocations and the

14. Richard von Krafft-Ebing, *Psychopathia Sexualis*, 352.

15. Hermaphroditus is the beautiful son of Greek gods Hermes and Aphrodite. The Naiad Salmacis tries to seduce Hermaphroditus, who rejects her. She pleads to the gods that the two never be parted, and they are forthwith fused together as one.

16. Théophile Gautier, *Mademoiselle de Maupin*, trans. Joanna Richardson (Penguin Books, 1981), 196.

17. Gautier, *Mademoiselle de Maupin*, 281.

18. Gautier, *Mademoiselle de Maupin*, 330.

19. Gautier, *Mademoiselle de Maupin*, 292.

strong suggestion of lesbian desire are not resolved, or perhaps they are, at the end when Mlle Maupin makes loves to d'Albert and then to Rosette.

Gautier's novel is rich in style, humor, and imagery in ways that resonate in literature that follows it. However, at this juncture I would like to draw attention to the way in which a scholar who writes in 1967 a detailed chronicle of the hermaphrodite in European letters over more than a century, thinks of hermaphroditism. Busst states:

However, Maupin is not and cannot be perfectly androgynous, for the true hermaphrodite is too far removed from reality to be represented otherwise than imperfectly by a living character in a novel which aspires to any degree of realism. And it is precisely because it does not truly exist in reality that the hermaphrodite, this 'chimère ardent', 'une des chimères les plus ardemment caressées', is so beautiful.²⁰

Busst's mistaken belief that the hermaphrodite "is too far removed from reality" undergirds his discussion of "cerebral lechery" and its association with the negative symbol of the hermaphrodite. The yearning of those disenchanted with the world cannot be fulfilled by reality, so it becomes more intense, he asserts.²¹ "The figure of the hermaphrodite, refused by reality, represents the sexual ideal of these two cerebral perverts d'Albert and Maupin . . ."²² Whether this attitude reflects a lack of imagination or an unwillingness to admit to anything other than heteronormative sexual desire, the hermaphrodite so disturbs notions of bodies and sex that the expedient escape is no sex at all. This example offers a warning that the topic of hermaphroditism and hence a disturbance of dimorphic sex can distress even those who research it with scholarly "objectivity." Nevertheless, the symbol of the virginal hermaphrodite remains, and "cerebral lechery" in the figure of the hermaphrodite increases until the end of the nineteenth century.²³

This world-weariness and disillusion in Maupin and d'Albert can be found in other French Romantic literature. It is the inchoate form of the

20. Busst, "The Image of the Androgyne in the Nineteenth Century," 41–42. After the phrase 'chimère ardent' and 'une des chimères les plus ardemment caressées,' Busst cites pages in "Contralto" and *Mademoiselle de Maupin*, respectively, in the original text.

21. Busst, "The Image of the Androgyne in the Nineteenth Century," 42.

22. Busst, "The Image of the Androgyne in the Nineteenth Century," 43.

23. Busst, "The Image of the Androgyne in the Nineteenth Century," 44.

abulic protagonist that finds its apotheosis in *Des Esseintes* from *À Rebours* (*Against the Grain*), although author Joris-Karl Huysmans incurs a more direct debt to the work of Charles Baudelaire. This anti-hero re-emerges in several short stories by Tanizaki and reincarnates throughout twentieth-century literature. I discuss this in Chapter Four.

Mademoiselle de Maupin is one of the most influential novels written in the nineteenth century, and delighted important writers Joris-Karl Huysmans, Baudelaire, and Oscar Wilde.²⁴ Gautier smoked hashish with Balzac and Baudelaire, and also kept company with the Goncourt brothers. Baudelaire dedicated *Les Fleurs du mal* (*The Flowers of Evil*, 1857) to Gautier. Across the Atlantic Ocean, Gautier's creation seems to have inspired Julia Ward Howe (1819–1910) in her composition of, not “The Battle Hymn of the Republic,” which she composed in 1862, but her novel aptly, if not prosaically, entitled *The Hermaphrodite*. Gary Williams, who edited and published the novel in 2004, believes that Howe began writing it in 1846–47 but never tried to publish it because of the indelicate nature of the subject.²⁵

Instead of a person identifying herself as a woman, for the most part, Howe's protagonist identifies as a man, Laurence, and is a hermaphrodite. The physician who attends Laurence just before their demise comments, “Never before have I seen one [a hermaphrodite] presenting a beautiful physical development, and combining in the spiritual nature all that is most attractive in either sex.”²⁶ As in Gautier's novel, both a man and a woman fall deeply in love with the protagonist. Laurence is beautiful, honorable, and courageous. The story is suffused with the atmosphere and melodrama of a Gothic novel. The Christian theme is pronounced, and in the end, Laurence is sacrificed, as a Christ-like figure, for no other course is open to a virtuous, innocent figure of mixed sex. Somehow, he hears the words, “. . . ‘a cross is not formed otherwise than of two loves or two desires which cross each other or conflict.’”²⁷ Laurence has the body of both sexes, and therefore, presumably, desire for both sexes. Moreover, the narrative deems his same sex desire intolerable, as well as his conflicting desires.

Returning to the French context, Hyacinthe de Latouche (1785–1851) wrote *Fragoletta* (1829), and Honoré de Balzac (1799–1850), *Séraphîta*

24. Gary Williams, “Introduction,” in *The Hermaphrodite* (University of Nebraska Press, 2004), xxviii–xxix.

25. Williams, “Introduction,” xxxvi.

26. Julia Ward Howe, *The Hermaphrodite*, ed. and intro Gary Williams (University of Nebraska Press, 2004), 194.

27. Howe, 196.

(1834), immediately before the publication of *Mademoiselle de Maupin*. Busst cannot neatly classify the hermaphrodites in these two works as symbols of pessimism or optimism, perhaps because these are inadequate measures. Nonetheless, Busst dismisses Latouche for simply using the hermaphrodite for melodrama. *Fragoletta* is imputed to be the first Romantic novel whose androgynous character is physically, sexually ambiguous not just “psychologically” so.²⁸ Yet, the narrative is ambiguous about the physiology of the single character Fragoletta/Camille/Philippe. The reader must consider evidence from various scenes, deductively piecing together clues in order to arrive at a conclusion. But what conclusion? The novel is unclear about the dead Fragoletta. The final sentence leaves the matter of their sex undetermined.

Nigel Smith makes the case that the uncertainty of Fragoletta’s sex reflects the indeterminacy of Latouche’s disjointed text. The mystery of Fragoletta’s sex (and the desire to comprehend it) is matched by the reader’s desire to make the text comprehensible. By violating readers’ expectations of textual unity, Latouche embraces the Romantic rebellion against repressive classicism. Smith refers to Praz in his description of classicism as denoting equilibrium, and Romanticism as denoting a disruption of equilibrium. Their point is that the new movement subsumes an element of the old. Smith’s additional claim is that “the legion of androgynous figures that appeared in early nineteenth-century French texts” exemplifies the move to subvert classicism and throw art and culture off balance.²⁹

This theory coincides with Busst’s identification of the hermaphrodite as a symbol of optimism in the first part of the nineteenth century. For the hermaphrodite represents freedom not only from the constraints of literary form but of ideal bodily forms wedded to prescribed sexual desires, while destabilizing the proportion and discipline of classicism and ideals of dimorphic sex. The Romantic spirit is unruly, as the hermaphrodite’s body transgresses the rules of ideal male and female bodies.

Balzac, a towering presence in modern literature, was captivated by the figure of the hermaphrodite, whether for its Romantic *esprit* in disturbing sexual standards or for the atmosphere it lent his work (or both and more). Apparently, for his *Séraphita*, he borrowed the idea of a hermaphroditic protagonist, at least to some extent, from *Fragoletta*.³⁰ Yet, ambiguously

28. Nigel Smith, “Androgyny and the Refusal of Classicism: Rereading *Fragoletta*,” *Romance Quarterly* 43 (1996): 81.

29. Smith, “Androgyny and the Refusal of Classicism,” 81.

30. Smith, “Androgyny and the Refusal of Classicism,” 84.

sexed figures appear here and there in his oeuvre without the help of Latouche. His novella “Sarrasine,” (1830) is one such instance, not of a hermaphrodite, but of a highly desirable love object, La Zambinella, who appears to be a woman. Sarrasine, a passionate sculptor, is utterly intoxicated by the ideal beauty of the singer Zambinella, so he executes a magnificent statue in her likeness. Upon discovering that “she” is a castrato, Sarrasine is crushed and brandishes a sword to kill Zambinella. Zambinella, however, is saved by his protector, a cardinal. Balzac’s narrative sensuously describes the singer as irresistible with the “elegant contours” of his body and “feminine coquetry.”

Balzac’s *Lost Illusions* (*Illusions Perdues*, 1837), in which the “illustrious hermaphrodite” Mlle des Touches, or Camille Maupin, so kindly gives a principal role in their play to an actor in need, may be an example of using the figure for the purpose of atmosphere, as Mlle des Touches is a minor character. However, the role of the hermaphrodite in *Séraphîta* (1834–35) is central and a clear expression of Balzac’s fascination with the androgyne and with the theology of scientist and mystic Emanuel Swedenborg. According to Busst, Swedenborg believed that an angel embodied the married form of both husband and wife, and Balzac’s hermaphroditic angel, first referred to as Séraphîtus and then Séraphîta, is an exposition of this notion.³¹ Balzac’s hermaphrodite as angel offers advice (sermons) to the lovers Wilfred and Minna, who are both in love with Séraphîtus/Séraphîta. Like Fragoletta, Séraphîta is loved by both sexes, as is the eponymous Mademoiselle de Maupin, as is Laurence in Howe’s novel. Moreover, these characters are noble (some more than others), if not divine.

However, this symbol of virtue that Busst observes in the first half of the nineteenth century does have its exceptions; the later symbol of debauchery can be seen earlier. Balzac’s novella *La Fille aux yeux d’or* (*The Girl with the Golden Eyes*, 1834) offers a tantalizing cocktail of same-sex desire spiced with hermaphroditism and incest. Both Henri de Marsay and his half-sister, the Marquise de San-Réal have love affairs with the racially marked Creole Paquita. However, what was probably most distressing to his readership at the time was that Parisian, upper class characters practice the taboos of homosexuality and incest. This sibling pair of symbolically hermaphroditic characters is licentious and spiritually bankrupt.

Janet Beizer emphasizes the equivalency of incest, homosexuality, and hermaphroditism in Balzacian literature. Specifically, she observes that

31. Busst, “The Image of the Androgyne in the Nineteenth Century,” 78.

hermaphroditism often functions to mediate the other two.³² This conflation of hermaphroditism with homosexuality is present in the Japanese context also, as already mentioned.

At this point between the first half and the second half of the nineteenth century, the symbol of the hermaphrodite transitions from a largely sanguine one to a mostly “depraved” one. Whatever the figure of the hermaphrodite signified at any particular moment, it is important to recognize the experience and suffering of real hermaphroditic human beings who lived during this period, for the pain was not figurative nor the ignorance surrounding them hypothetical. To that end, I turn now to Herculine Barbin, a hermaphrodite whose memoirs Foucault discovered and published. In his introduction, Foucault asserts that for centuries, hermaphrodites were people with two sexes, and it was not until the modern period that Western societies insisted that there should be one “true” sex. Dreger documents this denial of true hermaphroditism in *Hermaphrodites and the Medical Invention of Sex*, as mentioned in the Introduction.

Herculine Barbin (called Alexina and later Abel) was one of those subjected to the scrutiny of doctors who insisted upon identifying a sex for them and sanctioning it legally. Born in 1838, Barbin was raised as a girl, later forced to identify as a man, and committed suicide in 1868. Foucault emphasizes the non-sexual identity of the voice narrating Barbin’s memoirs. In the court’s decision to rectify their civil status register as male and enter a new (male) name, Alexina was deprived of the freedom of non-identity.³³ In their narrative, Barbin looks back fondly on the days when they could live happily as a person not quite the same sex as the girls around them (at a Catholic convent). Now, as they write, their freedom from sexual identity has been torn away. “Profoundly disgusted with everything and everyone, I endure the injustices of human beings, their hypocritical hatreds, without being disturbed by them. I have shut myself up in a retrenchment that is proof against their attacks.”³⁴

Although, as Foucault observes, Barbin’s story did not attract much attention at the time,³⁵ it did inspire Oskar Panizza to write *A Scandal at the Convent* (1893), which is included in Foucault’s volume of Barbin’s

32. Janet L. Beizer, *Family Plots: Balzac’s Narrative Generations* (Yale University Press, 1986), 156.

33. Michele Foucault, “Introduction,” in *Herculine Barbin: Being the Recently Discovered Memoirs of a Nineteenth-Century French Hermaphrodite*, trans. Richard McDougall (Pantheon Books, 1980), xiii.

34. Herculine Barbin and Michel Foucault, 102.

35. Foucault, “Introduction,” xiv.

memoir. Panizza was a German psychiatrist and writer who eventually died in an asylum. To a greater or lesser extent, Panizza's dramatization of Barbin's unhappy circumstances can be seen as a vehicle for railing against the church.³⁶ It is worth noting that in the nineteenth-century hermaphrodite fervor, a real human being's case history received a ho-hum response, and a zealous doctor exploited it for anti-religious ideology.

The callous contempt and debasement of individuals evidencing both sexes continued in dramatized renderings of real events in Japan. Writer Kanagaki Robun, for example, refers to so-called "poison woman" Takahashi Oden as a futanari (*shiyūsōsei*) in order to reinforce his demonization of her. He exploits the futanari figure to condemn girls who are physically stronger than what he believes they ought to be.³⁷

The narrator in Robun's tale, *Takahashi Oden yasha monogatari* (*The Tale of Takahashi Oden, Devil Woman*, 1879), asserts:

That men and women differ from each other sexually, as well as in their nature is according to God's plan. The small difference in the exquisite workmanship of the physiques of men and women is only for the purpose of reproducing the human race. However, a woman who is spiritually superior to men is borne by the confusion of what is called androgyny (*shiyūsōsei*) by Western philosophers.³⁸

Oden is represented as a wild, rowdy eight- or nine-year-old, who is more interested in fisticuffs with boys than battledore and shuttlecock, games appropriate to young girls. Robun portrays this so-called masculinity in a woman as "unnatural" and criminal.³⁹

Resuming the survey of French literature, the turn toward a climate of sexual deviancy through, or exploitation of, the hermaphrodite in the later decades of the nineteenth century can be seen in landmark works by Rachilde (1860–1953) and Huysmans. Before proceeding with those narratives, I would like to emphasize two premises that I develop in the following chapters. One is the state's need to determine the "true sex" of individuals and authorize it legally. The second point is that different interests use non-conforming sex differently, which in itself is hardly sur-

36. Foucault, "Introduction," xv.

37. Kanagaki Robun, *Meiji bungaku zenshū 2, Meiji kaikaki bungakushū 2*, ed. Okitsu Kaname (Chikuma shobō, 1967), 4, 11; Christine L. Marran, *Poison Woman: Figuring Female Transgression in Modern Japanese Culture* (University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 11.

38. Robun, *Meiji bungaku zenshū 2, Meiji kaikaki bungakushū 2*, 4.

39. Robun, *Meiji bungaku zenshū 2, Meiji kaikaki bungakushū 2*, 11.

prising. However, examining how various parties, writers, artists, authorities, and nation states exploit non-dimorphic sex provides insights into the operation of the systems in which they participate. My focus is on artists, but much can be said about the state's insistence upon a legal sex. If we consider Althusser's famous assertions on the reproduction of the state's ruling ideology as central to the continuing existence of a capitalist social formation, then military conscription, for example, reveals why definitive sex is necessary. "Ideological state apparatuses" maintain the power of the state through ideology, functioning as institutions such as the military, family, religion, education, art, literature, etc.⁴⁰ Conscription and building a standing army were part of the process of institutionalizing political citizenship in the modernizing nation.⁴¹ Citizens were conferred rights and obligations, of which serving in the army was one. The Conscription Ordinance (*Chōheirei*) of 1873 made enlistment for active military duty compulsory for all males. The emperor had proclaimed the year before that military service was a national duty. People born as boys, according to their family registers (*koseki*), who baffled examining military doctors because of sexual anomalies according to a binary sex system, could call into question by their very bodies state discourse on the roles of "men" and "women" in the national "family" polity, headed by the emperor as father. The ideology of a nation supported by a strong army consisting of men supported by wives at home raising children weakens if non-"men" enter the army. It challenges the premises of gender roles and gendered labor.

In Gaikotsu's *Thoughts on Hermaphroditism*, a number of articles report on individuals being rejected for military service because their physical examinations revealed sexual characteristics of both sexes.⁴² The authorities insisted upon bodies that appeared to be clearly and only male. As it seemed that there were more hermaphrodites in the Meiji period than before, Gaikotsu explains that they are discussed more often in periodicals in the current era and credits conscription and the census with exposing han'in'yō (hermaphrodites).⁴³

40. Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses," in *Essays on Ideology* (Verso Editions, 1971), 19.

41. Eiko Ikegami, "Citizenship and National Identity in Early Meiji Japan, 1868–1889: A Comparative Assessment," *International Review of Social History* 40, no. S3 (1995): 185–221.

42. In Miyatake Gaikotsu's "Koshimaki o shite sōtei kensa" ("Wearing a Loincloth at the Youth Examination"), 371–72 and "Futatsu no nyōdō aru otoko" ("A Man with Two Urethras"), 374.

43. Miyatake Gaikotsu, "Jitsurei no tashōkan" ("A View of Precedents"), 384.

Moreover, in newspaper articles from the Meiji and Taishō (1912–1926) periods, futanari choosing to live as either men or women, once discovered, were scorned in terms such as degenerative (*hensei*) and deformity (*kikei*). The article “A Man with Two Urethras” (1915) provides a clue to what was unacceptable to the government and society at the time: “. . . because he was unsuitable as a man for conscription, he was disqualified.”⁴⁴ The continued dehumanization of the futanari served the purposes of the state in other sectors of society as well—the military, medicine, science—which overlapped and reinforced each other as they were modernized. The state attempted to construct a rigid binary of sex as a tool of control. The medico-scientific community was complicit with this effort, and Japanese sexologists, along with their Western counterparts, persevered to prove that *shin han'in'yō* (“true hermaphroditism”) did not exist. Just as sexual norms became increasingly codified and sexual paradigms transformed in the new nation state, the futanari was redefined under a new sexual regime and reconsidered according to its usefulness to writers as well.

Punctuating the Century of the Hermaphrodite

Coinciding with the birth of modern nation-states, continuing industrialization, advancements in science and technology, were the literary movements of Naturalism and Decadence, among others. In this abbreviated bloodline of the hermaphrodite in nineteenth-century France, however, I will jump to two last novels that vigorously quickened the life of the Decadence movement, the second of which punctuates the nineteenth century and ushers in the twentieth, Huysmans's *À Rebours*.

The first is by Rachilde, *nom de plume* of Marguerite Eymery, later Marguerite Vallette, who applied for and received official permission to dress as a man. She was known for her candid (or scandalous) treatment of sexuality and earned the sobriquet “Mademoiselle Baudelaire.” An important, perhaps sole female Decadent author, Rachilde published *Monsieur Venus* in 1884. The novel proffers a cornucopia of sexual “deviancy” (non-heteronormalcy), including male and female transvestism, sadism, masochism, homoeroticism, and more. In the novel, Raoule, a

44. “Futatsu no nyōdō aru otoko” in Miyatake Gaikotsu, *Hannannyokō*, *Miyatake Gaikotsu Chosakushū*, vol. 5, eds. Tanizawa Eiichi and Yoshino Takao (Kawade shobō shinsha, 1986), 374–75.

woman who also dresses as a man, seduces Jacques, a man she dresses as a woman and keeps as a lover. The sexual non-conformity of Raoule and Jacques is consistent with the Decadent preoccupation with the androgyne and hermaphrodite. Moreover, as Maurice Barrès writes in the introduction to the 1889 edition, the imaginations that dream of an asexual being (*un être insexué*) smell of death.⁴⁵ This refers to the decadent trait of deploring nature, nature that is central to the elements of Naturalism, in the Decadent literature of Huysmans and Tanizaki, and to the figure of the hermaphrodite. Barrès's remarks associate death, or an anti-life (anti-nature) force with hermaphroditism. Tanizaki's fiction in many ways coincides with this notion, as I will discuss.

In the same year as the publication of *Monsieur Vénius*, Huysmans published *À Rebours*, the “bible of Decadence,” the manifesto,⁴⁶ the embryo of “all the prose works of the Decadence,”⁴⁷ a dagger in the heart of Naturalism, and a novel that has sustained interest since 1884. Huysmans had been a disciple of Zola until this novel, in which Nature becomes monstrous and grotesque when it isn't simply dull. Nevertheless, Huysmans incorporates aspects of Naturalism in *À Rebours*, as I will discuss. Certain Naturalistic aspects, in fact, make the demarcation between literary Decadence and what preceded it more tenuous. Of course, this is true of European literature as well as Japanese. In what may be reductively termed “anti-Naturalist” texts, Tanizaki still adheres to some tenets of Naturalism (*shizenshugi*).

Nonetheless, *À Rebours* attacks Naturalism at the core by celebrating artificiality, and according to Praz, the title, if not its lifeblood was likely given by Baudelaire, who writes: “To apply to pleasure, to the sensation of being alive, the idea of the hyperacuity of the senses, that Poe applied to pain. To affect a creation through the pure logic of contrariety. The path is already marked, in the opposite direction [‘à rebours’].”⁴⁸

The hyperacute senses and sensibilities of *À Rebours* protagonist, Des Esseintes, who, incidentally, ardently admires Baudelaire, are already waning *in media res* with the degeneration of his ancient family.⁴⁹ He hurls

45. Quoted in Mario Praz, *The Romantic Agony*, trans. Angus Davidson (Oxford University Press, 1970), 348.

46. David Weir, *Decadence and the Making of Modernism* (University of Massachusetts Press, 1996), 83.

47. Mario Praz, *The Romantic Agony*, 323.

48. The original French is quoted in Praz, *The Romantic Agony*, 323. The English translation can be found in Weir, *Decadence and the Making of Modernism*, 85.

49. This decaying bloodline topos is requisite in the Decadent protagonist. Weir, 104.

himself into all manner of hedonist delights but remains deeply dissatisfied with the stupidity of people and society and finds no satisfaction through the titillation of the senses. He sinks into a vitiated state of boredom that insuperably weighs down upon him. And this is but the prologue to the work. The first chapter finds him relocating to a quiet haven outside of Paris where the narrative takes inventory of storehouses of hyperkinetic sense intoxicators of art, botany, literature, medicine, zoology, geology, and more. The narrative assembles the meditations, rants, analyses of art, and brief non-events in Des Esseintes's existence in no discernible plot.

Among his various sexual "conquests" and adventures, is the American acrobat Miss Urania. He is mysteriously attracted to her, so returns to the circus to watch her night after night.

The more he admired her suppleness and strength, the more he thought he saw an artificial change of sex operating in her; her mincing movements and feminine affectations became ever less obtrusive, and in their place there developed the agile, vigorous charms of a male. In short, after being a woman to begin with, then hesitating in a condition verging on the androgynous, she seemed to have made up her mind and become an integral, unmistakable man.⁵⁰

Reasoning from what he has just observed, Des Esseintes imagines that he is becoming female. This hermaphroditism and fluidity of sex appear in an array of sexual practices and desires to demonstrate Des Esseintes's variety of lascivious engagement and his degeneracy. Here the figure of the hermaphrodite is freakish and salacious.

Earlier in the novel, Salome glides, sways, and sinuates her way into Des Esseintes's ruminations, reinforcing the lubricious air and insinuating the hermaphrodite through Gustave Moreau's paintings. Sharing focalization with Des Esseintes, who owns Moreau's "Salome Dancing Before Herod" (c. 1874) and "The Apparition" (c. 1874), the narrative describes Salome in the first painting as seeing neither Herod nor her mother, "nor the hermaphrodite nor eunuch who stands sabre in hand at the foot of the throne, a terrifying creature, veiled as far as the eyes and with its sexless dugs hanging like gourds under its orange-striped tunic."⁵¹ That the narra-

50. Joris-Karl Huysmans, *Against Nature*, trans. Robert Baldick (Penguin Classics, 2003), 97.

51. Huysmans, *Against Nature*, 51–52.

tive refers to one of the figures as a “hermaphrodite” is conspicuous, as evidence for such determination does not exist.

In creating these paintings, “the audacious Moreau makes himself an archeologist of an imaginary Orient.”⁵² He drew upon an encyclopedic variety of sources, including Chinese, Indian, Moorish, Etruscan, and Egyptian art and architecture, enamels, Renaissance niello, medieval manuscripts, and Japanese prints, to reinvent Salome as a mysterious sibyl and seductress. Zola speaks of riddles and is unable to find the words to describe the paintings.⁵³ Critics at the time were perplexed, but Huysmans embraces the paintings and reinvents Moreau’s reinventions.

Painstakingly describing the accomplishments of Moreau’s paintings through *Des Esseintes*, the narrative explains, “She had always remained a dim and distant figure, lost in a mysterious ecstasy far off in the mists of time, beyond the reach of punctilious, pedestrian minds, and accessible only to brains shaken by neurosis . . .”⁵⁴ Salome becomes lust incarnate, “the monstrous Beast.” “. . . [S]he belonged to the theogonies of the Far East; she no longer had her origin in biblical tradition . . .”⁵⁵ In sum, Huysmans suggests the hermaphrodite in Moreau’s “Salome Dancing Before Herod,” who is not actually in the painting, to enhance the mystery and evoke the monstrousness of Salome and the ambiance created with such meticulous, dedicated study in both paintings.

An enthusiastic admirer of *À Rebours*, Oscar Wilde wrote his one-act play *Salomé* in French in 1891. In *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1891), Lord Henry gives Dorian a copy of a “yellow book,” the color signifying the decadent French novel.⁵⁶ “It was the strangest book he had ever read. It seemed to him that in exquisite raiment, and to the delicate sound of flutes, the sins of the world were passing in dumb show before him. Things that he had dimly dreamed of were suddenly made real to him. Things of

52. Gustave Moreau, J.-K. Huysmans, and André Guyaux, *Huysmans-Moreau: Féeriques Visions* (Musée Gustave Moreau, 2007), 49.

53. Moreau, *Féeriques Visions*, 49; Cynthia Burlingham, Marie-Cécile Forest, and Richard Hawkins, *A Strange Magic: Gustave Moreau’s Salome* (Hammer Museum with DelMonico Books/Prestel, 2012), 34.

54. Huysmans, *Against Nature*, 52.

55. Huysmans, 53.

56. Stanley Weintraub, *Beardsley: A Biography* (George Braziller, 1967), 95.

The Yellow Book, a British arts journal containing work by many well-known writers, published from 1894–97, was associated with decadence and aestheticism. Yellow was a reference to the decadent or scandalous French novel marked by its yellow covers that influenced the English literary scene during what came to be the “Yellow Nineties.”

which he had never dreamed were gradually revealed.”⁵⁷ It seems to him that the book contains the story of his own life. Like Des Esseintes and other Decadent heroes, he inherits his decadence from his progenitors and suffers from *ennui*. “Dorian Gray had been poisoned by a book. There were moments when he looked on evil simply as a mode through which he could realize his conception of the beautiful.”⁵⁸ Dorian buys nine copies of the first edition and revels in its baneful influence.⁵⁹

In Wilde’s manuscript, he titles the yellow book, *Le Secret de Raoul* by Catulle Sarrazin; however, title and author are deleted in the typescript. Among critical commentary, many believe that the name Raoul refers to Rachilde’s *Monsieur Vénus*.⁶⁰ Be that as it may, Wilde was deeply involved with the Parisian literary scene, as well as with Rachilde, herself.⁶¹

Tanizaki read Wilde’s work, including *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. He translated *Salomé* into Japanese in 1917, though Mori Ōgai had translated it in 1909.⁶² Obviously, Tanizaki thought he had insight to impart in his translation. Tanizaki could have come to know of *À Rebours* through *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and/or through Nagai Kafū, in addition to other avenues. It is not my intention, however, to establish a line of influence. Tanizaki’s work is his own. A fascination with displaying both sexes, same-sex desire, “cross-dressing,” and so forth, resonate in the art, literature, and culture of France and Japan, as well as other industrialized or industrializing nation-states at the time. I elaborate further on this in Chapter Three. Here I would like to reiterate the point that Rachilde’s *Monsieur Vénus* and Huysmans’s *À Rebours* both feature non-heteronormative characters and are pivotal in launching the Decadence movement in a trajectory that con-

57. Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, in *The Complete Works of Oscar Wilde*, vol. 3, (Oxford University Press, 2013), 102.

58. Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, 125.

59. Although the narrative doesn’t feature a hermaphrodite, it does mention Elagabalus, who is said to be a hermaphrodite, mentioned in an earlier footnote in this chapter.

60. Joseph Donohue, ed., *The Picture of Dorian Gray. The Complete Works of Oscar Wilde*, vol. 3 (Oxford University Press, 2013), 392–93.

61. Lecture by Petra Dierkes-Thrun, “Oscar Wilde, Rachilde, and the *Mercure de France*.” February 1, 2017. Wilde dedicated a copy of *Salome* to Rachilde, which is not surprising because, as Dierkes-Thrun reminds us, Rachilde was the literary review editor for the *Mercure de France*, the journal that she and her husband co-published. This was the major publishing outlet for French Decadent writers. See “Oscar Wilde, Rachilde, and the *Mercure de France*” in *Wilde’s Other Worlds*, eds. Michael F. Davis and Petra Dierkes-Thrun. (Routledge, 2018), 220–41.

62. Mori Ōgai, *Sarome, Ōgai zenshū*, vol. 5 (Iwanami shoten, 1972), 401–55.

tinues today. Wilde, spotlighting these two works in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, enables Dorian to shine in the reflection.

Continuing Sexual Discourse

Coincident with Tanizaki's delight in exploring non-normative sexualities, sexology proceeds in establishing itself. Japanese sexologists eventually came to be viewed as reformers for their desire to create a healthy citizenry through the spread of knowledge about sex. However, before that time, that the texts chosen to be translated into Japanese "largely pathologized nonconforming sexualities reflects prejudice against emancipatory tendencies that also existed in the field."⁶³ Yet, Sabine Frühstück writes that "from the 1920s onward, sexologists were lumped together with pacifists, socialists, communists, and anarchists and regarded as a nuisance or even a danger to the imperialist state."⁶⁴ Governmental authorities viewed sexologists' efforts, through the dissemination of knowledge to help both the working class and women in their reproductive role, as a threat. Women would challenge gender roles as inscribed in the 1889 Civil Code, they feared. As a result, the government increasingly censored sexologists' publications.⁶⁵

However progressive or reform-minded sexologists were, they still echoed earlier ideas on futanarisa and homosexuality, which relied heavily on Western thought. "'The West' was used as a synonym for certain claims to truth and the importance of scientific knowledge in general" for Japanese sexologists.⁶⁶ Habuto Eiji pathologizes homosexuality in his first book, co-authored with Sawada Junjirō, *Hentai seiyokuron (Perverse Sexual Desire, 1915)*, drawing on von Krafft-Ebing's *Psychopathia Sexualis*.⁶⁷

63. Rainer Herrn and Michael Thomas Taylor, "Magnus Hirschfeld's Interpretation of the Japanese *Onnagata* as Transvestites," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 27, no. 1 (January 2018): 86.

64. Sabine Frühstück, *Colonizing Sex: Sexology and Social Control in Modern Japan* (University of California Press, 2003), 13.

65. Frühstück, *Colonizing Sex*, 14.

66. Frühstück, 80.

67. Krafft-Ebing first wrote *Psychopathia Sexualis* in 1886 and revised it eleven times until 1902, when the twelfth edition was published. It was first translated into English from the German in 1892 and into Japanese in 1913 under the title *Hentai seiyoku shinri (Psychology of Abnormal Psychology)*. However, an earlier edition of *Psychopathia Sexualis* entitled *Shikijōkyōhen (On Sexual Mania)* was translated in 1894.

His denunciation of homosexuality in other writings continued until he died in 1929. The enormously popular book ran to eighteen printings within a decade. In his 1920 book, *Ippan seiyokugaku: kyōiku shiryō* (*General Sexology: Educational Materials*, 1920), he explains futanarisa, using the term *han'in'yō*, as Miyatake Gaikotsu does. A futanari, he writes in the chapter, “Introduction to Diseased Sexual Desire,” is physically and spiritually both sexes. “True hermaphrodites [*shin han'in'yō*] are exceedingly rare. The greater part of hermaphrodites has an abnormally developed clitoris that appears to be a penis, or the condition of hypospadias, giving the appearance of a vagina. That is, only external genitalia are transformed, so the person inclines toward a real man or woman. The general term for this is pseudo-hermaphrodite.”⁶⁸ This aligns with the taxonomy and definitions believed in the West. What is significant, however, is the final line of Habuto’s explanation, in which he writes, “This type of person [female pseudo-hermaphrodite] more often uses the vagina, the external genitalia, thus making it easier to lapse into same sex desire.” Here Habuto reveals the source of anxiety about futanarisa—same sex desire.

Pioneer German physician and sexologist, Magnus Hirschfeld (1868–1935), insisted that differences between females and males were a matter of degrees. “Everything that the female possesses, the male has—even if in still so small remnants—and of all male characteristics at least traces are present in the female . . .”⁶⁹ Hirschfeld based his doctrine (*Lehre*) of sexual intermediary degrees (*sexuelle Zwischenstufen*) on Charles Darwin’s “evolution-based hermaphroditization of human sexuality.”⁷⁰ He also agreed with Darwin’s conclusions that nature was impelled inexorably toward variability and change. “. . . [E]very man & woman is hermaphrodite . . .,” declared Darwin.⁷¹ Hirschfeld thus challenged the compartmentalizations of sex, as well as race. People are hybrid; they are “*mostly* male or *mostly* female.”⁷²

68. Habuto, *Ippan seiyokugaku: kyōiku shiryō* (Jitsugyō no nihonsha, 1920), 245.

69. Magnus Hirschfeld, *Geschlechtsübergänge: Mischung männlicher und weiblicher Geschlechtscharaktere (sexuelle Zwischenstufen)* *Gender Transitions: Mixtures of Male and Female Gender Characteristics (Sexual Intermediaries)* trans. Michael Lombardi-Nash (Self-published, Urania Manuscripts, 2022), 9–10.

70. J. Edgar Bauer, “On Behalf of Hermaphrodites and Mongrels: Refocusing the Reception of Magnus Hirschfeld’s Critical Thought on Sexuality and Race,” *Journal of Homosexuality* 68, no. 5 (2021): 782.

71. Quoted in Bauer, “On Behalf of Hermaphrodites and Mongrels: Refocusing the Reception of Magnus Hirschfeld’s Critical Thought on Sexuality and Race,” 781–82.

72. Hirschfeld, Magnus, *Gender Transitions: Mixtures of Male and Female Gender Characteristics (Sexual Intermediaries)*, 7.

However, Hirschfeld muddied the waters by setting up the categories of transvestites, homosexuals, hermaphrodites, and forms of androgyny in his “Wall of Sexual Transitions” in 1913 for the International Physicians’ Congress in London. Hirschfeld coined the term “transvestite” in 1910 and included *onnagata* (male actors who specialize in female roles in *kabuki*) in the transvestite category.⁷³ The false equivalency of the four categories perpetuated the misunderstanding of these terms, and to refer to *onnagata* as transvestites drives the nail into the coffin of clarity.⁷⁴ Hirschfeld divides the *onnagata* into three equal groups: 1. “completely normal men: men of normal tendencies and normal sex life”; 2. “transvestites: men who have a deep satisfaction in dressing as women but who are sexually attracted only to women”; and 3. “homosexuals: who, on the stage and in everyday life, and in love too, feel they are in their element only when they completely take the feminine role.”⁷⁵

Despite Hirschfeld’s influence as a respected sexologist in Japan through those who read him in German and English and through other channels, his embrace of hermaphroditism and homosexuality did not prevail in Japan.⁷⁶ Habuto Eiji’s oppositional stance to them provide evidence of this, as does the paucity of writings on futanari by Japanese sexologists during this period.

Male-male sexuality, similar to futanari sexuality, functions as a profound challenge to a dimorphic sexual paradigm. As mentioned above, the very existence of the futanari disrupted categories of male and female, both physically and regarding gender norms, as well as undermining the link between the two; that is, the link between a particular body behaving in a particular manner weakened. In *Seeing Sodomy in the Middle Ages*,

73. Hirschfeld visited Japan in 1931 as part of his world tour from 1930 to 1932, meeting with *onnagata* and delivering many lectures to enthusiastic audiences.

74. Hirschfeld never refers to them as *onnagata* but as Japanese female impersonators (*japanische Frauendarsteller*). Rainer Herrn and Michael Thomas Taylor, “Magnus Hirschfeld’s Interpretation of the Japanese *Onnagata* as Transvestites,” 65.

75. Quoted in Rainer Herrn and Michael Thomas Taylor, “Magnus Hirschfeld’s Interpretation of the Japanese *Onnagata* as Transvestites,” 94. Herrn and Taylor aver that Hirschfeld’s reasoning is based on European practices but that he represents his findings as the results of empirical research. Herrn and Taylor, 94.

76. Herrn and Taylor claim that the earliest Japanese translation of Hirschfeld’s work was published in 1931 despite Frühstück’s assertion that translations into Japanese of Hirschfeld’s work contributed to “a ‘psychiatric style of thinking’ about sexuality in Japan in the late nineteenth century.” Quoted in Rainer Herrn and Michael Thomas Taylor, “Magnus Hirschfeld’s Interpretation of the Japanese *Onnagata* as Transvestites,” 87n84.

Robert Mills meticulously establishes that sodomy in the West encompassed a broad range of discourses, from male-male anal intercourse to “sins against nature,” which could be committed by female or male.⁷⁷ Sodomy was deplored for the transgression of gender inversion, disquieting the categories of female and male. Ironically, vis-à-vis French Decadence many centuries later, Paris, around the year 1200, was a hotspot “for the production of antisodomy discourse.” Sodomy could be seen as a kind of murder, for it endangered humanity by blurring differences between female and male. Sexual dimorphism had to be maintained, as God created it.⁷⁸

Although this is discourse produced in the West, it is germane to developments in modern Japan. For one reason, it illuminates the troubling nature of futanarisa for the industrializing and militarizing Japanese state. As sodomy is represented to collapse borders, futanarisa collapsed borders between male and female, for whom social and familial roles became increasingly rigid. For another reason, Western ideology encouraged an end to the “barbaric” practice of *nanshoku* (male-male sexuality). The cultural movement of “civilization and enlightenment” (*bunmei kaika*) drove much of the sanctioning of sexual practices and gendered behavior directly after the Meiji Restoration (1868). Achieving the goal of “civilization” meant joining the comity of nations and becoming a major player on the world stage. The law proscribed gendered dress and hair length, so women could not wear their hair short, and everyone had to dress in accordance with their sex at birth.⁷⁹ By the last decade of the Meiji period, same-sex love became a deviant other and (exclusive) female-male sex became the norm. In other words, as Pflugfelder explains, in the older sexual paradigm the male erotic subject had alternatives of male and female erotic partners. The new sexual economy was exclusively male-female, and same-sex love was pathologized.⁸⁰

Naturalist writers and Mori Ōgai’s *Vita Sexualis* (1909) exemplify the discomfiture with male-male sexuality, as Jim Reichert eloquently argues, in the first case by rendering it invisible and in the second, by confounding past (early Meiji) and present (late Meiji) and demonizing it. In essence, the narrative of *Vita Sexualis* represents male-male sexuality as a cultural practice (early Meiji), but also scientifically determined, unnatural, abnor-

77. Robert Mills, *Seeing Sodomy in the Middle Ages* (University of Chicago Press, 2015), 3.

78. Mills, *Seeing Sodomy*, 25.

79. Pflugfelder, *Cartographies of Desire*, 151–52.

80. Pflugfelder, *Cartographies of Desire*, 251–52.

mal behavior (late Meiji). In this sense, Kanai's retrospective narrative performs one of the defining gestures of modernity; it constructs a vision of a distinct past that is necessarily mediated through the perspective of a self-consciously modern present.⁸¹ In what can only be described as an instance of homosexual panic, Kanai retrospectively brandishes this term (*Urning*) to make clear that despite the compromising situation in which he found himself, he experienced not the slightest trace of homosexual desire. Indeed, he exploits the intellectual capital attributed to Western, especially German, sexological jargon to bolster his claim.⁸²

Clearly, the sexological model of sex is entrenched by this time, and homosexuality, similar to hermaphroditism, rankles at the heart of it. Redefining male-male sexuality as "unnatural" is crucial to the process of establishing the modern model. In emphasizing the natural-unnatural divide, von Krafft-Ebing reinvoles language that grows out of religious/cultural commentary that prevailed in the West over centuries.

In discourse from the Middle Ages, "Nature" was an ideal that was corrupted upon Adam and Eve breaking God's commandment not to eat from the Tree of Knowledge. Henceforth, postlapsarian sex and "nature" imitate the Edenic ideal forms, and bodily corruption gets partly envisioned as dissolution of gender dimorphism.⁸³ "Sodomy thus not only attacks the gender of its (male) practitioners but is itself essentialized as the very embodiment of gender inversion."⁸⁴

It is not until the Meiji period that Japanese authorities focus attention on sodomy. Male-male sexual practices could be punished severely during the Edo period, but context and consequences were paramount to the sex acts themselves.⁸⁵ This transforms and by 1907 the legal gaze took purchase on the genital act, according to the latest *Keihō* (Penal Code).

In sum, Ōgai's 1909 text renders same-sex practitioners "unnatural" and deviant and pathologizes the practice. Such practices are not found in Naturalist texts. But in Tanizaki's short stories sexual identities are varied and open to possibilities. He dispenses with the entire notion of "natural" all together.

While Huysmans's novel and anti-hero were only possible in "a society

81. Reichert, *In the Company of Men: Representations of Male-Male Sexuality in Meiji Literature* (Stanford University Press, 2006), 219.

82. Reichert, *In the Company of Men*, 220.

83. Mills, *Seeing Sodomy*, 14.

84. Mills, 5.

85. Pflugfelder, *Cartographies of Desire*, 142.

made rotten by materialism,”⁸⁶ the Japanese young man, Tanizaki’s and others’, are also the result of a collision with modernity. The transformation of a local-based land mass into the centralized nation-state of Japan, along with mass culture, was disorienting and alienating for many. The spiritual desolation for some (e.g., Kitamura Tōkoku [1868–94, romantic writer who committed suicide]) was dislocation of a similar sort for others (e.g., Tōson). With the technologies of media, transportation, the household, that is, the technologies of everyday life, as well as the homogenization of difference through mass production,⁸⁷ the effort to staunch the lifeblood of art from flowing out of human existence, or in other words, the effort to aestheticize life, occupies a central place in early Tanizaki literature. Having been immersed in the visual and literary arts (*kusazōshi* picture books, kabuki, and *nō* theater) and style of townsmen culture (*chōnin bunka*) of the Edo period through his upbringing, Tanizaki welds the glittering surface and form of Edo visual culture to modern life.⁸⁸

Shikin and Tanizaki develop entirely different writing styles and principles, and, of course, Kashō creates his style through a different medium altogether. Shikin was writing from her perch as editor at *Jogaku zasshi* (“The Woman’s Magazine”) and probed themes relevant to women, especially marriage and the pitfalls therein. At the same time, she encouraged her female readers to become “whole” persons with the judgment to discern trustworthy men from the devious ones who appear in some of her stories. Despite the increasing domination of sexological thought and its strict bifurcation of the ideals of “male” and “female” and other such polarities, I contend that the voices of Shikin, Tanizaki, and Kashō contravened these norms.

86. Barbey D’Aurevilly, quoted in Weir, *Decadence and the Making of Modernism*, 85.

87. Andreas Huyssen, *After the Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture, Postmodernism (Theories of Representation and Difference)* (Indiana University Press, 1986), 9.

88. Odaka Shuya, *Seinenki: Tanizaki Jun’ichirō ron* (Sakuhinsha, 2007), 72–73.

2

Shimizu Shikin

Perfect Bodies and Equal Rights

One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman.

—Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*

Shimizu Shikin¹ (1868–1933) came of age in the vanguard of a movement espousing popular rights, equality among classes, and the establishment of a national assembly. In answer to the exigency to change the social order and traditional institutions left intact by the Meiji Restoration (1868), she began writing in the form of speeches on the progress of women’s education and the oppression of women before joining *Jiyū minken undō* (People’s Rights movement) in the 1880s. In 1885, at the age of seventeen, Shikin married a lawyer² in the Nara chapter of the movement and left him two years later for his infidelity. By age twenty-three she had received acclaim for her debut short story “Koware yubiwa” (“The Broken Ring,” 1891) and was working as editor at the premier women’s magazine *Jogaku zasshi*.³

1. Shikin was born Shimizu Toyo. She did not use the pen name of Shikin until 1896. At times she used her married name Kozai instead of Shimizu, as well as the pseudonyms Fumiko and Tsuyuko.

2. Whether this person is Okazaki Masaharu or Okazaki Takaatsu is unclear. See Reiko Yamaguchi, *Naite ai suru shimai ni tsugu: Kozai Shikin no shōgai* (Sōdo bunka, 1977), 63.

3. The title *Jogaku zasshi* and its table of contents were translated into English on its inside cover. *The Woman’s Magazine*, published from 1885 to 1904, targeted a female readership, though it was also widely read among men. It was an organ for promoting women’s education, literature, women’s rights, reform of the traditional family system (*ie seido*) and marriage based on unfair and antiquated customs and Christian morality.

Shikin had been influenced by voices raised on behalf of the common person. One such voice was that of leading statesman, Fukuzawa Yukichi (1835–1901), whose critique of the suppression of women derived from his declarations in *Gakumon no susume* (*An Encouragement of Learning*, 1873) that all people should be equal in their essential human rights.⁴ It was this and other novel ideas that so inspired the people who made the book a best-seller.⁵ Among them was Ueki Emori (1857–92), one of the leaders and ideologists of the People’s Rights Movement, who was influenced also by Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s *The Social Contract* and Herbert Spencer’s *Social Statics*. Ōi Kentarō (1843–1922), another prominent figure in the movement, associated with the more radical faction, was also swayed by French liberalism. Shikin associated with both Ueki and Ōi through her involvement in the People’s Rights movement.⁶ In 1888 Ueki asked Shikin to write one of the prefaces to his *Tōyō no fujo* (*Women of the Orient*, 1889). She opens by boldly pronouncing:

The issue of nineteenth-century society is the issue of women. The history of nineteenth-century civilization is the history of the

4. In the first three sections of *An Encouragement of Learning*, Fukuzawa focuses on the notion of inherent human rights regardless of one’s station in life, as well as on the equality of nations regardless of their wealth and strength. The most often cited essay demonstrating Fukuzawa’s reactionary retreat from this position is “Datsua ron” (“On De-Asianization,” 1885). Fukuzawa adopted a philosophy favoring national strength over individual rights. See Carmen Blacker’s discussion of Fukuzawa’s change of attitude and the essays he wrote expressing it in *The Japanese Enlightenment: A Study of the Writings of Fukuzawa Yukichi* (Cambridge University Press, 1969).

5. Sales of the seventeen pamphlets that comprised the book totaled 3,400,000. See *Fukuzawa zenshū*, vol. 2. (Jiji shinpōsha, 1898). Maeda Ai discusses the distribution of *An Encouragement of Learning* by the government through prefectural and ward offices, which contributed to its wide dissemination. For example, in the western part of present-day Nagano Prefecture, an estimated one book per one hundred people was distributed. In an effort to persuade people of the necessity of implementing civilization and enlightenment (*bunmei kaika*) ideas, Shinto and Buddhist priests, charged by the government with the responsibility of providing moral instruction, frequently used the book as well. See *Kindai dokusha no seiritsu*, 92 and 98. Maeda also cites Ienaga Saburō’s “Fukuzawa seishin no rekishiteki hatten” in *Nihon kindai shisōshi kenkyū* for an extended discussion of Fukuzawa’s influence on both Ueki Emori and Tokutomi Sohō.

6. Shikin had a child with Ōi in 1891. At the same time, he was secretly engaged to Fukuda Hideko (née Kageyama, 1865–1927), a pioneering women’s rights activist, who also had his child in 1891. His deception of both women was revealed when he mistakenly sent a letter he had written to one to the other’s address.

expansion of women's rights. At no other time has change in women in society been so great in America and in Europe as in this century. And that change has crossed the wide expanse of the Pacific Ocean to strike the shores of the Orient [. . .].⁷

Reinvoking the language of civilization as progressive, Shikin places the status of women at the center of the development of civilization. With such conviction, she became the premiere voice for the rights of women in Japan. Through her activism in the Freedom and People's Rights movement, Shikin read Herbert Spencer and probably John Stuart Mill as well.⁸ Their ideas on the legal and social subordination of women through the exercise and maintenance of power relations echo throughout Shikin's writings. It is no coincidence that "the history of nineteenth-century civilization is the history of the expansion of women's rights," and also the century of the hermaphrodite, at least in France. In a quickening of consciousness, the struggle for equal rights between men and women was gaining momentum and urgency at the same time as definitions and the understanding of human beings and human sexuality were changing.

In this chapter I discuss Shikin's incorporation of the futanari trope into her writing, which had an immediate and direct relationship with her social, political, and cultural circumstances. Shikin's choice of the trope is not an aesthetic one, as we shall see it is for Tanizaki; the futanari enables Shikin to demonstrate that sex categories are constructed and mutable. Since the futanari has organs or tissue of both sexes, they ought to be able to behave and feel as both sexes do, according to popular wisdom about sex at the time. Yet, such a notion disturbs the sexual paradigms, both modern and pre-modern. To make her point, Shikin has the sex on the surface of her futanari characters, encoded in clothing and hairstyle, contradicted by the "wrong," or the other sex's behavior and feelings. For example, several such characters present as female but exhibit assertiveness and fortitude traditionally coded as male.

7. Shimizu Shikin, "'Tōyō no fujo' jobun," in *Shikin zenshū*, ed. Kozai Yoshishige (Sōdo bunka, 1983), 240. These collected works will be abbreviated as SZ hereafter.

8. Her son, Kozai Yoshishige, remembers hearing his mother read Spencer's *Social Statics* and Rousseau's *Social Contract* ("Meiji no onna: Shimizu Shikin no koto," in SZ, ed. Kozai Yoshishige [Sōdo bunka, 1983], 559). Also see Shiota Ryohei's *Shintei meiji joryū sakka ron*, Shirizu, kindai bungaku kenkyū 4 (Bunsendo, 1965).

Sex Is Political

It is reasonable to infer from her letters, if not her stories, that her husband's intimate relations with another woman caused Shikin anguish.⁹ However, the tradition of married men having mistresses or multiple wives still existed in this period. Involvement with women besides a wife was a sign of status, of having achieved the financial success necessary to supporting more than one wife or family. In 1882, the Meiji government abolished recognition of a concubine as a relative or member of the family. Immediately before Shikin remarried in 1885, the Ministry of Home Affairs gave notice that a concubine could no longer be entered in the family register (*koseki*). Yet, this same criminal law approved entry of children (*shoshi*) born to a concubine and later, children born to any woman other than a wife, into the family register, according to the preference of the patriarch. The civil code of 1898 maintained this idea of a man's right to choose whether or not to list the children of a mistress in the family register. Until 1945 the Japanese government officially sanctioned relationships between a man and a woman other than a wife.¹⁰ My point here is that despite the ostensible threat to the status of the concubine in the 1880s, the practice of concubinage remained widely accepted; hence, Shikin's refusal to accept her husband's practice of the custom by divorcing him is significant.¹¹

Shikin stayed in Kyoto after leaving her first husband in 1889. She remained active in the Freedom and People's Rights movement and women's groups, delivering speeches and writing articles until, through an introduction to the editor, Iwamoto Yoshiharu (1863–1942), she moved to Tokyo and began editing and writing for *Jogaku zasshi* in 1890.

With the publication of "The Broken Ring," Shikin became known as a champion of people's rights, who, while writing against the subordination of women, promoted their independence. She was also the first to put a

9. Okazaki was a bigamist. The conditions of her brief marriage to him and the discovery of his other wife are similar to those in her debut short story "The Broken Ring" (1891).

10. Imai Yasuko, Yabu Teiko, and Watanabe Sumiko, eds. *Tanpen josei bungaku: kindai* (Ōfūsha, 1994), 15–16.

11. *Jogaku zasshi* joined the campaign to abolish prostitution and published several articles in support of the cause. See Inoue Teruko, "'Jogaku' shisō no keisei to tenkai: jogaku zasshisha no shisō shiteki kenkyū," *Shinbun kenkyūjo kiyō* 17 (1968): 41. Iwamoto considered dalliance with a concubine or prostitute an abrogation of the marriage contract and therefore grounds for divorce ("Understanding Protection of Women's Rights," *JZ* 5 March 1886: 81). *JZ* refers to *Jogaku zasshi* throughout.

proclamation of independence into literary form. In her refusal of patriarchal customs, she advocated self-respect and free marriage (*jiyū kekkon*), in opposition to forced marriage (*assei kekkon*). Furthermore, these salient concepts were all based on one aspect of the story, the refusal to accept her husband's romantic relationship with another woman, and not on the entire work.¹²

Kōda Rohan (1867–1947), a dominant literary figure in the 1890s, writes in his appraisal of “The Broken Ring,” “[. . .] one must not easily shut one's eyes because it is the work of a woman writer,” plainly demonstrating the bias against women. He concludes, “There are many talented women in the literary establishment at the present time, and the Jogaku Zasshi Company must be glad to know that one more is added here.”¹³ In her review of the same story, Tanabe Kaho (1868–1943, later Miyake Kaho, the best-known woman fiction writer of the day, calls Shikin a victim (*gisei*). Oppressed by the obstinate bigotry of her parents, she married a heartless man [Okazaki Harumasa], explains Kaho. From the midst of this grief, Shikin expresses sympathy for other women in “The Broken Ring.”¹⁴

Shikin was seen and written about primarily as a woman writer, a category of writers deemed emotional and frivolous, and a writer who used political themes, whether power relations among people and institutions or issues of human rights. As a consequence, her literary talent was minimized if not obscured; in turn she did not expand her repertoire of themes. Her writing was a reaction to the discourse regarding women's proper behavior and place in society (married caretakers). The consequences of being labeled a woman writer of women's rights would have repercussions for the subjects of her writing and the trajectory of her literary career, which ended early.

Editor Iwamoto wrote in *Jogaku zasshi* in 1889 that female novelists could produce innovative works by adding a woman's perspective. They should not merely copy what men produce but observe those phenomena that men never notice. He adds that women should be graceful writers, never vulgar or coarse.

Ah, Ladies! There is a harp in your bosom, but only the purest hand must strum it. Please do not let an impure, heartless hand pluck it. Therefore, we say women writers must not learn from male writers.

12. Yamaguchi, *Naite ai suru shimai ni tsugu*, 152.

13. Quoted in Yamaguchi, *Naite ai suru shimai*, 134–35.

14. Tanabe Kaho, *JZ*, March 28, 1891, 216.

Nevertheless, I do not say it is wrong to read Scott's work many times. Yes, listen to the male writers, but you do not have to learn from them. You can learn from them, but you do not have to copy them. The essence of womanhood is different in its nature from the essence of manhood. Shouldn't the novels written with the essence of womanhood be different from the novels written with the essence of manhood?¹⁵

Although Iwamoto encouraged women in their writing, he did not equivocate on the point that they were women writers and therefore had to behave like women. He did not discriminate against them through obvious disparagement but marginalized them and diminished their value, nonetheless. Iwamoto believed that whatever women produced should reflect that they were women. They must not forget their sex and therefore their place.

Iwamoto and the culture of *Jogaku zasshi* fostered Shikin's literary life. In order to situate her in this context, I will turn now to Iwamoto and interrogate the premises of his thinking that sometimes generated contradictory claims in his commentaries. Iwamoto's attitude and opinions regarding women are important because of his broad influence and his relationship to Shikin. Moreover, his views help elucidate the subject-position of Meiji women.

Iwamoto was born in 1863 and graduated in 1880 from Nakamura Masanao's Dōjinsha Academy in Tokyo, where he had been influenced by Nakamura's teachings on girls' education, as well as Confucianism and Christianity. Iwamoto became an editor for *Jogaku shinshi* (*New Magazine of Women's Education*), first issued by Shūseisha in June 1884. Targeting a female audience, the magazine was the first in Japan to take up the topic of "women's enlightenment" (*josei no keimō*).¹⁶ The commentary in the first issue asserts that the combination of the virtues and fine customs of Western women and the traditional ways of superior women of Japan will create the foundation for putting one's house in order and beautifying family ethics. Moreover, it will be the source of advancing Japan's morality, as well as producing talented genius.¹⁷ The contents of *Jogaku shinshi* reflect a period in which elements of modernity were still fluid and under debate.

15. Iwamoto Yoshiharu, "Women Writers as They Ought to Be," *JZ*, March 16, 1889, 273.

16. Inoue Teruko, "Jogaku' shisō no keisei to tenkai," 39.

17. Quoted in Noheji Kiyoe, *Josei kaihō shisō no genryū: Iwamoto Yoshiharu to "Jogaku zasshi."* (Azekura shobō, 1984), 124.

Yet, the magazine did clearly urge women to become conscious of themselves as individual human beings and of marriage as the union of a man and woman who truly love each other.¹⁸ Iwamoto's thoughts on women and marriage were germinating.

In 1885 Iwamoto and a colleague founded *Jogaku zasshi*, which continued until 1904. While *Jogaku shinshi* had furnished its female readership with information and ethics to adopt, *Jogaku zasshi* was both proactive and progressive in its aim to raise women's consciousness through its forum on women's rights.¹⁹ Yet, it also rejected more radical positions, such as gender equality of legal rights. It is noteworthy that *Jogaku zasshi* reached a male audience as well as female. Says one reader, "It is no exaggeration to say that all of Meiji period's new women's culture originates in this magazine."²⁰

Also in 1885, Iwamoto became a member of Shitaya Church, where Kimura Kumaji (1845–1927) baptized him. Kimura had just returned from the United States after a course of study in theology. Along with his wife Tōko, Kimura established a Christian girls' school, Meiji jogakkō in October 1885. Iwamoto's goal of spreading Christian morality in Japan became apparent in his writing.²¹

Upon his business partner's sudden death in 1886, Iwamoto became editor of *Jogaku zasshi*, and at around the same time, head teacher at Meiji jogakkō. In 1892 he became headmaster. Teaching gave him the practical knowledge with which to expound upon his ideas of women's education and position in society.

Iwamoto expressed his philosophy of girls' education (*jogaku*) until 1889 when he underwent a change in his position, in essays on Christianity and women, on abolishing prostitution, the important role of women in the family, and women working outside of the home. In so doing, he employed images of Western women and the home to critique Japanese society. However, Iwamoto's notion of equality between men and women amounted to asserting that women should be considered human beings too. Whether servant or master, landowner or peasant, people of any status were human. Yet, differences in social roles and positions required that the rights of men and women be differentiated and likewise the treatment of men and women should be distinct.²²

18. Noheji, *Josei kaihō shisō no genryū*, 125.

19. Inoue, "Jogaku' shisō no keisei to tenkai," 39.

20. Kanzaki Kiyoshi, *Gendai fujinden* (Chūō kōronsha, 1940), 146.

21. Inoue, "Jogaku' shisō no keisei to tenkai," 40.

22. Inoue, "Jogaku' shisō no keisei to tenkai," 47.

Stressing physical and psychological differences between men and women, Iwamoto justified the division of labor between the sexes, thus forming the basis of his *jogaku* philosophy. The home should be the most important concern of a woman, he believed. Iwamoto subscribed to a heterosexual cultural matrix, as Butler calls it, in which gender must follow from sex, and the practices of desire must follow from sex or gender. The notion that “‘intelligible’ genders are those which in some sense institute and maintain relations of coherence and continuity among sex, gender, sexual practice, and desire”²³ clearly underlies his philosophy. Within the boundaries of intelligible genders, Iwamoto sought to anchor women to the home and thereby garner respect for them as productive contributors to society. Among other essentializing traits, he attributed conservatism to females and an enterprising, progressive nature to males. Both are of equal value to society, he claimed, but it is natural that men act in public, while women belong in private space. Men are the ones to engage in politics and economic activities (outside of the home); women are the ones to stay in the home. He criticized women whose foremost activities were not concerned with the home, from an ethical and social point of view.²⁴

Despite the fact that Iwamoto proscribed certain women’s roles, he was praised for expounding the idea that women should be recognized for the service they performed as housekeepers. In addition, he rejected *danson johi* (respect men, despise women)—the pernicious tradition of treating women as inferior beings—thereby elevating their status to some extent. As a pioneering organ for change under the direction of Iwamoto, *Jogaku zasshi* especially prospered from 1889 to 1893 due to a blend of the literature it published and Iwamoto’s own symbolic status as proponent of social reform.²⁵

Yet, Iwamoto’s conservative bent manifested itself before Shikin joined the organization in May 1890, so it was a matter of time before Shikin’s views would clash with Iwamoto’s and she would decide to leave. The changing tenor of his *jogaku* thought began in 1889 with his transmutation of real struggle on the part of women—for equal rights in education, in

23. Butler continues, “. . . the spectres of discontinuity and incoherence, themselves thinkable only in relation to existing norms of continuity and coherence, are constantly prohibited and produced by the very laws that seek to establish causal or expressive lines of connection among biological sex, culturally constituted genders, and the ‘expression’ or ‘effect’ of both in the manifestation of sexual desire through sexual practice.” Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (Routledge, 1990), 17.

24. Inoue, “‘Jogaku’ shisō no keisei to tenkai,” 48–49.

25. Inoue, “‘Jogaku’ shisō no keisei to tenkai,” 41.

the home, and in marriage—to an abstract and cosmic view of harmony. He believed that religion, art, ethics, and philosophy functioned to harmonize society and the world, and women could fulfill the role of bringing these elements to the fore: “[. . .] in religion, women are the most zealous missionaries; in ethics, women are the most pure-hearted advocates; in art, women are the noblest patrons; and in philosophy, women are the gentlest practitioners.”²⁶

Similarly, Fukuzawa Yukichi, who had written in support of women’s education and rights, grew more conservative in his views. Beginning in 1882, he no longer emphasized people’s rights. Instead, he concentrated on the necessity of strengthening Japan’s national power. He severed the connection between individual rights and the strength of the nation. Carmen Blacker summarizes Fukuzawa’s attitude as thus: “If an authoritarian government could ensure a stronger nation than could a liberal one, then let there be an authoritarian government.”²⁷ In some form or another, both Fukuzawa and Iwamoto perceived individual freedoms as a threat to the nation.

Iwamoto shifted into a position where he urged that women should be valued as societal harmonizing agents based on their soft and gentle nature. In real terms this meant, for example, that he opposed women’s participation in politics, for the harmonizing role would be more effectively fulfilled by taking care of the home; accordingly, he also opposed women working outside the home.²⁸

I am certain that in the future both men and women must enter society and share political responsibilities in order to realize each individual’s strengths. However, whether women should have political rights cannot be determined based on commonly held beliefs. Even though heaven has granted equal rights to women of today, they still cannot make demands on the political level. So, in today’s world, women still cannot directly be involved in politics [. . .].²⁹

Although Iwamoto’s role as women’s advocate is diminished here, he was still considered the principal spokesman for women, and *Jogaku*

26. Meiji jogakkō, “Women and Women’s Education,” *JZ*, January 5, 1889: 4.

27. Carmen Blacker, *The Japanese Enlightenment: A Study of the Writings of Fukuzawa Yukichi* (Cambridge University Press, 1969), 134.

28. Iwamoto Yoshiharu, “Women of Today Should not Join Political Parties,” *JZ*, March 1, 1890; “Women’s Power,” *JZ* June 28, 1890.

29. Iwamoto, “Women’s Power,” *JZ*, June 28, 1890, 519.

zasshi still spoke to women.³⁰ Nevertheless, Iwamoto's conservatism continued both in his failure to directly confront the Civil Code's negative impact on women and in his decision to take his religious ministry abroad to "liberate" East Asian women.

Iwamoto's response to the Civil Code conflict was to emphasize *ryōsai kenbo* (good wife, wise mother) as a Japanese tradition. Although *ryōsai kenbo* was touted as a Japanese tradition by the government, in fact it was a neologism coined by Nakamura Masanao during the Enlightenment, the first decade of the Meiji period. The idiom was taken from the Chinese idiom *kensai, ryōbo* (intelligent wife, good mother). Nakamura used the term "to describe a model for women's roles adapted from the nineteenth century West (i.e., that women should provide the moral foundation of the home, educating the children and acting as 'better half' to their husbands)."³¹ Kathleen Uno documents this creation:

[Evidence] suggests that Japanese conceptions of womanhood as motherhood and of childhood as a lengthy period of economic dependence are social constructs that emerged in modern times. Moreover, the evidence presented concerning the division of reproductive labor of Tokugawa and early Meiji households implies that to view mothering as woman's universal and natural destiny is to deny history.³²

Although the new Civil Code laws would restrict the rights of women to assemble, etc., Iwamoto deflected the attack by harkening back to the Japanese woman of an indeterminate past who excelled in her roles as wife and mother.

In a word, being a Japanese good wife and wise mother of today is of great importance. Therefore, a woman who is just like a Western

30. Inoue, "Jogaku' shisō no keisei to tenkai," 55.

31. Laurel Rasplica Rodd, "Yosano Akiko and the Taishō Debate over the 'New Woman,'" in *Recreating Japanese Women, 1600–1945*, ed. and intro. Gail Lee Bernstein (University of California Press, 1991), 176.

Later (1898) the government adopted it as a slogan for educating women to carry out practical duties as wives and mothers in a repressive, patriarchal family system. See Sharon Sievers, *Flowers in Salt: The Beginnings of Feminist Consciousness in Modern Japan* (Stanford University Press, 1983) and Fukaya Masashi, *Ryōsai kenbo shugi no kyōiku* (Reimei shobō, 1990).

32. Kathleen S. Uno, "Women and Changes in the Household Division of Labor," in *Recreating Japanese Women, 1600–1945*, ed. and intro. Gail Lee Bernstein (University of California Press, 1991), 40.

woman is not necessarily the good wife, wise mother of Japan today. A woman just like the good wife, wise mother of old Japan does not itself mean that the woman is the good wife, wise mother of modern Japan. The woman of Japan today must be the good wife, wise mother of modern Japan.

Well, how can one be a good wife and wise mother? As a wife, she is required to strongly support, from within, her husband who works outside. As a mother, it is necessary for her to be equal to the task of thoroughly and completely educating her beloved children, who grow up in the course of time.³³ (emphasis added)

Iwamoto juxtaposes the model of the Western woman and the model of the Japanese woman of old and asserts that the modern Japanese woman must be a good wife and wise mother beyond these two, that in and of themselves these models are inadequate. The inadequacies lie in their existence in another place and time. The modern Japanese woman must be aware of her place in time, and answer to the call of 1890s Japan. Nevertheless, Iwamoto holds these models up as virtuous guiding lights. Ironically, contrary to Iwamoto's view, the woman of old Japan enjoyed greater privilege and rights in many ways than her modern counterpart.

Signaling further change in his *jogaku* ideas, Iwamoto wrote in 1893 on the topic of the home, but this time called it "room house" *shitsu ka*, meaning house, residence, couple, family, or home, instead of using the English word "*homu*," as he had done before. He also used a word for couple or spouse, *kōrei*, instead of the more common word for couple, or husband and wife (*fūfu*). The change in language indicates a change in thought.

Accordingly, a couple's mission is to love each other. The home's divine calling as well is love again. Yet why should this love be different from the love for fellow citizens and the world? Being born into the world, having the same meaning as belonging to a nation, one builds a home and becomes a couple. In this way there is love; in this duty there is devotion. The goal is to develop one's spirituality and have another develop hers or his.³⁴

33. Iwamoto Yoshiharu, "To the Presidents of Girls' Schools and to the Parents of the Female Students," *JZ*, April 4, 1891: 227.

34. Iwamoto Yoshiharu, "The Divine Mission of Home and Couple," *JZ* October 14, 1893: 388.

God determines the couple's union; it is not a contract between the two. Therefore, he reasons in 1893, they cannot divorce. These sentiments completely overturned what Iwamoto had earlier stressed in 1886, the right of women to divorce.

From the beginning, marriage has not been an ordinary bond. However, even if a couple marries in haste, they have to end up in a "happy life partnership" forever. Because an enduring "happy life partnership" is what we want, we'd like to restrain divorce. But if the will to divorce continues unceasingly and breaking off conjugal relations and untying the nuptial knot are unavoidable, then the justifiable path to follow is, of course, resolutely deciding to divorce.³⁵

Inherent in the right to divorce is the recognition of a woman as a subject, with the power to act on her own behalf. It is therefore fitting that Iwamoto further strips away this subjectivity: "Even if a nation is scattered, to abandon it is disloyal; even if a family is poverty-stricken and its members don't live in harmony, to leave is immoral."³⁶ Iwamoto conflates family with nation, and the subject of the nation, or the imperial subject, becomes one with the family member. He thereby equates disloyalty to the family to disloyalty to the nation; constraints imposed upon the subject in the emperor-subject relationship are superimposed onto familial relationships. The individual agency denied to the subject in the emperor-subject relationship is extinguished from the familial or conjugal relationship as well. Moreover, this denial for Iwamoto is gender-specific, for the correlative subject-position in the family is the wife. Yet, Iwamoto does not question a husband's continued right to divorce, further distinguishing the husband and wife's positions.

Shikin and Iwamoto

Before his conversion, Iwamoto recommended that marriage contracts be written, and in Part II of her short story "The Nature of the Modern Couple" ("Imayō fūfu katagi"),³⁷ Shikin features a woman who is vindicated

35. Iwamoto Yoshiharu, "Understanding Protection of Women's Rights," *JZ* March 5, 1886: 81.

36. Iwamoto, "The Divine Mission of Home and Couple," 386.

37. Published in *Jogaku zasshi*, August 10, 1897.

for having done just that. She insists upon it when her prospective husband resists, but had she not done so, the narrative makes it clear that her husband would have continued his affairs with other women. In addition, Shikin turns the screw a little tighter by commenting on the nature of love and happiness, which, it seems, has a great deal to do with money. Also, the relationship between husband and wife is dynamic and negotiable, unlike the emperor-subject relationship that Iwamoto promotes.

In Part I of the same story, Shikin opens up space for shifting identities, though it runs counter to Iwamoto's "truth" of women and the home. These identities resonated with women readers, and their emotions were evoked by the truths of the stories. Sōma Kokkō (1876–1955) graduated in 1897 from Meiji jogakkō, where Shikin had taught. Kokkō speaks for a large segment of Shikin's readership when she recalls how deeply she was moved at the anguish of the woman in "The Broken Ring." She describes the popularity Shikin enjoyed because of the story.³⁸ It is mentioned as having won Shikin literary fame in an introduction to a new piece by Shikin, "Noji no kiku" ("Chrysanthemum in the Path"), in the October 25, 1896 issue of *Jogaku zasshi*. Certainly, women who wanted to educate themselves and actively participate in society identified with the woman in Part I of "The Nature of the Modern Couple" as well. Before she has her first child, the wife plays the roles of both husband and wife, member of society, teacher, and equal partner in marriage. I discuss this story in detail below. Once again Shikin challenges the authority of Iwamoto and the social norm of gender polarity by offering these possibilities.

Throughout the period of Iwamoto's growing conservatism on girls' education, many people harbored a certain antipathy toward education for women. The general view was that education for girls beyond primary school was unnecessary and that female students were undisciplined. Journalists would go so far as to fabricate scandals and mount sustained assaults on female students. In the midst of the salvos, Iwamoto stood bravely as defender and advocate, giving succor to both students and par-

38. Sōma Kokkō, *Meiji shoki no san josei* (Kosei kaku, 1940), 280–81. After working in sericulture in Shinshū, Kokkō and her husband went to Tokyo and opened the bakery Nakamuraaya, which still operates today, in Shinjuku. Under Kokkō's influence, the shop doubled as a salon of sorts, frequented by artists such as Takamura Kōtarō, Nakamura Tsune, and the sculptor Hagiwara Rokuzan, who studied with Auguste Rodin. Kokkō was also a contributor to *Jogaku zasshi*. It was Iwamoto who anointed her with the pen name Kokkō (black light), Takeda Kiyoko, *Fujin kaihō no dōhyō: nihon shisōshi ni miru sono keifu* (Domesu shuppan, 1985), 150.

ents.³⁹ It was at this time that Shikin joined *Jogaku zasshi*. In a defensive posture, Yamaguchi opines,

It seems that one viewpoint maintains that not only *Jogaku zasshi*, which boasted of its own progressive stance, but even chairperson Iwamoto Yoshiharu, opposed women's right to participate in politics and was critical of women's rights advocates. But if he had been critical of women's rights advocates, then he would not have welcomed women's rights champion Shikin. As for Shikin, since having planned in Kyoto for the publication of a magazine "that debates the expansion of women's rights and political viewpoints," women's right to political participation would have been the first thing that they discussed. Then, having come to a certain understanding, she would have decided to go to *Jogaku zasshi*.⁴⁰

Yamaguchi's vigorous protest against the criticism of Iwamoto does not exculpate him of his oppressive stance. Shikin had been looking for a forum in which she could write creatively in the interest of women's rights. Whether or not she realized the extent of Iwamoto's conservatism—and he did become increasingly reactionary with time—it made sense for her to take advantage of the opportunity.

During Shikin's absence from the magazine for a few months in 1892 due to exhaustion and illness, Iwamoto instituted a reform of the magazine. From June 1892, issue number 320, there were two editions of the magazine, the "red cover," directed toward housewives and their household concerns, and the "white cover," targeting young people and their interests in literature and current affairs, published alternately. Shikin was charged with responsibility for the "red cover" edition when she returned to work in September. Hoshino Tenchi (1862–1950), a Christian enthusiast of literature and girls' education, took charge of the "white cover" edition. By the end of 1892, he relinquished responsibilities of the "white cover" edition to pursue the founding of *Bungakukai* (*Literary World*) under Iwamoto's auspices but not under Iwamoto's editorial policy. Michael Brownstein quotes Baba Kochō, who explains why Hoshino Tenchi, Shimazaki Tōson, and Kitamura Tōkoku, who also wrote for *Jogaku zasshi*, needed to free themselves from Iwamoto's control:

39. Yamaguchi, *Naite ai suru shimai*, 112.

40. Yamaguchi, 113.

These people had all been Christians at one time, but after they began writing, their ideas gradually began to go beyond the realm of Christian faith or Christian morality. When their writings, that is, works that contained assertions tinged with almost anti-Christian ideas, were published in *Jogaku zasshi*, they clashed with the position of Iwamoto, who was a prominent figure in Christian circles.⁴¹

The founding of *Bungakukai*, Brownstein explains, had more to do with literature than anything else. The literary interests of Hoshino, Tōson, and Tōkoku overlapped less frequently with women's education. Yet "for Iwamoto, literature would always be of secondary importance, subordinate to his larger concerns of elevating the status of Japanese women through education and social reform."⁴² In spite of solicitation of contributions from female students and would-be female writers in the first issue of *Bungakukai* on January 31, 1893, the result of Hoshino's departure from *Jogaku zasshi* to start a new, literary magazine was the cleaving of women's writing from men's writing, that is, from "literature." Because of the close relationship between *Jogaku zasshi* and *Bungakukai*, the seventh issue (July 1893) of *Bungakukai* carried the following disclaimer:

Literature is literature and religion is religion. *Literary World* [*Bungakukai*] is made up of a group of people with literary aspirations; they are not necessarily religious adherents. Furthermore, it is not limited to Christians or to Christian beliefs.

Literary World is published by Literary World Company, not by The Woman's Magazine Company. The names of the companies are different, and their principles are different. Literary World Company and The Woman's Company are different.⁴³

The *Bungakukai* coterie took pains to dissociate itself from *Jogaku zasshi*, but certainly its audience was familiar with names such as Tōson's and Tōkoku's, which had appeared in both magazines. Although *Jogaku zasshi* continued to publish fiction, the division of male literary pursuits in *Bun-*

41. Quoted in Michael C. Brownstein, "Jogaku zasshi and the Founding of *Bungakukai*," *Monumenta Nipponica* XXXV (1980): 328.

42. Michael C. Brownstein, "Prophet of the Inner Life: Kitamura Tōkoku and the Beginnings of Romanticism in Modern Japanese Literature" (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1981), 59.

43. Translation from Brownstein, *Prophet of the Inner Life*, 63.

gakukai demarcated a world of “serious, intellectual literature” from something less than that in *The Woman’s Magazine*.

That Shikin did not make a clear break with Iwamoto or *Jogaku zasshi* underscores her ambivalence. Yamaguchi views Shikin’s household management and housekeeping articles during her tenure as “red cover” editor as an effort to improve the station and worth of the housewife and a refusal to capitulate to what could have been a monotonous, trivial assignment. However valid that assessment may be, it obscures a certain policing of “truth” that guided Shikin’s hand. Some of the articles she wrote in 1892 included “Shufu no hiketsu issoku” (“One Tip for the Housewife”),⁴⁴ “Genan gejo meshitsukaikata” (“How to Treat Male and Female Servants”),⁴⁵ “Osatsu no ryōrihō” (“Potato Cuisine”),⁴⁶ and “Yome to shūtome” (“Daughter-in-Law and Mother-in-Law”).⁴⁷ *Jogaku zasshi* and Iwamoto authorized her writing as long as she confined her topics to the sphere of the home and its activities and relationships. As a consequence, this restriction stymied Shikin’s creative literary interests. After such a widely acclaimed story as “The Broken Ring” in 1891, Shikin was only able to produce one four-page short story, “Ichi seinen iyō no jukkai” (“A Young Man’s Unusual Recollections”) in 1892 and one six-page short story, “Komusume” (“A Young Girl”), in 1894. In addition, Iwamoto’s decision to appoint her “red cover” editor worked to silence her writing on women’s rights. Yet, what seeped out from the authorized articles appears to be a somewhat subversive interpretation of the home. Shikin was writing within a Meiji social context in which the social status of a person determined the rights, privileges, and treatment of that person, which Iwamoto used to justify the limited “equality” of women. Shikin wrote in “How to Treat Male and Female Servants” that servants were human beings too and should be treated as such. An employer of servants should teach and protect them and not treat them like slaves. After all, “a servant too is somebody’s child,” Shikin beseeches the housewives to remember. Their employment is based on an agreement that does not afford the employer the right to mistreat a fellow human being. Instead, employers should liberate servants from their subordination and respect their personhood.⁴⁸

Although Shikin policed herself in writing these articles and not writ-

44. *JZ*, October 1, 1892.

45. *JZ*, October 15, 1892.

46. *JZ*, October 29, 1892.

47. *JZ*, November 26, 1892.

48. Shimizu Shikin, “Genan gejo meshitsukaikata,” in *SZ*, ed. Kozai Yoshishige (Sōdo bunka, 1983), 369–70.

ing others, she also took the opportunity to advocate human rights in the realm to which she was restricted. As a woman writer, women's rights activist, and *Jogaku Zasshi* Company employee, Shikin's gender was paramount when she was assigned the red cover editorship. It overrode her ability as a creative writer and bound her hand to producing truths that could be validated by *Jogaku zasshi*. Gender saturated the truths that she produced, which in turn reified her identity as a woman writer and all the implications of that label. Occasionally, her human rights consciousness could inscribe itself in home economics during this period. These moments of interruption and eruption resist her identity as a so-called woman writer and reveal the shifting positions she could assume.

Shikin's resignation from *Jogaku Zasshi* Company in 1894 coincided with Iwamoto's evangelical mission to Asia. The Sino-Japanese War (1894–95), which began in summer of that year, elicited impulses in Iwamoto to wage a holy war (*seisen*) of justice (*seigi*) and charity (*hakuai*). Along with Methodist Christian colleagues, Iwamoto established the Kaigai kyōiku kai (Overseas Education Church) to pursue the "liberation" of India, Siberia, China, and Korea. In order to devote more of his energy to that purpose, Iwamoto changed *Jogaku zasshi* from a weekly to a monthly publication.⁴⁹

Iwamoto considered the women of Southeast Asia to hold a lower social position within their societies than that which Japanese women held in theirs. Therefore, it became the mission of Japanese women to liberate these Asian women. He believed, as did Shikin, in a progressive theory of history within which the status of women in more advanced nations was more elevated than in less advanced nations. Thus, it was incumbent upon Japan to expand women's rights in the less advanced nations of Asia.⁵⁰ By the time Iwamoto was justifying Japanese intervention in Korea (locus of disputes that led to the Sino-Japanese War) and other parts of Asia, Shikin had become a "contributor" to *Jogaku zasshi* and had moved to Kyoto.⁵¹

I am not suggesting that Shikin left *Jogaku zasshi* because of disagreements with Iwamoto. Certainly, the responsibilities of her new marriage and family played a substantial role⁵² in Shikin's change in status with the

49. Inoue, "'Jogaku' shisō no keisei to tenkai," 59.

50. Inoue, "'Jogaku' shisō no keisei to tenkai," 59.

51. Her new husband, Kozai Yoshinao, left to study in Europe in March 1895, so Shikin joined her mother-in-law in Kyoto.

52. See Yamaguchi, *Naite ai suru shimai ni tsugu* for the full account of her marriage to Yoshinao and his demands upon her.

magazine and then retirement from writing altogether. Shikin had become a wife, mother, and daughter-in-law. She continued to write to support herself while her husband was studying abroad, but her identity as writer, women's rights advocate, and member of the literary establishment faded and lost priority in her life. In addition to marriage, however, the influence of the atmosphere in which she wrote certainly supported her decision to discontinue writing. Those conditions, in which her prose fiction was not valued as highly because a woman had written it, not valued more than advice to housewives, and even scorned because it came from the hand of a writer who was also a mother, were as pervasive and encompassing as the demands of marriage. Consequently, she shifted the grounds on which her truths could be told and policed. That she represented herself in public silence for the second half of her life revealed another truth and identity.

Artistic Expression of Equality in "A Young Man's Unusual Recollections"

In his classic work on modern Japanese literature, *Kansei no henkaku* (*Transformations of Sensibility: The Phenomenology of Meiji Literature*), Kamei Hideo describes the literature of the 1890s as "constructed around women's sensibilities and passions." The female characters in these works "bear some sort of social taboo" and "symbolize the prohibitions that defined the everyday thinking of the petty bourgeoisie."⁵³ Moreover, he adds, the characters are narrow in their concerns; their thinking does not extend to the larger situation. Social criticism is not a self-conscious theme of these works.⁵⁴ While Kamei's assessment accurately captures much of this decade's literature, Shikin's is clearly among the exceptional work that perhaps proves the rule. Her social consciousness is front and center, and her concerns are broad.

The next short story Shikin published after her debut story "The Broken Ring" is also a dramatic monologue, "Ichi seinen iyō no jukkai," ("A Young Man's Unusual Recollections," 1892), in which she uses a male/futanari first-person narrator. Although it was not unusual for male authors to use female first-person narrators, women did not often employ

53. Kamei Hideo, *Transformations of Sensibility: The Phenomenology of Meiji Literature*, translation edited by Michael Bourdaghs (Center for Japanese Studies Publications: University of Michigan, 2002), 112.

54. Kamei Hideo, *Transformations of Sensibility*, 113.

the strategy of a male protagonist narrator. Hirotsu Ryūrō's "Zangiku" ("Lone Chrysanthemum," 1889) is narrated by a woman from her sick bed, and in Shimazaki Tōson's "Kyūshujin" ("Former Master," 1902), a maid narrates the story of the couple who employ her. Both Ryūrō and Tōson use female narrators to exploit stereotypes of women as illogical, in the case of "Zangiku,"⁵⁵ and as jealous and vindictive, in the case of "Kyūshujin."⁵⁶ Shikin, on the other hand, does not reify gendered categories or conventions through her narrator but instead explores sexed positions through a futanari figure. She rewrites the script for normative male performance through an ostensibly male narrator who shows deep respect for a woman. Their behavior produces a subject-position that is not reiterative or performative of the male gender. Rather, it is unintelligible because they enter a domain outside of their presumably male body by rejecting male behavior and embracing an alternatively sexed position. Shikin's narrator challenges normative sexed positions and the patriarchy that underpins them by speaking highly of a woman who would otherwise be ostracized and subordinated by that structure. This story was published in the same year as many of her housekeeping, "red cover" articles. She made the best of her job to write articles targeting housewives, while subversively upending a narrative representing a "man" unlike any man the reader might know.

According to Sasabuchi Tomoichi, pride for being a pioneer of the time can be felt through the word "*iyō*" in the title "Ichi seinen iyō no jukkai." *Iyō* means "strange," "unusual," or even "bizarre."⁵⁷ Shikin draws her character to be different, if not extraordinary, strange, and bizarre in their sentiments.

Both Sasabuchi and Yamaguchi discuss the biographical aspects of the story, the love described by the narrator as that shared between Shikin and her husband Kozai Yoshinao.⁵⁸ Clearly, however, a deeper significance lies in the representation of this futanari narrator than any real-life model. The narrator-character is a fiction, one imagined in a particular way. Shikin

55. Suga Hidemi, *Nihon kindai bungaku no "tanjō": genbun itchi undō to nashonari-zumu* (Ota Shuppan, 1995), 150–51. For a discussion of this narrator, see also Komori Yōichi, *Buntai toshite no monogatari* (Chikuma Shobō, 1988), 248–53.

56. For an extended discussion of the narrator's function in "Kyūshujin," see James A. Fujii, *Complicit Fictions: The Subject in the Modern Japanese Prose Narrative* (University of California Press, 1993), 45–75.

57. Sasabuchi Tomoichi, *Meiji Taishō bungaku no bunseki* (Meiji shoin, 1970), 128.

58. Rebecca Copeland also takes a largely biographical approach in *Lost Leaves: Women Writers of Meiji Japan* (University of Hawai'i Press, 2000), 185–89.

may or may not have wanted to achieve something personal in this depiction vis-à-vis her relationship with Kozai, but what she produces literarily and accomplishes on a social, political, and sexual level suggest alternatives to continuing rigidity in dimorphism and the gendered roles associated with it.

Writing under the *nom de plume* of “Tsuyuko,” Shikin states in the preface to the story that describing love without knowing it is like an amateur piloting a tugboat. Yet a tugboat pilot can cause loss of life, whereas Tsuyuko’s mistakes may only earn the derision of her readers. “I dare not say that I can explain love. Simply, I can state that an aspect of love is thus. In general, I am only posing a question.”⁵⁹

A different character takes up the helm of narration next by pondering why they are so thoroughly enraptured by a particular woman. They narrate their meeting and falling in love with this woman for the remainder of the story. The narrator thinks of her unceasingly. They declare, “Until now I have been called a man of strong will, but in her presence, I am transformed [from a man who had disdained women and considered them devils] into a maiden (*shojo*) . . . My pride, my individuality dissipates like mist.”⁶⁰ This image of the self as maiden is repeated on the same page when they say, “I crouched demurely before her like a maiden. At that time, I understood that, in fact, my views of women in general were very much mistaken and thereupon changed drastically.”

Referring to themselves with an expression normally reserved for females, “maiden,” they thereby expand the use of the term and double the perspective of a young, innocent, uncorrupted person. Furthermore, they leave open the possibility of anyone becoming a maiden. Shikin neutralizes his maleness by transforming “him” into a “maiden” and inverting the male gaze. The reader envisions a maidenly man, giving obeisance before a woman. The narrator explains that a friend told them that their beloved had lost her virtue to a lecherous man. After that, she despaired of men altogether. Since the “male” narrator becomes a maiden, why not the object of their love and regard, whose virtue has been compromised? She, too, could become a maiden (virgin) again.

In fact, the narrator repeatedly uses a number of words that are closely related in meaning: *shishitsu* (nature, disposition), *honshitsu* (essence, true nature), *seishitsu* (nature, disposition, character), and *seijo* (nature, dispo-

59. Shimizu Shikin, “Ichi seinen iyō no jukkai,” in *SZ*, edited by Kozai Yoshishige (Sōdo bunka, 1983), 24.

60. Shikin, “Ichi seinen iyō no jukkai,” 25.

sition, character). And with each invocation of their nature, virtue, or essence, they call into question its stability. In other words, they deconstruct the word itself by means of the verb that follows. For example, “She transformed my essence/true nature” (“*Yo no honshitsu o henjitaru*”)⁶¹ or “My essence/true nature disappeared” (“*Yo ga honshitsu sae, mattaku kieusetete*”).⁶² Normally, a person’s essence or true nature, by definition, does not change or vaporize. For Shikin’s narrator, however, it is something mutable. They are no longer the person they used to be, and they repeat the idea of transformation in a variety of ways.

Likewise, they challenge the notion of “man” and “woman,” for the “man” and “woman” do not behave according to expectations. A “man” worships a woman and feels deep respect for her, surprising even “himself.” “He” becomes a maiden. A woman is supremely virtuous, even though she has surrendered her virginity. She has superhuman power (*kairiki*), the narrator says.

In their provisionally male sexed position, the narrator-subject interprets and exposes norms by citing and violating norms. When they vocalize their past contempt for women, they reiterate a norm; when they worship the woman and become like a maiden before her, they violate norms, thereby exposing them and interpreting them as unworthy. A female author writing a “male” subject becoming a woman, however fleetingly, is a trenchant commentary on social and sexual norms and perhaps checks advancing sexological trends, even momentarily.

The narrator uses these terms—*man*, *woman*, *true nature*, *essence*, *virtue*, *maiden*—provisionally. And to reinforce the tentative nature of their language they frequently pose rhetorical questions: “Why do I care about her?”⁶³ “My virtue, my pride vanished here like smoke and fog. Why?”⁶⁴ “Is this love?”⁶⁵ The controlling effect of these rhetorical questions and unconventional use of terms and categories is that of uncertainty or inquiry.

Within a single, authorial, provisionally male speaking voice, we can hear echoes of a woman engaged in the struggle for equal rights in early 1890s Japan: “Ordinarily, for various reasons, I had regarded women as rubbish, or as demons, but now I felt powerless in front of her.”⁶⁶ The

61. Shikin, “Ichi seinen iyō no jukkai,” 25.

62. Shikin, “Ichi seinen iyō no jukkai,” 26.

63. Shikin, “Ichi seinen iyō no jukkai,” 24.

64. Shikin, “Ichi seinen iyō no jukkai,” 25.

65. Shikin, “Ichi seinen iyō no jukkai,” 26.

66. Shikin, “Ichi seinen iyō no jukkai,” 25.

“male” narrator has rectified their prejudices. Their voice echoes that of their lover, as well as that of a self-conscious writer who links voice and perspective, or vocalization and focalization, in a coherent futanari narrator, which “functions to mediate authorial subjectivity.”⁶⁷ The narrator assumes a futanari position and not one productive of normative male behavior at the time. Shikin has her narrator-subject cite, mime, display, and play with norms of maleness, turning them inside out.

Sasabuchi points out commonalities that the story has with Romanticist works, “Maihime” (“The Dancing Girl,” 1890) by Mori Ōgai; “Fūryū-butsumi” (“The Elegant Buddha,” 1889) by Koda Rohan; and “Waga rōgoku” (“My Prison,” 1892), “Seiya” (“Starry Night,” 1892), and more by Kitamura Tōkoku. In all cases, Sasabuchi asserts, their first person, confessional, classical, and translation styles render the narratives stiff and awkward.⁶⁸ Shikin knew Tōkoku from *Jogaku zasshi*, since he started his formal career there with the publication of “Ensei shika to josei” (“World-Weary Poets and Women,” 1892). In addition, his “Starry Night” (“Seiya”) appeared afterwards, in the July 2, 1892 edition of *Jogaku zasshi*. Perhaps “Starry Night” was fresh in Shikin’s mind when she framed “A Young Man’s Unusual Recollections” with the first narrator’s introductory paragraph on love, followed by “the first time I met her,” just as Tōkoku begins his story with an introductory paragraph on the psychological space between night and day, followed by “the first time I saw her.”

Shikin shares a literary line with such luminaries, as well as a certain engagement with emotionalism. Donald Keene assesses Rohan’s “The Elegant Buddha” as follows: “We can overlook what would be intolerable faults in a realistic story because we understand that the author’s intent is not to portray life as it is actually lived, but to present in idealized form the emotions and aspirations of an artist.”⁶⁹ Similarly, Shikin propounds ideals in a realistic frame. Her idealism encompasses love, but more particularly, “A Young Man’s Unusual Recollections” and other works of hers aspire to equal rights and mutual respect between men and women. Even more, her ideals bring women and men closer to each other by allowing, even naturalizing heretofore gendered behavior in both sexes. For example, the

67. Michael Bourdaghs, “Editor’s Introduction: Buried Modernities—The Phenomenological Criticism of Kamei Hideo,” in *Transformations of Sensibility: The Phenomenology of Meiji Literature*, trans. ed. Michael Bourdaghs (Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 2002), xxvi.

68. Sasabuchi, *Meiji Taishō bungaku no bunseki*, 126, 128.

69. Donald Keene, *Dawn to the West: Japanese Literature of the Modern Era* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1984), 155.

emotionalism expressed by her narrator is exceptional for a male in 1892, which explains the title, according to Sasabuchi.⁷⁰

Moreover, the love the narrator expresses is not the least bit carnal. Sasabuchi refers to it as Platonic, but one might also call it passionately noetic, or intellectually passionate. The effect reinforces the feeling that the narrator is not typically “male.” In addition, they evince none of the suffering of love.⁷¹ Their love is one of adoration and worship, with none of the anguish of intense yearning.

Still, they are dreamy and their memory foggy. They live entirely in their thoughts except for when they are in her presence. “My consciousness, my thoughts are entirely consumed by her. I don’t know anything other than that.”⁷² Enraptured, struck deaf, dumb, and blind, they cannot “distinguish self from other” (*jita no sakai wo mo, benzezaruru mono to*).⁷³ That a person in the Meiji period would become insensible and lose their head is decidedly not the reactions of a male, certainly not in reaction to a female. Yet again, a provisionally male character behaves in contradistinction to their sexed body. And that Shikin employs the concept of an unbounded, fluid self, a self merged with another, is striking. There are entire histories of the non-self in Japan, most prominently based on the fundamental Mahayana Buddhist concept of non-duality and within traditional cultural structures in which the individual only exists within relationships. Here, though, the non-distinction between self and other resonates with the non-distinction between male and female. The narrator seems not to identify any differences of consequence between male and female in themselves.

Fluidity and mutability, which structure the story, are manifest in the powerful symbol of alchemy. Pondering how or why they are transformed, the narrator considers a European legend in which they have heard about “a stone of wisdom” (*chishiki no ishi*) or “philosophers’ stone” (*seitetsu no ishi*) that acts as an alchemizing agent. It can change base metals into silver or gold and make the elixir of life for achieving immortality. Therefore, they wonder if she is a kind of philosophers’ stone. No one has ever discovered the stone, so we shouldn’t expect that it actually exists, they say. For that reason, her superhuman power is that much more wondrous. That she transformed their essence/true nature (*honshitsu o henjitaru*) is a

70. Sasabuchi, *Meiji Taishō bungaku no bunseki*, 128.

71. Sasabuchi, 128.

72. Shikin, “Ichi seinen iyō no jukkai,” 26.

73. Shikin, “Ichi seinen iyō no jukkai,” 25.

kind of alchemy. The narrator is an exemplar of change. Superficially, alchemy conjures a thirst for wealth and self-preservation, though it is a philosophy interested in purifying and perfecting material. Shikin employs the symbol of alchemy to highlight this desire for change for the better. Her story demonstrates that human beings are capable of positive change, elevating both women and men. The trope of the futanari plays a pivotal role in achieving this.

Shikin expresses a sensibility that questions received “knowledge” about sex and the body, and she strikes a chord among a receptive readership, especially the young women who were being corralled into marital relationships that restricted their behavior and mobility to gendered, male-dictated norms. She imbues her futanari narrator with positive traits that redefine maleness, and through their words and behavior, the narrative redefines femaleness. Here it is represented as strong, courageous, and bold. While erasing sexual difference, Shikin simultaneously enables the expression of any character trait regardless of its normative association with a particular sex. Shikin deploys this radical stance in defying heteronormative, sexed positions through a creative use of first-person narration. Her use of the terms *man* and *woman* are not fixed. She stretches definitions and undermines assumptions about these categories. Shikin knew that “women” and “men” were ideals that served “state apparatuses” and facilitated social control. Real people were infinite in their physical composition, emotionality, and comportment. She knew also that there was no natural or authentic difference between (and among) the sexes in their social roles, roles rife with discrepancy in their articulation of sexual difference. A person’s sex does not (“naturally”) limit one’s ability to be a warrior or a caregiver; human beings prescribe these limits.

Whereas a listener is posited in “The Broken Ring,” there is no direct address to a listener in “A Young Man’s Unusual Recollections.” The focus of the narrator seems primarily to be on themselves, on their own reactions and reform. They quote neither the woman they love nor anyone else. Shikin decides not to have them directly address her *Jogaku zasshi* readers, though this is the community with which she has a bond. In this case, “the awakening to consciousness of one’s own sensibility”⁷⁴ dominates other voices and themes. Yet, as the narrator mediates authorial subjectivity, they present an ideal of sex and men metamorphosed into creatures without demeaning attitudes toward women, and of women not judged for their sexual behavior according to a double standard. Kamei Hideo

74. Kamei, *Transformations of Sensibility*, 98.

observes in first-person narrators from the early 1890s “estrangement from others and the transformation of one’s internal self-image.”⁷⁵ Perhaps Shikin’s narrator-subject represents yet another moment in the transformation of sensibility in Meiji literature, to one in which the mind is unchained from the body; that is, the body does not dictate the mind’s desires. The futanari narrator refuses to be ruled by a category that is unstable yet restrictive. Shikin’s choice of the word “unusual” (*iyō*) in the title resonates deeply in the extraordinary narrator. She suggests through her narrative that there can be and should be a new economy of sex.

Equality in Marriage

The futanari trope germinated in “A Young Man’s Unusual Recollections” and blossomed four years later in Shikin’s essay entitled “Joshi kyōiku ni taisuru kibō” (“Expectations of Girls’ Education,” 1896).⁷⁶ Written in the immediate aftermath of the Sino-Japanese War, when the new nation had just proven its military superiority and patriotic zeal, when girls’ higher schools had spread, although still, in Shikin’s view, narrow in their educational goals, she denounces girls’ education for not providing a basic, well-rounded education (*konpon-teki kyōyō*).⁷⁷ Education for girls is not equal to that for boys, she declares.⁷⁸ Girls are educated to be mothers and wives, and they are excluded from a curriculum deemed unsuitable to their sex.

Besides eliminating the distinction between girls and boys through the principle that girls must be like this and must do that, girls’ education cannot succeed without the addition of great spirit and great knowledge and culture. If it is indeed necessary to include

75. Kamei, *Transformations of Sensibility*, 78.

76. Published in the magazine *Taiyō*.

77. Girls’ education peaked from 1897 to the beginning of the Taishō period (1912–26). See Ogō Orié, “Joshi kyōiku shoshi,” *Tokyojin*, July 1998, 90 and Ogō Orié, *Joshi kyōiku kotohajime* (Maruzen kabushiki geisha, 1995). However, private schools began to decline in 1899 with the promulgation of the *Kōtōjōgakkō rei* (Girls’ Higher School Act). See Ann M. Harrington, “Women and Higher Education in the Japanese Empire (1895–1945),” *Journal of Asian History* 21 (1987): 169–86.

78. Harrington writes, “When institutions called *joshi daigaku* (women’s colleges) and *joshi kōtōshihan gakkō* (women’s higher normal schools) came into existence, girls and young women entering these institutions had as formal preparation an education equal or inferior to boys middle school education.” Ann M. Harrington, “Women and Higher Education in the Japanese Empire (1895–1945),” 172.

these, then doesn't the girls' education that is now being practiced lack such spirit? Education that does not embrace any spirit besides that of good wife, wise mother, and education that insists upon discrimination between girls and boys from elementary school age does not belong to the category of girls' education.⁷⁹

As it stands, the mission of girls' education, asserts Shikin, is to make women who should be owned by men, or rather, women who must be convenient for men ([. . .] *danshi ga shiyū subeki joshi o tsukuru ni wa, arui wa kaette benri ni te mo arubeki ka*).⁸⁰ One half of a people absorbing the other half (reminiscent of Mill, who calls the absorbed half "the disqualified half of the human race"⁸¹) is an extreme way to phrase it, she concedes, but a girls' education can only impede the development of a girl's character.⁸² Thus, girls' education is one sphere in which girls are prepared to continue a pattern of relations that keeps them weak and unable to fulfill their potential as "complete people" (*ichinin-mae no ningen*).

In this essay as well as in "A Young Man's Unusual Recollections," Shikin challenges the construction of gender by exposing and stripping away naturalized notions of the "nature" of the sexes. She offers instances of men and women exhibiting behaviors of what are considered to be both male and female traits. For example, a woman can be brave, (like a man), and be concerned for her appearance and cleanliness (like a woman). A warrior may put a flower in his quiver and perfume on his helmet. "We cannot distinguish the traits necessary for men from those for women."⁸³ Shikin recognizes that behavioral traits are not limited to one sex or the other. Rather, social expectations for men and women are different. She points to the masculinist ideology of "essentializing" women as a means of forcing them into positions of little or no choice, as she urges an end to the discrimination against women in the realm of education. The explication and promulgation of these ideas are remarkable for the time and pre-date Simone de Beauvoir's claim written in the epithet above that one is not born a woman but becomes one.

Shikin's mingling of so-called mixed gender traits, such as bravery and concern for appearance and hygiene, resonates in Judith Butler's

79. Shimizu Shikin, "Joshi kyōiku ni taisuru kibō," in SZ, ed. Kozai Yoshishige (Sōdo bunka, 1983), 478.

80. Shimizu Shikin, "Joshi kyōiku ni taisuru kibō," 478.

81. John Stuart Mill, *The Subjection of Women* (Fawcett Publications, 1971), 127.

82. Shikin, "Joshi kyōiku ni taisuru kibō," 478–79.

83. Shikin, "Joshi kyōiku ni taisuru kibō," 481.

view of gender as groupings of attributes that are believed to signify a coherent gender. Mixing different attributes allows for new possibilities for performance. Butler calls gender an “act” contingent upon combinations of traits.⁸⁴ Shikin gives voice to another, different, coherent gender in the Meiji period.

Earlier, Shikin had written a brief essay also questioning the idea of inherent, gendered traits entitled “Femininity” (“Onnarashi to iu koto,” 1891):

What does it mean to be a true woman? It is not something that can be easily grasped right away, but what is commonly called feminine seems to be based on appearance. If a woman, in order to show her humility, covers her mouth with her sleeve when she laughs, or speaks in a voice so small that it is difficult to catch her words, then she is immediately deemed feminine. Such a judgment is extremely dubious. Do the talents and so forth that help a husband have no relationship to the value of a woman? It is a strange thing indeed.⁸⁵

Though she focuses on talents in relation to a husband to counter the notion that so-called female habits are inherently female, she does scoff at essentializing people based on the most superficial traits.⁸⁶

In “Expectations of Girls’ Education,” Shikin also speaks to the discomfort with ambiguity in gender in her comment about contempt for futanari (*ryōsei o kanetaru mono*). The challenge to think of people in terms other than their sexual equipment is unsettling, whether it entails freeing the mind of naturalized, sexual and gender stereotypes or opening the mind to the possibility of sexes not easily assigned stereotypes. Why shouldn’t the perfection of human virtue be found in the combination of the man and woman as one? If a person has deformed reproductive organs of both sexes, she must be despised as a reborn woman (*hensei joshi*), or

84. Butler, *Gender Trouble*, 139.

85. Shimizu Shikin, “Onnarashi to iu koto,” in SZ, ed. Kozai Yoshishige (Sōdo bunka, 1983), 321.

86. Interestingly, Yosano Akiko’s similarly titled essay entitled “‘Onnarishisa’ to wa nanika” (“What is ‘Femininity?’” 1921), mentioned earlier, echoes Shikin’s idea in “Expectations of Girls’ Education” more than in Shikin’s “Femininity.” As if Shikin never lived or wrote, Akiko mentions not one word about her. Akiko participated in dialogues on issues affecting the lives of women through articles in *Seitō* and elsewhere. Sievers insists upon a link, tenuous though it might be, between the feminists of the People’s Rights movement and the Bluestocking generation. Sievers, *Flowers in Salt*, 189.

ridiculed as a reborn man, notes Shikin.⁸⁷ However, if a person has perfectly formed reproductive organs of both sexes, then we can say that is a perfect human being.

At the heart of the confusion surrounding futanarisa is that a body combining male and female organs or tissue calls into question the boundaries between male and female bodies, thereby questioning the gendered roles assigned to them. While recognizing the confusion over futanarisa, Shikin asserts that genitalia are secondary to the superficial appearance of the body and to behavior and personality in the presentation of self, for male and female sex organs in a perfectly formed body would not necessarily elicit contempt, while a deformed body would. The point here is that there is nothing inherent in the sexual organs of a person that definitively provides character traits, but meaning is attached adventitiously by society to those organs, whether a “single” set or mixed. Shikin again resists the finality of gender, this time by appropriating the trope of the futanari, thereby refuting views of men’s and women’s fixed natures. Such a radical move seems to have been buried under subsequent sexological research and women’s rights advocates, who stay wedded to binaries of sex. That a middle-class woman writer with all that such a status implies, and with access to mainstream print media “appropriate” for women, to invoke a futanari (*ryōseiguyūsha*) to critique gender norms is radical indeed. She is neither a member of the literary establishment, nor a communist, socialist, or anarchist, which describes literary women of note who followed Shikin. She allows herself to imagine a person possessing all sorts of merits not based on gender. Such a person, she realizes, would be proscribed by societal norms by having virtues of both sexes and would therefore have to have the body of both sexes.

Shikin’s use of the term *ryōsei o kanetaru mono*, which in contemporary Japanese would be expressed as *ryōseiguyūsha*, or futanari, is noteworthy. In contrast to the Greek mythical origin of the hermaphrodite, the consolidation of the beautiful female god Aphrodite and the strong male god Hermes, a futanari in a Kamakura era (1185–1333) story is not a god but an offensive, pitiful-looking human,⁸⁸ suffering for their bad karma. As mentioned in the Introduction, the term *ryōseiguyū* is opaque. Shikin

87. Exhibitors of *misemono* spectacles peddled their “freaks” as people who suffered the results of karmic retribution. A transgression in a previous life could cause a person to be reborn as a futanari. See Andrew L. Markus, “The Carnival of Edo: *Misemono* Spectacles from Contemporary Accounts,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 45 (1985): 529.

88. Shirasu Masako, *Ryōsei guyū no bi* (Shinchosha, 1997), 11.

strengthens the impact of her statement against essentializing sexes by invoking an ambiguous term linked to an unfamiliar image that stops a reader in mid-thought.

Both Mill and Spencer address this notion of human nature, constancy in the individual, and purported characteristics of men and women, though not in regard to futanarisa. They agree that human nature has no fixity; it is endlessly imperfect, variable, and inextricably bound up with time and place. Mill asseverates,

What is now called the nature of women is an eminently artificial thing—the result of forced repression in some directions, unnatural stimulation in others. It may be asserted without scruple, that no other class of dependents have had their character so entirely distorted from its natural proportions by their relation with their master.[. . .].⁸⁹

Shikin illustrates this attitude elegantly in “Expectations of Girls’ Education” and elsewhere in her work. The following story is yet one more example.

“The Nature of the Modern Couple”

The sentiment of sorrow and disappointment in marriage in “The Broken Ring” and of adoring love in “A Young Man’s Unusual Recollections” gives way to hardly any sentiment at all but calculation, a seasoned, more pragmatic view of love and marriage in “The Nature of the Modern Couple” (“Imayō fūfu katagi,” 1897).⁹⁰ Marriage not only becomes negotiable, but love becomes more precarious as well. On the face of it, “The Nature of the Modern Couple” cautions the reader about the risks of marriage for women. By rectifying the terms upon which men and women conduct their relations, Shikin seeks to redefine marriage and in so doing, posits a female subjectivity, or a differently gendered subjectivity that is a viable alternative to the Meiji male “other.” That is, Shikin delineates a female sexed subject assuming a position that is neither a male reinscribed subject, nor a projection of male desire, nor a position of abjection banished to an unintelligible zone.

89. Mill, *The Subjection of Women*, 38.

90. Shimizu Shikin, “Imayō fūfu katagi,” in SZ, ed. Kozai Yoshishige (Sōdo bunka, 1983), 88–92.

Two brief stories comprise “The Nature of the Modern Couple,” both mediating wifely subject-positions vis-à-vis marital relations and their ideals. The subtitle of the first part is “The Scholar-Wife not Becoming to a Housewife” (“*Sōmen wa tsubushite mo tsubushi no kikanu gakusha no okusama*”). The opening presents a blissful, intimate, loving couple whose greatest concern is choosing the best gifts to buy each other. Enjoying their *dōken kōsai* (equality in social intercourse), which is based on the wife’s status as a schoolteacher and her contribution to the household finances, they send each other off to work and go for outings holding each other’s hands. This sort of tender and equal regard for each other, especially publicly, was highly unusual in 1897. However, the wife’s unexpected pregnancy and subsequent delivery of a baby change their lives. Expenses increase, and money becomes tight. Because they both work, they need the services of a maid and a nurse, whom they eventually relieve in order to save money. The wife then assumes their responsibilities. Finally, at the husband’s behest, the wife unwillingly quits her job as schoolteacher because she can’t manage all of the childcare and housework while also fulfilling her teaching responsibilities. From this point, the husband uses rougher language and issues arrogant orders to her, in no small part because she is not used to housework and often makes mistakes. The wife feels the sting of his insinuating remarks and criticism and wonders why he doesn’t help in the kitchen. On one occasion the husband tells his wife that he wants to eat *sōmen* (noodles), so she prepares the meal in the hope that she might recover credit by preparing the dish well. However, she pours cold water over the *sōmen* instead of boiling it. To cover up the failure, she feigns a sudden pain in her stomach. Alarmed, her husband immediately asks where he should rub her. As he nurses her, she is relieved to know that she hasn’t lost his love and confesses the *sōmen* blunder. The husband realizes that his treatment of his wife in making her perform housework, which she is not good at, ruins the merits she does possess, just as the method the wife uses to make the *sōmen* ruined the *sōmen*. He tells her that he must think of a new plan. The husband ends the vignette with a pun (*kakekotoba*) on his name, Shimota, to express his regret (*shimatta*).

On the first page of the story, the narrator immediately calls into question the gender positions of the husband and wife through their ostensibly equal partnership in the marriage:

[. . .] in the manner of their greeting each other, one couldn’t tell which one was the husband . . . The wife’s role is divided between

them. Every morning when they're preparing to leave for work, the wife sends off her husband by bringing his walking stick to him, while in consideration for his wife, the husband directs the maid to attend to his wife's shoes.⁹¹

Sexed positions are breached by both partners violating the traditional roles created for them. The husband is more polite in his greeting to his wife than custom demands. Moreover, he is too considerate of his wife regarding things that need not concern him at all, such as her preparation to go to work, especially considering that merely the fact of her going to work violates the norm of a wife in this class.

They are *futanari* in the sense that both display gendered behaviors of both sexes (*ryōsei*), thereby confounding the logic that biological sex determines behavior. They spontaneously comport themselves in this manner. In her essay "Expectations of Girls' Education," Shikin reasons that social expectations of gendered behavior are what lead people to scorn *futanari*, despite the fact that a person possessing the reproductive organs of both sexes is complete. That is, the *futanari* can perform in the style of both sexes and is not restricted to one set of behaviors. This is preferable because, "We cannot distinguish the traits necessary for men from those of women."⁹²

In effect, the husband is also a wife, while the wife is also a husband. The wife demonstrates her agency despite her gender, which allows her independence from a husband who delimits her action, behavior, and self-definition. She authorizes her own teaching at a girls' school and her attention to her husband. "Whenever they take a walk, holding hands," either one could be saying, "Today is my treat,"⁹³ because the wife has the financial independence that affords her the luxury of treating her husband. She posits herself through a rejection of a traditional, wifely role and an assumption of the husband's role, defining the gendered boundaries around which she lives her life.

The shifting positions of the wife before and after giving birth reveal assumptions about women's roles. It is the biological capability of the female that leads to the husband trying to manipulate her into his notion of female behavior. This is exactly the relationship dynamic between Himegimi and the man who rapes her, Saishō, in *Torikaebaya monogatari*.

91. Shikin, "Imayō fūfu katagi," 88.

92. Shikin, "Joshi kyōiku ni taisuru kibō," 481.

93. Shikin, "Imayō fūfu katagi," 88.

Saishō wants Himegimi to start acting like a woman once he discovers that she seems to have a female body. Moreover, it marks the turning point in the tale as well as in Shikin's story. Because the wife bears a child, the husband insists that she assume household and childcare responsibilities and ultimately give up her teaching job. From this point on, the husband attempts to relocate his wife's subject-position according to his view of what a woman should be, apparently changed from her pre-baby position. In other words, once she has fulfilled a biological imperative, she must also fulfill a male-inscribed female gender imperative. Their discord stems from the wife's discomfort with a role into which she has been forced after she has the baby. The wife reveals in her struggle an abject position through her rejection of the housewife role, thereby exposing the boundary between the domain of the reinscribed female position, which fits comfortably in the housewife role, and of the "uninhabitable" realm beyond. In her husband's view now, the wife's biological sex fully informs her gendered sex.

In Butler's terms, through an identification with the female sex, women who constitute the marginalized zones in contrast to the reinscribed female subject—"unfeminine" (*onna-rashikunai*) women, lesbians, unmarried women, "oversexed" women—are abjected or excluded. Clearly, futanari belong on this list of marginalized and abjected "peripheral sexualities." As mentioned earlier, the subject is constituted through this process of abjection. The subject maintains its hegemonic status by repudiating marginalized groups.

In spite of the fact that the couple is futanari-like, and her self-determined position is in play, her abject possibilities remained untested: "Those accustomed to the subjugation of women (*danson-johi*),"⁹⁴ purposely come to see the couple with such an unusual reputation. The wife was not subjugated by her husband; she authorized her own subjectivity. However, once the husband subjugates his wife, puts her into a female subject-position dictated by patriarchal prescriptions of femaleness, and otherwise treats her as inferior to himself, the abjected female-position falls into relief. She is dissatisfied with and uninterested in the traditional, wifely role. In this sense, she moves toward an "unlivable zone," thereby exposing her husband's presumptions of the sexed subject and her own. In other words, in the course of the story, their sexes change from futanari to "male" and "female" and then presumably back to futanari, which is more satisfactory to both.

94. Shikin, "Imayō fūfu katagi," 88.

In this struggle between and within roles of marriage partners, Shikin depicts the institution of marriage as unstable. The partnership begins to crumble when the equality and interchangeability of the partners disintegrate. Because marriage is a historical practice, the requirements and definitions of it change according to social and economic developments. The couple in Part I of “The Nature of the Modern Couple” is depicted as ideal; they enjoy equal rights with each other. She has a job at which she is skilled and, we can assume, that she finds fulfilling. Their respectful and loving conduct toward one another, or in other words, the wife behaving in a “masculine” way and the husband in a “womanly” way is so unusual that they are a “spectacle” (*mimono*) that people come to see. At the time, such unfeminine behavior as a woman cutting her hair short was proscribed. Similar to the strange couple, the *futanari* may distract and disrupt the expectations of onlookers if their identification or appearance is different from their behavior. Violations of expectations of sexed behavior strike at an acutely sensitive nerve, proving how fundamental sex is to subject formation.

More than unstable, in a sense the couple’s entire relationship can be seen as abjected and the husband ostracized, if not abjected himself. The relationship rejects custom and functions successfully outside the expectations of society, though they are thoroughly interpolated into a conventional, social world of profession and status. The couple consciously acknowledges their refusal of the dominant ideology by saying that if they are not embarrassed by their outward display of courtesy and regard for each other, then they have nothing to be concerned about. However, after his wife has the baby, the husband wants her to assume housewife responsibilities. The marriage changes from ideal to unhappy because of their new roles and because their roles are tied to economic constraints. The institution of marriage as an economic arrangement that guarantees a man’s ownership of property and children becomes an issue between the couple when the husband enforces the fulfillment of the role of middle-class wife.⁹⁵ The couple must renegotiate their marriage because the husband finally understands that the latest arrangement is not working. That the wife and husband have no names but are simply called *okusama* (wife) and *danna* (husband) suggests that anyone could step into these any-

95. Middle-class women had customarily stayed within the home. Sharon H. Nolte and Sally Ann Hastings, “The Meiji State’s Policy Toward Women, 1890–1910,” in *Recreating Japanese Women, 1600–1945*, ed. and intro. Gail Lee Bernstein (University of California Press, 1991), 158. The authors explain the state’s articulation of women’s roles in this essay.

mous roles. They are intermittently typical and idyllic; the narrative illustrates an ideal relationship, as well as pitfalls lying in wait to disrupt it.

The caveats about marriage dramatized in this and other stories by Shikin, attest to her distrust of a union based on Confucian ideals of womanhood and wifely self-sacrifice and obedience to a husband. In “The Broken Ring,” Shikin calls for a rethinking of traditional (patriarchal) marriage as instead, a union of two equal partners, equally educated and equally fulfilled. The wife in “The Broken Ring” has no children, so the husband subjugates her based upon her role as wife but not also mother. The inconvenience or loss of income due to the child in “The Nature of the Modern Couple” drives the husband to sacrifice their equality. Had the wife not had a baby, their equal marriage would presumably have continued, thereby making the reader consider the various roles in which women are subjugated.

Equality in marriage is one cause that Shikin champions, but fundamental to it is women having rights equal to those of men. Shikin deploys futanari figures to advance this goal by demonstrating the hypocrisy of prescribed sex roles and the false logic of the naturalized and overdetermined link between body and behavior. That the couple is represented as a spectacle, an entertainment destination, a sight to see, clearly demonstrates that subjectivity is performed with and through other people. The dominant ideology governing sex encroaches on the personal lives of this couple in a profound way.

Shikin reiterates the view of marriage as a union of two equal partners in “Imin gakuen” (“Immigrants’ School,” 1899) by collapsing another border besides sex, a socio-economic one. Equality should not be based on similar backgrounds. Two equal partners are no less equal because one is a member of a socially abjected group, the *burakumin*. Shikin moves to a new notion of status—one based on self-acquired merit (education, profession) rather than ascribed status based on birth (the social class of one’s parents).

By imagining a world beyond sexual (and social) binaries, Shikin created literature that the (male) literary establishment (*bundan*) couldn’t envision and the *Seitō* (*Bluestocking*, c. 1911) (female) writers later couldn’t remember. The omission of Shikin’s contributions from discussion and debate among *Bluestocking* and other women’s rights advocates is striking because it highlights a fundamental mechanism in the continued oppression of a group. That is, members of that oppressed group can operate to maintain the oppression by internalizing the dominant group’s ideology, consciously or not. By challenging the concept of the sexed subject at the material, bodily level and showing the speciousness of the sexual binary

and the inequality that flows from it, Shikin offered a radical alternative by redefining “female” and “male” and making room for other possibilities.

In spite of praise from Mori Ōgai, among others, and her popularity while at *Jogaku zasshi*, Shikin continues to be relatively obscure today. Her refusal to accept the categorical opposition of man and woman is what allowed the literary establishment, which operates according to this very opposition, to erase her from memory. Shikin is the reminder of possibilities denied. Her erasure is the disavowal of the loss of the emerging alternative female subject and other sexualities. Shikin’s contributions were minimized and her transgressing of boundaries unappreciated. She is pivotal in jolting the foundation imposed by the dimorphic sexual economy and revealing the self-grounding presumptions of the literary establishment and the domain of the Meiji subject.

3

Neither Fish nor Fowl

Tanizaki Jun'ichirō's Fluid Bodies *à rebours*

What is peculiar to modern societies, in fact, is not that they consigned sex to a shadow existence, but that they dedicated themselves to speaking of it *ad infinitum*, while exploiting it as *the secret*.

—Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*¹

[It] is a well-known fact that in Tanizaki's early work this sort of protagonist indulging in hermaphroditic (*herumafuroditikku*) self-intoxication frequently appears . . .

—Noguchi Takehiko, *Tanizaki Jun'ichirō ron*²

It is the spectator, and not life, that art really mirrors.

—Oscar Wilde, Preface, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*

Tanizaki Jun'ichirō's early fiction under study here has been evaluated in particular ways that preclude it from the level of “masterpiece,”³ in contrast to such famous works as *Naomi/A Fool's Love* (*Chijin no ai*, 1924), *Quicksand* (*Manji*, 1928), or *The Key* (*Kagi*, 1956). Suzuki Sadami believes that the reason for the negative reviews of the early work has to do with it presaging *ero-guro-nansensu* (erotic grotesque nonsense) and fantasy literature, thereby resisting dominant culture.⁴ Tanizaki's narratives frus-

1. Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, 35.

2. Noguchi Takehiko, *Tanizaki Jun'ichirō ron*. (Chūō kōronsha, 1973), 69.

3. Noguchi, *Tanizaki Jun'ichirō ron*, 9–12; Odaka Shūya, *Seinenki: Tanizaki jun'ichirō ron* (Sakuhinsha, 2007), 27.

4. Suzuki Sadami, “Eroticism, Grotesquerie, and Nonsense in Taishō Japan: Tanizaki's Response to Modern and Contemporary Culture,” in *A Tanizaki Feast: The Interna-*

trate heteronormative expectations indeed, as well as destabilize the unified subject. Yet, even more is at stake.

Noguchi's assertion quoted above, that "hermaphroditic-type" (*herumafuroditikku*)⁵ characters frequently appearing in Tanizaki's early work is well known, may come as a surprise to some. Much Tanizaki criticism focuses on the writer's fascination with the West, his orientalism, and his sexual themes, including sado-masochism. While these comprise the core of Tanizaki scholarship (central to an understanding of his work), my concern here is a particular deployment of sexual politics and tropes. The mere presence of the futanari is provocative, and investigating the means by which the writer achieves representations of such figures is revealing of the sexual economy and its vicissitudes, as I have stressed in previous chapters.

In addition, Tanizaki's use of the futanari figure coincides with his ideas about literature and his interest in Decadence and aesthetics. Specifically, he writes against Naturalism, and his literature from this early period celebrates art and beauty, as it tantalizes with the use of decadent characters. The influence of European, specifically French Decadence is clear, as is Edo period decadence. "The hermaphrodite, as Praz has pointed out at length, is the 'artistic sex *par excellence*' whose appeal to the decadent mentality involves an assumed combination of artificiality and depravity."⁶ Tanizaki painstakingly draws futanari characters whose artistic sensibility is on display while they perform in artificially crafted dramas of their own making. This chapter shows Tanizaki's consummate skill in spinning decadent themes into canny and entertaining stories.

Noguchi mentions as examples of "hermaphroditic" (*herumafuroditikku*) protagonists those of "Hyōfu" ("Blizzards," 1911), "Himitsu" ("The Secret," 1911), and "Konjiki no shi" ("The Golden Death," 1914).⁷ "Hyōfu" was banned based on "corruption of public morals" (*fūzoku kairan*), while the other two were not banned though equally risqué. Noguchi might also have mentioned "Nyonin shinsei" ("The Sacred Woman," 1918), which features a character similar to the ones in "The Golden Death" and "The Secret," who delight in their feminine beauty and envy women. In this chapter, I will examine the futanari protagonists in "The Secret," "The Golden Death," and "Until Abandoned" ("Suterareru made," 1914).

tional Symposium in Venice, eds. Anthony H. Chambers and Adriana Boscaro (Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 1998), 48–49.

5. The English word, "hermaphrodite" is transcribed in the *katakana* syllabary in the original text.

6. Weir, *Decadence and the Making of Modernism*, 105.

7. Noguchi Takehiko, *Tanizaki Jun'ichirō ron*, 69.

In representing the futanari, Tanizaki uses spectacle in spotlighting and separating the protagonists from others. The narrative calls the reader's attention to the character's body and directs the gaze to other characters gazing at the futanari, or the protagonist gazing at himself. This masterful use of the spectacle enables the decadence of the characters and the story to impress itself upon the reader. However, this is not the heteronormative male-gaze-dominating scopophilia that Laura Mulvey⁸ drove into our consciousness. It is neither heteronormative nor owned by "males." It is the directed gaze sexualized by the gazed-upon. I explore below how sex is reiterated or assumed or expressed by the gazer and the gazed-upon and the significance of the staging of the gazed-upon.

The characters are spectacles not simply because they wear make-up or adorn themselves in female kimono—in other words, because they perform the female gender in a flamboyant, theatrical, ostentatious fashion. They are spectacles also because they are individuated and separated so clearly from others, as Guy Debord regards the modern spectacle in *The Society of the Spectacle*,⁹ and the narrative strategically focuses the gaze on these extravagant figures with its own sort of "scopic regime."¹⁰ I elaborate on the spectacle in each story.

"The Golden Death" is a heuristic prototype in the sense that it lays the groundwork for themes developed in Tanizaki's later work, such as sado-masochism, narcissism, and aestheticism. As David Weir observes regarding "bibles" of Decadence, they do not survive as great works of literature. Yet, their importance in directing the course of literature or the anti-hero in the twentieth century cannot be overstated.¹¹ The same may be said of this flawed story of Tanizaki, which does not draw a large readership today. One shortcoming of the work is prolix discussions of specific works of art and philosophy generally unrelated to the plot. Yet, "The Golden Death" contains the ingredients for Tanizakian greatness—brilliantly crafted and understated relationship dynamics, fetishizing and aestheticizing the body, expression of sexual desire, and intimations of homoeroticism.

Interestingly, Tanizaki himself hated the story and did not consent to having it in his collected works (*zenshū*) published in 1930 and 1959. After his death in 1966, his widow, Tanizaki Matsuko, had the story reinserted,

8. Author of "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," published in 1975.

9. This influential work of political theory was published in 1967.

10. Martin Jay borrows Christian Metz's term to title his essay "Scopic Regimes of Modernity" on the hegemony of Cartesian perspectivalism and alternatives to it. (3)

11. David Weir, *Decadence and the Making of Modernism*.

along with others he had removed, in Tanizaki's collected works published from 1966 to 1970. In spite of Tanizaki's wishes, expressed in his will, Matsuko simply did not want these works that had been eliminated to be permanently erased.¹²

Among other authors spurning their work, Tokuda Shūsei not only abandoned *Arakure* (*Rough Living*, 1915) unfinished but “was a little tired of that sort of subject matter,”¹³ and did not write another like it.¹⁴ Shikin got married and ended her writing career, thereby abnegating her cause. Huysmans became a staunch Catholic and renounced *À Rebours*. Such reactions might suggest that the writers struck too close to the bone and wished to penetrate no further. That is not to say, however, that they reacted in such ways for the same reason, but it is worth noting that these stories all contain characters that are either futanari or intimate futanarisa. The writers' repudiation or resignation is dramatic.

“The Golden Death” is also vital here because of the deployment of decadent themes and the development of the decadent protagonist, who shares traits with the decadent protagonist of “The Secret.” These two works, along with “Until Abandoned,” are among the earliest in Tanizaki's career and were written in the blush of his early acquaintance with Nagai Kafū. Yet

12. Tanizaki Matsuko, “Konjiki no shi' no koto—otto, Tanizaki Jun'ichirō,” in *Bessatsu shōwa bungaku sakka shi*, (Mainichi shinbunsha, 1977), 86. Matsuko writes that President Shimanaka, of Chūō kōron publishing, in encouraging her to reconsider these heretofore eliminated stories, told her that although Tanizaki considered them failures, it was conceivable that future critics might evaluate them as masterpieces. Mishima Yukio (1925–70) wrote a commentary (*kaisetsu*) on “The Golden Death” for the *Shinchō nihon bungaku* series, vol. 6, published in 1970, in which he analyzes propositions related to sex, beauty, and imagination set forth in the story, while pointing out inconsistencies and contradictions. At the same time, he praises Tanizaki for wrestling with issues of beauty and art. Matsuko writes that Mishima endorsed “The Golden Death” as a masterpiece (*kessaku*). At the beginning of his essay, Mishima mentions that Tanizaki hated the story and similarly, Kawabata Yasunari showed disgust for his masterpiece “Kinjū” (“Of Birds and Beasts,” 1935). If one compares the two stories, writes Mishima, “The Golden Death” is a failure. However, Mishima does point out virtues of Tanizaki's story and calls it a work of surprising originality at the time. Perhaps Mishima should have mentioned that Tanizaki wrote “The Golden Death” at the beginning of his career, while Kawabata had already written “Izu no odoriko” (“The Dancing Girl of Izu,” 1926) and *Asakusa kurenaidan* (*The Scarlet Gang of Asakusa*, 1930) and published the masterpiece *Yukiguni* (*Snow Country*) in 1937. Mishima Yukio, “Kaisetsu,” in *Shinchō nihon bungaku* 6, *Tanizaki jun'ichirō shū* (Shinchōsha, 1970) 1037–39.

13. “*Tadare to Arakure no moderu*,” 13.

14. Richard Torrance, *The Fiction of Tokuda Shūsei, and the Emergence of Japan's New Middle Class* (University of Washington Press, 1994), 130.

again, these and others of his stories indicate that the sexual ambiguity Roden refers to in the 1920s, as discussed in the Introduction, is already imagined in Shikin's works and blooming in Tanizaki's short stories.

Situating Tanizaki Among Literary Movements and the Spirit of the Age

Kafū's influence on and appreciation of Tanizaki is well known. Ken Ito maintains that in Kafū's famous review of Tanizaki entitled "Tanizaki Jun'ichirō no sakuhin" ("The Work of Tanizaki Jun'ichirō," 1911) he presents a Tanizaki that is a projection of his own desire for "cultural integration." "Here, according to Kafū, is a young writer rooted in the *shitamachi* [downtown], yet imbued with the sensibilities of the latest literary movements from Europe. Here is the Baudelaire, the Poe, of Japan."¹⁵ I would add, here is the Huysmans of Japan, though Tanizaki was called "Wilde kun" (Mr. Wilde).¹⁶ Kafū read Huysmans, in addition to Baudelaire and Gautier, whom I discuss in the first chapter, and other important nineteenth-century French writers.

Ito asserts that Kafū mistakes cultural security for the longing for another world. He claims the masterpiece "Shisei" ("The Tattooer," 1910) bears this out; I would point to "The Golden Death" as well. As Ito describes it, "The materials for Tanizaki's world of beauty may be from Edo, but the design comes from the West . . ."¹⁷

Ito cites *The Romantic Agony* by Mario Praz, who refers to a sensibility that encompasses several movements and scores of writers in nineteenth-century Western literature. He reinforces the point:

Rather than point to any single writer in this vast field, it is perhaps more important to recognize the general availability of this community of sensibility to Japanese writers of Tanizaki's time. No educated Japanese with literary interests could have escaped exposure to such currents of thought. These ideas would have been ever present in works read in foreign languages, in translated materials, and in the writings of Japanese introducers. There is no doubt that Kafū

15. Ken K. Ito, *Visions of Desire: Tanizaki's Fictional Worlds* (Stanford University Press, 1991), 52.

16. Maho Hidaka, "Portraits on the Human Body: Japanese Adaptations of Oscar Wilde by Jun'ichiro Tanizaki," *The Wildean*, no. 46 (January 2015): 85n1.

17. Ken Ito, *Visions of Desire*, 53.

was an important point of entry for these concepts, but he was hardly alone. What set him apart was his stature. As a senior man of letters, Kafū articulated for the generation following him a possible Japanese relationship to the European community of sensibility.¹⁸

Tanizaki seems to have absorbed this sensibility and made it his own. It accords with an abiding admiration for Wilde, which can be observed in direct comments about him or his work in stories including “Until Abandoned,” translations (e.g., *Lady Windermere’s Fan*, 1892) and adaptations of his works, and echoes of such novels as *The Picture of Dorian Gray* in Tanizaki’s own.¹⁹

Noguchi asserts that the notion that Aestheticism (*tanbi-ha*) in the Meiji and Taishō periods was imported from the West is a common misunderstanding. This was the prevailing opinion at the time, even among Aestheticist, as well as Naturalist writers. In fact, what was imported was the general idea or the language of Aestheticism. The imprimatur of the West legitimized it.²⁰

The aestheticism already present in Japanese culture to which Noguchi refers lies in Edo eroticism, specifically the subjects confined to popular, illustrated books (*kusazōshi*), a genre not considered serious literature. It was not merely a revival of sensuality that had been suppressed, Noguchi emphasizes; literary aestheticism in the Meiji period now conferred upon this sensuality a cachet that it had not enjoyed before. The power to enable this happy confluence of circumstances was contact with Western Decadent literature.²¹

Kafū declared that Tanizaki had reached the pinnacle in the art of literary decadence. Yet, if Kafū hadn’t been drawn to the power of Edo’s cultural legacy beneath Tanizaki’s taste for Edo, he probably would not have been so moved.²² Therefore, because of Tanizaki’s Tokyo-bred background, which cultivated a deep feeling for Edo sensibility, he was primed to be receptive to Aestheticism from the West and the decadence that appealed to his proclivities.

One work among these European texts that has received scant attention in Tanizaki criticism, despite its importance to the creation of the modern, anti-hero of 20th century Western literature and its centrality in

18. Ito, 54–55.

19. Maho Hidaka, “Portraits on the Human Body,” 72–73.

20. Noguchi Takehiko, *Tanizaki Jun’ichirō ron*, 20.

21. Noguchi, 22.

22. Noguchi, 20.

the Decadent literary movement, is *À Rebours* (*Against the Grain*) by Joris-Karl Huysmans, as mentioned in Chapter One, along with a brief synopsis of the novel, which I expand upon here.

The protagonist of *Against Nature* (*À Rebours*), Des Esseintes, is in a state of degeneration when the novel opens. Contemptuous of humanity and exasperated by its banality, he exhausts himself in all forms of revelry and pleasure to the point of decrepitude. And still, tedium overwhelms him. To a greater or lesser degree, this describes the protagonists of Tanizaki's "The Mermaid's Lament" ("Ningyo no nageki," 1917), "The Golden Death," and "The Secret." In the course of an encyclopedic survey of Western literature, philosophy, and art from Homeric epics to Baudelairean poetry, Des Esseintes scathingly critiques some and praises others. However, he saves his fiercest invective for Naturalism. Among Tanizaki's stories, "The Golden Death" resembles this brooding most closely with the philosophical, polemical character of Okamura seeking self-fulfillment in his creation of a paradise outside of Tokyo in Hakone, just as Des Esseintes retreats from the din of human activity to pursue tranquility for his frazzled nerves in the suburbs of Paris. In Hakone, Okamura installs in their paradise park inventories of animals, plants, buildings, and topographical features. Their disquisitions on art and literature resonate with Des Esseintes's voice.

As mentioned in the first chapter, the exotic kinkiness of the hermaphrodite Miss Urania in and of itself, throws fat on the fire of decadence. Des Esseintes has all sorts of sexual experience with all sorts of sexual beings including Miss Urania, the narrative states. *Against Nature* contains in its hallucinogenic world the perfect template for the Decadent movement, which coalesced in France in the 1880s.

Des Esseintes epitomizes the anti-hero of twentieth-century Western literature and the abulic young man of Tanizaki's early literature.²³ Before Tanizaki's young man appeared, however, Tayama Katai and Shimazaki Tōson wrote several Naturalist protagonists. Although Tanizaki took an anti-Naturalist stance, he was grounded in modern realism, as the Naturalist writers were. While the Naturalists pursued "truth" and transparency in writing, Tanizaki and the Aesthetic school believed in the art of

23. Perhaps F. Scott Fitzgerald, himself, is heir to this strain of protagonist. In "A Short Biography" (1929) he wrote: "A feeling that all liquor has been drunk and all it can do for one has been experienced, and yet—'Garçon, un Chablis Mouton 1902, et pour commencer, une petite carafe de vin rose. C'est ça—merci.'"

writing. Naturalist literature was characterized by an intense concern for the (male) self and (his) self-realization. Tanizaki's anti-hero follows a course of self-fulfillment, with no pretensions to greater or nationalist goals, such as speaking for a generation, or giving voice to "truth."

Moreover, this anti-hero plays with the concept of normative heterosexuality in his futanari dabbling. The mere suggestion of homoeroticism or futanari positioning is a swipe at Naturalism because, despite the claim by Naturalist writers of the centrality of sexual desire in determining human nature, same-sex desire is wholly avoided in their texts.²⁴ What Tanizaki's protagonist does share with Naturalism is his "young man." While his protagonists are openly "depraved" and hedonistic, they are not like the I-novel (Naturalist) protagonists of Shimazaki Tōson, Tayama Katai, and Shiga Naoya, sensitive and earnest in their search for their "true" selves. Tanizaki's anti-hero notwithstanding, the young man is the relentless, normative subject of Japanese fiction in the modern period.

The young man (*seinen*) emerged as a discursive subject in the Meiji period in contradistinction to the ruffians (*sōshi*), who were politically driven, influenced by the Freedom and People's Rights Movement (*Jiyū minken undō*) of the 1870s and early 80s. The young man, the apolitical version, at center stage of Japanese modern fiction is not unlike the young man who arises in Western literature. More particularly, however, Tanizaki's protagonists are openly "depraved" and hedonistic, a scion of the Des Esseintes lineage. It is significant that this self-intoxicated protagonist is futanari-like, refusing the dichotomies of male-female and normal-abnormal, central to sexology. The narratives aestheticize the body, while disturbing heteronormative desire and gender roles.

The construction of these characters is predicated on performance of gender, linguistic and otherwise, and spectacle. The characters delight in becoming objects of art (or artifice) and in directing the gaze to their bodies. At the root of the representation of futanarisa in two of these protagonists is male beauty as an "imitation" of female beauty, or male beauty as an erasure of sexual difference.

24. Reichert deftly explicates Mori Ōgai's skewering of Naturalism in *Vita Sexualis* (1909). He writes, ". . . Naturalist representations of sexuality bowed to conventional, socially determined notions of what sexual identities were suitable for literary representation." Jim Reichert, *In the Company of Men: Representations of Male-Male Sexuality in Meiji Literature* (Stanford University Press, 2006), 203.

“The Golden Death”

The narrator-character Shimada frames “The Golden Death”²⁵ in recollections of his childhood friend and beautiful young man Okamura. Grounded in Okamura’s proclivities, the narrative interweaves themes related to art: definitions of art, hierarchies of artistic expression, and art’s relation to nature and to sex, echoing Des Esseintes and his ruminations on art.

Using Shimada as his sounding board, Okamura expounds on aesthetic theory through the literature of Homer, Horace, Lessing, Walter Pater (remembered popularly in association with Oscar Wilde), and more. In particular, they critique Lessing’s *Laokoon* (1766) to get at differences between artistic forms and demonstrate their knowledge of aesthetics and German. Rather than moving the plot forward, this pontificating shows Okamura’s desire to create art while not having the talent to do so. Their narcissistic swagger is reminiscent of the decadent Des Esseintes. In Mishima Yukio’s commentary on the story, he pokes holes in Okamura’s arguments.²⁶ However, it is not Okamura’s championing of painting or sculpture over poetry, or some such hierarchy that is significant. Art fascinates Okamura, and they want to create it. Yet, the closest they can come to artistry is to perfect the material of their already beautiful body and reproduce great works of art in a paradise-like park of their own design. Their *chefs-d’oeuvre* is performance art as the Buddha, as whom they exit this world in a golden shimmering dance.

The story tangles with two broad philosophical issues: what constitutes art, and the purpose of art. In addition, it addresses the role of the artist in the creation of art. Tanizaki’s short story “The Tattooer” (*Shisei*, 1910) treats the theme of the artist sacrificing for the sake of his art. “The Golden Death” contemplates this, too, in Okamura’s struggle to find their artistic expression. Although some, such as Mishima, claim that Okamura willfully sacrifices their life for art, as the story climaxes in their dazzling death, there is no evidence that their asphyxiation through gilding their entire body is intentional. Although the narrative focuses more on forms of art and on what constitutes beauty, the suggestion that Okamura sacrifices their life for art engages these themes. It could be said that they reach the pinnacle of their art performance through this final act. Certainly Mishima would find beauty in that.

25. First published in the *Tokyo Asahi Shimbun*, 1914.

26. See Note 12.

Théophile Gautier writes in the preface to *Mademoiselle de Maupin* (1835), “Nothing is really beautiful unless it is useless; everything useful is ugly, for it expresses a need, and the needs of man are ignoble and disgusting, like his poor weak nature. The most useful place in a house is the lavatory.”²⁷ Not only is uselessness a requirement for beauty in French decadent sensibilities, but it also defines a moment in the thread of Japanese decadence. In Tanizaki’s literature, the two are not unrelated. Okamura is not a useful member of society under the current (early Taishō) regime of capitalist production, nor have they the least interest in *rishin shusse* (rising in the world) in the traditional sense. Rather, beauty and the aestheticizing of their own body occupy Okamura’s thoughts. They are not “useful” or productive; they are simply beautiful and narcissistic. The decadent archetype Ariwara no Narihira (825–880) comes to mind. Because of a political alliance that ended poorly, his family’s prominence and power were diminished in the Heian (794–1185) court. The anonymous author of *The Tales of Ise* (*Ise monogatari*), a collection of short poems (*waka*), comments on Narihira’s political fortunes. Ikuho Amano writes, “According to Karaki [Junzō] the image of Narihira presents an aesthetics of decadence that for the first time in Japanese history centers on beauty and ethics—an aesthetics that was to become typical of Japanese decadence.”²⁸

In one of Shimada’s and Okamura’s discussions on aesthetics, the narrator Shimada tells Okamura that he doesn’t understand aesthetics (*bigaku*). “‘Of what use is aesthetics,’ he stated rhetorically. Okamura cared not a whit.”²⁹ Therefore, it seems, neither beauty nor aesthetics should serve a function from Okamura’s perspective. They follow in a long line of useless literary aesthetes.

The theme of the body as a form of art merges with that of the futanari in “The Golden Death” through Okamura’s body and beauty, both of which are doubly sexed. Okamura maintains that all art starts with the beauty of the human body. Therefore, he sculpts and refines his body into art, spending countless hours practicing gymnastic exercises and refusing to vitiate it with tobacco or alcohol. Shimada emphasizes the beauty of Okamura’s robust body and their care and treatment of it—chiseling and

27. Théophile Gautier, *Mademoiselle de Maupin*, 39.

28. Ikuho Amano, *Decadent Literature in Twentieth-Century Japan: Spectacles of Idle Labor*, First edition (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 3. Amano refers to Karaki Junzō’s *Muyōsha no keifu* (*The Genealogy of Useless Men*, 1964).

29. Tanizaki Jun’ichirō. *Tanizaki Jun’ichirō zenshū* vol. 2, 484 (Chūō kōronsha, 1966–70). These collected works will be abbreviated as TZ hereafter.

toning it through gymnastics and sports—and adorning it in fine fabrics. Yet, Shimada calls Okamura “gymnastics crazy” (*taisō kichigai*)³⁰ and scorns them for it.

Speaking of Greek art, they say, “All literature and all art began with human physical beauty. After all, nations that neglected the body could not produce great art.”³¹ Shimada, however, believes that great art requires great thinking (*shisō*). Still, Okamura persists in their conviction that the body is paramount to great art. “The noblest form (*tōtoshiki*) of art actually is the human body,” declares Okamura.³² They repeat that art first begins with beautifying one’s body. At the same time, they combine beauty and the body in the *futanari* form. The narrative remarks on Okamura’s continuing practice on exercise machines and use of light make-up and rouge for his lips. Okamura states, “As for the human body, male beauty is inferior to female beauty. Most of male beauty imitates female beauty. The beauty of in-between sex (*chūsei*) [erasure of difference] that appears in Greek sculpture is, in fact, merely a male endowed with female beauty.”³³

The male in the female and the female in the male, and intimations of mirroring each other echo the frequent descriptions of Himegimi and Wakagimi in *Torikaebaya monogatari*. Also, like their otherworldly beauty, Okamura’s becomes not of this world.

The mutability of the body is emphasized over the mutability of the sexed subject itself. Okamura’s beauty may possess female beauty, but more significantly, their beauty is of in-between sex, as it appears in Greek sculpture and as it appears in the Buddha, Okamura’s final form, in which they expire.

On the tenth night, they chose a great number of beautiful men and beautiful women, made them look like enlightened beings [Arhat Bodhisattva], dressed them in costumes of man-eating fiends, and so on. In the end, they painted gold leaf over their entire body, displayed the countenance of the Buddha (*nyorai*), gulped down sake, and danced ecstatically.

Sleeping off their fatigue from the all-night banquet, slovenly collapsed drunk in the palace corridors, against pillars, on ottomans, all present slept through until dawn the next day, and upon

30. *TZ* v. 2, 468.

31. *TZ* v. 2, 470.

32. *TZ* v. 2, 484.

33. *TZ* v. 2, 484.

waking up soon discovered Okamura's corpse had grown cold as ice on the table in the middle of the room.³⁴

In their Bacchanalian revelry, the self-intoxicating Okamura distinguishes himself from all others. Their perfect Buddha body glitters with gold, the radiant exquisiteness of their in-between sex, or the sex-transcendence of a Buddha.³⁵

Hence, the line between art and the human body is blurred, further complicating the question of what constitutes art. Prior to the climax, this is also demonstrated in innumerable human statues that bedeck their paradise. Since Okamura hasn't been successful writing or finding their *métier*, they finally resolve to design a paradise as their work of art. They use their inheritance to purchase 16.3 acres (20,000 *tsubo*) of land in Hakone, a resort area outside of Tokyo for this purpose. Among other features of this Edenic creation, Okamura places copies of sculptural masterpieces throughout, such as Auguste Rodin's "The Eternal Idol." Oddly, the face of the male in this statue looks like Okamura, who worships Rodin's art, so he has collected a good number of his famous pieces. Elsewhere human statues have been placed here and there on the grounds in a variety of positions, looking up to the heavens, leaning against a pillar, or sitting on a stone. Shimada often cannot discern the human from the (inanimate) work of art.³⁶

The narrative further blurs the distinction between art and the body through gender markers of dress and make-up. Okamura hadn't preferred Japanese clothing up until a point, remarks Shimada, when suddenly they ordered *haori* and kimono with flashy, striped, so-called "female" patterns and wore one after another.

34. *TZ* v. 2, 497–98.

35. The Buddha is said to have had a beautiful body and skin the color of gold, so Okamura's use of gold leaf is presumably to approximate the Buddha as closely as possible. Literary precedents of the Buddha's gold body include Ihara Saikaku's *Kōshoku ichidai otoko* (*The Life of an Amorous Man*, 1682) and *Taiheiki* (*A Chronicle of Great Peace*, 14th century). I am grateful to David Gundry for the Saikaku citation.

36. The use of statuary to emphasize ambiguity is worth noting. In the French satirical novel, *Description of the Island of Hermaphrodites, Newly Discovered* (*Description de l'île des hermaphrodites, nouvellement découverte*), written by Thomas Artus circa 1605, it becomes difficult to distinguish a statue from a human being, who is a hermaphrodite. "Distinctions between real and artificial, fact and fiction, are easily blurred in this realm of indistinct genders." Kathleen P. Long, "Hermaphrodites Newly Discovered: The Cultural Monsters of Early Modern France," in *Hermaphrodites in Renaissance Europe* (Routledge, 2006), 190.

He wouldn't wear a cap, so the shiny black sidelocks (*binpatsu*) he had grown long would blow in the wind. As he carried his nearly six-foot frame, swaying in slow motion, he was truly splendid and imposing, neither comical nor vulgar. People coming and going would turn and look back, staring in wonderment. These days, five or six times a month he would visit a beautician. He wore white make-up on his face and a thin layer of red lipstick. Because he was so beautiful to begin with, nobody realized he was wearing make-up.³⁷

Here the spectacle of Okamura is made clear by people staring in wonder not only at their imposing figure but also at the incongruity of this impressive body in make-up and female dress³⁸—behavior seemingly transgressing so-called biological sex. This calls to mind the spectacle [*mimono*] created in Shikin's story "The Nature of the Modern Couple." The wifely and husbandly behavior of the couple is so unusual that people come to view it as a sightseeing attraction. The narrating voice of Shimada transparently manipulates attention to Okamura's image and presentation. Tanizaki uses spectacle in this story and elsewhere to enhance characters' futanarisa. The visual field highlights their doubled sex. In the passage above, Okamura's make-up and natural beauty contrast with his tall (male) physique. This invites stares, just as ambiguously sexed people might receive unwelcome stares.

Of course, statues are primarily appreciated visually. They are a sort of spectacle by definition. In the case of Okamura as a Buddha statue, he is a spectacle artistically and as a futanari and visual extravaganza. Okamura's beauty demands to be gazed upon. Shimada says,

His luxury and dissipation strengthened day after day, and he seldom went to school. His physique and clothing became more and more beautifully splendid, to the point where he looked as if he could not be approached for the brilliance he radiated. It would often happen that when I tried to speak to him, I was struck by his beauty and struck dumb.³⁹

The narrative focuses squarely on Okamura's magnificent body, beautiful clothes, and made-up face. They tell Shimada that they believe their

37. *TZ* v. 2, 474.

38. Coded by the kimono patterns and fabrics.

39. *TZ* v. 2, 485.

appearance is good enough to be a picture (*e*).⁴⁰ Not only do they draw attention to their body and face vis-à-vis Shimada, but also in this nod to Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and European Decadence, they reveal their self-image.

Okamura is a spectacle, not only for passersby and for Shimada, but also for themselves. They are consciously both *objet d'art* and *objet de désir*. They sculpt art out of their material body, and they assume a form of art as a statue. Moreover, they are an object of desire, the narrative suggests, through Shimada's homoerotic attachment to them. In addition to being astonished at their beauty, earlier Shimada says, "In their flashy, sky-blue exercise outfit that fit them to a 'T,' strangely, I felt moved by the voluptuous charm of his nearly half-naked, beautiful figure."⁴¹

Shimada responds to Okamura's sensuality, but neither party acts upon it. In Naturalist literature the struggle to resist or surrender to sexual desire informs the deployment of such sensuality in, for example, Shimazaki Tōson's *Ie* (*The Family*, 1910–11) and *Shinsei* (*New Life*, 1918–1919) and Tayama Katai's *Futon* (*The Quilt*, 1907). The struggle to contain sexual impulses and paying a price for losing control of sexual passion feature in these works. In "The Golden Death," the homoerotic suggestion hangs in the air.

"Art is an expression of sexual desire. Artistic pleasure is physical, or it's one type of sensual pleasure. Therefore, art is not a spiritual thing; it is entirely sensual."⁴² Okamura embodies the idea that informs their declaration here. Desire is desire, regardless of the sex of the desirable object. Okamura is both desirable object and erasure of sexual difference.

Their assertion that art is an expression of sexual desire echoes the opinions of Richard von Krafft-Ebing, who declares that sexual impulse is at the root of ethics, religion, and aestheticism.⁴³ "Sexual influence is just as potent in the awakening of aesthetic sentiments."⁴⁴ ("*Shinbi-teki kanjō no kanki ni shikijō-teki yōsu no eikyō suru tokoro keshite sunakarazu.*")⁴⁵ Tanizaki read Krafft-Ebing and integrated his concepts, such as masochism, in his stories. Perhaps more than Western literature, Tanizaki placed greater importance upon reading abnormal psychology in this period of his youth, suggests

40. *TZ* v. 2, 475.

41. *TZ* v. 2, 469.

42. *TZ* v. 2, 485.

43. Richard von Krafft-Ebing, *Psychopathia Sexualis*, 1; Richard von Krafft-Ebing, *Hentai seiyoku shinri* (Yumani shobo, 2006), 1.

44. *Psychopathia Sexualis*, 11.

45. Richard von Krafft-Ebing, *Hentai seiyoku shinri*, 16.

Odaka Shūya.⁴⁶ Yet, though he derived much of his inspiration from Krafft-Ebing, Tanizaki misunderstood a great deal as well, according to Noguchi.⁴⁷ Accurate or not, Tanizaki engaged with these notions for his own aesthetic purposes. Therefore, if Okamura's art is a futanari performance, then it could be said that their sexual desire is bisexual.

The narrative sexualizes Okamura while they consciously sex themselves or assume a sexed position. Okamura crafts their body to engender both male and female attributes. Their "corporeal style" is "an act," as it were, which is both intentional and performative, where performative suggests a dramatic and contingent construction of meaning.⁴⁸

The decadence of subversive sex in "The Golden Death" also finds expression in celebrating art and artifice. Okamura's life is art; their body is art. Nature looks like art. Plants, jewels, and animals look artificial or monstrous. There are no representations of nature in what could be imagined as its original state. Animals are shipped in from their normal habitat to decorate and exoticize Okamura's paradise. They have the landscape dug up and rearranged to achieve more artistic scenery. Moreover, nature, in the form of flora, fauna, and human beings, is stripped of sex. Desire is absent except for homoerotic hints and a reference to Okamura's popularity among "many ladies, who shed tears and thr[o]w their lives away for him."⁴⁹ Humans are statues or are bit players on Okamura's stage, upon which they are the spectacle, drawing the gaze. They combine male and female allure in their body and arouse desire in all sexes. Also, that Okamura's desire is minimized, if not absent altogether, speaks to their "feminine" side. It was unseemly for women to be desirous of sex, according to popular discourse. The sexual desire of characters is a topic not developed in the story, but Okamura's futanari spectacle is stunning.

In an article written in 1920, novelist Mikami Otokichi (1891–1944) refers to Tanizaki's work as perverse love literature (*hentai ren'ai bungaku*), which is not an expression of contempt but a label that encompasses sado-masochism. He says that Tanizaki's characters are not normal but lecherous and their carnal desire is paramount to their depiction. Many protagonists from this early period of Tanizaki's work are intellectual puppets and the best representative of this tendency is the protagonist from "The Golden Death," in Mikami's view. Not only are elements of sado-

46. Odaka Shūya, *Seinenki: Tanizaki Jun'ichirō ron*, 114.

47. Noguchi, *Tanizaki Jun'ichirō ron*, 14.

48. Butler, *Gender Trouble*, 139.

49. *TZ* v. 2, 485.

masochism evident in this story but the over-intellectual protagonist is futanari, which is no doubt another reason why Mikami calls Tanizaki's work perverse. It is interesting to observe how these themes of desire, sado-masochism, and perverseness develop with female love interests in "The Secret" and "Until Abandoned."

"The Secret"

Rather than the in-between sex of Okamura, the protagonists of the next two stories are represented as feminine in affect. The first-person narrator of "The Secret," "Mr. S. K." (as written in the Japanese text), limns a dreamy world of old Tokyo—hidden enclaves, monasteries, and strange neighborhoods. The protagonist is the Des Esseintes-type/Okamura-type, blasé, world-weary anti-hero. Since boredom is an important theme here, it is worthwhile to consider its background.

The religious and philosophical dimensions of boredom in the West, upon which such renowned thinkers as Immanuel Kant (1724–1804), Arthur Schopenhauer (1788–1860) and Søren Kierkegaard (1813–1855) commented, gave way to the modern discourse, which began in literature. By the mid-19th century in France, ennui had become symbolic of the spiritual and material effects of modernization. Changes as a consequence of industrialization, urbanization, and an emerging consumer society were linked to melancholy, fatigue, and boredom.⁵⁰ To mention the most recent predecessors to Huysmans's *Des Esseintes*, Charles Baudelaire and Gustave Flaubert write boredom into the world of the lyrical subject of *Les Fleurs du mal* (1857), and into the romantic longing of Emma, the eponymous protagonist of *Madame Bovary* (1856), respectively. It is pathological in Baudelaire, personified as a monster, and "makes you mean of soul."⁵¹

One creature only is most foul and false!
 Though making no grand gestures, nor great cries,
 He willingly would devastate the earth
 And in one yawning swallow all the world;
 He is Ennui!—with tear-filled eye he dreams

50. Elizabeth S. Goodstein, *Experience Without Qualities: Boredom and Modernity* (Stanford University Press, 2005), 161.

51. Charles Baudelaire, *The Flowers of Evil*, trans. James McGowan (Oxford University Press, 2008), 53.

Of scaffolds, as he puffs his water pipe.
 Reader, you know this dainty monster too;
 —Hypocrite reader,—fellowman,—my twin!⁵²

In the Japanese context, the source of boredom varies somewhat from the routine of life and over-familiarity to something deeper. Tayama Katai's protagonist in *Futon* (1907) is bored with his wife. Masamune Hakuchō, author and critic, wrote "Doko e" ("Where To?" 1908) about a man who is indifferent to everything, including women, liquor, and books. "Doko e" is remarkable for the clarity with which it formulates themes of disillusionment and alienation that had begun to take shape in certain stories of Kunikida Doppo and which would be given their most articulate expression in the novels of Sōseki.⁵³

Natsume Sōseki (1867–1916) deploys boredom in the protagonist of *Sorekara* (*And Then*, 1909) as an expression of modernity and a symptom of moral ambiguity. It is not just anyone who suffers from ennui in *And Then*, nor in Tanizaki's fiction, for that matter. One must be male, educated, and transgress conventional morality and social customs. As if to underscore the gendered nature of ennui, in one passage, when Daisuke visits Michiyo, "She said she had been fulling cloth because she was bored (*taikutsu*). By being bored, Michiyo meant that with her husband out all the time, the tedious hours of housekeeping hung heavy on her hands."⁵⁴ The narrative evinces the difference between boredom experienced by Michiyo in contrast to that which Daisuke experiences. In a similar vein, Kenzo, in Sōseki's *Michikusa* (*Grass on the Wayside*, 1915), denigrates his wife, Osumi, for reading lowbrow literature, referring to her as "*taikutsu na saikun*" (bored wife).

The ennui represented in Tanizaki's "The Secret" is more in the decadent vein of Huysmans's *Des Esseintes*. Their nerves worn thin, suffering from anomie, Mr. S. K. ensconces himself in a hidden, otherworld, just as *Des Esseintes* does. Perhaps Mr. S. K. influenced a phenomenon of which mystery writer Edogawa Rampo (1894–1965) became a great practitioner. Several of Rampo's protagonists suffer from the malaise of boredom. For example, Tanaka from "Akai heya" ("The Red Chamber," 1925) finds the world utterly bereft of amusement and loses to despair; since the world

52. Baudelaire, *The Flowers of Evil*, 7.

53. Jay Rubin, *Injurious to Public Morals: Writers and the Meiji State* (University of Washington Press, 1984), 240.

54. Natsume Sōseki, *And Then*, trans. Norma Field (Tuttle Publishing, 2011), 150.

holds absolutely no interest for Gōda Saburō from “Yaneura no sanposha” (“The Stalker in the Attic,” 1926), he tries dressing in different disguises and wandering through different neighborhoods; and the first line of the preface to *Ryōki no hate* (*The Fruits of Curiosity Hunting*, 1930) construes that Aoki’s intense boredom has driven him to become even too much of a curiosity hunter (*Kare wa amari nimo taikutsuya de, katsu ryōkisha de arisugita*).⁵⁵ The severity of the boredom forces all of the characters to indulge in dissolute, pathological behavior in order to find amusement, but to no avail.

This topos of boredom coincides with *ryōki*, or curiosity hunting, popular during the 1920s and 30s. Jeffrey Angles explains that out of boredom the curiosity seeker desires to experience something transgressive.⁵⁶ Publications about *ryōki* aside, Rampo’s murderers, stalkers, and psychotics seek excitement in the bizarre, where “transgressive” is a given.

Tanizaki’s S. K. asks, “Is there nothing strange and mysterious enough to enliven these jaded nerves? Can’t I live in a barbaric, absurd dream world removed from reality?”⁵⁷ They feel the desire to hide out downtown (*shitamachi*) and savor an air of secrecy. Likewise, Des Esseintes and Okamura drop out of sight. After settling into their room in a temple, S. K. starts a practice of getting drunk, dressing in disguise, and going out to stroll. After experimenting with various costumes, they see a woman’s kimono that they absolutely must try on. They then become smitten, so to speak, with wearing women’s clothing. “Sometimes I even felt jealous of women, who because of their circumstances, could dress up without hesitation in the silk crepes I loved so much.”⁵⁸ Notably, S. K. positions themselves as a woman also through jealousy, which they express for other women, and a number of times other women look jealous of them as a woman throughout the story. Therefore, the text reinforces gender stereotypes to achieve S. K.’s transgressive sexuality.

However, Rampo’s stalker, Gōda, has a different experience. Like S. K., he experiments with several disguises before dressing as a woman. When this offers no lasting relief from his boredom, he turns to spying on people from an attic and eventually to murder. Perhaps Rampo took up Tanizaki’s suggestion in the last line of “The Secret” for the blasé protagonist “to pur-

55. Edogawa Rampo, *Ryōki no hate*, in *Edogawa Rampo Zenshū*, vol. 4, edited by Shinpo Hirohisa and Yamamae Yuzuru. Shohan ed. (Kōbunsha, 2003), 337.

56. Jeffrey Angles, “Seeking the Strange: *Ryōki* and the Navigation of Normality in Interwar Japan,” *Monumenta Nipponica* 63.1 (2008): 117.

57. *TZ* v. 1, 251.

58. *TZ* v. 1, 254.

sue more vibrant, bloody pleasures” (*motto shikisai no koi chidarake na kanraku o motomeru*).⁵⁹ For S. K., dressing as a woman is an end unto itself. They feel palpably different; they feel like a woman feels. Whereas Gōda tires of the female guise, S. K. becomes the disguise in a profound way, through the body.

Ensnared in their living quarters, S. K. surrounds himself with books full of strange tales and illustrations, including Arthur Conan Doyle’s *The Sign of Four* and “even a French book on wondrous Sexuology [sic].”⁶⁰ That the book is French is conspicuous, since Austro-German researchers dominated sexology. Of course, the book need not refer to an actual one, but it is interesting to consider that this “French book” might refer to Huysmans’s *Against Nature*. For one reason, though not a book of sexology, *Against Nature* tantalizes with an array of sexual practices, “perversions,” and delights, including sex with a “hermaphrodite.” The other argument in support of this book referring to *Against Nature* is the precedent set by Oscar Wilde in inserting Huysmans’s novel and thus its decadent implications into *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, as mentioned in Chapter One.

At the same time, Tanizaki’s “French book” gestures to a famous work of sexology entitled *Le fétichisme dans l’amour* (“Fetishism in Love,” 1887) by Alfred Binet, who was the first to name the phenomenon of fetishism.⁶¹ Robert Nye points out that “Fetishism in Love” received wide exposure because of its publication in the distinguished journal *Revue philosophique*. Such a reference in “The Secret” would be fitting considering the prominent role that fetishism plays in Tanizaki’s work. It could be said that S. K.’s attraction to feminine dress is a fetish.

Against Nature and “Fetishism in Love” implicate each other in the sense that Des Esseintes displays classic fetishistic yearnings reminiscent of psychiatric case studies, as Nye describes them.⁶² One of these incidents includes Des Esseintes’s encounter with Miss Urania. To overcome his sexual impotence, Des Esseintes would imagine Miss Urania transforming into a man while he would become a woman. “This exchange of sex between Miss Urania and himself had excited him tremendously.”⁶³ However, this fetish fails because he finds her feminine in her behavior in spite

59. *TZ* v.1, 270.

60. *TZ* v.1, 253.

61. Robert Nye, “The Medical Origins of Sexual Fetishism,” in *Fetishism as Cultural Discourse*, eds. Emily Apter and William Pietz (Cornell University Press, 1993), 21.

62. Robert Nye, “The Medical Origins of Sexual Fetishism,” 25.

63. Joris-Karl Huysmans, *Against Nature*, 97.

of her having become a man physically. The hermaphroditic state does not arouse him, but it seems that nothing can.

Clearly, Des Esseintes's enervated and bored condition is extreme, to the point of torpor. Tanizaki's deployment of boredom, and Rampo's repetitive use of it afterwards, resembles Huysmans's, but Tanizaki's and Rampo's characters rouse themselves to action. In S. K.'s case, they develop a practice of dressing as a woman and going to the theater. As if a ritual, they assume another sex as they dress themselves in differently sexed apparel and make-up:

From the touch of the long underkimono, the decorative collar, the underskirt, and the red, silk lined sleeves that rustled, my flesh was given the same sensations relished by the skin of all ordinary women. I put on white make-up from the nape of my neck to my wrists, and a wig in the ginkgo-leaf style. I covered my head with a large scarf. Then I boldly lost myself in the crowd of the night streets. It was as if feminine blood began to flow through my veins naturally, and I gradually lost masculine feelings and my masculine pose.⁶⁴

The narrative draws the reader's eye to the objects of the protagonist's focalization, articles of clothing and their somatic, haptic experience. It continues with their body parts and then their entire figure vanishing into a crowd. Images are restricted to the body or body embellishments of make-up or clothing. This sequestering of the reader's attention induces a visual claustrophobia. The mental vision lingers on S. K.'s body, make-up, and clothing, until "feminine blood" comingles with "masculine feelings."

The narrative represents sex as mutable. Gender markers, such as clothing and make-up, are capable of changing S. K.'s sex, hence rendering sex unstable. At one point the protagonist delightedly exclaims, "... I saw myself reflected in a large mirror elegantly and completely transformed into a woman." They note that their eyes and mouth move like a woman's.⁶⁵

In the above scene and throughout the story, the narrative provides the futanari's focalization and omits reactions from others to S. K. Filtered through Mr. K.'s narrative, others gaze at them, but the reader does not know the thoughts or opinions of these onlookers. As if to say the normative point of view is insignificant, the futanari reappropriates the gaze and controls the narrative, thus asserting a futanari subject, however fleetingly.

64. *TZ* v. 1, 255.

65. *TZ* v.1, 256.

In the age of sexology, which insists upon bifurcated sexual ideals, Mr. K. gleefully enjoys their sexual fluidity.

The protagonist continues to monopolize the gaze. In a scene a few pages after they feel feminine blood flowing through their veins, Mr. K. guides their footfalls up to the second floor of a jammed movie theater.

The film would stop occasionally, and when the lights went on suddenly, I peered from deep within the shadow of my large headscarf, surveying the faces of the throng overflowing the theater. Tobacco smoke permeated the air above the heads of the crowd below, like a cloud wafting up from a valley bed. I was secretly elated that many men peeked curiously at my old-style, large scarf, and many women stole covetous glances at the shades of my chic outfit. Among the women spectators (*kenbutsu no onna*), it appeared that none was as remarkable as I in terms of being unique, alluring, and beautiful.⁶⁶

In this case the first-person narrator manipulates the “camera” eye to themselves vis-à-vis other characters and spatial organization. They are situated above the crowd and when the lights go up, the spectators presumably must look up, craning their necks or shifting in their seats in order to see S. K. In so doing, they draw the gaze of reader and character alike to the spectacle of their womanly beauty; the shaft of light that has spilled out onto the screen shifts to the second-floor seats now becoming a spotlight trained on S. K. The spectacle that was the film is now S. K., who savors their spectacle-ness, as it were.

The spectacle itself, who is the futanari S. K., again controls the gaze. It is as if Tanizaki wrote these stories using a mechanical eye (or camera) through which to separate out his protagonists. They are distanced from others even among a crowd. Okamura as the Buddha is staged this way, as well as Kōkichi of “Until Abandoned.” The futanari gaze is trained on their self-fulfillment. Tanizaki’s strategy is his cinematic focusing of attention through defamiliarization. The familiar objects of kimono, ginkgo-leaf style hair, and so on, are abruptly rendered strange on a man who enjoys feminine blood running through their veins. Tanizaki’s narrative telescopes these articles of clothing, painted lips, and so forth, and then widens the image to include perhaps (normative) women staring at the protagonist. The widened image takes in the loss of masculine feelings contrasting with a woman’s eyes and mouth.

66. *TZ* v. 1, 257–58.

The narrative achieves this “scopic regime” by first delineating space between the audience and the smoky air above, followed by sexually distinguishing between the men in the audience and Mr. K., and then distinguishing between the women and Mr. K. Mr. K. is individuated as different from the men and women, assuming a *chūsei* or middle position of sex.

Martin Jay identifies three visual subcultures, or “scopic regimes of modernity,” in his chapter of the same name.⁶⁷ Corresponding to movements in Western European art, these scopic regimes are: Cartesian perspectivalism; the “art of describing”; and the baroque, the last two of which offer alternatives to the hegemony of the Cartesian tradition. Cartesian perspective refers to a singular, eternal, and disembodied point of view:

The abstract coldness of the perspectival gaze meant the withdrawal of the painter’s emotional entanglement with the objects depicted in geometricalized space. The participatory involvement of more absorptive visual modes was diminished, if not entirely suppressed, as the gap between spectator and spectacle widened.⁶⁸

The Cartesian perspective is bound up with a scientific worldview and subjective rationality in philosophy. Inherent in this rationalism is an “unrelenting dualism” between subject and object, body and mind.⁶⁹

Thomas Lamarre explains that Cartesianism has also helped create a system of inquiry, categories of knowledge, and the way in which we see connections among categories. Tanizaki challenges Cartesian perspectivalism by drawing scenes that play on perspective of subject and object, and male and female, and revel in ekphrastic delight. In the scene described above and elsewhere, the text has a close connection to art, certainly in content and style, but significantly in the layout of scenes as well. Space is proportioned and scaled. At the same time, his alternative visual order renders human subjects as disconnected. It overcomes sexual dualism and destabilizes the unified subject. Tanizaki’s style in achieving this is similar to baroque, as Jay describes it. The baroque dazzles and disorients with a multitude of images, refusing a monocular perspective and celebrating excess.

Mr. K. loves being looked at until they are overpowered by the charm

67. Martin Jay, “Scopic Regimes of Modernity,” in *Vision and Visuality*, ed. Hal Foster (Bay Press, 1988), 3–23.

68. Martin Jay, “Scopic Regimes of Modernity,” 8.

69. Thomas Lamarre, “Introduction: Radical Perspectivalism,” *Mechademia* 7 (2012):

of an enchanting woman, who happens to be sitting nearby in the movie theater. They feel like an “unsightly, wretched monster” (*minikuku asamashii bakemono*) in the make-up they so carefully applied and the kimono they so painstakingly dressed themselves in. “I couldn’t compete at all with either her femininity or her beauty.”⁷⁰

Coincidentally, they had a love affair with this beautiful woman some years earlier and dropped her. Afterwards, the two exchange notes and then resume the affair, but she insists that S. K. remain ignorant of where she lives. So, S. K. is blindfolded when they come to her house. Mr. K. loves the thrill and the dreamlike quality of the affair, and the disorientation, at first. She, on the other hand, fears the spell will be broken by the mundane reality of her living circumstances if they find out where she lives. And, of course, that is what happens.

Mr. K’s use of the word monster (*bakemono*) to describe himself in contrast to the beautiful woman, or “*yōjo*” (enchantress), as they call her, is fraught with meaning. Teratology enjoys a long history in Japan. The Japanese category of *bakemono* or *obake* includes a variety of monsters, goblins, ghosts, phantoms, and so on. *Bakemono* literally means, “changing thing,” but it also extends to aberrant and oddly formed entities.⁷¹ Without venturing into a “pandemonium” of such creatures, as Michael Dylan Foster calls it, it is worthwhile considering the significance of Tani-zaki’s use of the word *bakemono*.

S. K.’s femininity and beauty are a sham next to the woman’s. Yet, instead of calling themselves a fake or a woman *manqué*, they emphasize their grotesqueness through the word *bakemono*. Anthony Chambers translates *bakemono* as “freak,”⁷² capturing that aspect of monstrosity, though he might have chosen the word “monster” or “horror show.” Mr. K. is indeed a “changing thing,” assuming different forms: male, female, and futanari. Moreover, Mr. K. is *other* to the norm.

The futanari is a monster in representation; both resist classification,⁷³ transgress boundaries, oppose “nature,” have befuddling bodies, and are other to the normative subject. The futanari/monster affirms the norma-

70. TZ v. 1, 259.

71. Michael Dylan Foster, *Pandemonium and Parade: Japanese Monsters and the Culture of Yōkai* (University of California Press, 2008), 6.

72. Anthony Chambers, trans., “The Secret,” in *The Gourmet Club: A Sextet*, trans. Anthony H. Chambers and Paul McCarthy (University of Michigan Press, 2017), 49.

73. Michael Dylan Foster, *Pandemonium and Parade*, 10.

tive in its difference⁷⁴ but may also be a threatening reminder of any lurking inadequacy in the normative subject. Despite changing definitions of these concepts over time and across cultures, the monstrous and the normative are held fast in “a mutually constitutive relationship.”⁷⁵

“The Secret” invokes the monstrous, and therewith reaffirms Mr. K’s decadence and decadent surroundings. While directing attention to the beauty of the woman they compare themselves to, they highlight the speciousness that lurks skin deep beneath their artfully wrought beauty. Just as the discourse surrounding monsters speaks to the preoccupations and concerns of a society at any historical moment, so, too, does the discourse on the futanari. Nevertheless, Tanizaki deploys the futanari to serve his own aesthetic purposes. In so doing, the narrative demonstrates the mutability of the subject, sexually and psychologically.

Many secrets constitute “The Secret.” Odaka asserts that in Wilde’s *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, only a secret can impart romance (mystery and wonder) to modern life and that Tanizaki implies the same notion in “The Secret.”⁷⁶ Be that as it may, Mr. K. secretly dresses as a woman until an ex-lover recognizes them. They secretly visit a secret lover until they tire of her, when her secret location is exposed, and the allure evaporates. Yet not all secrets are created equally; they provide varying degrees of titillation. I maintain that “The Secret” exploits sex as *the* secret, while speaking of it, or revealing it incessantly, as Foucault says about sexual discourse of modern (Western) societies at the start of this chapter. Mr. K’s sex is a secret hiding in plain sight.⁷⁷ The secret has a multitude of possibilities, just as sexualities do.⁷⁸ “The Secret” capitalizes on the futanari figure effectively to achieve the possibilities of sex, breaking down the gaze and perspective, and creating art while implicitly commenting on art.

74. Margrit Shildrick, *Embodying the Monster: Encounters with the Vulnerable Self* (Sage Publications, 2002), 28.

75. Shildrick, *Embodying the Monster*, 29.

76. Odaka Shūya, *Seinenki: Tanizaki jun'ichirō ron*, 106.

77. Secrecy saturates the air in visual arts as well. Takehisa Yumeji (1884–1934) draws a secret, *Himitsu (The Secret)*, 1916, which graces the cover of this book. It accompanies a story by the same title about sixteen-year-old girls who bury secrets beneath a tree. Around the same time, the French artist, Marie Laurencin (1883–1956), painted *Das Geheimnis (The Secret)*, circa 1916–21). She paints herself listening to her lover whispering the secret of sapphic love, an open secret in Laurencin’s world. Sex is the secret boldly declaring itself to those who will see.

78. It is tempting to contemplate Mr. S. K. as namesake of the SK Hospital in Tanizaki’s prose fiction sensation of 1931, *Manji*, the labyrinthine tale of lesbian lovers.

“Until Abandoned”

Similar to “The Secret,” the narrative of “Until Abandoned” (1914) focuses on the appearance and feelings of protagonist Kōkichi as a woman. Published in the same year as “The Golden Death,” “Until Abandoned” features other-gendered characteristics in constituting the protagonist’s sex, such as the use of feminine language.

The focus on the body starts early in the roughly one-hundred-page novella. The third-person narration, with the help of a mirror, reflects upon Kōkichi’s feminine attributes. The following lengthy passage divulges a great deal about Tanizaki’s reading interests and the sexing of the futanari character:

... In other words, the manner in which he carried his extra weight made him the spitting image of a chubby seventeen or eighteen-year-old country girl or kitchen maid, that is, almost entirely feminine. Especially the plumpness around the buttocks and thighs, the thickness of the ankles and so on, from the hips down he looked no different from a woman.

After inquiring into Weininger’s theories, reading *Sex and Genius*,⁷⁹ Kōkichi came to feel the writer’s many merits with regard to his own physical constitution. Lingering naked in front of the mirror just after a bath, staring intently at the shape of both legs, they sensed that they were gradually transforming into a woman. If, as Weininger asserts, neither the perfect male nor the perfect female exists, meaning that there was no absolute distinction between men and women, then this theory could be applied to an individual’s psychology. Kōkichi discovered that sometimes they were completely dominated by female-like feelings. At these times, they would in fact become a woman.

Now, for example, they put on make-up facing a mirror. Although they don’t use white powder, they do their hair, put in oil, shave, and put on lotion. This is to attract their lover. They endeavor to make their face as beautiful as possible and be as charming as possible. They even feel an irrepressible joy at the beauty of their

79. An abridged Japanese translation of Weininger’s *Sex and Character* (1903) appeared in 1906 as *Sex and Genius (Danjo to tensai)*, no doubt because a good portion of the book discusses genius.

skin, lips, and hair. Is there not any difference between them and a woman waiting for a man?

Kōkichi, meanwhile, standing before the mirror, pulled out a set of new clothes from the bottom of a wicker trunk in the closet that they had had made, and removed the basting, one silk thread at a time. For a set of elaborate, splash pattern Oshima kimono, the cotton print sleeveless undergarment, the habutae silk long underkimono, the damask obi, they chose every design themselves in preparation for their spring wardrobe. Here too, their female temperament came into play, for Kōkichi normally spent more money on clothing than on books.⁸⁰

Lingering in front of the mirror, Kōkichi reflects a woman. Tanizaki exploits the coding of the mirror itself as female here and in “The Secret.” As quoted earlier, S. K. declares, “. . . I saw myself reflected in a large mirror elegantly and completely transformed into a woman.”⁸¹ Although a mirror reflects image, it has deeper significance than just surface. The Japanese proverb, “The sword is the soul of a warrior; the mirror is the soul of a woman,” (“*Katana wa bushi no tamashii, kagami wa onna no tamashii*”) indicates female subjectivity, not merely a figure clad in a female kimono. Additionally, the image of a woman in the mirror evokes numerous woodblock prints representing this subject by such artists as Kitagawa Utamaro (1753–1806) and Utagawa Kuniyoshi (1797–1861). Clearly, the narrative plays upon gender stereotypes, as it does in “The Secret,” to feminize the character. From the shape of legs to temperament, so-called feminine attributes contribute to sexing Kōkichi, presenting a potential for subverting the dimorphic sexual economy while reifying it at the same time.

Although the topic of the story is ostensibly a romantic relationship, the narrative trains the eye of the reader on Kōkichi, their body and behavior, from this early scene of them framed in a mirror. Here again, as with S. K., not to mention Okamura, the spectacle lovingly relishes the spectacle-ness of their body. The reader sees both Kōkichi looking at themselves in a mirror, as well as their reflection, thus seeing them twice in the same visual field, in a *mise en abyme*, as it were. The narrative creates not a single, unified Kōkichi but a doubled image, a doubled sex in one

80. *TZ* v. 2, 210–11.

81. *TZ* v. 2, 201.

body. The visual and the narrative reinforce this (baroque) disorientation of doubled sex. The image(s) transform before the reader's eyes, as Kōkichi becomes a woman, conjuring a complex feeling.

The casting of Kōkichi as both male and female lends a decadence to their character that coincides with their conception of romantic love and their attempt at conducting a noetic love affair. They endeavor to sculpt a woman to their predilections out of Michiko, just as Okamura chisels their body in "The Golden Death." "Until Abandoned" establishes the trope that reappears in subsequent Tanizaki stories:

Just as a sculptor creates their art from wood or stone, using her spirit and flesh as the foundation, they endeavored to give expression to their own illusion there. In short, constructing as much as possible an unnatural, unrealistic, and uncustomary, or otherwise dramatic character was their job for the moment. And, these efforts had already steadily brought about considerable results.⁸²

Treating the body as raw material for art, such as a block of stone or a canvas, is the premise for these two stories. The narratives lay emphasis on the artificiality of the creations as a valued result.

Beginning from the time that Kōkichi first started socializing with Michiko, her speech and conduct became more artificial (技巧的, *aatifisharu*) and eccentric (*ekusentorikku*). This phenomenon must be seen as the first indication that she was at least feeling their influence and gradually being made over artistically. There was still a considerable distance to her becoming their ideal work of art. However, they viewed her as the steady perfection of their creation.⁸³

The narrative invokes faraway lands, just as the "The Golden Death" makes innumerable references to the art of ancient Greece and other cultures. By virtue of their foreignness and remoteness in time, they are exotic or strange, thereby lending an air of decadence. "They tried to drive the nature of the great queens and empresses who cultivated flowers of evil, according to the legends of ancient civilizations like Babylon, Rome, Egypt, China, into the soul of their lover."⁸⁴ In addition to other decadent

82. *TZ* v. 2, 216–17.

83. *TZ* v. 2, 217.

84. *TZ* v. 2, 245–46.

themes, Baudelaire's *Les Fleurs du mal* resonates in the blooming flowers of evil (*zaiaku no hana*). Baudelaire's great work was translated into Japanese five years later, in 1919, under the title of *Aku no hana*,⁸⁵ but as discussed earlier, Tanizaki certainly knew Baudelaire's pivotal work.⁸⁶

In addition, the conceit of a lover as slave combines decadence and sado-masochism in the story. At the beginning the narrative posits that either she will become their slave, or they will become her slave. By the end, Michiko cannot accept anything less than absolute and total subjugation of Kōkichi. She often toys with them in a nasty way and seeing them cry gives her great pleasure. "As if the two had been completely reborn, they became irrational, like idiots or barbarians."⁸⁷ It is hardly surprising that sado-masochism structures the relationship of this romantic pair, the prototype of Naomi and Jōji in *Naomi/A Fool's Love*.

In a commentary entitled "The Hot Wind of Sensuality,"⁸⁸ Chiba Shunji concentrates on the theme of love in "Until Abandoned," ideal love, the hopelessness of love, and love's bliss. Kōkichi engages in a sado-masochistic, noetic love relationship with Michiko, in which they eventually fulfill the prophecy they make that she will leave them.

However, Chiba does not address the presence of a double-sexed body exhibiting a range of gendered behavior in this story of seemingly heteronormative "love" and desire. Kōkichi candidly remarks on their "female temperament" and female "physical constitution," and uses female language, including the first-person pronoun, *atashi*, as Michiko does, without qualification. Why?

Treating the theme of a love relationship is significant in Tanizaki's early career, as well as in other Japanese prose fiction at the time. Sōseki's *And Then* wielded an enormous influence on writers who were adolescents around 1907 to 1912. Chiba quotes renowned author Akutagawa Ryūnosuke (1892–1927), who writes of this influence on those of his gen-

85. By Baba Mutsuo.

86. Regarding Tanizaki's use of the phrase "*zaiaku no hana*" for "flowers of evil," unlike the term *aku*, which means "evil," "*zaiaku*," denotes a consideration, moral or otherwise, of others outside the individual. In Sōseki's great work *Kokoro*, Sensei says, "*Shikashi . . . shikashi kimi, koi wa zaiaku desuyo*." (Sōseki *zenshū* v. 9, 35). McClellan translates the phrase as "guilt in loving." Edwin McClellan, trans., *Kokoro: A Novel and Selected Essays* (Madison Books, 1992), 25.

87. *TZ* v. 2, 273.

88. The "hot wind" of his title comes from another short story by Tanizaki, "Neppū ni fukarete" ("Hot Wind Blowing," 1913), which he also discusses in the brief essay. In Tanizaki's critique of *Mon* and *Sorekara*, he refers to a phrase from *Mon* in which the couple, Oyone and Sōsuke, is "knocked down by a furious wind" [of sensuality].

eration.⁸⁹ Representative writers of the Shirakaba school, such as Shiga Naoya and Mushanokōji Saneatsu, share the sensibilities of *And Then* protagonist Daisuke, all of whom were bound by the promise of their inheritance and therefore unable to live as they wished. In that sense, *And Then* acted as a harbinger for these writers' appearance in the Taishō period, writes Chiba.⁹⁰

Tanizaki, too, had a strong response to *And Then*,⁹¹ and his empathy for Daisuke inspired him to draw a character in love, so to speak, in a modern idiom, while taking him in a more decadent direction. Tanizaki, himself, wrote about the destructive and constructive nature of love in *And Then* and Sōseki's *Mon* (*The Gate*, 1910), respectively. Clearly, modern, romantic love provided an intoxicating theme for writers of this period. Yet, Kōkichi's futanarisa is the elephant in the room of the house of love. It is a flashing neon sign that this love relationship is not of the Sōsekian variety that so impressed a generation of writers. It is cynical and much less romantic.

Odaka sees the sexual doubling as one of the very things that makes “modern love” an outcome of modernity, so to speak. That is, sexual ambiguity in the story is an expression of the discourse that asserts the comingling of the sexes, as in *Sex and Character* (1903) by Otto Weininger (1880–1903), referenced in the passage from the story above. Tanizaki's high schoolmate and fellow literature club member, Sugita Naoki, wrote a long article about Weininger that appeared in a 1910 issue of *Shinshichō*, a literary arts magazine.⁹² Therefore, it appears that Weininger was fairly well known, which would explain why Weininger received greater attention than Magnus Hirschfeld did for the concept that there was “no absolute distinction between men and women,” or “permanent bisexuality,” even though Hirschfeld predated Weininger with this theory by at least nine years. A charge of plagiarism was leveled at Weininger, who was already dead. J. Edgar Bauer expounds upon the concepts and lays out the controversy among Weininger, Hirschfeld, and Sigmund Freud in “Intersexual Variabilities and Phallic Restorations: Otto Weininger and Sigmund Freud as Detractors of Magnus Hirschfeld.”⁹³

89. Chiba Shunji, *Kaisetsu: kannō no neppū*, (Commentary: Hot Wind of Sensuality), in *Jun'ichirō rabirinsu*, edited by Chiba Shunji (Chūō kōron shinsha, 1999), 316.

90. Chiba, 316–17.

91. Chiba, 316–17.

92. Odaka Shūya, *Seinenki: Tanizaki jun'ichirō ron*, 105.

93. J. Edgar Bauer, “Intersexual Variabilities and Phallic Restorations: Otto Weininger and Sigmund Freud as Detractors of Magnus Hirschfeld,” *Journal of Bisexuality* 23, no. 3 (2023): 307–40.

Edward Carpenter, too, writes along these lines in *The Intermediate Sex* (1908). The cultural manifestation of gender ambivalence that Donald Roden discusses takes place in the 1920s, so it is significant that these pronouncements concerning masculine traits in women and feminine ones in men found in Hirschfeld, Weininger, and Carpenter are from an earlier period and cultural moment.

In the passage above, Kōkichi reflects on what they have read in Weininger's *Sex and Character*, that sexual categories of male and female are ideals that do not exist in reality. Therefore, there is no absolute distinction between men and women (*danjo no aida ni zettai-teki sabetsu ga nai*).

This notion is reiterated in Okamura's declarations about male beauty, female beauty, and the beauty of in-between sex (*chūsei*) in "The Golden Death." Moreover, Okamura, herself, possesses female beauty. And Mr. K. from "The Secret" (1911) shares with Kōkichi bodily sensations of femaleness, feeling feminine blood flow through their veins.

Tanizaki creates a protagonist who desires an aesthetic life. Going beyond Wildean decadence, however, Tanizaki's character is filled with uncertainty, writes Odaka. He claims that it is because Kōkichi doesn't lose himself in the love of a woman; that is, because of this vague romantic feeling, they need the device of a conceptual "aestheticization" (*geijutsuka*).⁹⁴

It may be that Kōkichi's need to aestheticize life because of their sexual doubleness makes sense in terms of motivation. This causality, however, does not apply to Tanizaki's integration of these elements. That is, all are part and parcel of his work in this period. As discussed, "The Golden Death" and "The Secret" display a cornucopia of aestheticism, futanarisa, and decadence. Tanizaki uses sexual ambiguity to enhance the decadence of characters and milieus. Krafft-Ebing's and Weininger's ideas provide inspiration, but Tanizaki creates fictive worlds inhabited by characters who live for beauty and art, and the sensuality implicit in the creation and appreciation of beauty and art involves the body and sex. The drive to indulge the senses (the body) informs the moral universe of the characters. Aesthetics, futanarisa, and decadence are implicated in each other; one does not cause another.

Indeed, Kōkichi is calculating in their pursuit of Michiko. They like the idea of the romance but are not actually in love. Odaka notes that Kōkichi's artificial attempt to produce clear emotions demonstrates sexual uncertainty and instability.⁹⁵ That they see themselves transitioning into a woman when they look in the mirror is clearly part of this sexual instability and

94. Odaka Shūya, *Seinenki: Tanizaki jun'ichirō ron*, 103.

95. Odaka, 104.

fluidity. Surely this is a commentary on “modern romance,” when the components are mutable, and the romance is utterly contrived. In light of the influence of Sōseki’s *And Then* and Tanizaki’s review of *The Gate*, the love relationship here is especially humorous and ironic. Tanizaki’s narrative takes the reader through the process of constructing a romantic relationship based not on love but on a futanari body and behavior and no sexual desire. That Kōkichi “predicts” that Michiko will leave them in the end, as she does, is part of the joke.

In the latter half of the story, the narrative states in unequivocal terms that the romance is an illusion (*gen’ei*):

It’s questionable whether or not there actually is much value in the thing called love, but at least it seems there is a charm in carrying out a love suicide. Both Michiko and Kōkichi have become used to the habit of being serious and acting it out. They value the illusion more than the reality and are inclined toward a disposition that delights in artistry more than nature. Advancing yet another step, throwing one’s life away for the sake of illusion is not necessarily impossible. In this way, when they end it elegantly in death, the world can in no way fathom the fact that the actions of the two are high “drama.”⁹⁶

Tanizaki is toying with “love” in what will become in future work his own Tanizakian way. He deploys the language of love, the elements of attraction, and the trappings of a relationship, and all are hollow. Kōkichi talks about love suicide and escape, but it is playacting. Kōkichi doesn’t cut a strapping figure; he’s pudgy. Kōkichi doesn’t exude male sexiness; they are futanari. The relationship soon enough involves a third party (Sugiura), who eventually replaces Kōkichi. “Love” is a mystique in “The Secret,” a spell that is easily broken. In “Until Abandoned” it is performance.

Kōkichi’s use of feminine language in the final one-third of the text is glaring. The narrative states toward the end of the story, “By this time, their behavior and language had become just like that of a woman.”⁹⁷ They express this linguistically through their use of utterance-ending/sentence final particles such as *yo*, *ne*, *na-no*, and *no*, which are marked in Japanese as feminine.⁹⁸ For example, “*Yappari sō na no?*” (“Just as I thought, is that

96. *TZ* v. 2, 256.

97. *TZ* v. 2, 262.

98. See Miyako Inoue, *Vicarious Language: Gender and Linguistic Modernity in Japan*

right?") would be "Yappari sō." "Shōchi shimashita—dakedo Sugiura wa baka na otoko desu nee" ("Understood/I see. But Sugiura is foolish, isn't he?") would be "Shōchi shita—dakedo Sugiura wa baka no otoko da-zee." Additionally, they are too polite to Michiko, in language and manner, reminiscent of Shikin's husband in "The Nature of the Modern Couple," and their pleading with her repeatedly, would also be considered feminine. This language performance completes Kōkichi as a futanari sexed figure, who, despite having been betrayed, prostrates himself at Michiko's feet. "As expected, they became her slave and wanted to destroy themselves at the feet of a cruel, wicked queen."⁹⁹

Kōkichi's language is conspicuous but not simply for its feminine qualities; it is a cocktail of male, female, and neutral (sentence final) particles and other attributes. Tanizaki could have, for example, had this character mimic so-called schoolgirl speech. Instead, he uses the copula *desu* and *keigo* (polite speech) and various particles but not the *wa*, *na*, and *no* particles that Tanizaki uses for Michiko.

This play with language recalls Shikin's narrator in "A Young Man's Unusual Recollections," who refers to himself as a maiden (*shojo*). Language is further destabilized by the slippery meanings of true nature or essence (*honshitsu*), disposition (*shishitsu*), or character (*seishitsu*; *seijo*). As Shikin does, Tanizaki highlights sex as performance in language, dress, manner, and bodies themselves.

In addition to the performativity of sex, the feminine in Tanizaki's protagonists bespeak of effeminacy in men as a sign of degeneration, a Naturalist reading of heredity. Shimazaki Tōson's (Naturalist) *Ie* (*The Family*, 1910–11), mentioned earlier, is replete with disease and degeneration symbolizing the continuing detritus of the family. Writing about Tōson's *The Family*, Nakayama Hiroaki asserts, "It wouldn't be too much to say that the family as a topos itself exists in an inseparable relation to disease."¹⁰⁰ Tanizaki's narratives exploit this trope, however, not to reinforce this notion, but to suggest alternative possibilities, one of which is that mixed sexes have always been and will continue to be. Haunting this theme of heredity in European Naturalism is Huysmans's *Des Esseintes*, whose long

(University of California Press, 2006), on the genealogy of so-called women's language, typically characterized by the utterance-ending particles *teyo*, *dawa*, and *noyo*, among others.

99. *TZ* v. 2, 285.

100. Nakayama Hiroaki, "Kettō no monogatari: *Ie* no 'yamai' ron," in *Shimazaki Tōson: bunmei hihyō to shi to shōsetsu to*, eds. Hiraoka Toshio and Kenmochi Takehiko (Sōbunsha shuppan, 1996), 183.

bloodline is dissipated. He is the last in his line, as Okamura (“The Golden Death”) is the last in their bloodline, and the jaded Mr. S. K. could be the last in theirs.

Despite the futanarisa apparent in these characters, the worlds of these stories are ones in which the rigid dichotomy of male and female ideals are in operation. That is, the conditions of a binary sexual economy function to further isolate these characters, while they accentuate these dichotomous ideals. The evocation of the figure of the futanari serves to enhance atmosphere, celebrate decadence in its spectacular and beautiful perfection, and highlight other sexual beings, which squeeze themselves into the system without dislodging female and male norms.

4

Takabatake Kashō's *Bishōnen* and *Shōjo* Meet Halfway

It is important to mention that the history of *shōjo manga* began with futanarisa [ryōseiguyū].

—Fujimoto Yukari¹

*Yaoi*² boys and fighting girls in *manga*³ are taken for granted now, as are certain iconic manga features of the face and body. From futanari characters to particular styles of rendering bodies, various threads of artistic influence can be traced in twentieth century Japanese art, not to mention that of centuries earlier. One of those threads wends its way back to painter and magazine illustrator Takabatake Kashō (1888–1966).

Kashō, like Joris-Karl Huysmans, exerted great influence on those who followed him but today is largely unknown by non-specialists. He was enormously popular in the Taishō (1912–1926) and early Shōwa (1926–1989) periods and was pivotal in creating a vision of “Taishō chic.” Today, however, he appears not to be worthy in his own right for solo exhibitions, despite the fact that there are two museums dedicated to his work: Takabatake Kashō Taishō Roman Kan,⁴ outside of Matsuyama in Shikoku, run by his family and supported by niche fans; and the Yayoi Museum in Tokyo, opened in 1984 by Kano Takumi, who was an avid fan. In his ado-

1. Fujimoto Yukari, *Watashi no ibasho wa doko ni aru no? Shōjo manga ga utsusu kokoro no katachi* (Gakuyō shobō, 1998), 130.

2. *Yaoi* refers to (narratives of) male, same sex desire, practice, and relationships in *manga* and *anime*.

3. *Manga* are Japanese graphic novels or comics.

4. The museum can be found here: <https://www.kashomuseum.org/> Accessed January 10, 2024.

lescence, Kano had been deeply moved by Kashō's work. This small museum relies on exhibits of other artists to draw patrons.⁵ Elsewhere, two examples of Kashō's exhibits with other artists are as follows: "In Pursuit of Luxuriant Beauty," at the Okinawa Prefectural Art Museum,⁶ in which Kashō's work was combined with the man he influenced, Okinawa's first illustrator and leading Nihonga artist Kinjō Yasutarō; and "Taishō Roman, Shōwa Modern: The Age of Popular Art,"⁷ at the Tenshin Memorial Museum of Art, Ibaraki Prefecture.

Beyond personal correspondence, Kashō left behind no writings regarding his influences or motivations. However, it is clear from his art, cosmopolitan lifestyle, and evidence that his interests lay in freer sexualities than state or sexological discourses would allow. His work testifies to a refusal to be locked into state-sanctioned, rigid definitions of "male" and "female" and the roles prescribed for them.

Beginnings

Takabatake Kōkichi was born in 1888, in an isolated area called Uwajima in Ehime Prefecture, Shikoku. His merchant father Kazusaburō did not care for Kōkichi's "character and conduct (*seikō*),"⁸ perhaps a euphemism for "effeminate" (*memeshii*), another term he used to describe his son.⁹ One can assume that Kōkichi's preference for playing with girls rather than boys displeased his father.¹⁰

It seems that Kōkichi did not exhibit the normative behavior of a young boy, nor the mannerisms and interests of one. His father was suspicious and uncomfortable with this, but Kazusaburō was long dead before his son began a "Bohemian" lifestyle that he would have found even more distressing. Kōkichi, who took the artist name Kashō, never married or

5. The Yayoi Museum can be found here: <https://www.yayoi-yumeji-museum.jp/> Accessed August 16, 2024.

6. The exhibition ran from May 28 to June 28, 2009.

7. This exhibition ran from July 11 to August 30, 2009.

8. Takabatake Kakō, *Gaka no shōzō: Takabatake Kashō no denki to sakuhin* (Chūsekisha, 1971), 24.

9. Takabatake Asako, *Kashō kara no tegami* (Ehime bukkusu, 1997), 131.

10. This is reminiscent of Kanagaki Robun's *The Tale of Takahashi Oden, Devil Woman* (*Takahashi Oden yasha monogatari*, 1879), mentioned in Chapter One, which refers to Oden as a futanari for being stronger than she "should" be. In addition, the narrative demonizes Oden for her "masculinity" and preference for the "wild, rowdy play" of boys, unbecoming a young girl.

had children. Once he moved to Tokyo, he led a bevy of handsome male pupils, and later on adopted a young man with whom he was intimate. I mention this because Kashō's great-grandniece,¹¹ Takabatake Asako, discusses his art vis-à-vis his behavior, or "nature," as it were, which she traces to the strained relationship between father and son.

Kazusaburō was the sort of man who didn't think a merchant's son needed to be educated. However, through the entreaties of Kōkichi's mother, Chiyo, Kazusaburō ultimately allowed Kōkichi to leave high school to study painting in Osaka at age fourteen, in 1902. He began as the pupil of Hirai Chokusui, who is best known for his paintings of peacocks. Eventually, Kōkichi became dissatisfied not only because he wanted to paint human subjects, but also because he wanted to learn a modern style. He felt that Chokusui had no sense of originality, nor spirit of the age.¹²

Therefore, in 1903 Kōkichi began at Kyoto City Art School (Kyoto Shiritsu Bijutsu Kōgei Gakkō), now called Kyoto City School of Arts and Crafts. Although Western-style painting (*yōga*) was not taught, Kōkichi persevered in sketching and drawing exercises. One of his pictures was entered in the Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis in 1904.¹³ However, *nihonga* (Japanese-style painting) seemed to be stagnating, based upon this exhibition. Ellen Conant writes, "More than half the paintings were by little-known artists and the rest were conventional renderings of familiar themes."¹⁴

Dissatisfied with Japanese-style painting and earnest about Western-style, in 1906 Kashō enrolled in the art academy, Kansai Bijutsuin, which was established with a focus on Asai Chu, the leading figure of the Japanese modern Western-style painting world.¹⁵ Asai had studied art in France from 1900 to 1902 and returned home having mastered the brighter tones of Impressionism. He was especially enthusiastic about Art Nouveau. Asai is credited with raising the level of and encouraging a new generation of Western-style painting in Japan.

After studying under Asai, Kashō returned to *nihonga* in 1909, this time at Terasaki Kōgyō's private painting school, Tenrai Gajuku. Kōgyō

11. Takabatake Asako is the great-granddaughter of Kametarō, Kashō's older brother.

12. Takabatake Kakō, *Gaka no shōzō*, 51.

13. This was "Jokan no kan" ("Court Lady's Crown").

14. Ellen P. Conant, "The Tokyo School of Fine Arts and the Development of *Nihonga*, 1889–1906," in *Nihonga, Transcending the Past: Japanese-Style Painting, 1868–1968*, eds. Ellen P. Conant, Steven D. Owyong, and J. Thomas Rimer (The Saint Louis Art Museum, 1995), 34.

15. Takabatake Asako, *Kashō kara no tegami*, 51–52.

was popular and had won numerous awards in competitive exhibitions. Kashō was charmed by his style, but unfortunately, no documentary evidence of Kōgyō's guidance remains. More broadly, it can be said that by studying tradition while incorporating individuality, Kashō pursued what was already the “new” nihonga under Kōgyō's influence.¹⁶

While French Impressionist artists incorporated concepts they learned from Japanese woodblock prints, Japanese Western-style artists were able to fulfill their desire to rejuvenate and modernize their approach through European fin-de-siècle art, such as Impressionism, the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and its descendent, Art Nouveau. Kashō made an impression with the curves that characterize Art Nouveau in the advertisements he drew for Chūjōto Chinese herbal medicine (*kanpōyaku*).

We can see these decorative lines also in the work of such artists as Aubrey Beardsley, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, Alphonse Mucha, and Gustav Klimt. Beardsley, who famously illustrated Oscar Wilde's play *Salomé*, mentioned in Chapter One, is significant here because he represents a throughline from Gustave Moreau, Huysmans's *Against Nature*, and *japonisme*,¹⁷ all acting as influences upon Beardsley, to Tanizaki and Kashō, upon whom he left a strong imprint.¹⁸

The so-nicknamed Chūjō princess (*hime*) that Kashō created to sell the herbal medicine was a forerunner in advertising images. She was modern, elegant, and graceful, and eclipsed the impression of the product itself.¹⁹ Moreover, the design anticipates Kashō's later work in terms of Art Nouveau influences, as does her face itself.

16. Takabatake Asako, *Kashō kara no tegami*, 64.

17. Weintraub writes, “Huysmans was inspired by a ‘Salomé’ of Gustave Moreau, first exhibited in 1876; and Moreau in turn had been influenced by Flaubert's evocations of oriental imagery in his *Tentation de Saint Antoine*.” Stanley Weintraub, *Beardsley: A Biography*, 64.

18. For example, Iwasa Soshiro sees Beardsley's illustration for *Salomé*, entitled *The Dancer's Reward*, reflected in an image in Tanizaki's “Shisei” (“The Tattooer,” 1910), as mentioned in Maho Hidaka, “Portraits on the Human Body: Japanese Adaptations of Oscar Wilde by Jun'ichiro Tanizaki,” 85n3. The article “Aubrey Beardsley” appeared, along with five of his illustrations, in the June 1910 issue of *Shirakaba*, the organ of the Shirakaba school writers, mentioned in Chapter Three. Another article on Beardsley with ten of his illustrations appeared in the September 1911 issue of *Shirakaba*. Joichiro Kawamura writes that Beardsley's impact on Japanese artists was extensive. “Beardsley and Japan,” in *Aubrey Beardsley*, eds. Stephen Calloway and Caroline Corbeau-Parsons (Tate Publishing, 2020), 55–59.

Kashō created his own *Salome* for the cover of a stationery set in 1926.

19. Takabatake Asako, *Kashō kara no tegami*, 87.

Critic Kusamori Shin'ichi interprets Kashō's design of the Chūjō princess as the "descent of a goddess." The idea of an advent or descent is also contained in "princess." The duality of familiarity and reverence, closeness and distance, is a strategy, asserts Kusamori. That his design inspired people to call her the Chūjō princess, also a powerful body of temptation, is significant.²⁰

Paramount to artistic styles and influences, perhaps, Kashō strove for beauty. Contemporaneous novelist for young girls, Yokoyama Michiko (1901–86) wrote that he "aimed for the perfect beauty of human beings in his pictures . . . He was obsessive especially with the beauty of human faces (both males' and females')." ²¹ Ultimately, Kashō painted in a variety of idioms, though he is best known for his Western, "Taishō chic" style, integrating extensive knowledge of fashion.

Kashō's Allure

Kashō's fans, male and female adolescents at the advent of modern-day graphic illustration, were extraordinarily ardent in their devotion to him, to the extent of forming Kashō clubs. His name even appears in the lyrics to a popular song from 1928 called "Ginza March" (*Ginza kōshin kyoku*), lyrics by Masaoka Iruru: "*Kunisada egaku no otome mo yukeba, Kashō gonomi no kimi mo yuku*," that is, "Girls that Kunisada drew stroll [in Ginza], and you, who have the Kashō style, also go." A latent meaning of the lyric is that girls who *look like* the ones in the art of Utagawa Kunisada (1786–1864) stroll along Ginza streets. These refer to the beauties (*bijin*) and courtesans who were the frequent subjects of Kunisada's art. Kunisada, also known as Toyokuni III, was a woodblock print artist of the "floating world" (*ukiyo*)²² who was extremely popular, prolific, and successful in his day, just as Kashō was in his.²³ The lyric has the girls stroll in Ginza because this area of Tokyo was at the forefront of popular fashion in Kashō's day.

20. Kusamori Shin'ichi, "Megami no kōrin" ["Descent of a Goddess"], *Bessatsu taiyō*, no. 47 (July 1985), 113.

21. Yokoyama Michiko, "Gahaku Kashō no sekai" "Master Painter Kashō's World," in *Takabatake Kashō meiga taishū*, ed. Takabatake Kakō (Kōdansha, 1976), 108.

22. *Ukiyo-e* is a genre of painting and prints that thrived from the seventeenth through nineteenth centuries, depicting kabuki actors, beautiful women, landscapes, and more.

23. Toyokuni is the favorite Japanese artist of the protagonist Okamura in "The Golden Death."

Kashō's name symbolized modernism.²⁴ The “you” (*kimi*) in the lyric refers to a “modern girl,”²⁵ the embodiment of modern female fashion and sensibilities at the time. The lyrics reflect how well known and appreciated he was. Furthermore, his popularity extended beyond the “modern girl” and “*mobo*” (modern boy) who might go “*ginbura*” (Ginza strolling), to encompass adults as well.²⁶

Kashō's appeal was evident from early on when he was still studying to become an artist. In 1905 he started hand-painting picture postcards of modern young women to supplement his allowance. The job designing advertisements for Chūjōto medicine for menstrual irregularity, the prevention of “hysteria,” and other female maladies, launched Kashō's career in 1911. By the end of the Taishō period (1925), he dominated the new profession of magazine illustration, unrivalled in demand for his work by magazine publishers such as Kōdansha. Kashō illustrated magazine stories, magazine covers, and frontispieces for dozens of magazines, such as *Shōjo kurabu* (*Girls' Club*), *Shōnen kurabu* (*Boys' Club*), *Fujin kurabu* (*Ladies' Club*), *Gendai* (*Modern Times*), *Kōdan kurabu* (*Storytelling Club*), *Shōjo sekai* (*Girls' World*), *Nihon shōnen* (*Japanese Boys*), *Fujin sekai* (*Ladies' World*), and *Fujokai* (*Women's World*), to name a few.

The period during which Kashō was at the top of his profession coincided with the time when sexology was holding sway in its strict bifurcation of the sexes, as well as when women were agitating for suffrage and becoming more involved in the public sphere. Takabatake Asako mentions sexology informing the gender norms promoted by the Taishō era government. “Kashō did not overtly protest the government, but he created art in which males weren't male and females weren't female.”²⁷ She refers to them as “enchanted, futanari-like subjects” (*ryōseiguyūtekina ayashii jinbutsu*).²⁸ In his art, Kashō's representations of women flouted conventional gender roles as enshrined in the Meiji Civil Code,²⁹ yet were

24. Takabatake Asako, *Kashō kara no tegami*, 145.

25. Matsumoto Shinako, ed., *Takabatake Kashō: Taishō, Shōwa, retoro byūti* (Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 2004), 8, 10.

26. Ozaki Hideki, “Takabatake Kashō no jojōga,” in *Takabatake Kashō meiga taishū*, ed. Takabatake Kakō (Kodansha, 1976), 152.

27. Takabatake Asako, interview, October 27, 2008, Tōon, Ehime Prefecture, Japan. Ms. Takabatake serves as director of The Takabatake Kashō Taishō Roman museum.

28. Takabatake Asako, *Kashō kara no tegami*, 120–21.

29. The Meiji Civil Code, enacted in 1898, recreated the family system by rejecting female succession (*anekatoku*), by restricting married women from contracting loans or investing capital without permission of their husbands, and by other such provisions that manifested inequality between the sexes. The ministry initiated policy in which

warmly embraced by his large following. Female subjects, often times “modern girls” (*moga*), rebuff the norms of so-called traditional feminine behavior and may have a mien of maleness about them. Male subjects, on the other hand, display femininity in gesture and appearance. In this chapter I examine Kashō's rendering of both types of subjects, thereby maintaining sexual possibilities that the government had foreclosed and liberating behavior from its overdetermined link to the body.

In an article entitled “‘Ryōseiguyū’ no renkinjutsu: Taishō/Shōwa wo irodotta sashie gaka tachi” (“The Alchemy of ‘Futanarisa’ [Ryōseiguyū]: Artists Who Illustrated the Taishō/Shōwa Periods,” Kusamori Shin’ichi identifies artists, preeminently Kashō, who painted futanari subjects. He claims that Kashō's use of futanari figures in his art bring his fans to a fever pitch. “Girls and boys are infatuated by the worlds of magazines and movies that compensate for their limited experience. . . .”³⁰ Kusamori goes so far as to declare: “It can be said that Kashō controlled the boys and girls from the Taishō democracy era, as well as the Shōwa moga and mobo era.”³¹

Kusamori writes that Kashō grasped the “secret” (“*ryōseiguyū no himitsu*”) of success—by drawing the male in the female and the female in the male.³² Once his art caught fire, of course, Kashō would continue illustrating in this affecting style, but Kusamori implies that Kashō had no feeling for what his futanari subjects implied, nor did he care. As Kashō's great-grandniece has said and written, Kashō was at odds with the government's rigidly polarized system of sex. At the same time, it is worth noting that if such a “secret” existed, that the consumers of his art responded positively and emphatically to the futanari. It speaks to a recognition, even an unconscious one, of the varied and layered subtleties of sex in us all.

women were to be educated in caregiving to children, husband, and parents. In her *Flowers in Salt: The Beginnings of Feminist Consciousness in Modern Japan* (Stanford University Press, 1983), 112–13, Sharon L. Sievers notes that “The ‘special qualities’ women's education now assumed had more to do with making up any gap that might exist in the repressive socialization of Japanese women than with developing intellect.” Yet, women played an important role, averred the Home Ministry, through managing the home frugally, educating children, and supporting the entire family and thereby, the nation. By the early 1920s, however, women's unrest, family disputes, and other factors threatened family-state ideology. Miriam Silverberg, *Erotic Grotesque Nonsense: The Mass Culture of Japanese Modern Times* (University of California Press, 2006), 145–46.

30. Kusamori Shin'ichi, “‘Ryōseiguyū’ no renkinjutsu” [“The Alchemy of Futanarisa”], *Bessatsu taiyō*, no. 47 (Autumn 1984): 65.

31. Kusamori Shin'ichi, “‘Ryōseiguyū’ no renkinjutsu,” 65.

32. Kusamori Shin'ichi, “Megami no kōrin” [“Descent of a Goddess”], *Bessatsu taiyō*, no. 47 (July 1985), 115.

This style in which females were not female and males were not male was not accidental. Manga artist Takemiya Keiko writes that Kashō's art was "characterized by the precision with which he drew the body three-dimensionally. His figures were so well defined that the viewer could sense the bones and around them the flesh. He distinguished the inner part of the feet from the outer part with great detail, and fingertips were particularly beautiful."³³ Therefore, this kind of skill allowed him to draw distinctly male and female figures if he had wanted to do so. The mutability of the body in Shikin's and Tanizaki's work presents in Kashō's art as well.

Regarding the double sex of Kashō's subjects, Takemiya writes:

I think the boys in Kashō's pictures are sexier than the girls because of the boys' expression of uncertainty. When it comes to his drawing skills, precisely because Kashō is someone who can clearly distinguish male figures from females, he depicts the masculinity in the females when drawing adolescent girls, and the femininity within adolescent males when drawing beautiful adolescent males. One may wonder if this is why Kashō's males appear to look sexier than females . . . The figure of the beautiful boys that Kashō drew were feminine, but the detail was masculine . . . The attraction of Kashō's pictures is that while he distinguishes between male and female figures through differences in detail, the qualities of both sexes (*ryōsei*) in the subject spill over onto the canvas.³⁴

The artist Uno Akira (b. 1934) concurs: "The boys, in fact, can be like girls, and the girls, in fact, can look like boys impersonating girls." No such sexual illusion or unorthodoxy exists in Takehisa Yumeji's (1884–1934) lyrical (*jojō*) artwork, by contrast.³⁵ Perhaps it is the very innocence of Yumeji's female subjects, or the fact that they more often conform to traditional roles and behavior that makes his images more iconic of the Taishō era. Today Yumeji's name is better known than Kashō's, though the work of both dominated prewar imagery of young women.

Kashō's specialty was facial expression and the expression of hands and

33. Takemiya Keiko, "Danjo gamensei no miryoku," in *Takabatake Kashō: Bishōnen zukan*, ed. Korona bukkusu henshūbu (Heibonsha, 2001), 44.

34. Takemiya, "Danjo gamensei no miryoku," 46–47.

35. Uno Akira, "Watashi no Kashō," in *Takabatake Kashō meiga taishū*, ed. Takabatake Kakō (Kōdansha, 1976), 155. Takehisa Yumeji (1884–1934) was a contemporary artist, poet, and writer who has remained extremely popular to this day. He is mentioned in Chapter 3, note 77.

feet, which exude his own lyricism. “That expression escalated emotionally but not in a distorted sense. That was Kashō’s humanity and intelligence.”³⁶ Others as well, detect the sensuality to which Uno alludes.

Artists familiar with Kashō, especially manga artists, take it for granted that Kashō’s subjects contain pronounced elements of the “opposite sex.” The figure of the futanari boldly emerges in manga, one of the cornerstones of Japanese popular culture. Fujimoto Yukari’s statement at the head of this chapter that *shōjo manga* (girl comics) started with futanarisa, therefore, is hardly surprising. In her critique of *shōjo manga*, in a chapter entitled “Transgender: Female Futanari [ryōseiguyū], Male Futanari [han’in’yō],” Fujimoto attributes the origins of *shōjo manga* to Takarazuka, the all-female theater troupe founded in 1913. She explains that Tezuka Osamu, celebrated manga artist and creator of the classic series *Ribon no kishi* (*Princess Knight*, 1953–1955), intended to reproduce in *shōjo manga* the world of the Takarazuka theater, in which both male and female parts are played by women.³⁷ Kashō’s work emerged in this period of Takarazuka’s growing popularity. In a sense, Kashō offered a visual art version of the Takarazuka Revue.

Once Tezuka transplanted Takarazuka, the direction of *shōjo manga* was set.³⁸ Fujimoto traces a succession of manga artists whose *shōjo manga* characters, both male and female, transgress sexual boundaries as a matter of course. She cites Takemiya’s *Kaze to ki no uta* (*The Song of the Wind and the Tree*, 1976–84) as one such epic work.³⁹ Takemiya, one of the most popular manga artists of the 1970s and 1980s, who creates futanari characters herself, was impressed by Kashō’s oeuvre from early on, writing that she had the sense that she had seen it a long time before she became even a novice artist.⁴⁰ Significantly, while Takehisa Yumeji’s lyrical images (*jojōga*) were part of the shared imagination in Japan, according to Uno,⁴¹ Kashō’s androgynous images too, imprinted themselves on the consciousness of some, just as the gender-crossing of Takarazuka had done on Tezuka.

Perhaps the sexual doubleness of his subjects played a role in Kashō’s strong influence on manga artists, just as it figured significantly in its appeal to Taishō youth. At the very least, a mien of sensuality emanates from his subjects. Takabatake Asako suggests that his avid young fans

36. Uno Akira, “Watashi no Kashō,” 155.

37. Fujimoto Yukari, *Watashi no ibasho wa doko ni aru no?*, 132.

38. Fujimoto, 133.

39. Fujimoto, 133.

40. Takemiya Keiko, *Takabatake Kashō*, 44.

41. Uno Akira, “Watashi no Kashō,” 155.

were excited by some sort of eroticism they sensed in his work. “For that very reason, his popularity derived not simply from the splendid fashion [of his subjects] or because they were pretty or stylish . . . Rather, in technical terms it’s called futanari (*ryōseiguyū*) . . . that sort of, that futanari-like, well, androgynous (*chūseitēki*) charm, I would say.”⁴² Perhaps it is this subliminal sexual appeal burgeoning at the right historical moment that accounts for Kashō’s allure.

In her discussion of contemporary comics appealing to various audiences, Fujimoto cites appearances of actual futanari and transgendered characters, including those in male-oriented magazines. She concludes, “By perusing such works as these, it becomes evident that men are trying to absorb ‘the female,’ the ideal object of desire. In short, men [characters] are trying to combine perfect femininity with perfect masculinity, like a coin, with two sides.”⁴³

Collapsing Boundaries Across Sexuality, Race, and Species

Takabatake Asako remarked, “Kashō chipped away at sexual difference and in the end, well, the subject is male and also female but is not [entirely] one or the other. Well, the subject is neither Japanese nor foreign. In that way, the categorization gradually disappears.”⁴⁴ By breaking down walls in categories of sex, race, and more, Kashō calls into question naturalized assumptions about these lenses through which people are seen.

This brings to mind Tanizaki obscuring the boundaries between art and the human body in “The Golden Death.” The narrative manages to highlight in-between sex in Okamura while also confounding the domains of art and the human being in the form of human statues, including that of the Buddha.

Regarding sex, the blurring of boundaries can be alluring and mysterious. That Kashō obscured other lines of difference is also intriguing. “When Kashō wanted to draw a Westerner, he could certainly draw a very Western-looking person . . . but, consciously he did not draw that way.” This comment, as well as “chipping away at sexual difference,” reiterates Kashō’s blurring of distinctions by drawing out the female in the male and the male

42. In an interview I conducted on October 27, 2008, at The Takabatake Kashō Taishō Roman museum in the city of Tōon in Ehime Prefecture.

43. Fujimoto Yukari, *Watashi no ibasho wa doko ni aru no?*, 158.

44. In an interview I conducted on October 27, 2008, at The Takabatake Kashō Taishō Roman Kan.



Figure 3.—*Wakaki funabito* (*Young Sailor*, 1926), Takabatake Kashō. Yayoi Museum.

in the female. This dismantling of categories gets to the heart of Kashō's art, which portrays subjects behaving in ways that do not adhere to the norms of their sex. With the categories obscured or removed, so too are the rules of conduct. Humans are freed to behave more in accordance with their inclinations and not according to naturalized ideas of propriety.

His *Umi no gensō* (*Sea's Illusion*, 1926) and *Wakaki funabito* (*Young Sailor*, 1926) (figure 3) provide other instances of this in-betweenness, in species and sex. *Sea's Illusion*, used as the frontispiece for an issue of *Shōjogahō* (*Girls' Illustrated*), is a fairly typical depiction of a mermaid, with the upper body that of a female and the lower body that of a large fish including a tail. Kashō drew *Young Sailor* not for a magazine but for use in stationery. The fingers and hands of the sailor, and the way they are positioned, are the same as those of the mermaid, as well as those of many of Kashō's subjects. What is interesting here is the movement of the bodies in both works and the positioning of shoulders and backs. The sashaying of the sailor is apparent not only in the folds of the sailor suit (pullover and bell-bottomed trousers) but in the kick of the back foot, the flying flap of the pullover, and the dancing tally dangling from the flat white hat. The flow and dynamism of their bodies mitigate the stasis implicit in the rigidly polarized male and female bodies that the government implicitly promoted. The breaking waves, rushing water, the flying hair on the mermaid's head, and flapping tail accomplish this movement similarly in *Sea's Illusion*. In addition, the sailor maneuvers his shoulder to dip and arch his back, while the mermaid raises her shoulder and twists her torso. The sailor has the same face as the mermaid but is playful and flirtatious. The mermaid is overtly sexual and alluring. The sailor could easily be female; the mermaid seems quite human. They have the same faces, strike poses, and camber their limbs in a decidedly "female" fashion. The dynamism of these in-between bodies speaks to possibility born of the subversion of categorical absolutes that bind the subject to prescribed bodies, behaviors, and desires. Kashō endeavors to dismantle divisions that control thought on such categories.

In addition to illustrating the permeability of borders of sex and species in the examples above, Kashō diminished, if not subtly erased, analytical categories of race or culture in his portrayals of pairs of young women. In some cases, one is in Japanese clothing and the other in Western; in some cases they both wear Western dress. In a compelling article on Kashō's female subjects providing a model for female consumers, Barbara Hartley elaborates on the topic of Kashō's subjects embracing both Western and Japanese traditions in magazine illustrations from 1925 to

1937. Hartley invokes Miriam Silverberg's powerful reading of Japanese modern life in the 1920s not as the West replacing Japanese cultural ideals but as a "recod[ing] of Western institutions and practices for indigenous Japanese consumption."⁴⁵ Clearly, this "re-coding" and "assimilation" are deployed in Kashō's work, in which Hartley discerns Western images in Japanese contexts.

While maintaining Hartley's reading as a reasonable possibility, I, however, see a delicate operation in which, as Takabatake Asako says, Kashō renders the subject as neither Japanese nor foreign. Of course, the settings may contain clear markers of Japan and the West, but Kashō obscures the definitive identity of faces and body language. Instead, he collapses the walls into a hybridity of female and male, Japanese and Western, human and animal, and for that matter, *nihonga* (Japanese-style painting) and *yōga* (western-style painting) as well.

Deborah Shamoan writes that Kashō's great work *Utsuriyuku sugata* (*Changing Figures*, 1935) "celebrates the mastery of the foreign by the Japanese female body."⁴⁶ Japanese, Chinese, and Western dress of various styles and fashions, uniforms, sports attire, and more, spanning periods and seasons, adorn the sixty figures in this giant opus. In contrast to a "mastery of the foreign," Silverberg (and Hartley) offer the more nuanced and incisive interpretation that Kashō actually *recodes* the non-Japanese dress. And as Silverberg effectively demonstrates, the Japanese "modern girl" could represent a variety of identities in the collective imagination—Japanese, European, cosmopolitan. Rather than a nationally and racially specific and embodied subject, the "modern girl" was a sketch, a reduction, a symbol upon which critics projected their fears and desires. This is no less true of Kashō's modern girls. By effectively erasing borders, he creates subjects who defy categorical definition.

In describing the *Zeitgeist* in which Kashō began his career and in which it ascended, Takabatake Asako remarks, "In short, a new consciousness sprouted among the general populace. They wanted to accept new things, not passively but proactively, and also, selectively, without considering Western things different. And because there was this socio-psychological

45. Barbara Hartley, "Performing the Nation: Magazine Images of Women and Girls in the Illustrations of Takabatake Kashō, 1925–1937," *Intersections: Gender and Sexuality in Asia and the Pacific*, no. 16 (March 2008): 7.

46. Deborah Shamoan, *Passionate Friendship: The Aesthetics of Girls' Culture in Japan* (University of Hawai'i Press, 2011), 68. Shamoan mistakenly dates "Utsuriyuku sugata" from 1921.



Figure 4.—*Le miroir rouge* (The Red Mirror), Georges Lepape.

transformation, Kashō was supported with wild enthusiasm.⁴⁷ In other words, Kashō enjoyed popularity for the very reason that he embraced and expressed the spirit of the new age of Taishō (consumer) culture. In this new consciousness, the focus was not on material objects, let alone material bodies, as Western versus Japanese, certainly not in his images. Kashō represents this hybridity, transformation, and flux. Moreover, images of Japanese women in Western dress and short hair were not unusual in his work or in that of other artists.

47. Takabatake Asako, *Kashō kara no tegami*, 83.



Figure 5.—*Autumn Makeup (Keshō no aki)*, Takehisa Yumeji. Takehisa Yumeji Museum.

We can view this hybridity from another angle by considering a French drawing and a Japanese one that emulated it. Appearing in the French magazine *Les feuilletts d'arts* (The arts folio) in 1919, Georges Lepape's *Le miroir rouge* (The Red Mirror) (figure 4) is strikingly Orientalist in its extreme features of an Asian face that resembles a *nō* mask. It is a caricature of the quintessential Japanese face, as if one existed. Takehisa Yumeji turns this exoticized figure on its head by adapting it to a Japanese context for the cover of the October 1924 issue of *Fujin gurafu* (*Ladies Graph*), entitled *Autumn Makeup (Keshō no aki)* (figure 5).⁴⁸ Yumeji's female sub-

48. These two images are juxtaposed in the exhibition catalog *Tōkyō-to Teien Bijutsukan, 1930-nendai Tōkyō: Aru deko no yakata (Asakanomiyatei) ga umareta jidai/Tokyo in the 1930s and the Birth of Prince Asaka's Art Deco Residence*, edited by Shusai Zaidan Hōjin, Tōkyō-to Rekishi Bunka Zaidan, Tōkyō-to Teien Bijutsukan, et al. (Tōkyō-to Rekishi Bunka Zaidan and Tōkyō-to Teien Bijutsukan, 2008), 90.

jects typically appear in mostly traditional clothing, in traditional settings, roles, and situations. Faces are wan; the expressions on them are innocent. In this picture, a rather Western-looking Japanese young lady peers into a mirror as she applies her makeup. The expression is simple and direct. The hand holding the mirror and the hand applying the powder are in the exact same positions as in Lepape's picture. However, Lepape's colors are saturated. His subject's lacquered nails are redder, her hair blacker. The tiny pupils of the Orientalized female's eyes can be seen just beneath slanting eyelids, while the relatively larger eyes of Yumeji's subject look blankly at the mirror. She evokes the bland, quotidian act of the toilet. Yumeji's subject here looks like most of his other "beauties" (*bijin*). The contrast of a hybrid Western/Japanese figure with Lepape's highly sexualized and Orientalized subject is stunning.

In two renderings of women peering into mirrors by Kashō, *Scarlet Camellia* (*Beni tsubaki*, 1926)⁴⁹ and *Gossamer* (*Keira*, 1926),⁵⁰ the subjects have the same face as most others in his oeuvre, regardless of sex, reminiscent of male and female as mirror images of each other in *Torikaebaya monogatari*, as described in the Introduction and Chapter Three. The field in each contains the woman from head to toe, holding a mirror out in front of her. In Lepape's and Yumeji's drawings, we see faces and mirrors fairly close up. Kashō chooses not to use closeups in these images. Nonetheless, the viewer can see large eyes and lush eyelashes. The lips are pursed. In both cases the subjects each bend a leg and swivel their hips while fixing and admiring their hair in the mirror. Panache and sexiness emanate from the figures.

In comparing Lepape's and Yumeji's drawings to each other and then to Kashō's, I wish to emphasize two points. One is that an iconic image of Taishō chic features a delicate, sometimes wistful "beauty" in commonplace scenes by Yumeji. Sexuality plays no role here, let alone sexual ambiguity. In contrast, Kashō's female subjects are suffused with a dynamic energy and sometimes a sexual energy held in check, as they engage in somewhat uncommon activities, such as painting a picture, playing tennis, skiing, dancing, swimming, or speaking on a telephone. Secondly, while French and other Western artists relish *japonisme* in sometimes racist articulations, Kashō and, at least in the case of *Autumn Makeup*, Yumeji

49. Reproduced in Takabatake Kashō Taishō Roman Kan, ed., *Takabatake Kashō Taishō Roman Kan Zuroku* (Ehime Prefecture, 1990), 114.

50. Reproduced in Takabatake Kashō Taishō Roman Kan, ed., *Takabatake Kashō Taishō Roman Kan zuroku*, 118.

as well, move beyond a Western-Japanese divide to a new sort of woman with a new consciousness that has already transcended a Japanese-versus-Western binary opposition.

Unfettered by the rigidity of tradition, Kashō created a new idiom that not only combined different elements but allowed these elements to organically emerge in each other. The Western and Japanese amalgam is one example of this; representation of sex is another. It cannot go unremarked that Kashō began to develop this style in the same period that Tanizaki wrote of the beauty of Okamura's in-between sex in "The Golden Death" (1914) and in Kōkichi in "Until Abandoned" (1914). By that I suggest not an influence by Tanizaki but a spirit of the age.

Spectacle

The suggestion that Kashō's fans sensed something different, something sexual, in his art, coincides with notions of the spectacle, as I situate it in Tanizaki's futanari characters in the preceding chapter. In most cases, Kashō's futanari subjects are usually portrayed alone, such as in *Song of the Bandits* (*Bazoku no uta*, 1929) (figure 6), originally used as a frontispiece in *Nihon shōnen*; *Autumn in Kurama* (*Kurama no aki*, 1926), another frontispiece from *Nihon shōnen*; *Young Sailor* (figure 3); and in the cover of an untitled stationery set (figure 7), discussed below. His oeuvre is rife with similar examples, but I mention these because the subjects are boldly conspicuous in their sexual ambiguity. In defying conventional norms of gender, thereby forcing the viewer to look more closely, the subjects prompt the viewer to reconsider those norms. One critic writes about the subject in *Song of the Bandits*, "They are gallant (*ririshii*) but in some way feminine. Especially from the waist down, they smack (*nioi ga suru*) of a woman."⁵¹

Kashō individuates and separates such subjects even beyond their sexual difference. An instance of Kashō's technique of directing the gaze in order to isolate the subject would be in *Atelier* (*Atorie*, 1926),⁵² in which a young woman paints another young woman, who has material draped over her nakedness. The viewer can see the two subjects, as well as the intervening picture that the artist is working on. This meta-view of art in

51. Kusamori Shin'ichi, "Ryōseiguyū' no renkinjutsu," *Bessatsu taiyō*, no. 47 (Autumn 1984): 64.

52. Reproduced in Takabatake Kashō Taishō Roman Kan, *Takabatake Kashō Taishō Roman Kan zuroku*, 112.



Figure 6.—*Song of the Bandits* (*Bazoku no uta*, 1929), Takabatake Kashō.
Yayoi Museum.



Figure 7.—Untitled collection of stationery *bishōnen*, Takabatake Kashō, Yayoi Museum.

the making, a *mise en abyme*, directs our attention to the model, since the artist in the picture is studying her, and the picture between them is a representation of her. At the same time, through its self-reflexivity, the artwork also implicates the viewer because we become aware that we are outside watching a process. The self-reflexivity highlights the process of art and the subject of art as constructed. In that sense, it is like the *mise en abyme* in Tanizaki's "Until Abandoned," which demonstrates sex as a construction.

Kashō's subjects are often physically individuated but also sexually separated from the world of a binary sexual economy, just as Tanizaki's characters are. Martin Jay's ideas on perspective and alternatives to the Cartesian tradition, which refers to a singular, eternal, scientific, and disembodied point of view, as I discuss in Chapter Three, are constructive here. Kashō offers an alternative to Cartesian perspectivalism in his visual order of sexual (in)difference. This economy is not in the service of a heterosexual male gaze or the dualism inherent in the Cartesian view. The subjects are outside of this economy in that they are both sexes and neither; consequently, the body that ought to determine gendered behavior, psychology, and emotion frustrate expectations. Kashō's scopic regime is fraught with possibility. It is flowing and sensual. Rich, deep colors resonate. The use of fabric is suggestive of the body beneath. His subjects, all with the same sexy eyes, murmur quietly to the viewer about a world of fluid sexualities.

The *mise-en-scène* focuses the gaze on the subject, in its entirety but also part by part. The movement of lines guides the gaze to the individuated parts of the body. For instance, in the cover of an untitled collection of stationery (figure 7) and in *Autumn in Kurama*, discussed above, the viewer focuses on feet, legs, arms, and the curve of the hip, one at a time. Conventionally feminine features, including tapered, slender fingers, small, red mouths, and soft, rosy flesh, surface in Kashō's *bishōnen* (beautiful young men). In this cover of an untitled collection of writing paper (figure 7), the subject lies on their side on a patch of grass, with their head propped up on one hand. A scarf covers most of their hair. One bird perches on their shoulder, another on their arm. Their shorts and one sleeve are curiously torn. They gaze through large, heavy eyes beyond the frame of the picture. The subject's double-sexed sensuality paired with the torn clothing disrupts the pastoral setting, leaving a highly charged impression of sexuality. As with Tanizaki's subjects, here too the scene draws a futanari gaze. It controls the viewer's attention to the disturbing mixing of non-normative, gendered objects, body parts, and behavior.

This gaze is in the interest of the futanari subject and violates a heteronormative economy.

Other stationery covers, such as *White Bush Clover* (*Shirahagi*, 1926)⁵³ and *Young Sailor*, discussed above, replicate the beautiful young men with feminine hands and gestures. Such embellishments may be small or subtle, but they augment the sensuality of the image. Kashō's typically futanari face induces the viewer to scrutinize the subject more closely. For example, the bow tie and short hair in an image in the *Kashō Lyrical Collection* (*Kashō jojō gashū*, 1928) (figure 8) indicate maleness, but the subject could just as easily be a Takarazuka *otokoyaku* (female actor specializing in male roles). Or, in the case of *Modern Boy* (*Modan bōi*, 1928) (figure 9), the subject could be a "modern girl" dressed in a men's double-breasted suit (a ringlet of hair caresses the cheek of this "boy" instead of a sideburn).⁵⁴ Little distinguishes male from female in these and myriad other drawings, save costuming and context.

Among body parts, the eyes are characteristic of Kashō's work and signify deeply in the total figure. The signature look of his subjects is the gaze toward an indeterminate space through *sanpaku gan* (three-white eyes), in which the sclera (white of the eye) is visible in three areas around the iris: on both sides and below. *Sanpaku* eyes have a cultural association with sexiness or salaciousness that lends itself to Kashō's figures.⁵⁵ For example, Naturalist writer Ikuta Kizan uses the term *sanpaku gan* in his story "The City" ("Tokai," 1908), which was found to be "injurious to public morals" (*fūzoku kairan*) and banned.⁵⁶ In the work, *sanpaku gan* highlights the sexual appeal of the young wife, whom Jay Rubin describes as "voluptuous."⁵⁷

Kashō's rendering of the irises in his subjects' eyes in a non-normative fashion certainly contributes to the sexual mien of the subjects, to which Takabatake Asako alludes. The sexiness of the eyes enhances the prancing of the eponymous sailor in *Young Sailor*, or the draped material cov-

53. Reproduced in Takabatake Kashō Taishō Roman Kan, *Takabatake Kashō Taishō Roman Kan zuroku*, 111.

54. As Miriam Silverberg concludes, ". . . first and foremost, the Modern Girl was defined by her body, specifically by her short hair and long, straight legs." Silverberg, *Erotic Grotesque Nonsense*, 53.

55. Shamoon refers to it as an "exaggerated eye" but misses its relevance—sex appeal.

56. Jay Rubin discusses the famous trial of Ikuta and Ishibashi Shian, the editor and publisher of *Bungei kurabu*, in which the story was first published in February 1908. See *Injurious to Public Morals: Writers and the Meiji State*.

57. Rubin, *Injurious to Public Morals: Writers and the Meiji State*, 87.



Figure 8.—*Kashō Lyrical Collection* (*Kashō jojō gashū*, 1928), Takabatake Kashō.
Yayoi Museum.

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筆 齊 華 島 高

Figure 9.—*Modern Boy (Modan bōi, 1928)*, Takabatake Kashō. Yayoi Museum.

ering the nakedness of a young woman posing for another young woman painting her in *Atelier*. Even the horse in *Song of the Bandits* has matching intense sanpaku eyes along with the human being, with whom it appears to share a bond. These gestures and attitudes (both disposition and posture) complete a picture of erotic sensibility. Yet, as mentioned earlier, these subjects own their sexuality, as they manifest self-confidence and agency. They appear comfortable, sophisticated, and graceful, as well as sexy.

Focal Points

In this study I have focused on subjects who feel their second sexes and whose focalization or perspective of themselves as sexed subjects is shared with the reader, either directly through dialogue or through an omniscient narrator, or a combination of both. Access to the subject's perspective is different in the case of visual art. We can read facial expression, dress, gesture, pose, movement, setting, and the like, but cannot acquire verbal information. Therefore, we cannot access feelings and thoughts of subjects in Kashō's art in the same way that we can with literary subjects. Nevertheless, enough evidence of both sexes in Kashō's subjects allows us to consider them futanari, especially in light of the focal points of his artwork.

A focal point is an area of interest that draws the attention of the viewer's eye. It is usually the most important aspect of the painting or illustration, though there may be more than one focal point. A focal point tells of the importance of the work, gives it meaning and helps tell the story. An artist creates focal points using space, line, color, value, etc., in coordination with isolation, contrast, placement, introducing an unusual object or element in the setting, among others.

The focal point may be the subject's sanpaku eyes. The look in these eyes, for example, the intense expression in the eyes of the person in *Song of the Bandits* (figure 6), as well as that of the horse, attracts the viewer's attention. Although the focal points are not the eyes alone but the entire person in the untitled image in figure 8, and *Modern Boy* (figure 9), the viewer is struck by the whole, and then the eye is directed to parts. By means of contrast and other principles of composition, the viewer feels the doubleness of sex. The confidence or intensity or contentment of the subject's expression conveys their comfort with their doubled sex.

Female Presenting

In addition to the eroticism and futanarisa that unchains the body from overdetermined behavior and gender roles, female-presenting subjects in Kashō's work are portrayed outside of familial relationships and maternal roles. Most often they are at leisure, alone or with friends, perhaps engaged in a sport or pastime. The government ideology that dictated the gendered roles of imperial subjects of their class, for example, women at home taking care of the family, is generally ignored. In fact, Meiji government prescriptions for gendered responsibilities were varied, but I refer here to middle-class women in possession of at least some discretionary income, who are neither at home taking care of the family, nor in occupations newly accessible in the interwar years.⁵⁸

Moreover, Kashō's female subjects are not only depicted outside of the domestic sphere, but they are active and sporty. The cover of an issue of *Shōjo gahō* from around 1928 shows a young lady bent over, fastening her skis. She is poised and self-assured. In *Light (Hikari, ca. 1927)*⁵⁹ a young lady in a trendy sailor suit sits with one arm akimbo. In the background, in front of Ueno subway station⁶⁰ stands a large building with a clock on it that reads "subway" and "store." This self-confident, stylish woman has probably been shopping and traveling around town today.

Many images of young female subjects are tinged with an awakening sexuality in settings of nature. The young female figure in *Shore (Nagisa, 1927)*⁶¹ is uninhibited and at ease in her swimsuit with a frock draped over one shoulder. She gazes beyond the frame with the same large, heavy-lidded, sexy eyes characteristic of Kashō's work. The subject in *Autumn Leaves (Kōyō)*,⁶² the cover for the November 1929 issue of *Shōjo gahō*, looks directly at the viewer with her head slightly tilted, holding the stem of a leaf between her coy lips. Her large, heavy eyes seem slightly closed.

58. Elise K. Tipton, "Moving Up and Out: The 'Shop Girl' in Interwar Japan," in *Modern Girls on the Go: Gender, Mobility, and Labor in Japan* (Stanford University Press, 2013).

59. Reproduced in Murobushi Tetsurō, ed., "Takabatake Kashō," special feature, *Purintsu 21: 21st Century Prints* 19, no. 3 (Autumn 2008): 13.

60. Matsumoto, *Takabatake Kashō: Taishō, Shōwa, retoro byūti*, 53.

61. Reproduced in Takabatake Kashō Taishō Roman Kan, *Takabatake Kashō Taishō Roman Kan Zuroku*, 106.

62. Reproduced in *Takabatake Kashō Taishō Roman Kan Zuroku*, 101.

The “butterfly” in *Dancing Butterfly* (*Maeru kochō*),⁶³ used as a cover illustration for the April 1926 issue of *Shōjo gahō*, is depicted as a young female figure with butterfly wings. In high spirits with blushed cheeks, she playfully revels in the pure joy of dance. All are unabashed and at ease in their bodies, whatever the pose or activity.

Numerous other images, including one called *Dance* (*Dansu*, 1930),⁶⁴ portray women in the society of each other locking arms, holding hands, embracing, and touching in some way. They are intimate friends, representing the kind of female camaraderie and community found in girls’ higher schools. Erotic expressions on their faces or mouths are alluring but not sexualized in the service of a male gaze. The overall impression of these young ladies is self-determination and self-assurance. When in a group, the bonds of solidarity are strong. Kashō’s images of these female subjects contrast sharply with images of schoolgirls in prose fiction and print media from the 1890s into the early 1900s, when they were objects of criticism and derision.

The body has consistently been a contested site in feminism, from female subjugation to male authority as head of household under the Meiji Civil Code, to reproductive rights. In Kashō’s art, female bodies are liberated from government demands for reproduction and motherhood. They circulate in a world outside of male rule. Kashō imagines the body beyond binaries with their prescribed norms of behavior and expectations. Moreover, his subjects are masters of their sexuality. For their part, modern boys are given the freedom to assume sexualities also forbidden by state ideology and sexological discourse. Kashō represents autonomous subjects, whose behavior and attitudes are freed from the bounds of the body, implicitly supporting equality among people of all sexes. Nonetheless, these forays outside of dimorphic sex are operating under patriarchal rule, reacting to the law of the father. Their moments of liberation do not provide a blueprint for futanari subjectivity.

63. Reproduced in *Takabatake Kashō Taishō Roman Kan Zuroku*, 107.

64. This image was used on the cover of a writing paper collection and is reproduced in Murobushi Tetsurō, ed., “*Takabatake Kashō*,” *special feature, Purintsu 21: 21st Century Prints*, 12.

5

Representing and Erasing Perfect Beauty in the Contemporary Era

Ringu (*Ring*, 1991) by Suzuki Kōji and *Kataomoi* (*Unrequited Love*, 2001) by Higashino Keigo

... if a person has the reproductive organs of both sexes in their perfectly formed body, then we can say that the person is perfect.
—Shimizu Shikin, “Expectations of Girls’ Education”

‘Male and female, they’re the same too. Their original form was futanari [ryōseiguyū], like worms and slugs, having both female genitals and male genitals. Don’t you think it’s the perfect symbol of power and beauty?’

There was no way that an organism with both female and male genitalia epitomized perfect beauty.
—Suzuki Kōji, *Ringu*¹

‘I felt what I always felt, a sense of wonder that a woman with such perfect features should exist in the world. I’m not exactly sure what defines beauty, but I know that Dr. Tanaka, who was twenty years older than me, used to say the same thing. That he’d never seen anyone more beautiful than Sadako Yamamura.’
—Suzuki Kōji, *Ringu*²

“Prejudice is a burden that confuses the past, threatens the future and renders the present inaccessible.”
—Maya Angelou

1. Suzuki Kōji, *Ringu* (Kadokawa Shoten, 1991), 243.
2. *Ringu*, 252–53.

While dramatizing the inequality between men and women and clearly demonstrating how sex informs subjectivity, Shikin exposes the (il)logic of the sexual economy. That she turns to the futanari (ryōseiguyūsha) to illustrate the aporia of the body determining behavior, emotion, skill, etc., represents the *Zeitgeist* in Japan, as well as in the West. Serendipitously, Tanizaki was born into this milieu and moment in literary history and aestheticizes the futanari figure while challenging the sexological paradigm. Kashō rejects overdetermined, socially and legally dictated sexual norms by erasing borders of sex, race, and species. At the very least, it is fair to say that the representations of the futanari by these three artists challenge the dimorphic system of sex, if that system includes prejudices and expectations of behavior based on the sexed body. Shikin shows that women can be as brave as men, and men can be as emotional and gentle as women. Tanizaki celebrates the male body luxuriating in the prerogatives of the female sexed body. Kashō features “effeminate” boys and assertive girls with agency. In each case, the reader or viewer checks and perhaps reconsiders their reactions, which could be a step forward. Yet, do these provocations actually reinforce male and female ideals, while perhaps making room for additional positions? When a Tanizakian character transforms into a hyper-feminized woman, or the other’s sex’s features are ideals or even stereotypes, obviously this does not agitate toward dismantling the sexual regime. The counter-discourses represented in the previous chapters did not change the system, but they heightened awareness. Their critiques suggested alternative spaces for ways of being in the world, at the risk of antagonizing authorities and arbiters of acceptable behavior.

In this concluding chapter, I assess where representations of the futanari figure have come in a more contemporary period, namely in Suzuki Kōji’s 1991 novel, *Ringu* (*Ring*) and Higashino Keigo’s 2001 novel, *Kataomoi* (*Unrequited Love*) and consider the change in attitudes toward and representations of futanari subjects in the Meiji and Taishō periods and now. In addition, I scrutinize how writers in this period employ the futanari figure in contrast to artists from the past. Although *Ring* and *Unrequited Love* are anchored in recent historical moments, the sexual anxieties they express echo those of more than one hundred years ago. The driving force of evil in *Ring* is a futanari named Sadako, who has a specific condition called testicular feminization syndrome (*kōganseijoseikashō-kōgun*), generally known as androgen insensitivity syndrome (AIS). I explain the condition further below. After having been raped and thrown down a well for dead, Sadako’s utter degradation and objectification is punctuated by rendering them voiceless. A stark contrast to this gro-

tesquely debased subject appears in *Unrequited Love*. The novel presents transgendered characters and a minor futanari character struggling to live in a dimorphic world unwilling to accept them. Higashino's character, Mutsumi, is referred to as a "true hermaphrodite," (*shinsei han'in'yō*),³ the term that came into parlance in the medical community in the late 19th century and continued thereafter. The narrative is at such pains to establish the fact of the futanari body that the effect is contrived. Mutsumi is not organic to the plot; rather, they are one of a panoply of other-sexed, other-gendered people who complicates ways of viewing sex and desire.

Futanarisa has existential ramifications in *Unrequited Love* because it threatens the very grounds of being, since Mutsumi *is* their sexed body. If Mutsumi's futanarisa were absent, they would disappear from the text. In the case of *Ring*, sexualizing Sadako through the actions of different characters becomes pivotal to the story. These two contemporary literary representations of futanarisa may be appreciated for their recognition of anatomical realities, problematic as the stories might be. Despite contrivances, if not disparagement of characters, the narratives bring to the fore the centrality of sex in subject formation.

***Ring*: Historical Echoes of the Novel and Mutation of Global Franchise**

More widely known than Suzuki's novel is the film *Ringu*, directed by Nakata Hideo in 1998. I am treating only the novel and not the film here because Sadako's futanarisa is erased from the film. First, however, I should note the extensive and lucrative franchise that blossomed from the book. Nakata's *Ringu* "bec[a]me the most commercially successful horror film ever made in Japan, and one of Japan's biggest international hits of any genre."⁴ Suzuki followed up *Ringu* with two sequels, *Rasen* (*Spiral*, 1995) and *Ruupu* (*Loop*, 1998). Before the film, in 1995, *Ringu* was adapted for a Fuji Television series, and another television series followed that. The Korean remake of Nakata's film, called *The Ring Virus*, was released in 1999, and the American remake, *The Ring*, appeared in 2002, which gave birth to its own sequels. The book was translated into innumerable languages including French, English, and Italian. There were also video game

3. Higashino Keigo, *Kataomoi*, (Bungei Shunjū, 2004), 115.

4. David Kalat, *J-Horror: The Definitive Guide to The Ring, The Grudge and Beyond* (Vertical, 2007), 26.

and manga iterations. Not only did *Ring* spawn its own empire, but it launched a J-horror boom.⁵ Yet Sadako's futanarisa was expunged in the spread of all of these media.

When treading in the realm of horror, Japan has such a rich tradition of the supernatural that it is not unusual to bump into a ghost or vengeful spirit from the past. The legendary well ghost, Okiku, from *Banchō sarayashiki* ("Plate mansion") resonates in Sadako as a revenant after having been raped, thrown down a well, and left for dead. Dozens of versions of the legend exist, some of which date back to the early 16th century,⁶ while many appear in the 17th century⁷ and thereafter, when kabuki and wood-block prints (*ukiyo-e*) further popularized the legend.⁸ Eventually, Okiku came to life in film as well.⁹

The typical features that pertain to the character of Sadako are that Okiku is murdered and discarded in a well, often after an attempted seduction or sexual ultimatum.¹⁰ In some incarnations of the story, she continues to suffer while waiting for death, which is how Sadako presumably spends her last moments alive. Typically, Okiku is blamed for having broken one of a set of ten valuable plates, so she comes back to the well as a ghost counting plates to account for the tenth one, which has gone missing. Sadako's passion for vengeance informs *Ring*, but most versions of "Plate Mansion" represent Okiku as sad and weary rather than vengeful, not a typical *onryō* (vengeful spirit). Sadako's *raison d'être* is not only revenge, but they want nothing less than the annihilation of the human species.

Besides Okiku, Suzuki borrows one other significant model for his thriller. Sadako's mother, Shizuko, is inspired by the real-life story of Mifune Chizuko (1886–1911), a clairvoyant from Kumamoto Prefecture, who committed sui-

5. Hit films such as *Audition* (1999), directed by Miike Takashi, and *Ju-On: The Grudge* (2000), directed by Shimizu Takashi are centerpieces. The epithet "J-horror" is misleading because, among other reasons, plenty of films from Korea and Hong Kong comprised J-horror and the boom. See David Kalat, *J-Horror*, 9.

6. The Okiku shrine in Himeji city provides this claim, according to Zack Davisson, *Yūrei: the Japanese Ghost* (Chin Music Press, 2015), 115. Davisson describes Okiku's history in detail.

7. Richard M. Dorson, *Folk Legends of Japan* (Charles E. Tuttle, 1962), 104; Henri Joly, *Legend in Japanese Art: A Description of Historical Episodes, Legendary Characters, Folk-Lore Myths, Religious Symbolism, Illustrated in the Arts of Old Japan* (Charles E. Tuttle, 1967), 15–16.

8. A. B. Mitford's *Tales of Old Japan*, published in 1871, features a version as well.

9. The film is *Kaidan banchō sara-yashiki* (*Ghost in the Well*, 1957), directed by Kōno Toshikazu.

10. Itō Atsushi, *Nihon no sarayashiki densetsu* (Kaichōsha, 2002), 22.

cide. Mifune's story is instructive of the climate in which it occurred. Western science was ascendent in Meiji Japan, while ancestral (*senzo daidai no*) religion was chaotic, according to the government. Contradictory values, including science as the authority to explain natural phenomena, Japanese gods, and an omniscient, omnipotent Christian god surging into public discourse led to increasing doubt and anxiety regarding religion and faith.¹¹ A champion of *yōkaigaku* (ghost/supernatural creature/phenomena studies), Inoue Enryō founded the Tetsugaku kan (The Philosophical Institute) in 1887, with an impetus to challenge "backwards customs and superstitious thought."¹² It was with this belief in Western science and skepticism of the old ways that Mifune demonstrated her clairvoyance (*senrigan*). Many professors called her a fraud, even though many of her predictions were realized.¹³ Nonetheless, the shame presumably led to her suicide.

As in Mifune's case, in *Ring* a university professor, Ikuma Heihachiro, who believes in Shizuko's powers, tests them in a demonstration attended by the media and academics. Yet, Shizuko believes that everyone is wishing for her to fail and subsequently does. Reporters call Shizuko a fake (*inchiki*) and ridicule her and Ikuma. Eight-year-old Sadako witnesses her parents' humiliation and her mother's emotional decline. Also similar to Mifune Chizuko's case, the fictional Shizuko commits suicide.

Sadako, a psychic resurrected with a rage against humanity because of the destruction of their family and their own rape and murder, provides a useful example not only for representation of a futanari subject, but also for the centrality of sex in subject formation. I focus the rest of this discussion of *Ring* on three imbricated topics: subjectivity and the sexed body; focalization and vocalization of the futanari subject; and the prevalence of rape as a means of abjection and enforcing heteronormative hegemony. The perspectives and voices of narrators, omniscient and those of characters, have the power to affirm, erode, and abject sexed subjectivity in overt and subtle ways. I examine below who is seeing and speaking for Sadako as their subjectivity is bestowed and denied. At the same time, the patriarchal means of control, rape, hangs like a specter in *Ring*, haunting the subject, reminding them who speaks and sees for them.

11. Takahashi Naomi, "Inoue Enryō to yōkaigaku no genzai," in *Toyo University Repository for Academic Resources* (2001-07-20), 97-118. <http://id.nii.ac.jp/1060/00002723/>

12. Takahashi, "Inoue Enryō to yōkaigaku no genzai," 106.

13. Anthony Enns, "The Horror of Media: Technology and Spirituality in the *Ringu* Films," in *The Scary Screen: Media Anxiety in The Ring*, ed. Kristen Lacefield (Routledge 2010), 34.

Subjectivity and the Sexed Body

Whereas theorists have insisted that language¹⁴ and ideology¹⁵ are integral to subjectivity, here it is as if both have been stripped away from Sadako. The loss of their mother, who was shamed and driven to suicide by authorities, renders Sadako incapable of participating in civil society. Their means of expression is not the language of society. They become non-verbal because of their clairvoyance and alienation. All they have left is their sex, and that is abjected and denied. The erasure of Sadako's futanari sexuality from the film(s) punctuates this abjection. Sadako is the apotheosis of the modern futanari. They are primordial, misunderstood, and despised. The dehumanization that Sadako suffers is the culmination of that which is visited upon futanari bodies since the 12th century *Scroll of Diseases* (*Yamai zōshi*), at least where this book begins.

I start this section by addressing the misunderstanding of Sadako's condition as described in the narrative. The so-called "male pseudohermaphrodite" (*danseikari han'in'yō*) has testes, but in the case of androgen insensitivity syndrome, Sadako's condition, the body is missing an androgen receptor necessary to reading the androgens. Therefore, despite an XY chromosomal pattern and the presence of testes, the body has developed female genitals, including a vagina, clitoris, and labia because of missed androgen signals.¹⁶ AIS can be complete or partial. In the case of complete AIS, the penis and other male genitalia have not developed; in partial, there may be hypospadias, in which the opening of the urethra is on the underside of the penis; partially undescended testes; clitoromegaly (large clitoris), etc.

Dr. Nagao rapes Sadako and drops her down a well (more on that below). He admits that to Asakawa, the journalist who is investigating the unexplained deaths that we learn are caused by Sadako, and to Ryuji, the friend who helps Asakawa. Nagao explains that Sadako has androgen insensitivity syndrome and that people with this condition are all beautiful. This last comment is clearly unscientific, though not a fantasy concocted by the author. Such a truism exists. Dreger elaborates:

14. See Émile Benveniste, *Problems in General Linguistics*, trans. Mary Elizabeth Meek (University of Miami Press, 1971), 223–30 and Karatani Kōjin, Chapter 2. "The Discovery of Interiority," in *Origins of Modern Japanese Literature*, trans. ed. Brett de Bary (Duke University Press, 1993), the translation of Chapter 2, "Naimen no hakken" in *Nihon kindai bungaku no kigen* (Kodansha, 1988).

15. See Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses," *Essays on Ideology* (Verso Editions, 1971).

16. Dreger, *Hermaphrodites and the Medical Invention of Sex*, 38.

Generally AIS individuals do not develop very much noticeable body hair, and they grow tall with long arms and legs. Indeed, with these features—tall, smooth-skinned bodies with rounded hips and breasts and long limbs—they seem to fit the dominant feminine ideal in the United States today better than most medically “true” females.¹⁷

Although Dreger speaks to the beauty standards of the United States, in this case, the same might be said of Japan.

Therefore, the conceit in *Ringu* of Sadako’s staggering beauty and its connection to their futanarisa dovetails nicely with their supernatural monsterism and their sex. Sadako is hyper-feminized at the same time that their futanarisa is exploited for its strangeness. They are female when they make the videotape because they perform the requisite number of eyeblinks per minute for the average woman, which is five fewer than for the average man. Sadako is represented as an eerie and creepy woman (*bukimi; kimochi warui onna*), vengeful, evil, monstrous, viral. Still more, their futanari sexuality is stripped away when Ryuji says, “Biologically speaking, Yamamura Sadako was not a woman but a man (*onna dewa naku otoko nan da*), so she couldn’t have a child.”¹⁸ The text deconstructs itself as it denies Sadako’s subjectivity; she is a woman who is not a woman but a futanari who is neither a futanari nor a woman but a man, but apparently not when they made the videotape or when they are raped. Additionally, the text loops futanarisa to the viral nature of Sadako and actual viruses. In a discussion about viruses, Asakawa and Ryuji ponder the evolution of life. Ryuji postulates that all opposites were once the same:

Light and darkness, before the Big Bang, they lived harmoniously, with no contradiction. The same is true of God and the Devil. In short, a God fallen from grace came to be called the Devil, that’s all, but originally, they were the same. Male and female, they’re the same too. Their original form was futanari [*ryōseigyū*], like worms and slugs, having both female genitals and male genitals. Don’t you think it’s the perfect symbol of power and beauty?¹⁹

I cannot speak to Ryuji’s God and Devil, but human females and human males are not opposites. We need only read science, Charles Dar-

17. Dreger, *Hermaphrodites and the Medical Invention of Sex*, 38.

18. Suzuki Kōji, *Ringu*, 294.

19. Suzuki Kōji, *Ringu*, 243.

win, and Magnus Hirschfeld to know this. The stuff of Ryuji's imagination aside, the narrative brokers a leap to the smallpox virus joining forces with Sadako's resentment. Ultimately, they engender a virus that will destroy humanity.

This is contrived through Dr. Nagao getting infected with the smallpox virus by a patient living in a sanatorium for tuberculosis patients where he worked in the 1960s. Nagao had been vaccinated so had only minor symptoms. Yet, he has the distinction of being the last smallpox patient in Japan. It is here that Nagao rapes Sadako, as mentioned earlier, strangles them, and releases their body into a well. The narrative declares, "Right before dying, it was certain that Yamamura Sadako's body was invaded by the smallpox virus."²⁰ Both the original Japanese sentence and my translation of it are in the passive voice, foregrounding Sadako's body. The grammatical agent, the (smallpox) virus, invades, but then its host, Sadako, dies. However, Sadako has returned now and invades like a virus, spreading their curse. It is without question that Sadako's futanari body carries that lethal virus. The premise of Sadako's virus is that when a person watches their video, if the person does not show it to another person within seven days, then that person will die a horrific death.

The video itself contains projected images from Sadako's powerful psyche. Throughout the novel, characters sense Sadako's ghostly being, as well as images from her traumas, including her death at the bottom of the well. In search of Sadako's skeleton, Asakawa descends the well and hears Sadako breathing. "Her frighteningly beautiful face floated up to him from the photographs, shaking her head seductively (*namamekashiku*). Yamamura Sadako is here."²¹ Here again Sadako is not only a woman but a sexualized one. The sexualizing and desexing of Sadako are evident in the narrative strategy of the text.

Focalization and Vocalization of the Hermaphroditic Subject

As I have done throughout this book, here too, I endeavor to access the futanari subject's perspective and voice, and at the very least, call attention to others seeing and speaking for them. Although Sadako has a text, which is the video that has the power to kill, it is "interpreted" by Asakawa and Ryuji. The video contains real images seen through Sadako's eyes and

20. Suzuki Kōji, *Ringu*, 258.

21. Suzuki Kōji, *Ringu*, 284.

imagined images from Sadako's mind. They include real people whose significance in Sadako's life is unknown and/or traumatic, as well as odd images, such as flowing red liquid. Reminiscent of Julia Kristeva's semiotic, pre-lingual stage, though not the same, Sadako's mode of expression is composed of impulses and instinctual drives and cannot be articulated, until the men interpret for them and assign it language and meaning. They define Sadako and separate them from their primal, semiotic signification. Kristeva distinguishes the semiotic from signification, which identifies the subject and therefore its positionality.²² Kristeva's semiotic is not a position.

However, I claim that Sadako posits her own futanari sexed position and means of expression. Despite the descriptions, attributions, and definitions of Sadako given by the (male) characters in the text, Sadako takes a radical stance. They engage with the world and express themselves on their own terms, which refuse the sexed positions dictated by patriarchal imperatives.

Besides the videotape, everything else attributed to Sadako is reported or assumed by major and minor male characters. Therefore, those reports and assumptions are dubious, at best, and not only because these characters represent a heteronormative male position. In addition, a character may be biased for any number of reasons, as is the nature of the unreliable narrator.

In narrative theory, focalization refers to the mediation or relationship between voice and vision.²³ The videotape is Sadako's vision, but the voice originates elsewhere—from Asakawa and Ryuji. Ryuji lists the images in the video and their duration. The men's interpretations and "truths" corrupt Sadako's perspective. In their efforts to make images, colors, and juxtapositions logical and verbal, Asakawa and Ryuji change Sadako into their own versions of Sadako. Moreover, the third-person, omniscient narrative often overlaps with the male characters' focalization, which reinforces their authority.

22. Julia Kristeva, *The Kristeva Reader*, ed. Toril Moi (Columbia University Press, 1986), 43.

23. Mieke Bal has developed narrative theory based on the work of Gérard Genette, who introduced the term focalization. See Gérard Genette, *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method*, trans. Jane E. Lewin, fwd. Jonathan Culler (Cornell University Press, 1980). Bal analyzes in detail Genette's separation of perspective and narrating agent under the categories of mood and voice, respectively, in her *On Story-Telling: Essays in Narratology*, ed. David Jobling (Polebridge Press, 1991), but also treats focalization in *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative*, trans. Christine van Boheemen (University of Toronto Press, 1985).

Asakawa and Ryuji's male-inscribed versions of Sadako inform their attributions and fantasies of Sadako's motives. "Sadako wanted to have a child, but her body was incapable. So, she made a deal with the devil . . . to have lots of children,"²⁴ the omniscient narrative overlaps with Ryuji's thoughts. Yet, there is no evidence whatsoever that Sadako wanted children. They impute Sadako with the desire to bear children because sometimes they consider Sadako a woman, and by their definition, women want to become mothers. The men discover that Sadako was raped, so Ryuji believes that to carry out their vengeance against humanity, Sadako forces Nagao to rape them, assuming that they would be infected with the smallpox virus, which would enable them to become viral. Ryuji reasons that if Sadako had wanted to kill Nagao, they had the power to do so. "You had better view her resentment as . . . that is, the spearhead of Yamamura Sadako's rage was not a specific person but was directed toward the masses. Compared to that, her hatred of Nagao was as meaningless as a fart."²⁵ Just before this statement, Ryuji says that Sadako did not want to die a virgin, assuming that they were a virgin, so they enticed Nagao to rape and strangle them. Even the suggestion that a person would cause their own rape is an act of violence against the person revisiting the person. Moreover, Ryuji's arrogance and assertion of male privilege in assuming to know how Sadako feels about their rapist, further denies their subjectivity.

Rape

Rape in *Ring* is pervasive and collaborates with the strategies of focalization and abjection to degrade Sadako and reinforce heteronormativity. Rape and the threat of rape hang like a pall throughout the novel beginning with Ryuji telling Asakawa in an analepsis that he raped a woman. Ryuji has told Asakawa of three of his victims.

Rape continues to menace the inflection of the narrative with a minor character, Shigemori. Sadako belonged to an acting troupe that Shigemori founded. Arima, the director, says that Shigemori made comments like he was going to make Yamamura Sadako his own (*mono ni surunda*).²⁶ One night Shigemori gets drunk and says he will surprise Yamamura Sadako at her apartment. Nobody knows if he actually goes, but the following day he

24. Suzuki Kōji, 302.

25. Suzuki Kōji, 267.

26. Suzuki Kōji, 209.

is completely changed—pale and silent. Then he dies of a heart attack. By juxtaposing Shigemori's boastful, predatory behavior and the foregoing events, the narrative proposes that he attempts to rape her. Sadako quits the troupe after the incident.

The rape of Sadako by Nagao occupies the pivotal epicenter of the story. It is where Sadako's futanarisa is revealed. It is where the premise that the virus to destroy humanity is enabled. It is where Sadako's past, in the form of Okiku's legendary well, and future, in the promise of a viral vengeance, come together. Finally, it is the culmination of the male inscribed sexual violence that haunts the entire text and enforces heteronormative hegemony.

Nagao avers that he was compelled to rape Sadako. He feels a burning sensation. "I didn't know where the impulse that surged within me came from. I have a feeling now that the smallpox fever deprived me of my ability to control myself. I swear, I had never been seized by such sensual temptation in my life."²⁷

While Sadako endures regular debasement of their futanari subjectivity during their lifetime and after their death, they appear to be at the same time enormously powerful in their ability to kill and control the actions of others. On the one hand, men parrot the often-heard claim, "I was drunk" to justify rape, and on the other, a supernatural force can readily subdue them. In spite of itself, the text unwittingly sets into stark relief a steely sense of self and sexed subjectivity in Sadako against torrents of sexual and emotional brutality.

Interestingly, this pervasiveness of rape is emphasized toward the end of the story when Ryuji's loyal student, Takano Mai, wants Asakawa to know that Ryuji died a virgin. Mai describes him as "pure" (*junsui*) and "like a child when we were together" (*watashi no mae dewa kodomo mitai*).²⁸ Asakawa knew of his best friend, as the reader knows, as a rapist who bragged of his conquests. A number of operations are in effect here that maintain the supremacy of the heteronormative male sexed subject and mask male sexed subjects policing their domain and abjecting non-subjects. Ideals of sex are so unstable that a male such as Ryuji is so uncomfortable with his masculinity that he feels compelled to bolster it by raping women. Mai says to Asakawa, "[Ryuji] probably played the part of a reprobate with you, didn't he . . ."

"If he hadn't acted like that, he wouldn't have been able to live in this

27. Suzuki Kōji, 254.

28. Suzuki Kōji, 313.

society.”²⁹ Living in this society would be untenable because of its requirements on the heteronormative male-sexed subject. Therefore, Ryuji compensates for his masculine inadequacies by spewing the toxic vapor of rape braggadocio or rape fantasies, which overlap with each other.

Asakawa, a married-with-child male, whose “sense of ethics” (*rinri-kan*) prevents him from asking Ryuji and a reporter, Yoshino, to watch the lethal video because it would endanger their lives, never reports to the police or any authority the three rapes he knows of. His “non-involvement” means that Ryuji will likely rape again, based upon his record.

Asakawa’s complicity in Ryuji’s crimes demonstrates how male subjects police the domain of the heteronormative subject. Violence against non-male or abjected subjects does not fall into the realm of ethics for Asakawa. Rather, it serves as a constant reminder of power. Sadako is denied subjectivity and a voice. Additionally, rape enforces their abjection. However, Sadako is able to overcome this dehumanization, unlike mere mortals. Yet, their decision to annihilate the human species in retaliation, is a grim commentary on the state of sexual equality in the contemporary age. Non-conforming sexualities, in terms of bodies and desire, are treated so egregiously that the reaction is to destroy the world.

In the video, Sadako relives the traumas of their parents hounded by academics and the press, and of their own rape. And if Ryuji and Asakawa, as well as other characters are right, then Sadako is continuing to not process the traumas. Yet, processing the traumas is never a possibility because Sadako relives the same injustice and dehumanization over and over again, even beyond the book, for their futanarisa is eradicated in the media that follow.

Unrequited Love

In direct contrast to Sadako, who permeates *Ring*, Suenaga Mutsumi, the futanari character in *Unrequited Love*, serves as a personified public service announcement that appears or is mentioned in less than one percent of a 614-page novel. The plot revolves around transgendered characters, who, unable to live their true selves, try to exchange family registers (*koseki*) with other transgendered characters. Family registers record one of two sexes at birth and follow an individual for his/her/their entire life.

29. Suzuki Kōji, 314.

The opening line of the commentary in the Bunshun paperback edition of the novel reads: “Higashino Keigo’s *Unrequited Love* is a mystery with a theme that seems to have predicted the future.”³⁰ On the contrary, rather than predicting the topicality and exigency of gay and transgender rights, the narrative participates in a chorus of voices for these rights. Yet more pronounced, however, is the past, which weighs heavily on this narrative. The representation of the futanari subject is one-dimensional and subordinated to all other characters. The minimizing of the futanari, indeed the very language used to describe the futanari, including the word, “han’in’yō” (hermaphrodite), are dictated by the past.

A sports journalist, Nishiwaki Tetsurō, investigates a mystery involving friends from an American football team for which he played quarterback. Therefore, the heteronormative male protagonist directs the action in the past (football team) and in the diegetic present and enables the gender non-conforming characters to give voice to their struggle to live in a world dominated by a system he represents. As the probe proceeds, instigated by a transgendered team manager, who reappears from their football days, a cavalcade of transgendered characters emerges.

Mutsumi enters the mix because Tetsurō wants to question them about their identity as a futanari (han’in’yō). A university track team doctor uses the term “true hermaphrodite” (shinsei han’in’yō) explaining that Mutsumi was born with a penis and testicles, though “the penis couldn’t be confirmed” (*ochinchin ga kakunin dekinakattandeshō*).³¹ Mutsumi thought of herself as a girl until junior high school, when a doctor realizes her “body’s secret” (*nikutai no himitsu*).³² During high school, however, their male features developed, the doctor explains, because they started producing male hormones. “It was as if a female athlete were doping.”³³ Mutsumi no longer looked female because of the muscles they developed.

Mutsumi’s sex chromosomes (*seisenshokutai*) were examined. However, the doctor claims, a “true hermaphrodite” does not have a Y chromosome, so Mutsumi was deemed to be female. This generalization from the doctor contradicts another definition, which concerns the presence of ovarian and testicular tissue, and belies the complexity and variability of human sexual anatomy. The doctor calls futanarisa a “dis-

30. Yoshino Jin, “Kaisetsu,” in *Kataomoi*, by Higashino Keigo (Bungei Shunjū, 2004), 615.

31. Higashino, *Kataomoi*, 115.

32. Higashino, 115.

33. Higashino, 116.

ease of sex differentiation that doesn't go well,"³⁴ and a "congenital disease" (*sentensei no byōki*).³⁵

The Past Prevails

The notion that a non-normative sexual anatomy is diseased reflects a modernist narrative that has stubbornly persisted until today. ". . . [A]mbiguous genitalia do not constitute a metabolic disease," writes Dreger.³⁶ It is the case, however, "that whenever a baby is born with 'ambiguous' genitalia, doctors need to consider the situation a *potential* medical emergency, because intersexuality may signal one serious metabolic problem, congenital adrenal hyperplasia (CAH)."³⁷ CAH, which involves an electrolyte imbalance, can be fatal, so it must be treated or ruled out. Dreger emphasizes, "CAH requires treatment because it is a metabolic disease, but ambiguous genitalia are not. They do not necessarily require medical treatment."³⁸ In addition, the incidence of cancer in the testes of androgen-insensitive people, such as Sadako (*Ring*), is high. Therefore, this condition should be diagnosed as well, and the testes monitored. But again, Dreger underscores that the genitalia are not diseased.

The modernist discourse condemning non-normative sexed bodies and sexualities as diseased is reflected also in *Unrequited Love's* narration. That is, the third-person, omniscient narrator follows the protagonist, Tetsurō so closely that they overlap for much of the novel. The authoritative voice of the omniscient narrator lends authority to Tetsurō, even as he is learning about futanari and transgendered people. He controls and shapes the narrative, while appearing open-minded, fair, and sympathetic. His reasonable, heteronormative perspective is that of every woman and man within the dominant sexual economy, which also abjects and repudiates others.

The omniscient narrator reveals: "In the train Tetsurō thought about the athlete Suenaga Mutsumi the entire time. He wanted to know about her since he heard Mizuki's confession [of transitioning to a male]. Gender dysmorphia and han'in'yō [futanari]. Though one has to do with the mind and the other with the body, they are the same in that they both transcend sex/gender" (*sei wo chōetsu shiteiru to iu ten dewa onaji da*).³⁹

34. Higashino, 115.

35. Higashino, 117.

36. Dreger, *Hermaphrodites and the Medical Invention of Sex*, 189.

37. Dreger, *Hermaphrodites and the Medical Invention of Sex*, 189.

38. Dreger, *Hermaphrodites and the Medical Invention of Sex*, 189.

39. Higashino, 119–20.

Gender identity disorder, or gender dysphoria (*seidōitsuseishōgai*) is considered a mental health condition in Japan and has been widely criticized domestically and internationally.⁴⁰ This attitude also reflects the view of non-conforming sexualities as sick. Perhaps Tetsurō's rumination that futanarisa and gender dysphoria "transcend sex/gender" suggests the domain of humanism or human rights, implying a postmodernist view that defies the "one-body-one-sex-rule" and envisions a world in which people are not defined or judged based on sex.

Several times the narrative repeats a notion of the Möbius strip as a visual metaphor of sex as degrees of femaleness and maleness. This analogy of Magnus Hirschfeld's doctrine of sexual intermediary degrees, mentioned in Chapter One, did not spread in Japan when he promulgated it in 1913, nor when he visited Japan in 1931. In *Unrequited Love*, however, the concept is suggested by a transgender character named Aikawa, who is perhaps the most articulate character on matters of sex. "Maleness and femaleness are like the front and back of a Möbius strip,"⁴¹ says Aikawa. If a person follows along one side of a Möbius strip, before they know it, they find themselves on the other side. There is no perfect male, nor is there a perfect female. Moreover, there are female parts in males and male parts in females. Transgendered people, too, are all different, she adds.

"I think the disease called gender dysphoria doesn't exist. What we should be treating is the society that tries to eliminate minorities."⁴² The "unrequited love" (*kataomoi*) of the book title is that which is not returned by society to nonconforming sexed subjects. And this one-sided love will continue, Aikawa predicts.

The "progressive" idea of the sexed subject, transgendered and futanari, as more or less a combination of both sexes emerges from the past. However, on one level the narrative equates a transgendered identity with a futanari one, which denies futanari subjectivity. Yet, it acknowledges the anguish of non-conforming sexed people. Tetsurō uncovers the scheme of transgendered characters exchanging family registration (*koseki*)⁴³ with

40. Human Rights Watch asserts that "Gender Identity Disorder Special Cases Law" (*Seidōitsuseishōgai tokurei hō*), enacted in 2003, contradicts international human rights law. <https://www.hrw.org/report/2019/03/20/really-high-hurdle/japans-abusive-transgender-legal-recognition-process>

41. Higashino, *Kataomoi*, 366.

42. Higashino, 368.

43. The family register is an official document recording the identity and key facts and events of an individual, including the sex at birth. In order to change the sex in the family register, Japanese citizens were required to undergo sterilization surgery. In 2023 the Japanese Supreme Court (*saikōsaibansho*) ruled that that particular clause was unconstitutional. However, the law to change sex still requires a person be unmarried,

each other in order to live a fraudulent, legally documented life of their desired sexes. To accomplish this they explain to Tetsuro that “. . . they must wipe the slate clean of their past lives, academic backgrounds, and careers. That’s not all. Your past friends, acquaintances, family, and relatives—everybody, you lose them all.”⁴⁴

Groping Toward the Subject

Representations of the futanari discussed in this book range from dehumanized *others* to exoticized or idealized individuals to monsters to one-dimensional characters to combinations thereof. In every case, they are measured against the standard of heterosexual normativity and their bodies found diseased, while simultaneously lacking and profusive. Extirpating their focalization requires identifying the tacit and explicit views imbedded in textual narratives and those of other characters.

J. Edgar Bauer’s explication⁴⁵ of Audre Lorde’s (1934–1992) hermaphroditic poetics illuminates the inadequacies in these representations. Lorde wrests control from the patriarchy and redefines the terms of negotiation. She writes, “. . . if I, Audre Lorde, do not define myself, the outer world certainly will . . .”⁴⁶ The futanari figure in Japanese arts and letters and religion has endured others’ definitions since time immemorial. Moreover, “As a Black, lesbian, feminist, socialist, poet, mother of two, including one boy, and a member of an interracial couple, I usually find myself part of some group in which the majority defines me as deviant, difficult, inferior, or just plain ‘wrong.’”⁴⁷ And so it has been for the futanari in Japan.

Avoiding the terms “hermaphrodite” and “androgyny,” Lorde decon-

without children under eighteen years old, and have genitalia that resembles the “opposite sex.”

44. Higashino, 432.

45. J. Edgar Bauer, “At the Core of the Broken Fruit: On Audre Lorde’s Self-Definitions and the Critical Deployment of the Dahomey/Yoruba Lore,” in *Bury My Heart in a Free Land: Black Women Intellectuals in Modern U.S. History*, ed. Hettie V. Williams (Praeger, 2018).

46. Audre Lorde, “Self-Definition and My Poetry,” in *I Am Your Sister: Collected and Unpublished Writings of Audre Lorde*, eds. Rudolph P. Byrd et al. (Oxford University Press, 2009), 156.

47. Audre Lorde, “There is No Hierarchy of Oppression,” in *I Am Your Sister: Collected and Unpublished Writings of Audre Lorde*, eds. Rudolph P. Byrd et al. (Oxford University Press, 2009), 219.

structs sexual binarity by invoking African mythology that embraced the black mother, the source of power for all.⁴⁸ She acknowledges, however, that women can be reinscribed male subjects. The black mother, after all, has given birth to the patriarchal regime throughout time and place. Bauer describes patriarchy as “an act of truncation that severs the life or reason from its rootage in feeling . . .”⁴⁹ Chaos, confusion, feeling, emotion, these are the black mother. “The white fathers have told us: I think, therefore I am. But the Black mother within each of us, the poet within each of us, whispers in our dreams: I feel, therefore I can be free.”⁵⁰

As discussed above, Sadako’s mode of expression is chaotic and confusing, neither Cartesian nor rational. The men assign it language and impart its meaning. They define Sadako. Although Sadako maintains their futanari subjectivity and appears to perhaps be triumphant in their quest to destroy humankind, their voice has been drowned out and they have been abjected and dehumanized. Clearly, the need to self-define is crucial. In that sense, Sadako proffers a transformative paradigm, in spite of the text. The teratological prototype of the futanari subject circumvents the violence of ultimate subjugation.

Tanizaki conjures aspects of the monster in Mr. K in “The Secret.” In addition, the narrative flirts with a non-Cartesian, disorienting visual order. However, Tanizaki then moves onto other aesthetic interests. His futanari figures are firmly rooted in patriarchal worlds.

Yet, Tanizaki’s and Suzuki’s invocations of the monster testify to society’s continuous, inexorable anxiety concerning the futanari and non-normative sexualities from the 1890s until now. In recent years the animus toward those with non-normative bodies and desires has intensified and even taken lives, literally and figuratively. The treatment by society of non-conforming bodies and sexualities is certainly nothing less than a question of human rights. The abjection of the futanari screams with terror. This is the inside of the heteronormative subject “in the depths of the human unconscious.”⁵¹

48. Bauer, “At the Core of the Broken Fruit,” 246.

49. Bauer, “At the Core of the Broken Fruit,” 250.

50. Audre Lorde, “Poetry Makes Something Happen,” in *I Am Your Sister: Collected and Unpublished Writings of Audre Lorde*, eds. Rudolph P. Byrd et al. (Oxford University Press, 2009), 186.

51. Busst, “The Image of the Androgyne in the Nineteenth Century,” 86.

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