

**KNOWING WOMEN:  
SEI SHŌNAGON'S *MAKURA NO SŌSHI*  
IN EARLY-MODERN JAPAN**

by

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## Abstract

This dissertation explores the reception history of *Makura no sōshi* (The Pillow Book, 11<sup>th</sup> c.) from the seventeenth through the nineteenth centuries. Focusing on an extensive body of texts, including scholarly commentaries, erotic parodies, and instruction manuals for women, I examine how *Makura no sōshi* and the image of its female author Sei Shōnagon were transformed through shifts in political contexts, readerships, and socio-cultural conditions. The complex reception history of *The Pillow Book*, in which the text was recreated through diverse forms, serves as a useful case study of how literary criticism, gender structures, and the status of women have changed through time. Drawing from research on the invention of national literatures and the historical reception of Japanese “classical” works, this study reveals the processes and agents that contributed to the shifting place of *Makura no sōshi* within Japanese literature. By so doing, it sheds light on the extent to which misrepresentations of Heian texts and their authors have influenced approaches in literary scholarship and shaped contemporary images of the Heian period as a whole.

The Introduction analyzes the context in which *Makura no sōshi* was produced and considers theoretical approaches to the reception of literary works, particularly the processes of evaluation, interpretation, adaptation, and canonization. Chapter One traces scholarly debates regarding the textual identity and the genre of the work as recorded in scholarly commentaries and works of literary criticism. Chapter Two takes up the popularization of the Heian text among male readers and considers its transformation into a highly eroticized work. An examination of illustrated adaptations of *Makura no sōshi* for a female readership follows in Chapter Three, which shows how the work was used as a manual for social mobility gained through marriage. Chapter Four turns to constructions of Sei Shōnagon in instruction manuals for women and examines the use of the image of the author as an efficient tool for gender training both in Edo (1603-1868) and Meiji (1868-1912) Japan. The Conclusion summarizes aspects of *Makura no sōshi* that defy categorization and make it a dynamic text.

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## Introduction

What is *Makura no sōshi*? This literary work, produced in Japan's Heian (794-1185) imperial court at the beginning of the eleventh century, is usually defined in the following way: a miscellany (*zuihitsu* 随筆) of approximately three hundred disconnected lists, diary-like entries, and essay-like passages that reveal the refinement of the court and the strong character of author Sei Shōnagon 清少納言 (964?- after 1027). In fact, every aspect of this description is a product of later engagements with the text that aimed at shortening the distance between the context of the production of the work and the new contexts of reception. Very little is known about *The Pillow Book*, as it is usually translated into English, or about its author. Sei Shōnagon's great-grandfather was Kiyohara no Fukayabu 清原深養父 (dates unknown), whose poems were included in the first and second imperially commissioned anthologies of poetry, the *Kokinwakashū* 古今和歌集 (Collection of Ancient and Modern Times, 905) and the *Gosenwakashū* 後撰和歌集 (Later Collection, 955), respectively. Her father, Kiyohara no Motosuke 清原元輔 (908-990), served as one of the compilers of the *Gosenwakashū* and was included among the Thirty-six Poetry Immortals (*Sanjūrokkasen* 三十六歌仙).<sup>1</sup> In her thirties, Sei was recruited as an attendant to Empress Teishi 中宮定子 (977-1000) and served at court from 993 until Teishi's death in the year 1000.

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<sup>1</sup> Motosuke is known as one of the Five Men of the Pear Chamber (*Nashitsubo no gonin* 梨壺の五人), along with Ōnakatomi no Yoshinobu 大中臣能宣 (921-991), Minamoto no Shitagō 源順 (911-983), Sakanoue no Mochiki 坂上望城 (dates unknown), and Ki no Tokibumi (紀時文, 922-996).

Fujiwara no Teishi 藤原定子 was a daughter of Fujiwara no Michitaka 藤原道隆 (953-995). Her entrance into the palace of Emperor Ichijō 一条天皇 (980-1011, r. 986-1011) in the year 990 at the age of fourteen coincided with the coming-of-age ceremony of the eleven year-old emperor. During this same year, she was promoted to empress following her father's appointment as regent (*kanpaku* 関白), which was the post of utmost political power. Three years later, Sei Shōnagon joined the cultural salon of Teishi.<sup>2</sup> Highly intelligent and talented mid-ranking aristocratic women like Sei played an important role in the marriage politics of the Heian court, since their erudition and creativity were viewed as enhancing the cultural sophistication of their female patrons' courts. Being preferred by the emperor above his other consorts naturally increased the chances for a woman to become the mother of a future emperor. In 995, Michitaka's other daughter, Genshi 原子, entered the court as a consort of the crown prince, which was indicative of her father's growing power. However, in the same year the political situation began to change, following Michitaka's death at age forty-three. Tragic events continued the following year, when Teishi brothers Korechika 伊周 and Takaie 隆家 were exiled in the fifth month, and their mother Kishi 貴子 died in the tenth month. Also in the same year, Teishi's uncle Michinaga 道長 (966-1027), who had been her father's rival, rose to power as the next regent. Left without political backing or a close relative at court for support, and threatened by the appointment of Michinaga's daughter Shōshi 彰子 (988-1074) as another empress to Ichijō, Teishi lived for four more years undergoing hardship and humiliation.

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<sup>2</sup> Miyakawa Yōko, "Fujiwara no Teishi," in *Makura no sōshi daijiten*, edited by Makura no sōshi kenkyūkai (Tokyo: Bensei Shuppan, 2001), 538.

*The Pillow Book* features Sei Shōnagon's service at court, and covers the years of the tragic decline of her patron. However, it is not a narrative permeated by lament but an account of the cultural and literary sophistication of the court that is imbued with humor and laughter. Touching on a wide range of issues such as women's status, subjectivity, aesthetic competence, and literacy, *The Pillow Book* constructs the court of Empress Teishi as triumphant and glamorous.<sup>3</sup>

As recorded in the last passage of two textual variants of *Makura no sōshi*, the *Nōinbon* 能因本 and *Sankanbon* 三卷本 manuscripts, the text began to circulate within the court when the Middle General of the Left Tsunefusa 權中納言経房 (969-1023),<sup>4</sup> seized Sei's notebook and carried it off, sometime between 995 and 996. It was presumably after Sei put the finishing touches on her manuscript, and most likely after the death of her patron, that the revised text began to be transmitted along with the other copies of her narrative which were already in circulation. The lack of a rigid textual structure and a fixed notion of what exactly the text was may have encouraged scribes to freely copy, interpret, and modify it. Since the original manuscript was already lost by the late Heian period,<sup>5</sup> various copies that were full of careless scribal errors and deliberate "improvements" continued to circulate,

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<sup>3</sup> See Mitamura Masako, *Makura no sōshi: Hyōgen no ronri* (Tokyo: Yūseidō Shuppan, 1995); see also Naomi Fukumori, "Sei Shonagon's Makura no soshi: A Re-Visionary History, *The Journal of the Association of Teachers of Japanese* 31, no. 1 (Apr., 1997): 1-44.

<sup>4</sup> Minamoto Tsunefusa was a Middle General of the Left from Chōhō 4 (998) until Chōwa 4 (1015). See Matsuo Satoshi and Nagai Kazuko, eds., *Makura no sōshi: Nōinbon, Genbun & Gendaigoyaku Shirīzu* (Tokyo: Kasama Shoin, 2008), 365.

<sup>5</sup> Ikeda Kikan, "Makura no sōshi no genkei to sono seiritsu nendai," *Kenkyū Makura no sōshi* (Tokyo: Shibundō, 1963), 30-1.

making the final intentions of the author unclear. As early as the beginning of the Kamakura period (1185-1333) people were aware of the existence of different versions of *Makura no sōshi*.<sup>6</sup>

The numerous textual variants of *Makura no sōshi* circulating at the beginning of the twentieth century were grouped into four textual lines by literary scholar Ikeda Kikan 池田 亀鑑 (1896-1956). However, the exceedingly complicated textual history precludes any definitive conclusion about the authenticity of one textual line over the others. It is unclear what the text Sei Shōnagon wrote actually looked like. The versions that were considered by seventeenth-century scholars when collating a text for the first printed commentaries were not divided into sections. In other words, the division of the text into sections is a product of seventeenth-century scholarship on the Heian work, and the sections lie at the core of what is considered the major difference between the textual variants. Twentieth-century scholars classified the sections into three main categories: lists/catalogues (*ruijūtekina dan* 類聚的な段), essays (*zuisōtekina dan* 随想的な段) and diary-like passages (*nikkitekina dan* 日記的な段), and further drew a distinction between those that are in a seemingly random order and those that are arranged by categories. In addition, manuscripts diverge from one another in terms of orthography, content, and number of passages. This results in works with very divergent literary effects. Furthermore, the intensity of authorial presence varies across manuscripts: in some texts the narrator seems passionately concerned with the topics she discusses, whereas in others she is presented as less outspoken. For example, a close reading and comparison of some of the passages in the two randomly organized textual lines, the

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<sup>6</sup> Matsuo Satoshi and Nagai Kazuko, 369.

*Nōinbon* and the *Sankanbon*, give the impression that the *Nōinbon* consistently conveys a voice that is more intimate and closely connected with the social and historical specificities of the era in which the work was composed. The narrator's coquettish and self-conscious decorum reveals a strong awareness of the readers' gaze. The result is a narrative of immediacy and vitality. On the other hand, the *Sankanbon* textual line—the one currently considered the most authentic and as such used as a base text by the mainstream of modern scholars—contains passages that are more restrained and resemble impassive reportage.<sup>7</sup>

Despite the plurality of textual manifestations and voices of *The Pillow Book*, however, readers are usually offered only one representation of the text. For example, manuscripts which centuries later came to be categorized as belonging to the *Nōinbon* textual line were chosen as the preferred version of *Makura no sōshi* in the Edo period, and served as a base text for scholarly commentaries, adaptations and parodies.<sup>8</sup> The situation shifted in the modern period when authoritative scholars followed Ikeda Kikan, who hailed the *Sankanbon* textual line as the most authentic “*Makura no sōshi*,” while acknowledging the lack of an extant manuscript written in Sei's hand.<sup>9</sup>

In addition to shifts in the preferred manuscript lineage of the text, Sei's work has been frequently “rewritten” by scholars, critics, writers, and translators whose engagements with it vary in scope and intention. Each interaction with the text has yielded its own “*Pillow Book*”—intentionally or not—providing readers with yet another attempt at keeping Sei's

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<sup>7</sup> See Gergana Ivanova, “Textual Variations of Sei Shōnagon's *Makura no sōshi*: Perception of the Text and the Narratorial Voice,” MA thesis (University of Toronto, 2006).

<sup>8</sup> Sako Tetsurō, “*Makura no sōshi kenkyūshi*,” *Makura no sōshi kōza*, vol. 4 (Tokyo: Yūseidō, 1976), 304-7.

<sup>9</sup> Ikeda, *Kenkyū Makura no sōshi*, 301.

narrative alive. Despite the immense transformations of the text, many of the versions among the vast number of works that claim lineage to Sei's text have come to be recognized as the same *Makura no sōshi*.

In a similar way, Sei Shōnagon's image shifted as her work was brought to new audiences. Barbara Herrnstein Smith has suggested that the meaning and value of a work are constructed through the process by which readers (both individual and as hegemonic groups) ascribe value in accordance with a text's effectiveness in playing a certain role in specific historical and social settings. She asserts that the "'properties' of a work—its 'structure,' 'features,' 'qualities,' and of course its 'meaning'—are not fixed, given, or inherent in the work 'itself' but are at every point the variable products of particular subjects' interactions with it."<sup>10</sup>

"Properties" that have been crucial to the historical reception of *The Pillow Book* include not only its "meaning" but also the gender and presumed character or nature of its author, the genre of the work, the time of its composition, and the milieu it features. In other words, *The Pillow Book*'s female authorship, thematic diversity, subsequent attribution to the *zuihitsu* genre, and focus on Heian court society from a woman's perspective, have shaped the ways the text has been read over the centuries.

Why do readers recognize all the textual variants and narrative versions of *The Pillow Book*, despite the astonishing differences between them, as the same work? If there is no definitive text, where are the meaning and aesthetic value of Sei's work anchored?

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<sup>10</sup> Barbara Herrnstein Smith, "Contingencies of Value," *Contingencies of Value*, 30-53 (Cambridge, MA & London, England: Harvard University Press, 1988), 48.

How can one make judgments on the literary effect of the text and the quality of the voice of the narrator-cum-author—and thus construct an image of the implied author—when they vary significantly across manuscript lineages?

The contested exegetical approaches, adaptations, and parodies, as well as works that have drawn inspiration from Sei's *Pillow Book* over the centuries, validate Hans R. Jauss's claim that "a literary work is not an object that stands by itself and that offers the same view to each reader in each period."<sup>11</sup> Targeting the New Critical view of literary works as timeless and inviolable objects, Jauss promotes the importance of reception history in literary interpretation. Underscoring the roles of readers and the background against which a work is received, rather than a literary work itself and the genius of its author, Jauss argues that an audience does not receive a work of art simply on its own merits. On the contrary, it is received and judged against a background of other works as well as against the background of the everyday experience of life. This background, which he terms "the horizon of expectations," shapes interpretations through the expectations readers bring to a work.<sup>12</sup>

It is unclear how *The Pillow Book* was received in the context of its creation. The fact that it was completed after the demise of Sei's patron, who had been a political rival to the reigning empress, raises the question of why its dissemination was not curtailed. One explanation could be that the work was regarded as an active "pacification" of angry spirits (*chinkon* 鎮魂) to Sei's patron and her immediate family and "a literary prayer to the spirit

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<sup>11</sup> Hans Robert Jauss, *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*, translated by Timothy Bahti (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982), 21.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.



of the deceased empress.”<sup>13</sup> Commissioned by her patron, as evident from the epilogue that acknowledges the fact that Sei received paper from Teishi, Sei produced a narrative imbued with allusions to earlier literary works. Chinese literary sources include Bo Juyi’s poetry anthology *Bai-Shi Wen Ji* (J. *Hakushi monjū* 白氏文集, 824); Chinese poems by Japanese poets that were later included in Fujiwara no Kintō’s *Wakan rōeishū* 和漢朗詠集 (Collection of Japanese and Chinese Poems for Singing, 1018); a number of histories, compendia, and textbooks for young readers (known as *yōgakusho* 幼学書), including *Records of the Historian* (Ch: Shiji; J: Shiki 史記, 91 BC), *The History of the Former Han Dynasty* (Ch: Han shu; J: Kansho 漢書, ca. 80), and *Beginner’s Guide* (Ch: Meng Qui; J: Mōgyū 蒙求, 746); and sutras, such as *The Lotus Sutra* (Sk: Saddharma Puṇḍarīka Sūtra; J: *Hokekyō* 法華經), *The Amida Sutra* (Sk: Amitābha Sūtra; J: *Amidakyō* 阿弥陀經), and *The Contemplation Sutra* (Sk: Amitāyurdhyāna Sūtra; J: *Kanmuryō jukyō* 觀無量寿經). In addition to Chinese-language sources, *The Pillow Book* refers to many native literary works, including the *Kokinshū*, the *Man’yōshū* 万葉集 (Collection of Myriad Leaves, ca. 759), popular songs (*imayō*), and songs of celebration sung at court gatherings (*saibara* 催馬楽).<sup>14</sup> Allusions to romances (*monogatari*) and other works that have not survived may be also present in the text but are not evident to the modern reader. Women’s knowledge of literary Sinitic in Heian Japan was a prerequisite for certain positions at court and was highly

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<sup>13</sup> Haruo Shirane, ed., *Traditional Japanese Literature: An Anthology, Beginnings to 1600* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 248.

<sup>14</sup> Nakada Kōji, “Kotenseki kara no eikyō,” in *Makura no sōshi daijiten*, 599-640.

encouraged by parents who hoped to position their daughters well for careers at court.<sup>15</sup> In addition, Chinese poetry, and specifically that of Bo Juyi, dominated cultural life at court, as is clear from its inclusion in many literary works of the time and its strong presence in poetry contests.<sup>16</sup> Drawing from a wealth of literary works, Sei's text underscores the sophistication of Teishi's salon, whose members were likely its intended readership, and reveals the literary competence of its author.

Jauss's idea of a literary text as an event rather than a fixed object was developed a decade later by Wolfgang Iser, another leading member of the German Constance School. His "implied reader" is charged with the task of assembling the set of instructions or "repertoire" provided by the text, and of interpreting the resultant assemblage.<sup>17</sup> The implied reader thus "designates a network of response-inviting structures, which impel the reader to grasp the text." Interpretation is a result of this dynamic interaction of text and reader, and meaning is arrived at through a process of choosing one of the available alternatives and rejecting the rest. Iser states that "if there is not one specific meaning of a literary text, this

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<sup>15</sup> Joshua S. Mostow, "Mother Tongue and Father Script: Sei Shōnagon and Murasaki Shikibu," in *The Father-Daughter Plot: Japanese Literary Women and the Law of the Father*, edited by Rebecca L. Copeland and Esperanza Ramirez-Christensen, 115-142 (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001), 121-127.

<sup>16</sup> Jonathan Chaves, "Chinese Poems in *Wakan rōei shū*," in *Japanese and Chinese Poems to Sing: The Wakan rōei shū*, translated by Thomas Rimer and Jonathan Chaves, 15-28 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 220-25.

<sup>17</sup> Iser defines the implied reader as one who "embodies all those predispositions necessary for a literary work to exercise its effect—predispositions laid down, not by an empirical outside reality, but by the text itself."

‘apparent deficiency’ is, in fact, the productive matrix which enables the text to be meaningful in a variety of different contexts.” Locating meaning not in texts and individual readers and response but in “the protocols of communities,” Stanley Fish’s concept of “interpretative communities” foregrounds the educational and professional communities as sources of interpretative strategies. It is precisely these communities that provide training and membership to literary scholars, according to Fish, rather than texts, that govern and generate interpretation. In the case of Sei Shōnagon’s work whose dissemination has taken place over a millennium not only in Japan but also abroad, all of these three agents, that is readers, implied readers, and “interpretive communities,” have contributed to the shifting place of *The Pillow Book* within Japanese literature.

*Makura no sōshi* is one of the texts that form the corpus of what is known today as “Heian literature,” a category that comprises literary works by women writers related to the court of Emperor Ichijō. The quality and quantity of women’s writing that appeared this early in world history is astonishing, but even more anomalous is the crucial role these texts played in the creation of a national literature in early-twentieth-century Japan. As vernacular texts written in the native script, these works became the core of the Japanese literary canon and the basis for future genre categorizations. The female gender of these writers and the view of the period as the pinnacle of cultural achievement have led to “essentialized notions of gender and national culture,” within which categories such as “women” and “Japanese culture” have been frequently conflated and perceived to “have transhistorical and homogeneous referents.”<sup>18</sup> Thus the complex reception history of *The Pillow Book* serves as

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<sup>18</sup> Tomiko Yoda, *Gender and National Literature: Heian Texts in the Constructions of Japanese Modernity* (Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2004), 2.

a useful case study not only of how works from the past travel through time and space but also of how Japan, the status of women, and literary criticism have changed through time. In addition, the reception of *Makura no sōshi* has taken place not only within Japan but also internationally. Outside Japan, *The Pillow Book* has become representative of Japanese literature as a whole, and has inspired a wide spectrum of novels, poems, and screenplays. These adaptations and reinventions of Sei Shōnagon's text engage Japan in diverse ways—some may be seen as profoundly Orientalist whereas others recreate aspects of *The Pillow Book* as an homage to Japanese literature and art. Some examples include Alison Fell's *The Pillow Boy of the Lady Onogoro* (1994), Peter Greenaway's film *The Pillow Book* (1996), Ruth Ozeki's *My Year of Meats* (1998), Barrie Sherwood's *The Pillow Book of Lady Kasa* (2000), Jan Blensdorf's *My Name is Sei Shonagon* (2003), and Laura Joh Rowland's *The Pillow Book of Lady Wisteria* (2003). These adaptations of *The Pillow Book* and allusions to Sei's work show how it transcends time in its appeal but also how it continues to be reinvented into new forms. What necessitates *Makura no sōshi*'s continuous recycling? While acknowledging the role of the author in shaping a literary work through his or her skills, Herrnstein Smith argues that the value of a work at any historical juncture is measured according to its effectiveness in performing the “desired/able” function for certain individuals or groups, closely associated with “cultural power and commonly other forms of power as well.”<sup>19</sup> Thus the value of a literary artifact is “contingent” on specific historical, political, and social contexts. This approach offers an insightful perspective into the reasons why texts do not occupy a stable place in literary history but are constantly reevaluated.

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<sup>19</sup> Smith, “Contingencies of Value,” 51.

The means by which a literary work is admitted into a canon (or rather becomes canonized) differ across the literary landscape: from text to text, from genre to genre, and from context to context. Haruo Shirane and other scholars have shown the uniqueness of the way particular texts fare across time and space.<sup>20</sup> Drawing on examples from the Japanese literary field, these studies have countered the assumption that a canon is a timeless monolith and have stressed the coexistence of different canons, as well as the canon's shifting nature. In fact, as Joshua S. Mostow has noted, "[c]anonization [...] is an ongoing process,"<sup>21</sup> and therefore it should not be regarded as a final product or result. For example, following centuries of reception history characterized by *Makura no sōshi*'s marginalized position within Japanese literature, in 1922 it was placed on an equal footing with *Genji monogatari* and *Tsurezuregusa* 徒然草 (Essays in Idleness, 1330-1332), along with the earliest anthology of Japanese poetry, the *Man'yōshū*, and was designated as "world literature."<sup>22</sup> The presumed conformity of these works to relatively recently imported Western literary standards, and thus their "effective performance of desired functions," was crucial in their canonization and elevation as works that were to represent Japanese literature at home and abroad.

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<sup>20</sup> Shirane Haruo, and Tomi Suzuki, eds. *Inventing the Classics: Modernity, National Identity, and Japanese Literature* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press: 2000).

<sup>21</sup> Joshua Mostow, "Modern Constructions of *Tales of Ise*: Gender and Courtliness," in *Inventing the Classics: Modernity, National Identity, and Japanese Literature*, edited by Haruo Shirane, and Tomi Suzuki, 96-119 (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000), 96.

<sup>22</sup> Tomi Suzuki, "The Tale of *Genji*, National Literature, Language, and Modernism," in *Envisioning The Tale of Genji: Media, Gender and Cultural Production*, edited by Haruo Shirane, 243-87 (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 266.

In addition to the “properties” of the text itself, the reception and evaluation of *Makura no sōshi* has been influenced by its pairing with other works such as Yoshida Kenkō’s *Tsurezuregusa* and Murasaki Shikibu’s *Genji monogatari*. First pointed out by the poet Shōtetsu 正鉄 (1381-1459), *Tsurezuregusa*’s “imitation” of the style of *Makura no sōshi*<sup>23</sup> has been used in subsequent centuries to link the two works based on similarity of formal features. In the eighteenth century both were labeled *zuihitsu*.<sup>24</sup> However, despite the acknowledged status of Sei’s work as a predecessor to this genre, *The Pillow Book* has been represented within this dyad as the “inferior” work. Divorcing Sei’s text from the social, political, and cultural aspects of the context of its creation, male scholars in the centuries that followed repeatedly construed it as one lacking in seriousness and depth. Juxtaposed with the “mature” and “polished”<sup>25</sup> tone of its counterpart, authored by a male recluse, Sei’s work has often been evaluated as a second-rate literary work.<sup>26</sup> It is important to note that the initial stage of the pairing of these two texts occurred in the medieval period, when Buddhism was at its height. It is not surprising, then, that a female-authored text would be treated less sympathetically than a work composed by a male writer who was a

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<sup>23</sup> Robert H. Brower, trans., *Conversations with Shōtetsu (Shōtetsu monogatari)* (Ann Arbor: Centre for Japanese Studies, The University of Michigan, 1992), 96.

<sup>24</sup> Linda H. Chance, *Formless in Form: Kenkō, 'Tsurezuregusa,' and the Rhetoric of Japanese Fragmentary Prose* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1997), 280.

<sup>25</sup> See for example, Watanabe Minoru, ed., *Makura no sōshi*, SNKBT 25 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1991), 2.

<sup>26</sup> See also Linda H. Chance, “Zuihitsu and Gender: *Tsurezuregusa* and *The Pillow Book*,” in *Inventing the Classics: Modernity, National Identity, and Japanese Literature*, edited by Shirane Haruo and Tomi Suzuki, 120-147 (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press: 2000).

Buddhist priest. Yet, this reception and assessment of the two narratives continued into the modern period and cast its shadow over later scholarship.

Sei Shōnagon's pairing with Murasaki Shikibu is another discourse with a long history. Despite the fact that Sei's and Murasaki's works discuss similar topics—court life, relationships between men and women, and courtly aesthetics among many examples—and that both writers share significant similarities such as gender, family background, education, and status within the court they served, *Makura no sōshi* has received considerably less scholarly attention in comparison with *Genji monogatari*. An important aspect of the initial receptions of both works is the fact that while *The Pillow Book* was most likely completed after Teishi's salon had disappeared following her death, *The Tale of Genji* emerged as a literary work in a court related to the most politically powerful and influential family in the Heian period, whose fortunes did not wane for almost a century.<sup>27</sup> Another factor, perhaps even more crucial, pertains to the formal features of each work. The different styles that constitute Sei's narrative, which literary scholars classified as lists (or catalogues), essays and diary-like passages in the early twentieth century,<sup>28</sup> made the work resistant to generic categorization. As already mentioned, it was designated a *zuihitsu* in the late Edo period (1603-1868), following centuries of reception as a collection of anecdotes (*setsuwashū* 説話).

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<sup>27</sup> Murasaki Shikibu served as a lady-in-waiting in the court of Fujiwara Shōshi, whose father Fujiwara Michinaga (966-1028) was a regent from 996 to 1017. Shōshi was a principal consort to Emperor Ichijō. She oversaw the rule of her sons Go-Ichijō (r. 1016-1036) and Emperor Go-Suzaku (r. 1036-1045), and her grandsons Emperor Go-Reizei (r. 1045-1068) and Emperor Go-Sanjō (r. 1068-1072). In 1072, a year before her death, the throne was succeeded by her great-grandson Emperor Shirakawa (r.1072-1086).

<sup>28</sup> *Makura no sōshi daijiten*, 10-53.

集), court romance, a work related to poetry (*kasho* 歌書), and a diary (*nikki* 日記).<sup>29</sup> With the centrality of *waka* (and *renga*) within Japanese literature during the medieval period, the fact that *The Pillow Book* did not focus on poetry made the work “unable” to perform desired/desirable functions in the manner of works like *Ise monogatari* and *Genji monogatari*. Moreover, as Japanese scholars have noted, although *The Pillow Book* was referred to as one of the texts crucial to “understanding the meaning (*kokoro*) of Japanese poetry,” the work’s aesthetic perspective of celebrating everything attractive, amusing, and interesting (*wokashi* をかし), did not appeal to the medieval masters of poetry.<sup>30</sup>

Before the advent of commercial printing and publishing in the seventeenth century, which radically transformed the production and consumption of literary texts and created a national readership by the early nineteenth century, texts existed only as manuscripts and their dissemination and readership were circumscribed.<sup>31</sup> This limited accessibility of texts,

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 699-713.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 718. Neither Fujiwara no Teika 藤原定家 nor Fujiwara no Suetsune 藤原季経 (1131-1221) commented on *waka* in Sei’s *Pillow Book* in their own copies of the work. It seems that their primary interest lay in personal names and years. In Imagawa Ryōshun’s (1326-1420?) *Ryōshun isshiden* 了俊一子伝, attention is drawn to the importance of *waka* in *Ise monogatari*, *Makura no sōshi*, and *Genji monogatari*, as well as the poems included in the Three Collections 三代集 (the first three imperial anthologies of Japanese poetry: the *Kokinshū*, the *Gosenshū* [951], and the *Shūishū* [1005-1007]), and the private poetry collections of the Thirty-six Poetry Immortals. See *Makura no sōshi daijiten*, 717.

<sup>31</sup> Peter Kornicki notes that the purposes in producing Buddhist, Confucian, and native texts differed as did their modes of dissemination. He also acknowledges the limited production of printed texts prior to the seventeenth century. See Peter Kornicki, *The Book in Japan: A Cultural History from the beginnings to the Nineteenth Century* (Leiden, Boston, Köln: Brill, 1998), 258.



particularly those that were considered “compulsory” reading in order to conform to certain cultural, religious, and political ideals, ascribed them an elite status. Starting in the medieval period, concern about their “correct” transmission and interpretation gave rise to the compilation of commentaries and treatises that provided later readers with glimpses into the text.<sup>32</sup> It is through such writings about the source text that later readers gained knowledge about literature from the past. For example, traditions attributed to particular households or lineages dominated the compilation of commentaries on classical texts in the Kamakura period.<sup>33</sup> The literati aimed to gain or uphold their privileged status through the “controlled dissemination of learned commentary” in the form of lectures and readings for a select audience of readers by distinguished scholars, known as *kōshaku* 講釈. This process reveals how the preservation of “authenticity” and “purity” in literature from the past was seen as tied to cultural authority and elevated status. Less educated audiences from the peripheries, however, had access to fragments of these texts. These included key scenes, poems, and plot summaries in the form of digests, paintings, *nō* plays, and Muromachi fiction.<sup>34</sup> *Makura no sōshi* was not part of the medieval literary canon and its text existed in numerous variants until the Edo period when the Heian work was repackaged, adapted, imitated, and parodied for newly-emergent audiences.

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 261, also 440.

<sup>33</sup> Haruo Shirane, “*The Tale of Genji* and the Dynamics of Cultural Production: Canonization and Popularization,” in *Envisioning The Tale of Genji: Media, Gender and Cultural Production*, edited by Haruo Shirane, 1-46 (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 24.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

Such repackaging attempts to bridge the cultural, linguistic, and temporal gaps between the context of creation of a literary work and its subsequent readers. For instance, compared to the oldest extant version of *The Pillow Book*, its adaptations and translations into modern Japanese exhibit tremendous differences. Yet, each text contains “*Makura no sōshi*” in its title, from the adaptations meant for a general audience, including Hashimoto Osamu’s *Momajiri goyaku Makura no sōshi* 桃尻語訳枕草子 (An ‘Inept’ Modern Translation of *The Pillow Book*, 1998), to the numerous *manga* renditions. A recent example can be seen in a children’s book based on the first paragraph of Sei’s narrative (known to contemporary readers as “*Haru wa akebono*” 春は曙 or “In Spring, the dawn”), and accompanied by illustrations aimed at those of preschool age.<sup>35</sup> Why are all these texts referred to as *Makura no sōshi*, despite the vast differences between them?

Herrnstein Smith contends that every retelling of a story results in a new work. Taking the story of *Cinderella* as her main example, she notes that if the commonality between all versions of the story is “an abstraction” which is manifested through a plot summary that individuals construct, there would be a limitless number of plot summaries because of the lack of “uniformity of the intuitively apprehended deep-plot structure of all versions of *Cinderella*.”<sup>36</sup> This, she notes, is due to the fact that the ability to give a plot summary is not “innate” but acquired in different ways and thus performed differently. In addition, she states that people may produce different summaries of the same narrative under

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<sup>35</sup> Tanji Akiko, *Haru wa akebono: koe ni dasu kotoba ehon* (Tokyo: Horupu shuppan, 2005).

<sup>36</sup> Barbara Herrnstein Smith. “Afterthoughts on Narrative III: Narrative Versions, Narrative Theories.” *Critical Inquiry* 10, no. 1 (Autumn, 1980): 217.

different conditions, when “the motives and purposes of their summarizing are different.”<sup>37</sup>

For example, different summaries of the same narrative will be constructed for different audiences, and for different goals. She notes:

the basic stories or deep-plot structures of narratives are often not abstract, disembodied, or subsumed entities but quite manifest, material, and particular retellings—and thus versions—of those narratives, constructed, as all versions are, by someone in particular, on some occasion, for some purpose, and in accord with some relevant set of principles.<sup>38</sup>

In other words, for any particular narrative there is no one basic story but rather an unlimited number of narratives, which Smith divides into “versions” (translations, transcriptions, adaptations, abridgements) and “retellings” (of plot summaries, basic stories, interpretations) that do not exist in a hierarchical order. She further explains:

Whenever we start to cut back, peel off, strip away, lay bare, and so forth, we always do so in accord with certain assumptions and purposes which, in turn, create hierarchies of relevance and centrality; and it is in terms of these hierarchies that we will distinguish certain elements and relations as being central or peripheral, more important or less important, and more basic or less basic.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 217.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 218.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 221.

Smith acknowledges the different functions and interests that versions and retellings serve, and claims that their formal properties manifest the motives and functions surrounding the production of each version. In addition, she stresses the multiplicity of functions that any narrative can play and repudiates the tendency to link a narrative to a “single fundamental political purpose or psychological (or transcendental) effect.”<sup>40</sup> The form and the features of a narrative are regarded as functions of “multiple interacting conditions rather than as representations of specific, discrete objects, events, or ideas.”<sup>41</sup> Such conditions she specifies are “circumstantial variables,” such as context and material setting, and “psychological variables,” including the narrator’s motives, desires, memories, knowledge, and expectations.

Not every act of adapting reaches back to the “original” text, but instead uses as its source the version that is the most authoritative and available at the moment or that the producers find most convenient for their purposes. For instance, one of the earliest complete commentaries on *The Pillow Book*, Kitamura Kigin’s 北村季吟 (1625-1705) *Makura no sōshi shunshoshō* (枕草子春曙抄, 1674), was collated using several textual variants. *Shunshoshō*’s broad dissemination continued until the Taishō period (1912-1926). Kaneko Motoomi’s 金子元臣 *Kōchū Makura no sōshi* (校注枕草子, 1915) was based on Kigin’s text, acquired status as the most authoritative version, and functioned as a source for further rewritings by later scholars. In a similar way, texts for women in the Edo period disregarded scholarly editions of the work but adapted episodes about Sei Shōnagon from medieval

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 235.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 226.

collections of anecdotes. Thus difference is continuously produced. How do we then account for the differences among these various versions?

Adaptations, versions, retellings, rewritings—all signal a need to tell a story over and over again. But is it the same story, and does it speak to changing audiences in the same way? Following Herrnstein Smith's argument that the canonization of a text is closely related to its ability to successfully perform a certain function for a (usually) hegemonic group, it is important to ask why a text was popular at a certain time, what function(s) it was perceived to play by whom and for whom, how the identity of the text was "preserved" for the subsequent generations of readers through its continuous transformations, how it was consumed, and what information can be gathered about its intended audience.

The past, or tradition, is continuously re-imagined, reassessed, and reinvented, and thus renewed into the present. Although incomplete and performative, the products of these engagements with the past alter the horizons of expectations, create misreadings and new readings, violate norms, unite disparate ideas, and encourage creativity. Homi Bhabha states:

The borderline work of culture demands an encounter with 'newness' that is not part of the continuum of past and present. It creates a sense of the new as an insurgent act of cultural translation. Such art does not merely recall the past as social cause or aesthetic precedent; it renews the past, refiguring it as a contingent 'in-between' space, that innovates and interrupts the

performance of the present. The ‘past-present’ becomes part of the necessity, not the nostalgia, of living.<sup>42</sup>

Here Bhabha proposes a third, “in-between space” that creates new identity and location, and avoids the “fixity” and “fetishism” of (the dichotomy between) the past and the present. In this third space “meaning and symbols of culture have no primordial unity or fixity.”<sup>43</sup> It represents cultural hybridity enacted in mimicry. The representation of the “original and authoritative” is always belated, thus articulated as “repetition and difference.”<sup>44</sup>

Over the last decade, Japanese scholars such as Tsushima Tomoaki, Nakajima Wakako, and Numajiri Toshimichi have turned their attention to aspects of the reception history of *The Pillow Book*, specifically the constructed nature of *zuihitsu*, the early-modern scholarly attempts to make the text “readable,” and the shifts in the representation of Sei within medieval and early modern collections of anecdotes.<sup>45</sup> This dissertation is the first attempt, however, to offer an examination of the fluidity of *Makura no sōshi* in the Edo period in terms of literary criticism, women’s education, and male readerships, and to show

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<sup>42</sup> Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York & London: Routledge, 1994), 7.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 37.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 107.

<sup>45</sup> See for example Nakajima Wakako, “Makura no sōshi ‘Kōrohō no yuki’ no dan no juyō o megutte: Chūsei, kinsei no setsuwashū o chūshin ni,” *Kokubunronsō* 18 (March, 1991): 1-15; Numajiri Toshimichi, *Heian bungaku no hassō to seisei*, Kokugaku Daigaku Daigakuin Kenkyū Sōsho, Bungaku Kenkyūka 17 (Tokyo: Kokugakuin Daigaku Daigakuin, 2007); Tsushima Tomoaki, *Dōtai to shite no Makura no sōshi* (Tokyo: Ōfū, 2005).

how, even within the same historical setting, the text did not perform the same functions for audiences that differed in gender.

Chapter One examines scholarly debates regarding the textual identity and the genre of *Makura no sōshi* as recorded in the three complete commentaries on the text published in the Edo period, and works by *kokugaku* (nativist studies) scholars. I consider how the constructed nature of *Makura no sōshi*, with regard to its text, textual organization, and genre classification, influenced the subsequent evaluation and canonization of the work. Chapter Two takes up rewritings of *Makura no sōshi* intended for male readers and considers the transformation of the Heian text into a highly eroticized work. Through an examination of *kanazōshi* and *sharebon* works, I attempt to re-evaluate these erotic parodies as vehicles for asserting gender ideology, identity, and status. Chapter Three focuses on the popularization of Sei Shōnagon's work among female readers. I analyze illustrated adaptations of *Makura no sōshi* in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and show how the work was used as a manual for social mobility gained through marriage. An examination of constructions of Sei Shōnagon in instruction manuals for women follows in Chapter Four. Focusing on the image of the author in visual and written works, I show how Sei was used as an efficient tool for gender training both in Edo (1603-1868) and Meiji (1868-1912) Japan. The Conclusion summarizes aspects of *Makura no sōshi* that defy categorization and make it a dynamic text.

## Chapter One

### (Re-)Constructing the Text: Early-Modern Scholarship on

#### *Makura no sōshi*

##### 1.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the transformations of *Makura no sōshi* from manuscript to printed text following changes in literary production and consumption during the seventeenth century. The rapid development of printing technology and book markets made texts from the past easily accessible as physical objects. Annotated printed editions allowed a newly emerging readership of classical literature to better understand the content of works composed centuries earlier. To be able to grasp the contents of such texts, it was necessary for a reader not only to be equipped with knowledge of the archaic language in which they were composed, but also to be familiar with the socio-historical context. From the twelfth century onward, knowledge about literature from the past was transmitted as “a corpus of (more or less esoteric) teachings and a set of associated rules for their use,”<sup>46</sup> in Lewis Cook’s words. This “Secret Teaching” (of how to read the canon) provided knowledge that was central to the “licensing of professional court” poets,<sup>47</sup> and as such was carefully guarded by conservative aristocrats. This approach to the transmission of literary knowledge was not endorsed by all. For example, Matsunaga Teitoku 松永貞徳 (1571-1653), the

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<sup>46</sup> Lewis Edwin Cook, “The Discipline of Poetry: Authority and Invention in the *Kokin-denju*” (PhD diss., Cornell University, 2000), 18.

<sup>47</sup> The citation comes from Cook. See “The Discipline of Poetry,” 22.



founder of the Teimon 貞門 school of *haikai*, and his disciples, denounced this professionalization of poetics and voiced his opposition, together with his disciples, by offering public lectures on the classics. Promoting the art of *haikai* as a form of poetry that was “accessible to a wide but not necessarily highly educated audience,”<sup>48</sup> they criticized the state of *waka*, which was a territory claimed by the aristocratic elite. Teitoku made literary works from the past available to a new readership, the majority of which was comprised of wealthy townsmen. The notes of such public lectures were frequently published as commentaries, which, as Ii Haruki has noted, signals the public acknowledgement of the work in question as a classic, and shows the formation of a class of readers who necessitated such commentaries.<sup>49</sup> As knowledge of Sei Shōnagon’s text began to be produced, the work was made accessible to a readership beyond aristocrats, upper-class warriors and Buddhist priests. What did *Makura no sōshi* mean to early-modern readers and scholars? What led the work to be categorized as a *zuihitsu* and what were the consequences of such categorization? These are some of the questions this chapter explores by focusing on early-modern studies of *The Pillow Book*.

*Makura no sōshi* can be viewed as a hybrid cultural construction on various levels. Its textual multiplicity comprises various manuscript lineages, each bearing the traces of complex processes of splicing, collating, editing, and purposely altering pre-existing manuscripts. It is frequently defined as the Japanese literary work with the largest number of

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<sup>48</sup> Haruo Shirane, *Early Modern Japanese Literature: An Anthology 1600-1900* (New York: Columbia Press, 2002), 172.

<sup>49</sup> Ii Haruki, “Kochūshaku kenkyū no igi,” *Heian bungaku no kochūshaku to juyō: dai issū*, vol. 1 (Tokyo: Musashino Shoin, 2008), 3.

textual variants. Since the 1920s, *The Pillow Book* has been viewed as existing in four textual lineages, namely *Den Nōin shojihon* 伝能因所持本 (“The book in possession of Nōin”), also known as the *Nōinbon*; *Sankanbon keitō shohon* 三卷本系統諸本 (“The books from the three-volume lineage”), also known as *Antei ninen okugakibon* 安貞二年奥書本 (“The book with an afterword from the second year of Antei [1228]”), frequently referred to as the *Sankanbon*; the *Maedakebon* 前田家本 (“The book of the Maeda family”); and the *Sakaibon* 堺本 (“The book from Sakai”). Another aspect of hybridity pertains to the textual organization. Based on their formal features, the four textual lines of *Makura no sōshi* have further been divided into texts written in a seemingly random order (*zassanteki* 雜纂的), including the *Nōinbon* and the *Sankanbon*, and texts viewed as classified (*bunruiteki* 分類的), including the *Maedakebon* and the *Sakaibon*. Such textual organization refers to the division of the sections into three types, such as diary-like sections, essay-like sections, and lists. Moreover, with regard to its form, *Makura no sōshi* combines a wide range of literary genres, including diary, essay, list, anecdote, and poem. In terms of language and style, this Japanese text contains a vast number of Chinese expressions, and is imbued with intertextual elements from both Japanese and Chinese sources. Since the late nineteenth century, scholars of *Makura no sōshi* have engaged in various debates. The large number of versions of Sei Shōnagon’s work that differ in structural organization, orthography, and content challenge the assumption that there exists an authentic text, which is definitive and remains stable through time. This hybridity of Sei Shōnagon’s work has led to the text being

characterized as “dynamic” (*dōtai* 動態), despite the fact that it was produced over a millennium ago.<sup>50</sup>

Ongoing scholarly debates regarding the formal features of *Makura no sōshi* have led to periodically shifting views on the superiority of one specific textual line over the others. Since the 1920s the *Sankanbon* textual line has been seen as the most authoritative lineage of *The Pillow Book*, but its preeminence has been disputed over the last twenty years. Through head-notes, marginal notes, and notes within the body of the text, scholars of *The Pillow Book* have taken up questions pertaining to its genre, textual multiplicity, meaning, and value. This heterogeneity of the work has defied categorization and definition. On the one hand, it has resulted in a work amenable to transformations and multiple readings, and allowed scholars and writers not only a site of contestation for literary and ideological authority, but also a fruitful source for inspiring creative engagements with the past. On the other hand, however, a preoccupation with the formal features of the work, and the difficulty of pinning it down to one stable notion of what *Makura no sōshi* is, have impeded attention to its rich content, resulting in marginalization of the work within the literary canon. As Mitamura Masako has observed, the scholarly focus on *Makura no sōshi*’s textual multiplicity and categorization of the work as a *zuihitsu* have led to literary devaluation of the Heian text. Thus, scholarly works on the *Genji* significantly outnumber those on *Makura no sōshi*.<sup>51</sup> Despite the relegation of Sei Shōnagon’s work to an inferior position within

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<sup>50</sup> Examples include Nagai’s and Tsushima’s studies. See Nagai, “Dōtai to shite no *Makura no sōshi*: honmon to sakusha to” and Tsushima, *Dōtai to shite no Makura no sōshi*.

<sup>51</sup> Mitamura Masako, “*Makura no sōshi* no kenkyū no ashifumi,” *Nihon Bungaku* 31, no. 2 (February, 1982). She noted that there were 132 scholarly works on the *Genji* and only 19 on *The Pillow Book*.

literary history, scholars have continuously asked fruitful questions of the work, such as What does an original text imply? When does a written work become literature? and Why, despite the lack of an authentic text, do literary works continue to play important roles even after a millennium has passed since their production? As these questions show, *Makura no sōshi* continues to create ambiguity and disrupt dichotomies in the scholarly world, by challenging the binaries of authenticity-imitation, homogeneity-heterogeneity, and stability-fluidity.

Among the first attempts to create knowledge about *The Pillow Book* is the exegesis on the work attached to the *Sankanbon* line. Entitled *Sankanbon kanmotsu* 三卷本勘物 (1228) it is signed by Bōkyū Guō 毫及愚翁, whom modern scholars have identified as the influential poet, scholar and editor Fujiwara no Teika 藤原定家 (1162-1241).<sup>52</sup> It is a brief commentary that includes notes mainly on historical figures and events. However, unlike works such as *Genji monogatari* and *Ise monogatari* 伊勢物語 (10<sup>th</sup> c.), which attracted scholarly attention as early as late twelfth century in the case of the former, and mid-thirteenth century in the case of the latter,<sup>53</sup> it was not until the second half of the seventeenth century that complete commentaries of *Makura no sōshi* were published.

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<sup>52</sup> It is arguable whether other commentaries on *Makura no sōshi* were produced before 1674. Several titles are mentioned in secondary sources but none of them has survived. See Hamaguchi Toshihiro, “*Makura no sōshi chūshakusho kaidai*,” in *Makura no sōshi daijiten*, edited by Makura no Sōshi Kenkyūkai (Tokyo: Bensei Shuppan, 2001), 790-1.

<sup>53</sup> Jamie Lynn Newhard, “Genre, Secrecy and the Book: A History of Late Medieval and Early Modern Literary Scholarship on *Ise monogatari*.” PhD diss. (Columbia University, 2005), 36-7.

The oldest extant commentary on *Makura no sōshi* was printed in 1674. Despite the fact that the *Gunsho ichiran* 群書一覽, a late-Edo bibliographic catalogue, lists the author as unknown, modern scholars have reached consensus that this commentary on *The Pillow Book* was written by Katō Bansai 加藤磐斎 (1621-1674). It is entitled *Sei Shōnagon Makura no sōshishō* 清少納言枕双紙抄 (Commentary of Sei Shōnagon's Pillow Book) and was later transmitted also as *Makura no sōshishō* 枕草子抄 (Commentary on The Pillow Book), *Bansaishō* 磐斎抄 (Bansai's Commentary), and *Makura no sōshi bansaishō* 枕草子万歳抄 (Bansai's Commentary of The Pillow Book). This commentary was preceded by Bansai's studies on other literary texts from the past such as *Tsurezuregusa*, *Ise monogatari*, *Hōjōki* 方丈記 (1212), and *Hyakunin isshu* 百人一首 (13th c.), and was completed in the year of his death. Despite the lack of commentaries on *The Pillow Book*, Sei Shōnagon's work was not a priority for early-Edo scholars, a fact suggestive of its marginal position within the corpus of classical texts.

Two months after the publication of Bansai's commentary, Kitamura Kigin 北村季吟 (1624-1705) completed his own *Shunshoshō* 春曙抄 (The Spring Dawn Commentary). The title originates from the opening of Sei's work, i.e., *haru wa akebono* 春は曙 (In spring, the dawn). This commentary became the most widely read annotated edition of *Makura no sōshi* from the late Edo period through the pre-war Shōwa period (1926-1930), and all subsequent annotated editions of the text until 1931 were based on Kigin's work.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> The last commentary that used *Shunshoshō* as a base-text was *Makura no sōshi shūchū* by Sekine Masato. See *Makura no sōshi*, 805.

The third commentary was written in 1681 by Okanishi Ichū 岡西惟中 (1639-1711), the principal theoretician and spokesman of Nishiyama Sōin's school of *haikai*, the main rival to Teitoku's school. Ichū's commentary was entitled *Makura no sōshi bōchū* 枕草紙傍註 (Marginal Notes to The Pillow Book), but is also known as *Sei Shōnagon bōchū* 清少納言傍注 (Sei Shōnagon's Marginal Notes) and *Makura no sōshi shūsuishō* 枕草紙拾穂抄 (Notes on Gathered Grains of The Pillow Book). The commentaries by Bansai, Kigin, and Ichū are commonly referred to as “the three commentaries of the Edo period” (*Edo jidai no sanchū*)<sup>55</sup> as they are the only complete commentaries on *The Pillow Book* that were written and published during the early modern period. Although it is unclear why exactly these three commentaries appeared in the second half of the seventeenth century, they signal a shift in the place which *Makura no sōshi* occupied among the other literary works.

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<sup>55</sup> Shioda Ryōhei, ed., *Shosetsu ichiran Makura no sōshi* (Tokyo: Meiji Shoin, 1970), 188.

In subsequent centuries several other thematic or fragmentary commentaries appeared.<sup>56</sup> For example, Tsuboi Yoshichika's 壺井義知 *Sei Shōnagon Makura no sōshi shōzoku satsuyōshō* 清少納言枕草紙装束撮要抄 (1729) offers a study of attire and furniture that appear in the Heian text, and Tonomura Tsunehisa's 殿村常久 *Chigusa no nezashi* 千草の根ざし (1830) examines the plants to which Sei Shōnagon refers. A large number of fragmentary commentaries (*kaki-ire* 書入) appeared in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. They were all based on Kigin's *Shunshoshō* and were produced mainly by *kokugaku* scholars.

This chapter first examines the textual multiplicity of *Makura no sōshi* before the seventeenth century. It shows that as early as the late eleventh-century variants of the text

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<sup>56</sup> Other Edo-period commentaries include Tsuboi Yoshichika 壺井義知, *Sei Shōnagon Makura no sōshi shōzoku satsuyōshō* 清少納言枕草紙装束撮要抄 (1729); Tada Yoshitoshi 多田義俊, *Makura no sōshishō* 枕草紙抄 (18th c.); Motoori Norinaga 本居宣長, *Shunshoshō kakiire* 春曙抄書入 (18th c.); Fujii Takanao 藤井高尚, *Sei Shōnagon Makura no sōshi shinshaku* 清少納言枕冊子新釈 (1825); Iwasaki Yoshitaka 岩崎美隆, *Makura no sōshi kōenshō* 枕草紙紅園抄 (1829); Tonomura Tsunehisa 殿村常久, *Chigusa no nezashi* 千草の根ざし (1830); Iwasaki Yoshitaka 岩崎美隆, *Makura no sōshi shiki* 枕草子私記 (1841); Maeda Natsukage 前田夏蔭, *Maeda Natsukage kakiire Shunshoshō* 前田夏蔭書入春曙抄 (19th c.); Okamoto Yasutaka 岡本保孝, *Makura no sōshi songi* 枕草紙存疑 (19th c.); Nagasawa Tomoo 長沢伴雄, *Hyōchū Makura no sōshi* 標注枕草紙 (1844); Urushido Shigekata 漆戸茂喬, *Makura no sōshi tsuke no kimakura* 枕草紙つけの木枕 (1847); Shimagawa Kamamitsu 島川鎌満, *Makura no sōshi tsugenoko makura oitsugikō* 枕草紙豆気廼木枕追継考 (1855); Saitō Hikomaro 斎藤彦磨, *Makura no sōshi* 枕草紙 (1857). For a brief description of each commentary, see Hamaguchi, *Makura no sōshi daijiten*, 791-7.

were already in circulation, and that by the fifteenth century scholars were aware of the presence of various textual lines of the work. Next, I explore the scholarly attempts to produce an authoritative text and determine the textual organization of *Makura no sōshi* in the seventeenth century. The last section of this chapter takes up the category of *zuihitsu* into which Sei Shōnagon was eventually firmly placed. By tracing the shifts in the meaning of *zuihitsu* in the Edo period and the twentieth century, I demonstrate how this genre categorization of *Makura no sōshi* has affected the understanding of the work and its canonization.

## 1.2 *The Pillow Book* before the Edo Period

Modern scholars have reached a consensus that there is no extant text written in Sei Shōnagon's hand. According to the famous colophon to the *Sankanbon*, *Makura no sōshi* began to circulate long before Sei Shōnagon completed the text. It states:

左中将まだ伊勢の守と聞えし時、里におはしたりしに、端の方なりし  
畳をさし出でしものは、この草子載りて出でにけり。まどひ取り入れ  
しかど、やがて持ておはして、いと久しくありてぞ返りたりし。それ  
よりありきそめたるなめり、とぞ本に。<sup>57</sup>

While the Minister of the Left, still called “Governor of Ise,” was visiting my home, when I offered a mat, my notebook fell out on top of it. Panicking, I attempted to put it back, but he snatched it up and carried it off, just like that,

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<sup>57</sup> See Tsushima Tomoaki and Nakajima Wakako, *Shinpen Makura no sōshi* (Tokyo: Ōfūsha, 2010), 304.



and it was after a very long time that it was returned. It seems, the book says, that it started to circulate from that time.<sup>58</sup>

The *Sankanbon kanmotsu* identifies the Minister of the Left as Minamoto no Tsunefusa 源経房 (969-1023) and dates his service as a provincial governor in Ise to 995-996. Tsunefusa was an adopted son of Fujiwara no Michinaga and as such was considered Michitaka's foe. Within *The Pillow Book*, he appears several times and is depicted as someone very close to Sei Shōnagon. However, accounts of the events that took place over the next four or five years recorded in *The Pillow Book* suggest that the work continued to be written while versions or portions of its text were already in circulation.<sup>59</sup> As early as the Heian period, at least two versions of *Makura no sōshi* that belonged to people closely related to Sei Shōnagon and Empress Teishi were disseminated widely. These texts played an important role in the construction of two of the textual lineages of *Makura no sōshi*, namely the *Nōinbon* and the *Sankanbon*. The postscript to the *Nōinbon* text suggests the existence of a version of *The Pillow Book* which belonged to the Princess of the First Order<sup>60</sup> (Ippon no Miya 一品宮). Ikeda Kikan has identified Ippon no Miya as Fujiwara no Shūshi 徹子 (997?-1049), also known as Princess Shūshi. Shūshi was the first child born to Emperor Ichijō and

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<sup>58</sup> The translation is mine.

<sup>59</sup> Saitō Kiyoe et al., eds. *Makura no sōshi Tsurezuregusa*, Kokugo Kokubungaku Kenkyūshi Taisei 6 (Tokyo: Sanseidō, 1960), 37-8.

<sup>60</sup> See Ivan Morris, *The Pillow Book of Sei Shōnagon*, vol. 1 (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), 208. I use Ivan Morris' translation throughout this dissertation because it is based on texts from the *Nōinbon* textual line, which was the most widely read text during the Edo period. I also refer to Meredith McKinney's recent translation, which is based on the *Sankanbon* manuscript.

Empress Teishi. The proximity of Shūshi to Teishi's salon makes it possible that the book of the Empress of the First Order (*Ippon no miya no hon*) may have significantly resembled the original text (if it was not the original itself).

枕草子は、人ごとに持たれども、まことによき本は世にありがたき物なり。これもさまではなけれども、能因が本と聞けば、むげにはあらじと思ひて、書き写してさぶらふぞ。草子ながらも手がらもわろけれど、これはいたく人などに貸さでおかれさぶらふべし。なべておほかる中に、なのめなれど、なほこの本もいと心よくもおぼえさぶらはず。さきの一条院の一品の宮の本として見しこそ、めでたかりしか、と本に見えたり。<sup>61</sup>

Everyone has a copy of *The Pillow Book*, but a truly good copy is difficult to find in this realm. This, [manuscript] too, is not that good, but since I heard that it had belonged to Nōin, I copied it, thinking that it would be no worse than others. The state of the paper and the handwriting are disappointing, but I intend not to lend it to many others. Among the many copies of *The Pillow Book*, this one is not too bad, but I do not find it extraordinary. I have seen the book of the Princess of the First Order of the Retired Emperor Ichijō of the past, which is superb. So says the book.

This *Nōinbon* postscript juxtaposes two manuscripts, namely Nōin's book (*Nōin ga hon*) and the book of the Princess of the First Order, the former being construed as ordinary and

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<sup>61</sup> Matsuo and Nagai, 369.

without merits and the latter as superb (*medetaki*). Modern scholars conjecture that the two texts described in the postscript belonged to the *Nōinbon* and the *Sankanbon* lines.<sup>62</sup>

Despite the copyist's assessment of Nōin's book as not outstanding, it does not preclude the possibility of the text's close association with Sei Shōnagon. In fact, Sei Shōnagon's son Tachibana no Norinaga 橘則長 was married to the sister of the famous poet Nōin (Tachibana no Nagayasu 橘永愷, 988-after 1048).<sup>63</sup> The *Sankanbon kanmotsu* includes biographical information about Tachibana no Norisue 橘則季 (dates unknown) in the portion of the text next to Minamoto no Tsunefusa. Norisue is Sei Shōnagon's grandson born to Norinaga and Nōin's sister. Unlike Tsunefusa, Norisue does not appear in *The Pillow Book*. It is unclear why Tsunefusa and Norisue have been included in the *Sankanbon kanmotsu*, but modern scholars have agreed that they were likely perceived as the people responsible for the circulation of the two main versions of *The Pillow Book*, the *Nōinbon* and the *Sankanbon*.<sup>64</sup> In other words, they conjectured that Nōin might have obtained *The Pillow Book* through Sei Shōnagon's grandson. What the two postscripts suggest is that even in the eleventh century, various versions of *The Pillow Book* were already in circulation, and although the two works mentioned in the *Nōinbon* postscript—the book of Ippon no Miya

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<sup>62</sup> Watanabe Minoru has conjectured that the book of the princess of the First Order may have been the source text for the *Sankanbon*, and thus has tried to justify the proximity of the *Sankanbon* to the original text produced by Sei Shōnagon.

<sup>63</sup> Scholars have referred to her as Tachibana no Motoyasu 橘元愷. See *Makura no sōshi daijiten*, 78 and 85. Norinaga is a son to Sei and Tachibana no Norimitsu 橘則光 (965-?).

<sup>64</sup> Kakitani Yūzō, "Sankanbon," in *Makura no sōshi daijiten*, 66.

and Nōin's book—were related to people close to Sei Shōnagon and Teishi, they were deemed as differing in quality and evaluated accordingly.

The *Sankanbon* was copied several times, as its postscripts suggest, and circulated widely in medieval Japan.<sup>65</sup> The earliest postscript, thought to have been brushed by Fujiwara no Teika, is dated 1228 (Antei 2), which suggests that *Sankanbon* was collated during the reign of Emperor Go-Horikawa (1212-1234, r. 1221-1232). The postscript reads:

本云

往事所持之荒本、紛失年久。更借出一兩之本、令書留之。依無証本、不散不審。但管見之所及、勘合旧記等、注付時代年月等。是亦謬案歟

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The book says:

Time has passed since I lost my own copy which was carelessly made. Then I borrowed two manuscripts and made a copy. Since there is no authoritative text, it contains numerous ambiguities. Yet, I looked at other sources and added notes regarding the dates as much as possible. I, too, might be wrong.

A century later, the *Sankanbon* became the base text for the illustrated scroll *Makura no sōshi emaki* 枕草子繪卷 (Illustrated Scroll of the Pillow Book, 14<sup>th</sup> c.). The mention in the

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<sup>65</sup> According to the dated postscripts, the text was copied in 1228 (Antei 2), between 1228 and 1447, 1447 (Bunan 4), 1473 (Bunmei 7), and 1583 (Tenshō 11). See Hashimoto Fumio, *Genten o mezashite: Koten bungaku no tame no shoshi* (Tokyo: Kasama Shoin, 1977), 184-94.

<sup>66</sup> See Tsushima and Nakajima, 306-7.

fifteenth-century *Shōtetsu monogatari* 正徹物語 (Conversations with Shōtetsu) of a version of *Makura no sōshi* consisting of three books also suggests that the author is referring to the *Sankanbon*.<sup>67</sup> Scholars did not focus on the *Nōinbon* until the late sixteenth century, a period when the publication of manuscripts from this textual lineage burgeoned.<sup>68</sup> *The Book of 1649* (*Keian ni-nenbon* 慶安二年本) was published several times through printing blocks and became the most widely circulated text, on which the three commentaries in the Edo period were based.

In addition to the *Sankanbon* and *Nōinbon*, there are two other textual lineages, the *Maedakebon* and the *Sakaibon*. The *Maedakebon* is a text composed of four volumes without a postscript. The only extant copy entered the collection of the Maeda family in 1609, but its paper and handwriting suggest that this copy was made in the mid-Kamakura period. Scholars such as Kusunoki Michitaka have argued for the strong influence of the *Nōinbon* and the *Sakaibon* on the *Maedakebon*.<sup>69</sup> The *Sakaibon*, on the other hand, does not include diary-like passages. This textual lineage contains passages that cannot be found in

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<sup>67</sup> For an English translation of the work see Robert H. Brower and Steven D. Carter, *Conversations with Shōtetsu: Shōtetsu monogatari*, Michigan Monograph Series in Japanese Studies, vol. 7 (Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, The University of Michigan, 1992). The mention of a three-volume manuscript of *Makura no sōshi* is included on p. 63.

<sup>68</sup> Such texts include versions entitled *Jūgyōhon* 十行本 (Ten-line Book), *Jūnigyōhon* 十二行本 (Twelve-line Book), *Jūsangyōhon* 十三行本 (Thirteen-line Book) in the old-movable type printing (*kokatsujiban* 古活字版) published between 1596 and 1649, and *Keian ninenbon* 慶安二年本 (*The Book of 1649*), which was published several times through printing plates and became the most widely circulated text. See Kakitani, *Makura no sōshi daijiten*, 63.

<sup>69</sup> Kusunoki Michitaka, *Makura no sōshi ihon kenkyū* (Tokyo: Kasama Shoin, 1970).

the other three manuscript lines, particularly those with sexually explicit content. Hayami Hiroshi has proposed that the *Maedakebon* is based on the *Nōinbon* and the *Sakaibon*, and that *Sakaibon* existed before the production of the *Sankanbon*.<sup>70</sup> It is generally believed that the *Maedakebon* was produced during the late Heian period or early Kamakura period.<sup>71</sup>

Although the *Sankanbon* appears to have circulated widely during the centuries before the Edo period, medieval scholars did not always regard it as the authoritative text. For example, Numajiri Toshimichi's analysis of the use of *The Pillow Book* in commentaries on *Genji monogatari* has revealed that the *Sakaibon* functioned as a text that facilitated the reading of Murasaki Shikibu's work. Specifically, the Kamakura-period commentary entitled *Ihon Shimeishō* 異本紫明抄 (Variant Notes on Explicating Murasaki, 1252)<sup>72</sup> contains citations from four manuscripts of *Makura no sōshi*.<sup>73</sup> Among them, the manuscript which belonged to the *Genji* scholar Saie 西円 (dates unknown) is deemed as being close to the *Sakaibon* though not identical. This fact suggests that many more manuscripts of Sei Shōnagon's text were in circulation before the development of commercial printing in the seventeenth century, but the majority of them were later lost. Extant manuscripts of *Makura no sōshi* provide us with a limited ability to reconstruct the versions of the text that

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<sup>70</sup> *Makura no sōshi daijiten*, 100-1.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 93.

<sup>72</sup> I borrow the translation of the title from Cook. See Lewis Cook, "Genre Trouble: Medieval Commentaries and Canonization of *The Tale of Genji*," in *Envisioning The Tale of Genji: Media, Gender, and Cultural Production*, edited by Haruo Shirane (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 129-153, 135.

<sup>73</sup> Numajiri Toshimichi, *Heian bungaku no hassō to seisei*, Kokugaku Daigaku Daigakuin Kenkyū Sōsho, Bungaku Kenkyūka 17 (Tokyo: Kokugakuin Daigaku Daigakuin, 2007), 172.

circulated in the medieval period, thus blurring its textual history. Challenges one faces when surveying the reception of Sei Shōnagon's text resemble those one encounters when tracing the history of *Genji* commentaries. As Cook has noted, "[c]itations in surviving texts suggest that much else of the written record has been lost."<sup>74</sup>

Numajiri has further shown that the factions within the Kawachi school used different texts of *Makura no sōshi* in their *Genji* commentaries. For instance, annotating his *Shimeishō* 紫明抄 (Notes in Explicating Murasaki, 1267, 1294)<sup>75</sup> Sojaku 素寂 (dates unknown) quoted from a *Makura no sōshi* manuscript that he owned, whereas his brother Minamoto no Chikayuki 源親行 (1188-after 1272), in his *Gen chūsaihisō* 源中最秘抄 (Most Secret Teachings of *The Tale of Genji*, ca. 1364), cited the text second-hand by referring to quotes included in *Ihon Shimeishō*.<sup>76</sup> The seemingly innumerable versions of Sei Shōnagon's text were used to mutually complement each other in order to reconstruct pieces of the text, which was already lost. The use of four different manuscripts of *Makura no sōshi* in the compilation of *Ihon Shimeishō* reveals that in the thirteenth century Sei Shōnagon's text existed as an abstract notion which could be actualized through its various representations. Unlike *Ise monogatari* and *Genji monogatari*, for which definitive texts were collated as early as the thirteenth century, the necessity to decide on an authoritative version of *Makura no sōshi* was not of primary concern to scholars until the production of

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<sup>74</sup> See Cook, *Genre Trouble*, 131.

<sup>75</sup> I borrow the translation of the title from Cook. See Cook, *Genre Trouble*, 135.

<sup>76</sup> Numajiri, Toshimichi. *Heian bungaku no hassō to seisei*, Kokugaku Daigaku Daigakuin Kenkyū Sōsho, Bungaku Kenkyūka 17 (Tokyo: Kokugakuin Daigaku Daigakuin, 2007), 202-3.

the text's printed commentaries in the seventeenth century.<sup>77</sup> The creation of an authoritative text of Sei Shōnagon's work in the early Edo period signaled a desire to transform *Makura no sōshi* from a fluid text to a stable one. This change in the treatment of the text at the beginning of the seventeenth century took place as new modes of disseminating literary knowledge of the classics developed and a unified text was needed to educate a broad audience.

### 1.3 Shaping the Text

The main challenge that seventeenth-century scholars of *The Pillow Book* confronted was the extremely large number of manuscripts from various textual lines, which resulted from multiple attempts at redaction and reconstruction of the text since the mid-Heian period. Unlike other classics for which Teika had already produced authoritative copies or “authorized texts” (*shōhon* 証本),<sup>78</sup> at the time Bansai, Kigin, and Ichū were writing their commentaries on *The Pillow Book* there was no manuscript generally recognized by scholars as Teika's copy of *Makura no sōshi*. How did seventeenth-century scholars agree on an authoritative text? None of the three commentaries on *Makura no sōshi* was based on a

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<sup>77</sup> What came to be known as the authoritative texts were Fujiwara no Teika's copies in the case of *Ise monogatari*, and Teika's and Minamoto no Michiyuki's (died 1244) copies in the case of *Genji monogatari*. See Joshua S. Mostow and Royall Tyler, trans., *The Ise Stories: Ise Monogatari* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2010), 5. See also Royall Tyler, trans., *The Tale of Genji* (Penguin Books, 2003), xix.

<sup>78</sup> Cook's translation of the term: “authorized texts,” i.e. manuscripts with colophons certifying their authority and assessing their authority as the standard texts for a given family or lineage. Cook, “Discipline,” 21.



single manuscript. In his preface Bansai states that the differences among the textual variants of Sei's text are abundant but most of them pertain to scribal errors (*densha* 伝写). He further notes that that he has collected a large number of old manuscripts (*kohon*) and printed texts (*inpon* 印本), examined them, and collated a text that he hopes to serve as the "authentic" text (*shōhon* 正本).<sup>79</sup> What Bansai refers to as the "old manuscript" or "the text which has been handed down" (*denrai no hon* 伝来の本), is a text from the *Sankanbon* lineage, as becomes clear from the *Sankanbon* postscript signed by Kajūji Norihide 勧修寺教秀 (1426-1496) which Bansai quotes. In contrast, it is unclear whether *inpon* refers to printed versions of the text or to the five-volume *Nōinbon* copy made by Hosokawa Yūsai, as Suzuki Tomotarō contends.<sup>80</sup> *Inpon* in the case of the latter would mean "The Priest's Book" indicating Yūsai's entrance into Buddhist orders following the death of his patron Oda Nobunaga 織田信長 (1534-1582) in 1582.<sup>81</sup>

Likewise, in his preface to the *Shunshoshō* Kigin acknowledges the multiplicity of textual variants of *Makura no sōshi*, and reflects on the difficulty of selecting one text as

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<sup>79</sup> Katō Bansai, *Makura no sōshishō*, edited by Kokubun meicho kankōkai, Nihon Bungaku Kochū Taisei (Tokyo: Kokubun Meicho Kankōkai, 1934), 1-2. The Japanese text reads: これらの数本に依て、校合吟味せしめ、正本とする所也。

<sup>80</sup> Officially known as the *Kajūji okugakibon* 教秀奥書本. See Suzuki Tomotarō, "Makura no sōshi shohanpon no honmon no seiritsu: Toku ni Keian hanpon, Bansaishō, Shunshoshō, Bōchūbon ni tsuite," *Heian jidai bungaku ronsō*, 453-92 (Tokyo: Kasama Shoin, 1968), 494.

<sup>81</sup> On Yūsai see Donald Keene, *Seeds in the Heart: Japanese Literature from Earliest Times to the Late Sixteenth Century*, A History of Japanese Literature vol. 1 (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1993), 1136.

authoritative. Kigin refers to the textual variants of the manuscripts according to the number of books they consist of, such as “two volumes” (*nisatsu* 二冊), “three volumes” (*sansatsu* 三冊), and “five volumes” (*gosatsu* 五冊) rather than the “old book” (*kohon* 古本), *Inpon*, or “the book, which has been handed down” (*denraibon* 伝来本), as Bansai does. In other words, Kigin pays attention to the structure of the manuscripts, whereas for Bansai the manuscripts are distinguished by extratextual characteristics and related to their transmission. Bansai asserts authority through various texts he used to construct the *Makura no sōshi* texts for his commentary, as appellations such as “old” (*kohon*) and “handed down” (*denrai*) suggest. Kigin, however, seems interested in the texts used by his predecessors. He writes that unlike the *Kokinshū*, *Gosenshū*, and *Genji monogatari*, for *Makura no sōshi* no copy authorized by Teika exists. He laments the lack of an authorized text and says that he utilized two manuscripts for his commentary precisely because they contained postscripts.<sup>82</sup> Kigin justifies his choice of these manuscripts as base-texts because postscripts, in general, proved that the texts have been read in the past. In other words, he regards postscripts as markers of authority. Kigin mentions that in 1653 he obtained a two-volume manuscript from Bishū,<sup>83</sup> which he describes in the following way:

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<sup>82</sup> The Japanese text reads: 此草紙異本さまゞあり。或は二冊、或は三冊、或は五冊、一決しがたし。古今和歌集、後撰集、源氏物語等は、定家卿の証本ありて世に定まり侍るに、枕草紙にはいまだ此卿の御本を見侍らず。See Kitamura Kigin, *Makura no sōshi: Shunshoshō*, edited by Ikeda Kikan, vol. 1 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1951), 36.

<sup>83</sup> Bishū is an alternate name for Owari province, which was situated in the western part of present-day Aichi prefecture.

其本、紙ふるく、手跡中古の筆體なりき。其文意、あざやかにて、  
所々に朱點をくはへ、且又、人々の傳、官考などしるされたり。<sup>84</sup>

As for this book, the paper is old and the handwriting style is from the past.  
Its meaning is clear, vermilion dots have been added, and even notes about  
people's lives and posts have been recorded.

The manuscript in question belongs to the *Sankanbon* line, as its postscripts signed by Bōkyū Gō and Fujiwara Ason Norihide show. The other manuscript that Kigin references comes from the *Sakaibon* lineage and bears a colophon by Kunaikyō Kiyohara. The emphasis Kigin places on the postscripts shows that for him a textual variant's authority is manifested through a record of the copyist's name or the time of its production. He describes the *Sakaibon* as one that does not contain a single section with a poem by Sei and significantly different *makura kotoba* 枕詞 (“pillow words” or “fixed epithets ‘on’ which specific words lay”)<sup>85</sup> compared to other variants. As for the *Sankanbon*, Kigin further notes that later literary works have quoted from this manuscript, specifically Sei Shōnagon's poems and episodes in which they appear, thus revealing that the *Sankanbon* was widely read in the past. The literary works he points to include poetry collections such as the *Goshūishū* 後拾遺集, *Senzaiwakashū* 千載和歌集 (*Collection of a Thousand Years*, 1188), *ShinKokinwakashū* 新古今和歌集 (*New Collection of Ancient and Modern Times*, 1205), *ShokuKokinwakashū* 続古今和歌集 (*Collection of Ancient and Modern Times Continued*,

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<sup>84</sup> See Kigin, *Shunshoshō*, vol.1, 34.

<sup>85</sup> I cite Mostow. See Joshua S. Mostow, *Pictures of the Heart: The Hyakunin Isshu in Word and Image* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1996), 15.

1266), *Gyokuyōwakashū* 玉葉和歌集 (*Collection of Jeweled Leaves*, 1312), poetry treatises such as *Yakumo mishō* 八雲御抄 (*The August Eightfold Cloud Treatise*, 13<sup>th</sup> c.) and *Etsumokushō* 悦目抄 (*Pleasing Selections and Commentaries*, mid-Kamakura period), the guide to imperial ceremonies and customs *Kinbishō* 禁秘抄 (*Summary of Court Practices*, 1213-1221), and Kenkō's *Tsurezuregusa* 徒然草 (*Essays in Idleness*, 1330-1332).<sup>86</sup> Kigin also acknowledges that he has used a good (*yoroshiki*) manuscript. In short, Kigin claims that he relied heavily on the *Sankanbon* text.

Lastly, Ichū's commentary, *Makura no sōshi bōchū*, also follows the *Keian hanpon*, but has been strongly influenced by Bansai's commentary and the five-volume *Nōinbon* text of *Miyagi Kōyō denju Genshi Hōinbon* 宮木孝庸伝受玄旨法印本.<sup>87</sup> Ichū discusses the differences between the manuscripts of *The Pillow Book* with regard to scribal errors and notes that he used the five-volume manuscript and corrected its mistakes.<sup>88</sup> To underscore the value of his work, Ichū states that he referenced a manuscript copied by Hosokawa Yūsai, an authority on *waka* and the secret transmission of knowledge about the first

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<sup>86</sup> The dates and the English translation of the titles of the poetry collections are cited from Stefania Burk's dissertation. See Stefania Eliza Burk, "Reading between the Lines: Poetry and Politics in the Imperial Anthologies of the Late Kamakura Period (1185-1333)," PhD diss. (University of California, Berkeley, 2001), 216-23.

<sup>87</sup> Suzuki, 494.

<sup>88</sup> Okanishi Ichū, and Katō Bansai, *Makura no sōshi bōchū, Makura no sōshishō*, edited by Muromatsu Iwao, *Kokubun chūshaku zensho*, vol. 4 (Tokyo: Sumiya Shobō, 1967), 1.

imperial-commissioned poetry anthology the *Kokinshū*.<sup>89</sup> Yūsai's copy is also from the *Nōinbon* lineage. Ichū thus mentions Yūsai's manuscript to imbue his commentary with greater authority. In addition, he opens his commentary with the *Nōinbon* colophon, something which neither Bansai nor Kigin included in their annotations. Why did they not refer to it?

Suzuki Tomotarō's extensive study of the textuality of the three Edo-period commentaries reveals that the Bansai and Kigin texts were strongly influenced by the *Keian hanpon*, which was based on the *Nōinbon* textual lineage, and did not emulate the *Sankanbon* as they maintain. Textual evidence shows that Bansai and Kigin consulted the *Keian hanpon*, yet neither notes this in his commentary. Bansai's text was strongly influenced by the *Keian hanpon* manuscript and includes a postscript signed by Kajūji Norihide, known as the "Norihide postscript text" (*Norihide okugakibon* 教秀奥書本, presently referred to as a text from the *Sankanbon* lineage). Kigin's text was influenced by both *Norihide okugakibon* and the *Wood-Block Twelve-Line Text* (*Mokkatsu jūnigyōhon* 木活字十二行本), a predecessor of the *Keian hanpon*.<sup>90</sup> Bansai's and Kigin's omission of the *Nōinbon* colophon may have been intended to conceal the fact that they had relied on a text different from the *Sankanbon*. Suzuki further argues that Ichū's commentary was also based on the *Keian hanpon* and was strongly influenced by both Norihide's and Yūsai's texts.

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<sup>89</sup> "The Secret Teachings of Ancient and Modern Poems" is a translation of The *Kokin denju*. See Cook, "Discipline," 1-54. This manuscript is known as *Hosokawakezō Yūsai jihitsubon* 細川家蔵幽齋自筆本. See Suzuki, 494. See also Kishigami Shinji et al. eds, *Makura no sōshi, Tsurezuregusa*, Kokugo Kokubungaku Kenkyūshi Taisei 6 (Tokyo: Sanseidō, 1977), 232.

<sup>90</sup>Suzuki, 494.

Suzuki concludes that none of the three commentaries followed one particular textual line nor were they based on a single manuscript. Rather, each of the seventeenth-century manuscripts represents a compilation of selections from manuscripts across textual lineages.<sup>91</sup> Accordingly, the primary texts constructed by the three scholars are products of collations and revisions (*kōtei* 校訂),<sup>92</sup> leading to the absence of a “pure” text (*junsuibon*), as Suzuki calls it. “Pure” text here implies a version based on manuscript(s) within one textual lineage that modern scholars usually use for their commentaries. Neither Bansai, nor Kigin, nor Ichū described in detail the sources they used for the compilation of their own texts of *Makura no sōshi*. They avoided selecting a single text over the other available options, but produced their own primary text. Bansai refers to his final text as “the correct” text (*tadashiki*), Kigin calls his “the good text” (*yoroshiki*) while Ichū references a figure of authority from the past (Yūsai) to prove authenticity. Each of these textual reconstructions of *Makura no sōshi* laid claim to being the most authoritative version. Their multiplicity shows that Sei’s work was a fluid text that allowed various approaches. All of the major scholarly commentators of the early-modern period appropriated the *Keian hanpon* which was a printed version, rather than using manuscript copies. This reveals that their reconstruction of *Makura no sōshi* was primarily based on early-modern technologies rather than relying on aristocratic connections that they would need to access manuscripts from the past.

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<sup>91</sup> Ibid., 493.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

## 1.4 Sectioning *Makura no sōshi*

Central to the reception of *Makura no sōshi* in the Edo period was Shōtetsu’s pairing of *Makura no sōshi* and *Tsurezuregusa*, as recorded in *Shōtetsu monogatari*. Specifically, he wrote that *Makura no sōshi* had been written in no particular order (*nan no sahō mo naku kakitaru mono*), and that *Tsurezuregusa* imitated its style.<sup>93</sup> Shōtetsu’s evaluation was repeatedly taken up by later scholars and became central to the discussions about the style and genre of *The Pillow Book* in subsequent centuries. Following Shōtetsu, the authors of the three Edo commentaries grouped together *Makura no sōshi* and *Tsurezuregusa* as texts of a similar style—later to be forced into a genre called *zuihitsu*. A heterogeneous work like *Makura no sōshi* required a division of the text into units whose content was graspable. The modern annotated editions of *The Pillow Book* contain over three hundred sections. How did seventeenth-century scholars divide the text? What were the effects of such divisions? How did such division influence the understanding of the text and the perception of the work as a whole?

### 1.4.1 Bansai

The earliest commentary—Bansai’s *Makura no sōshishō*—comprises one hundred and fifty-seven sections, each with a heading that appears indented on a new line. Every section begins with a list and thus bears a title whose structure is either “adjective/adjectival verb + *mono*” or “a noun + *wa*”, such as “Susamajiki mono” すさまじきもの (Dispiriting things)

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<sup>93</sup> The Japanese text reads: 何のさほうもなく書たるもの.

and “Yama wa” 山は (Mountains), respectively.<sup>94</sup> The sections are divided into subsections (*setsu* 節), each starting on a new line and further broken into segments (*shō* 章). A note interpreting the text and an explanation about the text’s thematic relation to the heading of the section follow each section. Bansai’s notes are interwoven into the main text. They start immediately after the end of a section, thus forming a patchwork with the main text and editorial notes, the borderline of which is often blurred (Figure 1.1). To make the text even more consistent, Bansai reordered some of the passages, grouping them into thematically related units.<sup>95</sup> Bansai reworked *The Pillow Book* to construct a text as one in which the sections follow a certain order and logic, rather than being a collection of disconnected writings or random jottings.

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<sup>94</sup> Modern scholars have divided the texts from the Nōinbon lineage into 323 sections, as seen in Tanaka Jūtarō’s *Kōhon Makura no sōshi*, and Matsuo Satoshi and Nagai Kazuko’s *Makura no sōshi*. See Tanaka Jūtarō, *Kōhon Makura no sōshi* (Tokyo: Koten Bunko, 1953-1957). See also Numajiri Toshimichi, “‘Sei Shōnagon *Makura no sōshishō*’ no shōdan kubun hōhō,” in *Nihon Bungaku* 59, no. 5 (May, 2010): 42-56, 42.

<sup>95</sup> The content and the order of the passages were heavily influenced by the *Sankanbon* text. See Suzuki, 464-5.



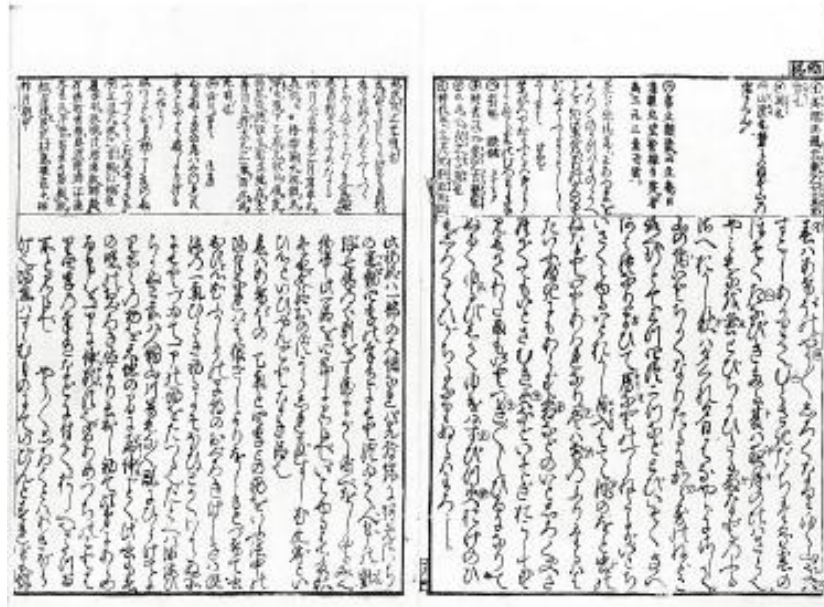


Figure 1.1: Katō Bansai's *Sei Shōnagon Makura no sōshishō*. 1674. *Kotenseki shiryō tenji mokuroku* (Osaka: Soai Daigaku, 1988), 16.

The fourth section in Bansai's commentary, which is the longest in the whole work, occupying two-thirds of Book One, serves as a good example of Bansai's approach. Under the heading *Kotogoto naru mono* (Different Things)<sup>96</sup> Bansai grouped together a large portion of the text which the modern editions of *Makura no sōshi* present within seven sections.<sup>97</sup> These sections are entitled *Kotogoto naru mono*,<sup>98</sup> *Omowan ko wo* (That Parents Should Bring up Some Beloved Son),<sup>99</sup> *Daijin narimasa ga ie ni* (When the Empress Moved),<sup>100</sup> *Ue ni saburō ōneko wa* (The Cat Who Lived in the Palace),<sup>101</sup> *Shōgatsu*

<sup>96</sup> The Japanese text reads: ことごとなるもの. See Bansai, 23.

<sup>97</sup> See Matsuo and Nagai, 28-38.

<sup>98</sup> See Ivan Morris, 5.

<sup>99</sup> The Japanese text reads: 思はむ子を. See Ibid., 5-6.

<sup>100</sup> The Japanese text reads: 大進生昌が家に. See Ibid., 6-9.

*tsuitachi* (On the First Day of the First Month),<sup>102</sup> *Yorokobi sōsuru koso* (I Enjoy Watching the Officials),<sup>103</sup> and *Ima Dairi no hingashi wo ba* (The Eastern Wing of the Palace of Today).<sup>104</sup> Bansai further divided the section into twelve subsections. He presented the episode about Narimasa within seven subsections and combined *Shōgatsu tsuitachi* (On the First Day of the First Month) and *Yorokobi sōsuru koso* (I Enjoy Watching the Officials). Bansai explains the structure of this section by clarifying its scope and stating that all of the twelve subsections contain topics that express the general meaning (*omomuki* おもむき) of the phrase *kotogoto naru mono*. He states:

是より下のわらひ給ふと云迄第四段の分也すべてこと／＼なる物と題に  
あらはしたるそのおもむきを品々述たり十二節に見るべき也就中此一  
節は詞のことやうなるを云也。<sup>105</sup>

The fourth section expands from here to “and smiled” below. The general meaning (*omomuki*) of the whole section expressed through the heading *kotogoto naru mono* can be seen in the twelve subsections that delineate various aspects. Above all, the first section tells about differences in language.

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<sup>101</sup> The Japanese text reads: うへに侍ふ御猫は. See Ibid., 9-12.

<sup>102</sup> The Japanese text reads: 正月一日. See Ibid., 12-3.

<sup>103</sup> The Japanese text reads: よろこび奏するこそ. Ibid., 13.

<sup>104</sup> The Japanese text reads: 今内裏の東をば. Ibid., 13.

<sup>105</sup> Bansai, 23.

His approach is grounded on the concept of “the essence” (*kokoro* 心) of the phrase *kotogoto naru mono*. Tsushima Tomoaki views *kokoro* as the revised version of Bansai’s idea of *rai-i* 来意, which Bansai employs in his commentary on the *Tsurezuregusa* entitled *Tsurezuregusashō* or *Bansaishō* (Commentary on the *Tsurezuregusa*, 1661).<sup>106</sup> Linda Chance defines *rai-i* or the “‘meaning carried over’ theory” as “based on the intuition that each section ‘seems independent, but the essence is the same.’”<sup>107</sup> According to Bansai, the meaning of the text is hidden, remote, and profound, in other words, difficult to grasp on a first reading. He tries to intuit what the logical connection may be between the different passages within the block of text he made into a section.

Bansai first, within a headnote, defines broadly the phrase *kotogoto naru mono*, including meanings such as unusual (*ki* 奇), different (*iji* 異事), and strange (*kai* 怪).<sup>108</sup> The section is headed by what nowadays is known as the list entitled *kotogoto naru mono* which reads:

法師のことば。をとこ女ことば。げすのことばには、かならずもじあまりたり。<sup>109</sup>

A priest’s language. The speech of men and of women. The common people always tend to add extra syllables to their words.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> Tsushima, 104.

<sup>107</sup> Linda H. Chance, *Formless in Form: Kenkō, Tsurezuregusa, and the Rhetoric of Japanese Fragmentary Prose* (Stanford, CA.: Stanford University Press, 1997), 70.

<sup>108</sup> Bansai, 24.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

Bansai explains what each of these examples of different ways of talking indicates, stating that “the language of a priest” is “biased” (*katatsumuru*), “men’s language” is “strong” (*tsuyoki*), “women’s language” is “soft” (*yawara naru*), and that “commoners’ language” is “inaccurate” (*tadashikaran*).<sup>111</sup> Bansai next explains the meaning of the heading and interprets this subsection as follows:

【ことごとなる物】とは、当段の題也。同じからず。品わかるゝ物事を云也。又、ふつゝかに、いやしきもあり。又はかりがたく、あやしき心もあり。<sup>112</sup>

*Kotogoto naru mono* is the heading of this section. It refers to things that are not the same but are interchangeable. Also, things that are insufficient and unsophisticated. Also, things that are unpredictable and suspicious.

Bansai delineates the broad spectrum of meanings of the phrase *kotogoto naru mono* and tries to fit each subsection within this long Section Four of his commentary into the extensive category of *kotogoto naru mono*. After each subsection he comments on its linkage to the whole section. In some cases the links seem plausible, whereas in others Bansai justifies his reorganization of the text in an evasive way. For example, he links Subsection Four, which describes how depressing it is for parents to bring up a beloved son to become a priest, to “a priest’s language” in the previous subsection. He notes that this

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<sup>110</sup> Ivan Morris, 5.

<sup>111</sup> Bansai, 24.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid., 23.

subsection expands on the previous subsection by discussing young priests' vigilant ascetic practices.<sup>113</sup> The common topic of these subsections about priests, Bansai maintains, makes them related to each other.

Another example of a logical link is Subsection Eleven. It includes passages that in modern editions appear as two separate sections, namely "On the First Day of the First Month" and "I Enjoy Watching the Officials." Bansai explains that the texts describe the seasonal change of the sky and people's mood during the five festivals (*gosekku*) as being unusual (*kotogoto naru sama*).<sup>114</sup> However, his justification of the positioning of Subsection Three within this section is tenuous. The subsection opens with the episode about the move of Teishi and her entourage into the residence of Taira no Narimasa. It tells of the small gate of Narimasa's residence which forced the ladies-in-waiting to dismount from their carriages and walk into Narimasa's residence, thus exposing them to the gazes of male courtiers. According to Bansai, this episode extrapolates on the first subsection's phrase "men's language and women's language" (*otoko onna no kotoba*), and demonstrates the thoughtful behaviour (*kokorozukai*) of men and women. He stresses that the episode teaches that one should not forget proper manners even when one becomes accustomed to a certain situation (*narete rei wo wasurenu kokoro wo oshietari*).<sup>115</sup> However, this episode in *Makura no sōshi* does not include any verbal exchange between men and women. The mere fact that the subsection describes women's discomfort in the presence of men does not create a natural link to the preceding subsection.

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<sup>113</sup> Bansai, 24.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid., 47.

<sup>115</sup> The Japanese text reads: なれて禮をわすれぬ心を教たり. Bansai, 27.

Even more ambiguous is Bansai's explanation of the logic regarding Subsection Seven. It depicts Narimasa's visit during the night to the room in which Sei and the other ladies-in-waiting slept, and his excuse of wishing to discuss something with Sei. There Narimasa becomes a laughing stock of the women. Bansai comments that Narimasa is "disgracefully laughed at" (*hashitanaku iiwarō*), despite his intention to apologize for the earlier incident. What Bansai views as *kotogoto naru mono* here is the misunderstanding of Narimasa's intention. However, he does not explain which meaning of *kotogoto naru mono* applies to this episode but rather leaves it to the reader to decide. Having offered his view about the linkages of each subsection to the whole section, Bansai concludes by underscoring not only the organizational principle of the text but also the depth of its meaning as a series of interrelated episodes.<sup>116</sup>

Bansai's approach is to combine passages into larger sections, then justify the order in which separate sections appear one after the other. The section entitled "Yama wa" 山は (Mountains) is followed by the section "Mine wa" 峯は (Peaks). For example, his comment after the latter reads:

此段は、上の山類のつゞき也。上の段には、うたによせある山どもを、  
書のせられたり。此段、歌によせなきみね共を、かきのせられたり。  
上の段とは、うらおもての義に、とりなして見るべし。<sup>117</sup>

This section is a continuation of the previous one regarding mountains. In the previous section, mountains that function as associated words (*yose*) in poetry

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<sup>116</sup> Ibid., 51.

<sup>117</sup> Bansai, 85.

have been recorded. This section includes peaks that do not appear in poems. Together with the previous section, it should be regarded as expressing contrasting meanings.

This is similar to the sections entitled “Pools,” “Seas,” and “Ferries,” which come one after the other and are all related to water (*mizube* 水辺). Through a reorganization of the text within sections and the order in which they appear, Bansai constructs a work in which various forms of knowledge are catalogued into categories, which themselves are offered to the reader in a logical order. As will be discussed later, this approach made *The Pillow Book* amenable to categorization as a *zuihitsu*, the genre used by scholars in China and Chinese-studies scholars in Japan to encapsulate various kinds of knowledge.

In his preface, Bansai laments that *The Pillow Book* has been underappreciated, despite it being on par with the *Ise* and the *Genji*. Bansai notes:

次に、此双紙を、先達の賞玩せられし事をいはず、八雲御抄の、学書の編にのせ給ふのみならず、所々に其詞を用ひ給ひし也。兼好は、是にもとづゐて徒然草を書、且往々に引きのせられたり。清嚴茶話云、  
「枕草子は、何さほうもなく書たる物也。三卷ある也。つれぐ草は、枕草子をつぎて書たる物也々。」これからは、此双紙を、先達の賞玩せられし事共也。今亦按レ之伊勢・大和・源氏・狭衣などに、をさへとるべきかは。其外、うつぼ・竹取・堤・濱松のごときは、さら

也。然共、いせ、源氏・にくらぶれば、賞ぶ人十分が一ならん。あさ  
ましくも、歎かしきかな。げにそれも、故ある事ならんかし<sup>118</sup>

Next, speaking of the appreciation of our predecessors for this work, it was not only included in the category of “Scholarly Works” in *Yakumo mishō*, but its text was cited in various works. Kenkō wrote *Tsurezuregusa* based on it, and that fact began to be repeatedly quoted. As *Seigan chawa*<sup>119</sup> notes, “*Makura no sōshi* was written down in no particular order. It consists of three books. *Tsurezuregusa* was written in the tradition of *Makura no sōshi*.”<sup>120</sup> These [works] were the first to appreciate this booklet. Is it even slightly inferior to *Ise*, *Yamato*, *Genji*, *Sagoromo*, etc.? It is even less inferior to others such as *Taketori*, *Tsutsumi*, and *Hamamatsu*. However the people who appreciate it are probably only one-tenth of those who [praise] the *Ise* [and] the *Genji*. It is shameful and regrettable. But there is a reason behind this, too.

Here Bansai shows an awareness of the “unfair” treatment that *The Pillow Book* received among earlier scholars and the small number of readers who appreciate it. Although he notes that there is a reason for the marginalization of Sei’s work, he does not explain it. Moreover, Bansai does not describe the merits of the text itself, except for hailing the work as primarily didactic.

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<sup>118</sup> Bansai, 2.

<sup>119</sup> *Seigan chawa* is the title of the second book of *Shōtetsu monogatari*.

<sup>120</sup> I cite Brower and Carter, 126.



一部の大意、詞花言葉を遊び、有職故実をわきまふるのみならず、全  
實儀の教諭なりと見るべき事、肝要なるべし。<sup>121</sup>

...the central point of it is not only to enjoy the leaves and flowers of words,  
and to make clear old customs, but it must be seen as teaching the real  
meanings of things.<sup>122</sup>

Bansai's view of *Makura no sōshi* as a didactic work further resembles his approach to *Tsurezuregusa*, which the scholar deemed a Buddhist text.<sup>123</sup> Within Sei's work he frequently emphasizes the moral of a section or subsection. Elsewhere in his preface, Bansai portrays the author Sei Shōnagon as an icon of intelligence and literary talent (*saichi no yangoto naki* 才智のやんごとなき) and stresses that her accomplishments have been praised for centuries. Such an image of the author further emphasizes the value of the work.

To sum up, Bansai constructs *Makura no sōshi* as a text that addresses a wide variety of topics within logically ordered passages. His approach to the text focuses on the logic by which topics and sections appear, and the use of notions such as *dan*, *setsu*, and *shō* to demonstrate that the work has a well-organized structure. As such, *Makura no sōshi* is positioned as a Chinese studies-influenced compendium and is construed as a morally didactic work.

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<sup>121</sup> Bansai, 2-3.

<sup>122</sup> I use Chance's translation. See Chance, "Zuihitsu and Gender," 141.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

### 1.4.2 Kigin

Bansai's view of Sei Shōnagon's work as thematically consistent and logically organized was criticized by later scholars. In Kigin's *Shunshoshō* the text is printed largely without any kind of breaks and only the list-like passages' headings appear as indented titles (Figure 1.2). He keeps the headings of the lists and only adds a part alternation mark (*ioriten* 庵点) to indicate the beginning of a new passage. Unlike Bansai, who explains why each of the episodes is included in the respective section, Kigin stresses the *unrelated* nature of the passages and sets them apart as independent of each other. This results in the division of the text into almost twice as many sections as in Bansai's commentary. The same section of the text that Bansai split into twelve subsections, Kigin treats as twelve independent sections. He explains that the passages were not written with the intent to make them match the *makura kotoba kotogoto naru mono*, but “this should be considered a ‘play of the brush’ (*fudezusabi* or *fude susabi* 筆すさび) that depicts whatever comes to your mind.”<sup>124</sup> Kigin's idea of a “play of the brush” refers to random jottings. He frequently uses this term to indicate the change of topic in *Makura no sōshi*. This is again an appeal to the idea of *zuihitsu* but understood differently from Bansai. It is close to the writing of later *kokugaku* scholars, which will be also discussed later.

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<sup>124</sup> The Japanese text reads: かやうの事を段々書き交へられし事更に其の枕詞に合せたる事のみならず。只思ひうるに任せたる筆ずさびと見るべきにや。 See Kigin, *Shunshoshō*, vol. 1, 53.



Figure 1.2: Kitamura Kigin's *Shunshoshō* (1674). *Kotenseki shiryō tenji mokuroku* (Osaka: Soai Daigaku, 1988), 17.

Kigin does not divide the text into sections but emphasizes the disconnected nature of the topics around which passages are centred. In contrast to Bansai's multiple large sections with thematically-related subsections, Kigin stresses the independent nature of the episodes within his unbroken text. His comments include "from here it is a different matter" (*koko yori mata betsu no koto nari*),<sup>125</sup> "from here it is a separate section" (*koko yori mata betsu no dan nari*),<sup>126</sup> or "from here it is again a new story" (*koko yori mata koto monogatari nari*).<sup>127</sup> Contrary to Bansai's approach, Kigin considers Sei's text to be a collection of notes written

<sup>125</sup>The Japanese text reads: *Kore yori mata betsu no koto nari* 是より又別の事也. See Ibid., 63.

<sup>126</sup>The Japanese text reads: *Kore yori mata betsu dan nari* 是より又別段也. See Kigin, *Shunshoshō*, vol. 1, 70.

<sup>127</sup>The Japanese text reads: *Kore yori mata koto monogatari nari* 是より又こと物かたり也. See Ibid., 131.

in no particular order. This phrase appears frequently throughout his commentary, as if he were writing against Bansai's view of *Makura no sōshi* as a collection of thematically related units. As we shall see, such "play of the brush" in Sei Shōnagon's work would become central to the reception of *The Pillow Book* in subsequent centuries.

Kigin underscores the value of *The Pillow Book* by commenting on its style and constructing it as equal to *Genji monogatari*.

此さうしの文体やごとなき物にて、我国の至宝といはれし源氏物語に  
双び称せられて、源氏枕草紙と申つ々"け侍るにや。吉田の兼好ほう  
しがつれ々"草にも此の草紙を庶幾せる所々おほし。其筆のあや、詞  
の優美、心の幽玄、更にいはんもいまめかしき義なるべし。

Is it because of the exceptional style of this work, that it has been discussed along with *Genji monogatari*, the utmost treasure of our country, and referred [together] as *Genji* (and) *Makura no sōshi*? Priest Kenkō has quoted from this work many times. The style of the work, the elegant language, and the depth of meaning, although [I stop my praise here], are exceptional.

Unlike Bansai's almost exclusive focus on the text of *Makura no sōshi*, Kigin draws from various sources such as *Eiga monogatari*, Akazome Emon's poem in the *ShinKokinshū*, Hosokawa Yūsai's *Hyakunin isschu shō*, and the Seiganji legend to reconstruct Sei Shōnagon. He brings into his text authoritative sources to reconstruct the author's life. In addition, by considering Sei together with other Heian women as recorded in these texts, he emphasizes her image as a woman poet. Kigin, in fact, gave much attention to Sei in his earlier work

entitled *Ominaeshi monogatari* 女郎花物語 (Tales of the Maidenflower, 1650), through which he tried to construct a literary tradition of women as poets.<sup>128</sup> By emphasizing Sei's image as a Heian poet he also stresses the literary value of her work, in contrast to Bansai's didactic approach. Moreover, Kigin emphasizes the primacy of *The Pillow Book* by presenting it as equal in quality to the *Genji* and, unlike Bansai, does not comment on its marginalized position.

### 1.4.3 Ichū

The third commentary, Okanishi Ichū's *Makura no sōshi bōchū* offers relatively concise notes to the one hundred and fifty sections of his commentary, modelled after Bansai's *Makura no sōshishō* which makes the positioning of the main text and the notes on the page easier for the reader to follow (Figure 1.3). Unlike Bansai, however, Ichū narrows down the meaning of the headings of the sections and proposes more plausible linkages among the subsections within a large section.

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<sup>128</sup> See Paul Gordon Schalow, "Formulating a Theory of Women's Writing in 17th Century Japan: Kitamura Kigin's *Ominaeshi monogatari* [Tales of the Maidenflower]," *Early Modern Japan* 5, no. 2 (December, 1995): 14-18, 16. A few years later Kigin produced another work entitled *Iwatsutsuji* (Wild Azaleas, 1676) through which he proposed a literary tradition of poetry related to male-male eroticism. See Paul Gordon Schalow, "The Invention of a Literary Tradition of Male Love. Kitamura Kigin's *Iwatsutsuji*," *Monumenta Nipponica* 48, No. 1 (Spring, 1993): 1-31.



Figure 1.3: Okanishi Ichū's *Makura no sōshi bōchū*. 1681. *Kotenseki shiryō tenji mokuroku*

(Osaka: Soai Daigaku, 1988), 18.

For instance, for the same section entitled *Kotokoto naru mono*, Ichū limits the meaning of *koto-goto naru mono* to “things that sound different” (*kikimimi kotogoto naru mono*) and interprets the passages as ones that bear such an “essence” (*dai no kokoro*).<sup>129</sup> To support his interpretation of the topic, Ichū links the phrase “a priest’s language,” included in the opening of this section, to Section 144 of *Tsurezuregusa*. In *Tsurezuregusa*, this section recounts an episode about the Kegon Priest Myōe 明恵 (1173-1232), who misunderstood a man who was washing his horse’s legs by the river. Instead of *ashi* 足 (leg), Myōe heard *aji* and assumed that the man was reciting the invocation of *aji* 阿字 (the first letter of the Sanskrit alphabet). Ichū uses this as an example of things that sound different, with regard to priests’ language. Next, in terms of men’s and women’s language, Ichū explains that they

<sup>129</sup> Muromatsu et al., 28.

sound different, specifically that “[m]en’s speech is coarse and women’s is soft.”<sup>130</sup>

Moreover, after the episode about Narimasa he writes that the “self-praise by Narimasa sounds unusual for himself.”<sup>131</sup> Ichū concludes this section by stating that he recorded together things that sound different, thus following the heading verbatim.<sup>132</sup>

Although Ichū follows closely Bansai’s commentary, he does not agree with the didactic approach of his predecessor. In his preface, he repeats Bansai’s statement regarding the overall meaning of *Makura no sōshi*, namely, that it is a source of knowledge about poetry and old customs. However, Ichū excludes the didactic function of the text which Bansai asserted in his commentary. In addition, Ichū added twenty-five illustrations of Heian-court architecture, attire, and people to the beginning of the commentary. The inclusion of these illustrations also reinforces Ichū’s perception of the historicity of *Makura no sōshi*. Ichū’s approach is an appropriation of the methodology of the earlier scholars. Like Bansai, he constructs *Makura no sōshi* as a collection of lists, but like Kigin, he rejects its educational overtones.

#### 1.4.4 The Three Commentaries

As can be seen from these examples, Bansai, Kigin, and Ichū were primarily concerned with compiling and sectioning the text rather than regarding one pre-existing manuscript as the best base-text. Each scholar created his own version of *Makura no sōshi*, following his own

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<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

<sup>131</sup> The Japanese text reads: 是又なりまさか自賛いひてきゝみゝことごとしきさまをつゐでにいひあらはしたり。See Muromatsu et al., 33.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid., 38.

organizational rubric, and thus three different “primary” editions went into circulation. None of these versions followed one particular textual line; each was an amalgam of textual lineages in accordance with the preferences of the editor.

Among them, Kigin’s commentaries became the standard text of *The Pillow Book* which later scholars used for their own commentaries. It was not until 1947 that a complete commentary of *The Pillow Book* based entirely on a single textual line was produced.<sup>133</sup>

With this publication of Tanaka Jūtarō’s *Makura no sōshi* 枕冊子, the *Sankanbon* textual line became the authoritative textual lineage of *The Pillow Book* and continues to be treated as such today. Unlike the Edo-period scholars, however, Japanese scholars since the 1940s have based their commentaries on the work on a single manuscript while supplementing the missing parts with manuscripts within the same textual lineage.

## 1.5 Shaping the Meaning

### 1.5.1 Early-Edo Interpretations

How did scholars interpret *Makura no sōshi*? The seventeenth-century commentators viewed the title of the work as central in the debate about the nature of the text. First, in the fifth section of his preface, following poetic treatises such as Fujiwara no Kiyosuke’s 藤原清輔 (1104-77) *Fukuro zōshi* 袋草子 (Commonplace Book, ca. 1157) and Minamoto

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<sup>133</sup> Tanaka Jūtarō used the *Yōmei Bunkobon* (Type Two Text of the *Sankanbon* Line) for commentary on *Makura no sōshi*. He supplemented the missing sections at the opening of the *Yōmei Bunko Text* with the *Text Formerly in Yatomi Hamao’s Collection* 弥富破摩雄旧蔵本 (Type One Text of the *Sankanbon* Line), which is currently stored at Sōai University. See *Makura no sōshi daijiten*, 806.



Toshiyori's 源俊頼 (1055?-1129?) *Shunrai kuden* 俊頼口伝 (Secret Teachings of Toshiyori), Bansai states that the work was given its title by later readers. He interprets the title in two different ways. One of them takes *makura* as referring to *uta-makura no sōshi* 歌枕の草子 “a notebook of *utamakura*.” *Utamakura* (“poem-pillow”) are words “on which the entire poem may depend, or rest as on a pillow,” in Mostow’s words.<sup>134</sup> Bansai explains:

枕草子と云意は枕は歌枕の意也されば此双紙の体初に少し言ひだして  
其心を次第に奥へいひもて行故に歌の枕詞にひとしき義也<sup>135</sup>

With regard to the meaning of *Makura no sōshi*, *makura* refers to *uta-makura*. However, structurally, since this work first offers a concise statement whose meaning (*kokoro*) later is revealed in depth, it is equal to *makura kotoba* in poetry.

Bansai likely refers to the lists of *Makura no sōshi*, each of which contains a heading and examples that illustrate various aspects of the heading or topic. Thus the headings are seen as a segment, on which the lists “depend.” Because Bansai reorganizes the work into sections, and each beginning with a topic on which the whole section “rests,” his view of *Makura no sōshi* as a collection of *utamakura* is plausible, but only for the version he produces. Another interpretation Bansai offers is based on Teika’s comment in his collection of notes on poetry criticism entitled *Hekianshō* 僻案抄 (Mistaken Commentaries, 1226). Teika links *makura* to the first-person plural pronoun “we” when written 臣等 *makura*, and

<sup>134</sup> I cite Mostow, *Picture of the Heart*, 14.

<sup>135</sup> Bansai, 3.

accordingly the first-person singular pronoun when the word is written without the character 等. Such examples, Bansai writes, are found in texts such as *Kojiki* 古事記 (712), *Shōjiroku* 姓氏録 (815), and *Engishiki* 延喜式 (927). Applying Teika’s comment to *Makura no sōshi*, Bansai maintains that the work’s title suggests “a personal diary notebook” (*warawa no nikki sōshi*). In a note, however, he explains that between the two possible interpretations of the title, “personal diary notebook” is what he believed was Sei Shōnagon’s intention (*hoi* 本意). He supports this claim with a quote from the colophon that recounts Sei’s suggestion for the paper she received from Teishi, namely “I will make it into a pillow.” This view of Sei’s writing as a diary underscores his didactic approach to the work, as already discussed, specifically that the central point of *Makura no sōshi* is “to teach the real meaning of things.” Bansai also explains the meaning of *sōshi* as a “draft” (*sōan* 草案) or set of “notes” (*sōkō* 草稿). Accordingly, he regarded *The Pillow Book* as informal writing based on actual experience.

For Kigin, *Makura no sōshi* was primarily a collection of *makura kotoba* 枕詞, or “fixed epithets ‘on’ which specific words lay.”<sup>136</sup> He illustrates the meaning of the word through list headings found within Sei’s work, such as *kotogoto naru mono*. However, in his notes on the colophon, Kigin proposes an interpretation of the title as *makura zōshi* 枕造紙, and associates the creation of *Makura no sōshi* with the act of production and with the notion of creating a pillow from paper. He also notes that *sōshi* could be written using the characters for a “draft” version 草紙 or for a “book” 双紙, both read as “sōshi.” Kigin explains that when rendered as “draft” 草紙, these characters mean “the rough version of

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<sup>136</sup> I cite Mostow, *Picture of the Heart*, 15.

something” (*mono no shitagaki* or *sōkō* 草稿). According to him, *sōshi* stresses the absence of a complete version (*seisho* 清書) of the work. When rendered as “book” (*sōshi* 双紙), the characters mean “to put together paper and exhaust in writing” (*kami o narabete kakitsuraneshi kokoro*). In both cases, Kigin concludes that *sōshi* served as the general term for narratives from the past (*mukashi monogatari nado no sōmyō* 昔物語などの総名).<sup>137</sup> Kigin refutes Bansai’s view of Sei’s work as a collection of lists of logically connected entries, and argues instead that it is a collection of conventional epithets (*makura kotoba*) used in waka composition.

Finally, Ichū does not contribute to the debate surrounding the meaning of the title, but agrees with both Bansai and Kigin. He briefly summarizes his predecessors’ views by stating that *makura* means *makura kotoba* and *sōshi* means “a draft.” He also acknowledges the theory that *makura* can mean “I/my.”

### 1.5.2 Late-Edo Interpretations

In the centuries that followed, scholars continued to debate the meaning of the title of Sei Shōnagon’s work, but the three complete commentaries from the seventeenth century acted as a springboard for ongoing discussion. The world of literary criticism was dominated by *kokugaku* scholars whose ideology opposed the dominant “existing epistemological frameworks” of Tokugawa society. These scholars critiqued “the rigidly hierarchical and monolithic neo-Confucian worldview” and the traditional forms of transmission of knowledge.<sup>138</sup> Opposing the dominant tendency to reduce poetry to moral didacticism,

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<sup>137</sup> Kigin, *Shunshoshō*, vol. 1, 35.

<sup>138</sup> Yoda, 37.

*kokugaku* scholars agreed that at the core of Japanese poetry lay human emotions (*ninjō* 人情). Kada no Arimaro asserted that the function of poetry was to “generate aesthetic enjoyment,” Kamo no Mabuchi underscored its spontaneity and “pure expression of concrete human feelings,” and Motoori Norinaga defined poetry as “a social medium” of “affective essence and formal aesthetic.”<sup>139</sup>

*Kokugaku* scholars did not produce complete commentaries on *Makura no sōshi* but revised Kigin’s *Shunshoshō*. They were no longer concerned with the textual variants of Sei’s work but rather with its textual organization and linguistic aspects. Bansai’s commentaries that emphasized the logical linkages within the text and the text’s didactic function did not fit the agenda of *kokugaku* scholars. In fact, late Edo-period *kokugaku* scholars regarded *Makura no sōshi* as randomly recorded musings. The problem they faced was how to classify the work.

In 1774 the poet and writer Ban Kōkei 伴蒿蹊 (1733-1806), in his work entitled *Kunitsufumi yoyo no ato* 国文世々の跡 (The Traces of Our National Literature), classified native writing into categories, such as *monogatari* and *nikki*.<sup>140</sup> He ascertained that *Makura no sōshi* did not fit into either of these and categorized it as *zuihitsu*.

枕草子は別に随筆なるものから、物語にたぐふべしや<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>139</sup> Ibid., 35.

<sup>140</sup> I borrow Linda Chances translation of the title. *Formless in Form*, 71. She notes that Ban Kōkei did not consider *Makura no sōshi* and *Tsurezuregusa* as belonging to the same genre. See also Nakamura Yukihiro, “Kinsei zuihitsu ni tsuite,” *Nakamura Yukihiro chojutsushū: Kinsei yogo*, vol. 13 (Tokyo, Chūōkōronsha, 1984), 287.

<sup>141</sup> Nakamura, 287.

*Makura no sōshi* is different; since it is *zuihitsu*, should it be classified as a *monogatari*?

The implied answer to this rhetorical question is that *Makura no sōshi* should clearly not be classified as a *monogatari*. Ban Kōkei assigned the label of *zuihitsu* to *Makura no sōshi*, but he neither provided a definition nor explained how Sei Shōnagon's work was different from court romances (*monogatari*). However, his singling out of *Makura no sōshi* as different from other literary works of the Heian period influenced the reception of the work in later decades.

What did *zuihitsu* mean in the eighteenth century? The term was imported from China where it was first used with regard to Hong Mai 洪邁 (1123-1202). Entitled *Yōsai zuihitsu* 容齋隨筆 (Ch: Jung-chai sui-pi), his writing contained observations on various topics, including literature, medicine, and astronomy.<sup>142</sup> The Japanese rendition of the Chinese term *sui-pi* appeared for the first time in 1481 in *Sanetaka kōki* 実隆公記, the diary of Sanjōnishi Sanetaka 三条西実隆 (1455-1537).<sup>143</sup> Sanetaka used the term *zuihitsu* in the context of a Chinese-style compendium referring to the work of the Muromachi-period scholar Ichijō Kanera 一條兼良 (1402-1481) as *Tōsai zuihitsu* 東齋隨筆 (1481). The Confucian scholar Hayashi Razan 林羅山 (1583-1657) later used *zuihitsu* with regard to ten out of the forty-seven volumes that constituted his collection *Hayashi Razan bunshū* 林羅山文集. As the scholar of Edo-period literature Nakamura Yukihiro has observed, in the early seventeenth century *zuihitsu* was a literary form employed primarily by Japanese scholars of

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<sup>142</sup> Chance, *Formless in Form*, 47.

<sup>143</sup> The diary of Sanjōnishi Sanetaka 三条西実隆 (1455-1537). Nakamura, 287.

Chinese studies, who modelled their works on the Chinese predecessor and included *zuihitsu* in the titles. In the eighteenth century this form of writing was adopted by *kokugaku* scholars and *gesaku* writers.<sup>144</sup> Kōkei thus situated *Makura no sōshi* within a body of male-authored texts that were produced centuries after Sei's work. In 1801 he cited *Makura no sōshi* again in a work entitled *Kanden jihitsu* 閑田次筆 (Fallow-Field Essays). Kōkei linked Sei Shōnagon's style to the notion of writing in a manner of "following the brush" (*fude ni makasete*) and defined it as trivial (*hakanaki mono*).

凡の人事實をよろこばず文華をのみめづるからに作れる人も見る人も  
物語（物語）ととりはやせし歟されば後世もことに源語をのみたとき  
物にして栄華のごときは行れず枕の草子はおもしろきものなれども終  
章筆にまかせてはかなきものなりされど作りものにあらねば其代のう  
ちの有さま上の御心はせ末々の男女のあるやうをも窺ふによし<sup>145</sup>

Is it just because most people are displeased with the truth and praise [a work's] style that writers and readers applaud *monogatari*? In later centuries, only *Genji monogatari* was assessed highly and works like *Eiga monogatari* were not read widely.<sup>146</sup> Although *Makura no sōshi* is interesting, the whole work is written [as if] following the brush and is trivial. However, since it is

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<sup>144</sup> Ibid., 292.

<sup>145</sup> *Hyakka setsurin Zokuhen Ge no Ichi*, "Kanden jihitsu," (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1906), 126.

<sup>146</sup> Earlier in the work Kōkei notes that the sole authorship of Akazome Emon was questioned by later readers. Ibid., 125-6.

not fiction, its merit lies in its allowing a glimpse into the manners based on the ways of that era and relationships between various men and women.

Kōkei adds that although fictional tales (*tsukuri monogatari*) like the *Genji* also depict old customs and clothing (*kojitsu fukushoku* 故実服色), they do not represent the past accurately because they have not recorded actual events (*jikki ni wa niru bekarazu* 実記には似るべからず). According to him, *Makura no sōshi* is a historical record written without a particular order. He juxtaposes it with *monogatari* (court romances) and notes that although fiction is inferior to real-life accounts, the style of the *Genji* has made the work attractive to readers, while the “inconclusiveness” of *Makura no sōshi* has led to its marginalization. This interpretation of the work as a window unto the context into which it was produced echoes Norinaga’s view of mid-Heian poetry as “a rich source for envisioning the symbiotic relations between the ideal society bound by communal empathy, on the one hand, and pure, authentic language, on the other.”<sup>147</sup> Kōkei proposed that *Eiga monogatari* was seen as inferior to the *Genji* because it was a historical account and presumed to have multiple authors.<sup>148</sup> According to Kōkei’s argument, works were not judged based on their proximity to truth but rather on their style.

A definition of *zuihitsu* as a genre was first put forward by Ishiwara (also Ishihara) Masaaki 石原正明 (1760-1821), a disciple of Motoori Norinaga, in his *Nennen zuihitsu* 年々随筆 (Year by Year Zuihitsu, 1801-1805), which also incorporated *zuihitsu* in its title.

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<sup>147</sup> Yoda, 115.

<sup>148</sup> Ban Kōkei, 126-7.

随筆は。みきく事。いひおもふ事。あだごとまめごとま。よりくるにしがひて書つくるものにしあれば。常にはいとよくしりをる事も。忘れてはひがごといひ。浅まなる考ども、立ちまじり。文章もえむにこまやかにはふとえ書とらで。こち々々しくつたなき事などもありて。さまあしき物ながら。さるつくろひなきものなるゆゑ。心いき。ざへのほど。器のかざりもみえて。中々々おもしろきものなり。<sup>149</sup>

A *zuihitsu* is something in which you write down things you have seen and heard, said or thought, the useless and the serious alike as they come to you. This includes matters in which one is quite well versed, as well as shallow musings that one simply feels it would be a shame to forget. Unable to capture things in a subtle and delicate style, one is likely to include awkward or tasteless things that make it disappointing. But because a *zuihitsu* is not embellished, character, ability, and learning show, making it all the more interesting.<sup>150</sup>

Ishiwara's definition underscores the spontaneity of the genre. He construes it as an "unembellished" (*tsukuroi no nai*) style of writing which exposes the writer's character and talent. In other words, Ishiwara suggests that writers' personalities can be extrapolated from their works. His view was later developed by literary scholars in Meiji Japan who used the label *zuihitsu* to define Sei's personality, an approach that led to greater disdain of her work.

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<sup>149</sup> Ishiwara Masaaki, "Nennen zuihitsu 1," in *Hyakka setsurin Zokuhen Ge no Ichi* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1906), 109.

<sup>150</sup> I have adapted Linda Chance's translation. See Chance, *Formless in Form*, 72.



In addition to *Makura no sōshi*, Ishiwara discusses as *zuihitsu* the *Tsurezuregusa*, Motoori Norinaga's *Tamakatsuma* 玉勝間 (The Beautiful Basket, 1793-1812), and Amano Sadakage's 天野信景 (1663-1733) multi-volume work *Shiojiri* 塩尻, works that were perceived as written without an organizational style. As Chance notes, “[a]t this stage, *zuihitsu* was adopted as a catchall term for mostly large, loose collocations of any period, or any sort, and thus a genre that was not expected to have clear limits.”<sup>151</sup> She further notes that by including native writings with those influenced by their Chinese predecessors who catalogued knowledge into categories, scholars extended the limits of the genre to show that Japan had fostered a literary heritage of the same genre and was thus not inferior to China.<sup>152</sup> As the earliest work among these texts, *Makura no sōshi* was presented as progenitor of the genre and used in the construction of a literary tradition of *zuihitsu* in Japan.

Iwasaki Yoshitaka's 岩崎美隆 (1804-1847) commentary *Makura no sōshi kōenshō* 枕草紙紅園抄 (1829) critiques and assesses the views of Kigin, Bansai and Ichū, hailing Kigin's *Shunshoshō* as the finest annotation. Iwasaki supplements the *Shunshoshō* with Bansai's notes. In addition to commenting on the language of *Makura no sōshi*, Iwasaki rejects Bansai's view of *The Pillow Book* as a didactic text. He notes that *sōshi* 草紙 means a record of “moving, sad, hateful and interesting things, as well as criticism” and that because it “follows the brush,” it cannot be viewed as didactic.<sup>153</sup> Iwasaki also critiques the unscholarly approach of past commentators in characterizing all tales (*monogatari*) and *sōshi* from the past as didactic (*kyōyu no tame* 教諭の為). He underscores the importance of

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<sup>151</sup> Ibid., 73.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid., 73.

<sup>153</sup> Iwasaki.

old texts as conveying “the emotional experience (*aware*) of a situation or thing (*mono*).”<sup>154</sup> Building on Norinaga’s theory of *mono no aware* in Heian literature, Iwasaki states that if his contemporaries understood the past, they would be better equipped for human relations. This, he argues, is the “initial stage of natural learning” (*onozukara shirubeki gakumon no hashi to naru beshi*). Although Iwasaki argues against didactic approaches to literary works, his view of texts from the past as sources of knowledge suggests that *Makura no sōshi* was viewed as educational. His focus, however, is on emotions and interactions between people, rather than moral discourses influenced by Buddhism and Confucianism. Iwasaki also defines the term *sōshi* as “notes written on the spot” (*tōza no oboegaki* 当座のおぼえ書). Referring to Shōtetsu’s pairing of *Makura no sōshi* with *Tsurezuregusa*, he views the works as random jottings about the experiences of their authors.

Iwasaki’s view of Sei’s work was further developed three years later by nativist scholar Fujii Takanao. In the first volume of his *Matsu no ochiba* 松の落葉 (The Pine’s Fallen Leaves, 1832) he interpreted Sei Shōnagon’s work as a booklet kept by her side, in which she recorded things that she saw and heard and she was likely to forget. He drew attention to the personal aspect of *Makura no sōshi*, the spontaneity of the style, and the nature of such writing as amusing and entertaining.

The category of *zuihitsu* continued to expand in the twentieth century. With the publication of the eighty volumes of *Nihon zuihitsu taisei* 日本随筆大成 in the 1970s, a vast body of early-modern works were attributed to the genre of *zuihitsu*. The content within this

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<sup>154</sup> I use Harper’s translation of *mono no aware*. Thomas Harper, *Motoori Norinaga’s Criticism of the Genji Monogatari: A Study of the background and Critical Content of His Genji Monogatari Tama no Ogushi* (Ann Arbor, MI, 1971), 2-3.

spectrum of works varied greatly, from literature to politics.<sup>155</sup> The modern genre of *zuihitsu* was thus used as an all-embracing receptacle for works that were difficult to categorize.

The placement of *Makura no sōshi* within the *zuihitsu* genre not only reduced it to a miscellany, thus rejecting all other possible readings, but also made the work ahistorical. The focus on the form rather than its content reinforced the view of the work as “anomalous.” This constructed difference was translated into inferiority and marginalized Sei Shōnagon within the literary canon. The anomalous style of the work became central to the image of Sei Shōnagon. For example, in *Shinkoku bungakushi* 新国文学史 (New History of National Literature, 1912), Igarashi Akira 五十嵐顕 states that regardless of her talent, Sei is “a drifter” (*hōrō shumi* 放浪趣味), an “irresponsible unattached observer” (*musekinin naru takamimono no taido* 無責任なる高見物の態度), and someone of “unstable personality” (*teichakusei no nai* 定着性のない). These attributes are influenced by the understanding of the *zuihitsu* in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. However, in attaching these attributes to her, he links such personality traits to the genre of *zuihitsu* by discounting Sei as “the kind of person who would write a *zuihitsu*” (*zuihitsu o kaku beki hito* 随筆を書くべき人).<sup>156</sup> Thus, just as Sei came to be defined by the genre of *zuihitsu*, her image, too, influenced the genre. Igarashi’s unfavorable assessment of Sei’s text and personality set the tone for later evaluations of both the work and the author. One extreme example of this can be seen in Ikeda Kikan’s refutation of Kigin’s organization of the *Makura no sōshi* in the *Shunshoshō*: “If she wrote in this way, it would not be a *zuihitsu* but the writing of a

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<sup>155</sup> Nakamura, 289-90.

<sup>156</sup> Cited in Tsushima, 73.

schizophrenic,” he argued, because of “the absence of chronological order, order of thought, and lack of associations.”<sup>157</sup>

## 1.6 Conclusion

The complex textual history of *Makura no sōshi* shows how the absence of a definitive text deterred literary criticism on the content of the work. Scholars in the seventeenth century faced the challenge of reconstructing the text and deciding on its textual organization.

Bansai, Kigin, and Ichū, who compiled the three complete commentaries on Sei Shōnagon’s work in the early Edo period, produced primary texts by collating versions from various textual lineages. Among the textual variants the commentators referenced, the recently printed *Nōinbon* version particularly influenced their commentaries. Thus the *Nōinbon* became the most widely read textual line in early-modern Japan.

Furthermore, Bansai and Kigin rearranged the text and presented *The Pillow Book* as a collection of lists and a collection of random jottings respectively. Although these approaches to textual organization developed in contrast to each other, they were later amalgamated into the concept of *zuihitsu*. Scholars placed Sei Shōnagon within this broad category of writings dominated by male authors, and treated the work either as a compendium of various forms of knowledge linked to works of Chinese literature, or as a collection of musings recorded on the spot that bore similarities to Japanese writings from the late-Edo period. Despite the constructed nature of the text itself, its textual organization, and its genre categorization, all of these external elements played an important role in the subsequent evaluation and canonization of Sei Shōnagon’s work.

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<sup>157</sup> Ikeda Kikan, *Zuihitsu bungaku* (Tokyo: Shibundō, 1968), 231.

## Chapter Two

### Eroticizing *The Pillow Book*: Knowledge, Status, and Identity

#### 2.1 Introduction

Although the seventeenth-century scholars who produced commentaries on *Makura no sōshi* did not regard it as a text suitable for a primarily male or female audience, as readership of the work expanded, writers adapted Sei Shōnagon's work in diverse ways, often targeting either female or male audiences.<sup>158</sup> As we have seen in Chapter One, over the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries *Makura no sōshi* became more widely read by men. From the mid-eighteenth to the early nineteenth centuries, following the rise in readership and scholarly approaches, numerous parodies and adaptations of the text were produced and marketed for women. This chapter will focus on erotic parodies of *The Pillow Book* and consider how the Heian text was appropriated for male audiences, what made it amenable to such transformations, and what the reception of Sei's text reveals about seventeenth and eighteenth centuries' attitudes towards Heian literature and Heian women writers.

The first section of this chapter considers the earliest extant erotic rewriting of *The Pillow Book* and the gender ideology it conveys. This is followed by an examination of two works that focus on the pleasure quarters and shows how *Makura no sōshi* functioned as a powerful tool to question established notions of identity and status. I examine the following texts: *Inu makura narabi ni kyōka* 犬枕並狂歌 (Dog Pillow and Mad Verses, 1607), *Ahō*

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<sup>158</sup> On the gendering of literature in early-modern Japan see Paul G. Schalow, "Theorizing Sex/Gender in Early Modern Japan: Kitamura Kigin's *Maidenflowers* and *Wild Azaleas*," *Japanese Studies*, vol. 18, no. 3 (1989): 247-63, 252.

*makura kotoba* 阿房枕言葉 (The Fool's Pillow Words, 1749), and *Shūi makura zōshi* *kagaishō* 拾遺枕草紙花街抄 (Gleanings of the Pillow Book and the Pleasure District, ca. 1751). These works are important because they show how such appropriations of women's writing for a male readership influenced later interpretation of the source text. They also elucidate why *Makura no sōshi* was rewritten into an erotic text and why Sei Shōnagon came to be perceived as a predecessor to early-modern courtesans.

Before analyzing the texts themselves, it is necessary to briefly consider the problem of terminology and how to classify or characterize these texts. Are they parody, travesty, caricature, pastiche, transformation, or imitation? Gérard Genette's meticulous classification of intertextuality into types of relationships that are created between any given text (hypertext) and a prior text (hypotext) is instructive, when works, in general, are being considered outside their immediate historical contexts.<sup>159</sup> However, he focuses on the formal features of the texts involved and disregards the role of the reader, or the intended readership of a work. Linda Hutcheon's study of parody has stressed the importance of the reader as a decoder. She points out the consensus among historians of parody that "parody prospers in periods of cultural sophistication that enable parodists to rely on the competence of the

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<sup>159</sup> Gérard Genette, *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree*, translated by Channa Newman & Claude Doubinsky (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997) 1-7. Genette makes a rigid delineation of the subgenres that are included in parody and draws the following categories: parody ("the distortion of a text by means of minimal transformations"), travesty ("the stylistic transformation whose function is to debase"), caricature ("the satirical pastiche"), and pastiche ("the imitation of a style without any satirical intent"). Genette observes that hypertexts are created through a process of transformation: simple transformation (parody and travesty) or indirect transformation or imitation (caricature and pastiche).

reader (viewer, listener) of the parody.”<sup>160</sup> Hutcheon defines parody as “a form of imitation, but imitation characterized by ironic inversion, [...] repetition with critical distance, which marks difference rather than similarity.”<sup>161</sup> She later adds that “irony’s edge [is what] gives parody its ‘critical’ dimension in its marking of difference at the heart of similarity.”<sup>162</sup>

Hutcheon also notes that irony is contingent upon reader’s ability to recognize it. Parody, she maintains, is a “form of ‘artistic recycling,’ whose intentionality ranges from “respectful admiration to biting ridicule.”<sup>163</sup> How is intentionality determined? Does it shift when parody is examined outside its original context? In her discussion of narrative versions, Barbara Herrnstein Smith contends that “every telling [narrative transaction] is produced and experienced under certain social conditions and constraints and [...] it always involves two parties, an audience as well as a narrator.”<sup>164</sup> Following Herrnstein Smith, a text is not a parody on its own but becomes one within a narrative transaction. In other words, a work becomes parodic when a reader successfully decodes the message encoded by the narrator and takes into account the specific context of production.

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<sup>160</sup> Hutcheon, *A Theory of Parody: The Teachings of Twentieth-Century Art Forms* (New York and London: Methuen, 1985), 19.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>162</sup> Linda Hutcheon, *Irony’s Edge: The Theory and Politics of Irony* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 4.

<sup>163</sup> Hutcheon, *Parody*, 16. She quotes Rabinowitz. See Rabinowitz, P. J. (1980), “‘What’s Hecuba to Us?’: The Audience’s Experience of Literary Borrowing,” *The Reader in the Text: Essays on Audience and Interpretation*, sous la d. de Susan R. Suleiman & Inge Crosman, 241-263 (Princeton, New Jersey, Princeton University Press), 241.

<sup>164</sup> Smith, “Afterthoughts,” 233.

Early-modern parodies of *Makura no sōshi* have attracted little scholarly attention, partly because of the marginalization of Sei Shōnagon's work vis-à-vis *Genji monogatari*, and partly because of the predominant attitude towards parody as an inferior genre. Later rewritings of the Heian texts are usually dismissed as being “influenced” by *The Pillow Book*. As Hutcheon contends, “multiple versions of a story in fact exist laterally, not vertically.”<sup>165</sup> The value of such rewritings should be gauged not through a comparison with Sei Shōnagon's text but through consideration of how and why *Makura no sōshi* and the image of its author have been brought into these later works.

Why did *Makura no sōshi* become subject to parody? First, the title assigned to Sei Shōnagon's work by later readers played an important role in the early-modern reception of *The Pillow Book*. Numerous erotic images were produced during the late seventeenth century. Works that included explicit sexual content were referred to as *makura zōshi* 枕草紙, or “pillow books,” a term transcribed with the characters “pillow” 枕, “grass” 草, and “paper” 紙. This new type of “pillow book” usually contained pornographic images that were called *makura-e* 枕絵 (pillow pictures). To distinguish between Sei Shōnagon's *Pillow Book* and the Edo-period works of erotic content, the case particle *no* was inserted between *makura* and *sōshi* functioning as an attributive marker, and from the mid-Edo period on Sei's work began to be called *Makura no sōshi* or *Sei Shōnagon Makura no sōshi*, whereas erotic works were referred to as *makura zōshi* 枕ざうし.<sup>166</sup> Although the exact pronunciation of the title of Sei Shōnagon's work before the seventeenth century is unclear,

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<sup>165</sup> Linda Hutcheon, *A Theory of Adaptation* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 169.

<sup>166</sup> Tanaka Jūtarō, *Sei Shōnagon makura no sōshi kenkyū*, Kasama Sōsho 10 (Tokyo: Kasama Shoin, 1942), 521.



in the preface to his commentary *Shunshoshō* Kitamura Kigin notes that the title should be pronounced as “makura sōshi” or “makura zōshi.”<sup>167</sup> The inclusion of this remark in his commentary suggests that at least until the mid-seventeenth century the phrase *makura zōshi/sōshi* did not have an erotic implication.

In contrast, eighteenth-century *senryū* (seventeen syllable comic verses) that reference Sei Shōnagon’s *Pillow Book* show that there were already two types of “pillow books” in circulation. The following three poems illustrate the confusion triggered by the similarity of the appellations.

納言のハさし合の無イまくらなり<sup>168</sup>

Nagon’s is an unobjectionable “pillow”

きよらかな枕は親の前で見<sup>169</sup>

Reading the clean “Pillow” in front of your parents

註の要る枕草紙を清女書<sup>170</sup>

Madam Sei wrote a “Pillow Book” requiring annotation

As the first two *senryū* show, in the eighteenth century Sei Shōnagon’s *Pillow Book* was seen as a respectable literary work as opposed to erotic “pillow books” that were subject to

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<sup>167</sup> Kigin, *Shunshoshō*, vol. 1, 3

<sup>168</sup> Hanasaku Kazuo, *Senryū no shungashi* (Tokyo: Taiheishooku, 1989), 40

<sup>169</sup> The character for “pure” (*kiyoraka*) also functions as the last name Sei 清 and thus puns on both contexts here. Ibid., 40.

<sup>170</sup> Tanaka, *Makura no sōshi kenkyū*, 511.

censorship. The third poem indicates that by the early-modern period, Sei's work was only comprehensible when accompanied by commentary. These poems set *Makura no sōshi* apart from erotic books, which consisted primarily of images and minimal text and were thus easy to grasp. The role of the hand in auto-eroticism and sexual acts that erotic books encouraged was frequently linked to the act of writing of Sei Shōnagon's *Pillow Book*, as the following two satiric poems suggest.

枕草紙を書た手でみすをまき<sup>171</sup>

Raising the blind/rolling a tissue with the hand that wrote *The Pillow Book*

枕の草子つまみにも油あと<sup>172</sup>

Traces of oil even when turning the *pillow book* pages

The first of these *senryū* recalls the famous episode from *Makura no sōshi* in which Sei Shōnagon raises the blind to show that she has guessed Empress Teishi's allusion to one of Bo Juyi's poems, a scene which will be examined in Chapter Four. The homophone *misu* 御簾 / みす can mean "blinds" used at a residence and "tissue paper" that would normally be tucked inside the front of one's kimono. In referencing blinds, the author alludes to the most famous episode in *The Pillow Book*. But this also evokes the image of tissues used to wipe away bodily fluids after sexual activity. The oil (*abura*) in the second poem refers to lamp oil used when reading at night, but also to lubricating oil for enhancing sexual intercourse. As can be seen in the satiric poems above, the word *makura* ("pillow") in the title of Sei

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<sup>171</sup> Hanasaku, 42.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid., 43.

Shōnagon's work would have suggested erotic connotations to early-modern audiences and thus invited parodic usage.

Despite the wide range of literary forms that comprise *Makura no sōshi*, for early-modern readers the work was constructed as a collection of lists —“monozukushi” ものづくし or “monohazuke” 物は付 (a detailing of things). Lists became popular because of their centrality within the *zappai* 雑俳 subgenre of *haikai*. Although a similar practice had existed since the Heian period, *zappai* reached its peak during the Kanpō era (1741-1744). Poetry lists involve a short verse, consisting of an adjective or an adjectival verb and the noun *mono* (“things”), which was presented by a judge, and an “added verse” (*tsukeku*) appropriate for the topic which was added by each participant in a poetry gathering. Lists composed during such poetry contests were compiled in collections for later reference.<sup>173</sup>

Lists also became a style of conveying information, specifically guides, primers, and rosters that spanned various aspects of urban society. This vast body of informational texts burgeoned in the era of commercial printing. Social knowledge was classified and transmitted through lists, a format that enabled equal access to a wide audience encompassing various levels of literacy. Thus, information, once available to an elite audience, became a “common property” in Mary Elizabeth Berry's words.<sup>174</sup> Berry's study of informational texts in early-modern Japan contends that the visibility of society created

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<sup>173</sup> Mutō Sadao, “‘Monohazuke’ zakkō—medetaki mono wa,” *Senryū shinano*, No. 610 (January, 1994):1-6, 1.

<sup>174</sup> Mary Elizabeth Berry, *Japan in Print: Information and Nation in the Early Modern Period* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 2007), 52.

through such texts instigated social criticism through the self-consciousness it fostered.<sup>175</sup>

The dissemination of information to a diverse audience was subversive in that this general access to information challenged fixed notions of social structure. Berry examines education as one example of information that became widely accessible to anyone with enough time and money.<sup>176</sup> In this new social context, the lists that made up one-third of *Makura no sōshi* were regarded as a useful tool for conveying knowledge. As lists, they were a style of knowledge transmission familiar to those who had read other informational texts.

## 2.2 Homo- and Hetero-eroticism in *Inu Makura*

The earliest extant parody of Sei Shōnagon's work is entitled *Inu makura narabi ni kyōka*.<sup>177</sup>

It consists of seventy-three lists and nineteen *kyōka* (comic verses), organized under headings either cited from *Makura no sōshi* or newly created. The work imitates the style of the eleventh-century work, specifically its lists, and does not play upon the content of the source text. The word *inu* contained in the title means “fake,” “sham,” or “pseudo.”<sup>178</sup>

Works that contain *inu* in their titles include *Inu tsurezure* 犬つれつれ (1608), and *Inu*

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<sup>175</sup> Ibid., 53.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid., 50-51.

<sup>177</sup> Edward Putzar has offered a translation accompanied with a brief introduction to English-speaking readers. See Edward Putzar, “Inu Makura: The Dog Pillow,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 28 (1968): 98-113.

<sup>178</sup> Komachiya defines “inu” as “nisete hinaru.” See Komachiya Teruhiko, “*Inu makura, Mottomo no sōshi, Sei Shōnagon chie no ita: Makura no sōshi no kyōju to rufu*,” *Kōkō tsūshin tōsho kokugo no.* 322 (May, 1994): 1-3, 2.

*hyakunin isshu* 犬百人一首 (1669), parodies of *Tsurezuregusa* and *Hyakunin isshu* respectively.

Although the author of *Inu makura* is unknown, Matsudaira Tadaakira's 松平忠明 nine-volume chronicle entitled *Tōdaiki* 当代記 (*A Contemporary Record*, 17<sup>th</sup> century) notes that Hata Sōha 秦宗巴 (1550-1608) was involved in its compilation. Sōha worked as a physician to the imperial regent Toyotomi Hidetsugu 豊臣秀次 (1568-1595) and the military leader Tokugawa Ieyasu 徳川家康 (1542-1616).<sup>179</sup> He also worked for Konoe Nobutada 近衛信尹 (1565–1614), a calligrapher who was the son of the regent Konoe Sakihisa 近衛前久 (1536-1612), as an *otogishu* 御伽衆 or in a similar capacity. The *otogishu* were men who served as conversational partners and advisers to *daimyō* from the fifteenth to the mid-seventeenth centuries.<sup>180</sup> Furthermore, Sōha was active as a writer and poet. He authored the first commentary on *Tsurezuregusa*, entitled *Jumyōinshō* 寿命院抄 (1604)<sup>181</sup> and co-authored *The Hundred Verse Sequence Composed by Jōha, Ryūan and Others on the Second Day of the Seventh Month in 1593* (*Bunroku ni-nen shichigatsu futsuka Jōha Ryūan ra nani fune hyakuin* 文禄二年七月二日紹巴立安等何舟百韻). Sōha signed under various pennames such as Jumyōin 寿命院, Ryūan 立安, and Ritsuan 立庵.

Linda Chance has noted that Sōha's commentary on *Tsurezuregusa* was printed without the text of *Tsurezuregusa*, which points to a readership consisting primarily of

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<sup>179</sup> Putzar, "Inu Makura," 100.

<sup>180</sup> Mutō, 1-6.

<sup>181</sup> Linda Chance, "Constructing the Classic: *Tsurezuregusa* in Tokugawa Readings," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 117, no. 1 (Jan. - Mar., 1997): 39-56, 42.

upper-class individuals who had access to manuscript copies of *Tsurezuregusa*.<sup>182</sup> Since *Inu makura*, Sōha's parody on *The Pillow Book*, does not overtly refer to *The Pillow Book* text itself, we can assume that it was also aimed at a highly literate audience. Mutō Sadao contends that *Inu makura* was a record of the lists (*monohazuke*) composed in the *zappai* subgenre of *haikai* that Nobutada and his men composed for amusement.<sup>183</sup> If *Inu makura* indeed served as a guide for *haikai* composition then it effectively transformed a work that depicts a female court of the past into a contemporary, male-dominated setting. How did this shift in setting and anticipated readership influence the content of the *Inu makura*?<sup>184</sup>

*Inu makura* covers a variety of topics, but the majority are related to contemporary life. For example, the list entitled “Delightful Things” (*ureshiki mono*) features “a real bargain at a shop”<sup>185</sup> (*machigai no horidashi*)<sup>186</sup> “Things that Discourage Conversation” (*hanashi ni shimanu mono*) includes “rumours about the shogun”<sup>187</sup> (*uesama no onsata*),<sup>188</sup> and “Useful Things that Seem Useless” (*irinu yō de iru mono*) notes “military gear after the fighting has stopped”<sup>189</sup> (*hideri no nuikakezaya*).<sup>190</sup> The topics and examples selected for *Inu*

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<sup>182</sup> Ibid., 42.

<sup>183</sup> Mutō Sadao, “‘Monohazuke’ zakkō,” 1-6.

<sup>184</sup> Maeda Kingorō, and Morita Takeshi, eds., “Inu makura narabi kyōka,” in *Kanazōshishū*, 35-48, Nihon koten bungaku taimei 90 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1965).

<sup>185</sup> Putzar, “Inu Makura,” 101.

<sup>186</sup> Maeda and Morita, “Inu makura,” 35.

<sup>187</sup> Putzar, “Inu Makura,” 103.

<sup>188</sup> Maeda and Morita, “Inu makura,” 37.

<sup>189</sup> Putzar, “Inu Makura,” 103.

<sup>190</sup> Maeda and Morita, “Inu makura,” 36.

*makura* often concern gender and sexuality. According to Mostow's gender/sexuality paradigm in early seventeenth-century Edo, there existed an understanding of three genders: "'pansexual' males ([...] proscribed from other adult men and children of either sex), ...exclusively heterosexual females,"<sup>191</sup> and *wakashu*, who were appropriate objects of desire for both men and women. *Inu makura* comments on the three genders, but among the three, *wakashu* receive the most attention. The work contains nineteen references to *wakashu*, followed by twelve references to women, and only five to adult men. This focus on the *wakashu* is not unique to *Inu makura*. Works produced in the genres of *kana zōshi* (booklets written in the vernacular), *ukiyo zōshi* (tales from the floating world), and *senryū* often take up the image of the *wakashu*. This literary fascination with *wakashu* can be traced to earlier medieval narratives, later categorized as *chigo monogatari* (acolyte tales), that revolve around love affairs between priests and boys.<sup>192</sup> The erotic relations seen in early-modern fiction generally conform to the conventions of *shudō*, the "Way of Youngmen"<sup>193</sup>—an asymmetrical dynamic within which each partner was assigned a different role, thus excluding the concept of sameness between partners.<sup>194</sup> The older male,

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<sup>191</sup> Joshua S. Mostow, "The Gender of *Wakashu* and the Grammar of Desire," in *Gender and Power in the Japanese Visual Field*, ed. Joshua S. Mostow et al (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2003), 49-70, 52.

<sup>192</sup> Margaret H. Childs, "Chigo Monogatari: Love Stories or Buddhist Sermons?" *Monumenta Nipponica* 35, no. 2 (Summer, 1980), 127-151, 127.

<sup>193</sup> I have borrowed Joshua Mostow's translation of the term *shudō*. Mostow, "The Gender of *Wakashu*," 53.

<sup>194</sup> For a discussion of male-male relations in terms of difference or sameness between the partners (paederastic or homosexual) see Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, "Tales of Avunculate: Queer Tutelage in the

also known as *nenja* (“person [implicitly male] who thinks of a particular youth”)<sup>195</sup> was constructed as the superior partner, which granted him the prerogative to penetrate his younger beloved. Accordingly, the younger male, referred to as *wakashu* (youngman/adolescent male), was the junior and as such the receptive partner within the *shudō* dyad.<sup>196</sup> Sexual practices, however, were only one aspect of such male-male bonding structured around the concept of *différence* between the two partners in pre-modern Japan. Emotional attachment and pedagogical transmission of knowledge were also essential to the *shudō* followers. As a senior partner, the *nenja* acted as a role model and source of admiration and respect for the adolescent boy, who had embarked on training that would later provide him membership in the world of adult men. The relationship between the *nenja* and *wakashu* were described as being just as strong as those between a parent and a child.<sup>197</sup>

*Inu makura* embodies the perspective of a *nenja*. It presents *wakashu* as objects of desire and classifies and evaluates their behaviour. Statements such as the following

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*Importance of Being Earnest*,” *Tendencies* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), 57. Cited by Mostow, “The Gender of Wakashu.”

<sup>195</sup> Gregory M. Pflugfelder, “Authorizing Pleasure: Male-Male Sexuality in Edo-Period Popular Discourse,” *Cartographies of Desire: Male-Male Sexuality in Japanese Discourse, 1600-1950* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1999), 36.

<sup>196</sup> Passivity characterized a *wakashu* only in his relations with a *nenja*. When he was involved in a heterosexual relationship, however, he often assumed an active role. See Mostow, “The Gender of *Wakashu*,” 67-8.

<sup>197</sup> Paul Gordon Schalow, “Spiritual Dimensions of Male Beauty in Japanese Buddhism” in *Religion, Homosexuality and Literature*, ed. Michael L. Stemmeler and José Ignacio Cabezón (Las Colinas, Texas: Monument Press, 1992): 75-92, 89.



describe the *nenja*'s desire to spend time with a *wakashu*. "The prospect of an evening tryst with one's *wakashu*" is listed under "Things That Stand One's Hair on End," "a flower-viewing walk with one's *wakashu*" appears among "Interesting Things," "what follows evening stories/a tryst with a *wakashu*" is presented as "Things One Would Like to Stop," "a *wakashu* who seems to be about to leave but stays" is recorded as "Joyful Things When One Has Been Apprehensive." The text also evaluates various aspects of a *wakashu* by presenting, for example "imprudence of a fine *wakashu*" as "Bad Things in Good," "nail dirt and nose hair of a *wakashu*" "Unclean Things," "one's *wakashu* pretending romantic attraction to someone else" as "Things That Make One Angry," and "pretense of love by a *wakashu*" as "Things of Mean Character," "a *wakashu* speaking well of one behind one's back" as "Things Joyful to the Heart," and "the groundless jealousy of a *wakashu*" as "Joyful Things When One Has Been Apprehensive." Through various examples *Inu makura* encourages devotion, sincerity, faithfulness, and availability of a *wakashu* to his partner, while constructing grooming neglect, hypocrisy, and promiscuity as negative. In addition, monogamy is construed as central for the ideal *wakashu*.

If the focus is on *wakashu*, how are women and men represented? Unlike the jealousy of a *wakashu*, which is depicted as something to be celebrated, jealous men and women are classified as "Fearsome Things." The jealousy of a male youth who was sexually available to an elder man was not regarded as menacing, thus reinforcing the image of the *wakashu* as inferior, submissive, and controllable. In contrast, heterosexual jealousy is deemed threatening, as numerous examples show, including medieval narratives about the jealous spirit of Lady Rokujō and the woman serpent who chased the monk from the Dōjōji Temple.

The text has classified behaviours of women into categories that evaluate negative experiences. This becomes evident from the headings of the lists. The only positive reference among the twelve examples that discuss women is the statement that comments on them as mothers to sons:

気遣して嬉しき物

一人娘息子誕生<sup>198</sup>

Joyful Things When One Has Been Apprehensive

One's only daughter giving birth to a son<sup>199</sup>

The majority of the references to women express negative attitudes, as the headings of the lists suggest. For instance, a woman's talent for writing is classified in "Hateful Things" ("a woman's writing well"), "an intellectually pretentious woman" is included in "Things that Succeed Though Seeming Unlikely," and "the jealousy of an aging woman" appears in the list of "Fearsome Things." Moreover, women who are disappointing in bed and women who are past their prime are regarded as useless ("A woman who falls asleep on you after making love" and "an old wife" in "Things One Would Like to Send Away" ), and women living alone or unmarried/widowed are construed as hateful ("a widow living alone" as "Things People Despise"). Descriptions of adult men include references to their fearsome jealousy, and failed masculinity, that is an adopted husband and a masterless samurai (presented as "Things That People Despise"). The text construes as positive "the heart of the master's son" and "the sword of a strong man" as their placement in the

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<sup>198</sup> Maeda and Morita, "Inu makura," 35.

<sup>199</sup> Putzar, "Inu Makura," 107.

category of “Things the Bigger the Better” shows. Schalow has noted that topics related to human experience were important for the composition of comic linked verses. Sexuality and gender were central among them, and in some haikai schools the incorporation of perspectives of male-male eroticism was considered a prerequisite for skillful poets.<sup>200</sup>

Unlike later erotic parodies, *Inu makura* does not use vulgar language nor does it depict sexual acts explicitly. Rather, by imitating the classical style of *The Pillow Book*, the producers of *Inu makura* showed knowledge of canonical literary sources. Moreover, by representing *wakashu* as objects of desire and reducing women to their functions as mothers and sexual outlets for men, *Inu makura* transforms a woman’s literary work to project a fully masculine presence.

### 2.3 *The Pillow Book* and the Pleasure Quarters

The establishment of licensed pleasure quarters in the early seventeenth century and the development of a culture specific to them led to the production of a large number of works that revealed the practices that took place in these districts. Such literature provided a view into the pleasure quarters for those who could not afford to visit, while also educating those who frequented them in proper comportment. A major genre within informational texts called *yūjo hyōbanki* 遊女評判記 (ratings of courtesans)<sup>201</sup> developed between the mid-

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<sup>200</sup> Schalow, “Theorizing Sex/Gender in Early Modern Japan,” 252.

<sup>201</sup> I use Marcia Yonemoto’s translation of the term. See Marcia Yonemoto, *Mapping Early Modern Japan: Space, Place, and Culture in the Tokugawa Period (1603-1868)* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 2003), 134.

seventeenth and mid-eighteenth centuries. These works targeted an elite audience, specifically samurai and wealthy merchants who were regular customers in the pleasure quarter of Yoshiwara, as well as high-ranking courtesans.<sup>202</sup> As patronage of the pleasure quarters expanded in the eighteenth century, detailed views of the quarters, known as *saiken* 細見, were produced. *Saiken* consisted of intricate maps of the pleasure quarters that offered information about the names of the brothels and the courtesans associated with them, organized according to rank.<sup>203</sup> By the mid-eighteenth century, in addition to *saiken*, a new genre came into circulation, the *sharebon* 洒落本 (books of style).<sup>204</sup> As knowledge about social sensibilities became necessary with the expansion of the patrons to the pleasure districts, these texts edified readers about the etiquette of brothels. The genre of *sharebon* typically represented two archetypes: the “tasteful and cultivated” patron (*tsū*), in contrast to the patron who was “loud, boorish, and with no sense of refined city manners” (*yabō*).<sup>205</sup> This genre included books “of wit and fashion, a playful creation that seeks to entertain and amuse as well as satirize contemporary fashions,”<sup>206</sup> as J. Scott Miller has defined it. What was the function of satire in works depicting the pleasure quarters?

In her study of *saiken* and *sharebon*, Marcia Yonemoto shows that the literature about the pleasure districts was seen as subversive. She asserts that these texts appropriated

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<sup>202</sup> Ibid.

<sup>203</sup> Ibid., 134-5. Yonemoto notes that originally *saiken* were appended to *yūjo hyōbanki* but began to be published independently after 1728.

<sup>204</sup> Ibid., 133.

<sup>205</sup> Ibid., 137.

<sup>206</sup> J. Scott Miller, “The Hybrid Narrative of Kyoden’s *Sharebon*,” *Monumenta Nipponica* 43, no. 2 (Summer, 1988): 133-152, 134.

early modern mapping vocabulary to “redefine political and cultural space”<sup>207</sup> in Edo-period Japan. Building on Yonemoto’s argument, we can understand the focus on knowledge of manners and etiquette in guides to the pleasure quarters as expressing a form of social criticism. These works project a society in which notions such as status and class as constructed by the shogunate dissolve and new identities and hierarchies emerge. Indeed, the pleasure quarters allowed for an escape from a world in which class and identity were fixed for life. Despite the government’s control, the pleasure quarters came to function as independent communities with their own rules and manners. These entertainment districts and the government’s control over them resemble the colonial situation. Through the development of a unique culture, the pleasure districts constructed their own identity that differed from the government’s view of them as a marginal space. By shaping themselves as the “other” Japan, the licensed quarters imitated those in power and challenged the constructed nature of the symbolic expression of authority.

*Makura no sōshi* offered a useful source for producing subversive guides to the art of pleasure-seeking, since lists enabled the classification of manners and attitudes (through the *mono*-type lists) and the remapping or creation of a Japan of its own (through the *wa*-type lists). One example is a work entitled *Ahō makura kotoba* (The Fool’s Pillow Words). Published in Kyoto in 1749, the work comments on various pleasure quarters throughout the country. The preface identifies its author as Lord Tōkūsai (Tōkūsai shujin 偷空齋主人). It reads:

春の日やゝかたぶき鳥もねどころへゆく此つれ（づれ）のあまりかひ  
なくたゝん名をもおしまで枕ひき寄せ見ぬ長崎みたる津の国ゆかぬ武

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<sup>207</sup> Yonemoto, *Mapping*, 133.

蔵野遊びたる都のうかれ事のみ思ひ寝入しに怪しき老婆の来りて吾は  
むかし阿房宮の下官女なりしが人にかいまじはりて悦しむるに実を失  
ずその陰徳によりて漢はた倭の遊理にも飛行し奥義をすること掌を指  
すがことし今汝嘘の実をしらむ事をおもふされど嘘は即実なることを  
しらずせちにこゝろざす事のあはれなれば此一卷をさづくるなりてお  
かしき物かたりして其姿の失ぬ枕もたげて見れば早東雲紫を奪ふ是も  
うそのまことならむと夢をたづねて一卷を開くに正しく書きつらねた  
れど何といふべき題なしこれを捨てずば題せよすてばやぶれとしき  
りにせむる人は儉空齋主人なり阿房枕言葉と題するものは<sup>208</sup>

The spring sun was gradually sinking, and the birds were heading to their  
nests. Having nothing else to do, [recalling the poem] “how I would regret  
my name coming”<sup>209</sup> I drew my pillow closer, thinking only of the “merry-  
making” in Nagasaki, which I have never seen, Tsu no Kuni, of which I have  
seen a great deal, Musashino, where I have never been, and the capital of  
pleasure-seeking. As I fell asleep, a strange old woman appeared. “In the past  
I humbly served Princess Ahō (Ahō no Miya), and while I mingled with  
others and entertained them, I did not lose my true self, and because of these  
secret acts of charity, I hopped from Chinese to Japanese pleasure quarters,

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<sup>208</sup> “Ahō makura kotoba,” *Sharebon Taisei* 1, edited by Sharebon Taisei Heishū Iinkai (Chūōkōronsha, 1978), 238.

<sup>209</sup> This is an allusion to Poem 67 by the Sūō Handmaid in *Hyakunin Isshu*. See Mostow, *Pictures of the Heart*, 340-1.

and unmistakably learned their secrets. Now you think that you will probably come to know falsehood, but you don't know that falsehood is adapted to reality. Since it is touching when someone aspires to something keenly, I produced this one book," she said, wrote an amusing story, and disappeared. When I lifted the pillow, I was charmed by the purple dawn that had arrived so soon. Thinking that this, too, was probably a lie coming true, I revisited my dream. When I opened the book, it was certainly written, but there was no set title. Should I discard it? The person who insisted that I give it a title if not discarding it and tear it apart if discarding it, was Lord Tōkūsai. He provided the title of *The Fool's Pillow Words*.

The Preface of *The Fool's Pillow Words* alludes to the opening of *The Pillow Book* through the image of spring. The phrase *tsurezure* also recalls both *The Pillow Book* and *Tsurezuregusa*. However, unlike Sei Shōnagon's work which depicts spring dawn, *Ahō makura kotoba* begins with a spring evening. The narrator tells readers that as he was thinking of various pleasure quarters, an old woman appeared before him. The depiction of the woman as a writer who served in the court alludes to Heian-period woman writers. The mention of China further suggests that the old woman was most likely Sei Shōnagon. Her depiction as an experienced courtesan reveals a perception of female court attendants from the past as promiscuous women. Thus, the Preface transforms the imperial court into a pleasure quarter and female attendants into prostitutes. *The Pillow Book* describes various aspects of the life at court and likewise this work portrays life within the pleasure quarters.

Having set the work on a spring evening, the author opens with a list entitled "Plains" (*Hara wa*). However, rather than discussing plains, readers are presented with descriptions

of the pleasure quarters of Kyoto and Edo, namely Shimabara and Yoshiwara, each containing the word “plain” (*hara*). The eleventh-century lists in *Makura no sōshi* classified poetic topics similarly to *utamakura* handbooks, which were designed to facilitate the composition of poetry. These “poetic catalogues,” in Mark Morris’ words, contained connotations with which the informed reader in the Heian period could engage.<sup>210</sup> Unlike the Heian-period lists, however, the lists in *Ahō makura kotoba* catalogue topics related to the pleasure quarters, specifically names of brothels and courtesans. For example, the list entitled “Mountains” (*Yama wa*) in the *Pillow Book* appears as follows:

Mounts Ogura, Mikasa, Konokure, Wasurezu, Iritachi, Kase, Hiwa, Katasari  
 (I should be interested to know for whom it stood aside), Itsuwa, Nochise,  
 Kasatori, Hira, Toko (I enjoy recalling the Emperor’s poem that goes, “Nor  
 ever dare reveal my name!”), Ibuki, Asakura (I like the idea that the lovers  
 probably met again in another place), Iwata, Ōhire (its name also pleases me,  
 for it brings to mind the envoys at the Extraordinary Festivals), Tamuke,  
 Miwa (most delightful), Otowa, Machikane, Tamasaka, Miminashi, Sue no  
 Matsu, Katsuragi, the Sacred Mountain of Mino, Mounts Hahaso, Kurai, Kibi  
 no Naka, Arashi, Sarashina, Obasute, Oshio, Asama, Katateme, Kaeru,  
 Imose.<sup>211</sup>

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<sup>210</sup> Morris explains that in Heian Japan *utamakura* referred to “poetaster’s handbooks” and did not have the meaning of toponyms infused with poetic connotations. See Mark Morris, “Sei Shōnagon’s Poetic Catalogues,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 40, no. 1 (June, 1980): 5-54, 24 and 32-33.

<sup>211</sup> Ivan Morris, 14.



The majority of the mountains included in this list are related to love poems and included in collections of poems such as *Man'yōshū* (Mikasayama), *Goshūishū* (Sue no Matsuyama), and *Ise shū* (Itsuwa-matayama). The list with the same heading in *Ahō makura kotoba* reads:

まろ山、いもせ山<sup>212</sup>

Maroyama, Imoseyama

Instead of place names that appear in classical Japanese poetry, this “list” includes the names of the pleasure quarters of Maruyama in Nagasaki and Imoseyama in Kii, as the contemporary notes to the text indicate. In addition, a note acknowledges the misspelling of the pleasure quarter in Nagasaki as it appears as “Maroyama,” rather than “Maruyama.” The text appropriates the list as it appears in *The Pillow Book* and instead of discussing the geography of Japan, it focuses on sites important to the culture of pleasure seeking.

Another example comes from the first list in the text entitled “Plains” (*Fuchi* 淵). It reads:

玉淵 あるはひとりふちふたりふちかこわれひとにありといとおし  
しんまちは嶋はらの女郎にまろ山のさうぞくさせてよしはらのほりを  
もたせ大坂のあげやにてといへばなり遊客よ遊客よ伊勢が家集に  
飛鳥川ふちにもあらぬわか家もせにかはりゆく物にそ有りける。<sup>213</sup>

Tamabuchi, or “remuneration” for one, “remuneration” for two; having a concubine is so charming.

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<sup>212</sup> “Ahō makura kotoba,” 239.

<sup>213</sup> Ibid., 241.

In Shinmachi a courtesan from Shimabara dressed in a robe from Maruyama  
and with the independent spirit of Yoshiwara said, “In a house of assignation  
in Osaka.” Hey, patrons, come this way! In the collection of Lady Ise it says:

not a deep pool of  
the Asuka River yet  
my house has turned to  
tumbling coins flowing like the  
bubbling shallows of the stream<sup>214</sup>

This list puns the word for “pool” (*fuchi* 淵) and the word for “remuneration” (*fuchi* 扶持).

The first reference is to Tamabuchi’s daughter, a talented courtesan who impressed Emperor Uda, as recorded in *Jikkinshō*.<sup>215</sup> This is followed by a concise description of the ideal courtesan that appeared in earlier works as well, including Ihara Saikaku’s *Kōshoku ichidai otoko* 好色一代男 (Life of an Amorous Man, 1682). Finally, Ise’s poem recorded in *Kokinshū* reinforces the theme of courtesans and remuneration. The text has omitted the headnote to the poem which reads: “Composed when she [Ise] sold her house.”<sup>216</sup> Thus removing the poem from its context, *Ahō makura kotoba* again places a Heian-period woman poet among descriptions of courtesans. Again, this list transforms the collection of pools into one that focuses on courtesans and money.

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<sup>214</sup> *Kokinshū*, 334 (#990). The poem also appears in the *Gunsho ruiju* version of the *Ise shu*.

<sup>215</sup> *Jikkinshō*, vol. 10, story 50.

<sup>216</sup> *Kokinshū*, 334. 家売りによめる

*Ahō makura kotoba* closely resembles Kigin's *Shunshoshō* by providing notes in addition to the main text. It imitates Kigin's work by using notes to demarcate boundaries of sections, indicating, for example “from here a new section begins” (是より亦別段ナリ *kore yori mata betsudan nari*), as I discussed in Chapter One.<sup>217</sup> Moreover, notes from Kigin's commentary appear in the same way as they do in the annotated edition. The main text contained in *Ahō makura kotoba* is also modelled after *The Pillow Book*. It is a collection of both *mono*-type and *wa*-type lists. It integrates lists that appear in *The Pillow Book* by borrowing not only their heading but also citing directly from them. The effect of *Ahō makura kotoba* is a hodge-podge of quotations from and allusions to classical texts, including *Ise monogatari*, *Saigyō monogatari*, *Jikkinshō*, *Kokinshū*, *Hyakunin isshu*, *Kōshoku ichidai otoko*. Thus the work can be seen as a pastiche of various texts adapted to the context of the eighteenth-century pleasure quarters. What is the role of these subtexts within the narrative?

Let us examine one famous scene from *The Pillow Book* in greater detail. *Ahō makura kotoba* cites the episode about the dog Okinamaro and the cat Myōbu directly from *Makura no sōshi*. This episode appears in the section entitled “Kotogoto naru mono” (“Things that differ though they appear the same”). The quote from *Makura no sōshi* starts with the opening of the episode, introduces the Emperor's cat and the dog, tells of the dog's attack on the cat, and concludes with the dog's exile to Dog Island. The text continues:

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<sup>217</sup> “*Ahō makura kotoba*.”

その比は世の人もねこをばわきていとおかし物におもひいとかあいが  
りけるついで又おほんふところにもいらんものはとの心ばへをとりて  
女郎をねこといひはじめけるとなむ<sup>218</sup>

How charming that people in those days treated cats in a special way. They  
lavished affection on them. Next, they say, the emperor appeared as about to  
embrace someone, and thus began to call courtesans “cats.”

The author brings *Makura no sōshi* into the text but concludes with an unexpected ending  
that relates the court of Heian-Japan to the pleasure quarters of early-modern Japan. This  
sudden transformation is entertaining for the reader, but it also effectively rewrites the  
*Pillow Book* episode into a commentary related to courtesans. The text ties the emperor’s  
love for his cat to the amorousness of Heian aristocracy, and thus constructs an erotic image  
of the classical court that is linked to contemporary society.

The episode about a beloved son made into a priest that appears among the first  
sections in *The Pillow Book* has also been incorporated into this eighteenth-century text. The  
section in *Makura no sōshi* focuses on the miserable destiny of a young man who has taken  
holy vows. However, *Ahō makura kotoba* has replaced the hero with a female protagonist  
and discusses the hardships of a daughter sold into prostitution. The eighteenth-century  
reworking of the episode reads:

おもはん子を女郎にうりたらんこそはいと心ぐるしけれさるはいとた  
のもしき玉のこしもおほきならひなるをたゞてんやものゝやうに思ひ

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<sup>218</sup> “Ahō makura kotoba,” 241.

たらむこそいとおしけれかぶろだちはいたくごうぜられいぬるをもや  
すからずいふましてしかへらるゝなどのかたはいとくるしげなり<sup>219</sup>

It breaks my heart to think of parents selling a beloved daughter into prostitution. However, although it has been widely said that it is a promising thing as she may marry up, it is unfortunate precisely because she is regarded as mere merchandise for sale. The training period is extremely toilsome, and they say her sleep is restless. Needless to say, it seems irksome when she is transferred to another brothel.

Unlike the episode entitled “That Parents Should Bring up Some Beloved Son” in *The Pillow Book*, the episode in *Ahō makura kotoba* is concerned with the destiny of a girl separated from her family. The narrator shows sympathy for young girls sold into prostitution by revealing the difficulty of their lives within brothels. The opening of the section brings *The Pillow Book* to mind in referencing a parent and child, but then the topic quickly changes, creating a sense of surprise and amusement for the reader. In discussing the style of works within the *sharebon* genre, Miller notes that these texts “have such a wide potential for “subversion of reader expectations” with the use of satire.”<sup>220</sup> However, drawing attention to the misfortune of young courtesans, the text provides criticism of the hegemonic discourse about filial piety, and specifically of a daughter whose body is sold for the sake of her parents. This motif populates Edo-period fiction, the most famous example coming from the play *Chūshingura* (first performed in 1748). In a scene that elicits sympathy and respect,

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<sup>219</sup> “Ahō makura kotoba,” 240.

<sup>220</sup> Miller, 134.

Okaru, a dutiful daughter, agrees to be sold into prostitution by her father Yoichibei in order to raise money for a vendetta. *Ahō makura kotoba*, however, does not present the heroine as exemplary, but rather expresses pity for her state, and thus can be seen as offering a veiled critique of Confucian ideology.

Another aspect of this reworking of Sei Shōnagon's *Pillow Book* is the inclusion of two stories from earlier texts that deal with courtesans and Buddhism. These stories come from *Saigyō monogatari* and *Jikkinshō*. One of the best-known episodes in *Saigyō monogatari* describes the itinerant poet Saigyō's exchange of poems with a courtesan at Eguchi who refuses to offer him a place to stay when he is caught in heavy rain. Before departing Saigyō composes the following poem:

Hard it must be, to tire completely, of the world's ways, if you are loath to  
offer, even a moment's lodging!<sup>221</sup>

The courtesan replies:

I only thought, since I hear you're one, tired of the world, not to have your  
heart seek, a moment's lodging.<sup>222</sup>

The courtesan's rejoinder points out the hypocrisy of Saigyō, a Buddhist monk, requesting accommodation from a courtesan. Her refusal to provide "a moment's lodging" is doubled with the notion of this world being but a temporary abode. Thus the rejection of Saigyō is also a critique of Buddhist views of sexuality and women's place as practitioners, since it is

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<sup>221</sup> Gustav Heldt, "Saigyō's Traveling Tale. A Translation of *Saigyō Monogatari*."

*Monumenta Nipponica* 52, no. 4 (Winter, 1997): 467-521, 514.

<sup>222</sup> Ibid.

the courtesan (also known as Eguchi), rather than the monk, who displays a superior understanding of Buddhist tenets. Eguchi's response underscores the discrepancy between Buddhist ideology and the priest's conduct.<sup>223</sup>

In contrast, the *Jikkinshō* episode tells a story about the Holy Man Shōkū who desperately wished to see the incarnation of Fugen. In a dream he is instructed to visit a courtesan at Murotsu, which is the location of the first pleasure quarter in Japan.<sup>224</sup> When he arrives at the port, he sees a courtesan entertaining others by singing the following song:

At the Mitarai shores in Murozumi along the Suō sea  
the winds do not blow but little waves rise.

The courtesan then transforms into Fugen and before long dies. Superficially, each story describes the unsuccessful proposition of a monk to a courtesan, with the story from the *Jikkinshō* portraying the woman as attractive but inaccessible. But these two famous episodes, which were later transmitted as popular stories and reenacted in *nō* and *kabuki* plays, also reveal the tension between women's sexuality and Buddhist practice. Moreover, the agency granted to the female entertainers constructs them as superior to the monks, and this power relation is projected onto the institutions each of them represents, that is, the pleasure quarters and Buddhist clergy.

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<sup>223</sup> For other interpretations of the passage see the following studies: Bernard Faure, *The Power of Denial: Buddhism, Purity, and Gender* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2003), 265; Janet R. Goodwin, *Selling Songs and Smiles: The Sex Trade in Heian and Kamakura Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007), 117; Marra, *Representations of Power*, 94.

<sup>224</sup> Ikeda Yasaburō et al., ed., *Kōshoku gonin onna*, Tokusen Nihon no koten 8. (Tokyo: Sekai Bunkasha, 1982), 17.

*Ahō makura kotoba* thus reveals the appeal that Sei Shōnagon's work had for a readership related to or interested in the pleasure quarters. The inclusion of episodes and poems from various literary works acted as a means of confirming readers' erudition when they recognized the source text. Knowledge of *Makura no sōshi*, likewise, amplified the reader's pleasure at identifying excerpts from the Heian-period work that were adapted to the early-modern culture of entertainment districts. The form and the content of Sei Shōnagon's text further enabled the production of a narrative with an underlying tone of criticism of the dominant structures of power, and recreated a world at the core of which lay savviness related to pleasure seeking.

## 2.4 Eroticism and Manners in Action

Soon after the production of *Ahō makura kotoba* a work entitled *Shūi Makura no sōshi kagaishō* (Gleanings of the Pillow Book and the Pleasure District, ca. 1751; hereafter referred to as the *Kagaishō*) was published in Osaka. The preface reads:

むかし清少納言といへる女房、ひとりねの枕の友に、夜な（夜な）ふ  
でずさめる書枕草子とてそこはかもなき風流感情を後の世につたへ侍  
らんとて、やがて桜木にせし時、花柳の言葉は鄙也とて此一巻をはぶ  
き去りて、彼草紙にハのせざりける、是をおぼろげに聞はつりたる人  
の言ならわせにや、今の代閨局に男女の裸を画けるをバ、必ず枕草紙  
といへり、清氏の心はその旨を専らにして、其かたちにかゝわらず、  
今の画ハそのかたちを重として、其むねにあづからず、ついにはぶき



去りらる言葉を知る人なし、されば往昔つたなからぬ人も、世のうきにつれて、一たび花街のつとめに身をしづめては、かれにふれこゝに習ひて、やがてつたなき心もきざし侍らん事を言せく思ひ、またハもとよりかたくななる女郎たちのいけん草にもと、かの一巻をかきつゞけり、拾遺枕草子とはなづけぬ。<sup>225</sup>

In the past, a lady-in-waiting named Sei Shōnagon was lonely every night and wrote in her book *Makura no sōshi*, trying to convey ephemeral elegance and emotions to later readers. When her writing was printed [was made into a woodblock print], these stories about the pleasure quarters were seen as vulgar, thus this single volume was omitted and not included within her book. Those who vaguely heard about it—perhaps because of the way it was passed down—would certainly say that *Makura no sōshi* depicts the men and women of today naked in their bedrooms. Sei's sole intention was not related to such accounts. The current story regards the form [of *The Pillow Book*] as important and ignores its content, and eventually there is no one who knows what the omitted volume was. Yet, even a woman of no low birth might be caught in the ups and downs of this world and submerged into prostitution. Once there, she becomes involved and accustomed to it before she knows it, and it is unfortunate that soon her vulgar feelings are revealed. Thus, hoping that it would be at least slightly instructive to courtesans, who are stubborn

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<sup>225</sup> Kagaishō, *Sharebon Taisei* vol. 1, edited by Sharebon Taisei Heishū Iinkai (Chūōkōronsha, 1979), 289.

by nature, I composed this one book about the pleasure quarters and entitled it *Gleanings of The Pillow Book*.

The preface tells readers that this work was originally written by Sei, but was omitted because of its sexual content. It construes Sei Shōnagon as a courtesan from a pleasure quarter in the past, who recorded her experience in order to transmit them to later generations of readers. Because of its sexual content, this booklet by Sei was not included in her *Pillow Book*. However, the preface asserts the value of the work by stressing the fact that it is instructive reading for courtesans. A list of twelve works referred to in the *Kagaishō* immediately follows the table of contents. These works include *Nihon shoki* 日本書記 (Chronicles of Japan, 720), Sugawara Michizane's *Ruijū kokushi* 類聚国史 (Classified National History, 892), the collection of supplementary government regulations *Engishiki* 延喜式 (Procedures of the Engi Era, 905-927), Minamoto no Shitagō's *Wamyōshō* (Topical Collection of Japanese Terms, 934),<sup>226</sup> *Heike monogatari* (The Tale of the Heike, 1180-1185), *Gikeiki* (The Story of Yoshitsune, 1410), and the collection of songs *Matsu no ochiba* 松の落葉 (Fallen Leaves of Pines, 1710). Most of these texts, which would have been understood primarily as classical histories, were referred to in the commentaries on *Makura no sōshi* from the previous century. This selection of historical works at the beginning of the text signals a narrative grounded in respected, canonical texts from the past. Despite being a newly written, mid-eighteenth-century text, the *Kagaishō* is annotated and formatted similarly to commentaries on *The Pillow Book* from the previous century. Why would the producers choose to annotate a contemporary text and represent it in the manner of an older

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<sup>226</sup> I use Goodwin's translation of the title. Goodwin, *Selling Songs*, 13.

one? The *Kagaishō* notes imitate the commentaries on Sei Shōnagon's work and reinforce the impression that this booklet is no different from the eleventh-century work. As was the case with annotations of *The Pillow Book*, the notes in the *Kagaishō* effectively guide readers through the work and highlight important aspects. Moreover, notes serve as an important tool for edifying a less knowledgeable readership. What aspects of the text are subject to annotation? The notes focus mainly on key concepts within the language of the pleasure district, including *jorō* 女郎 (prostitute), *nakai* 中居 (intermediary between a patron and a prostitute), *miuke* 身うけ (buying out a prostitute's contract), *taishetsu no kyaku* 大せつのきやく (a valued patron). For example, the following definition is provided for *jorō*:

女郎 嶋の白人はなり鳥羽院の御宇嶋の千歳若の前などいへる美女を  
召して踊りなど覧ありし事国史に見へたり是白人の始也<sup>227</sup>

*Jorō* (Prostitute): An unlicensed prostitute in Shima-no-uchi. In *Kokushi* there is an episode about two beauties named Shima-no-senzai and Waka-no-mai during the time of retired emperor Toba, whom he summoned and watched dance. This is the origin of unlicensed prostitution.

This definition of *jorō* is based on a classical episode about the *shirabyōshi* 白拍子 dancer Giō which is found in *The Tales of the Heike*. *Shirabyōshi* was a combination of dance and song performed by women dressed in male attire as part of court and temple celebrations during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The eighteenth-century *Kagaishō* text models its

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<sup>227</sup> *Kagaishō*, 292

definition of a current courtesan on a classical description of *shirabyōshi* performers found in an earlier, canonical text that describes their activities at the imperial court.<sup>228</sup> The *Kagaishō* provides a source for this definition by citing a work indicated as *Kokushi*. This likely refers not to Michizane's *Kokushi*, but to some other text; however, the definition in fact draws from *Heike monogatari*. By citing an unknown history, yet drawing from a famous example of entertainers associated with the imperial court of the past, the note creates a long tradition of prostitution outside the licensed quarters and elevates the status of women engaged in this profession. The annotation at the opening of the text reads:

此草紙の発端に嶋の内の風情を沙汰して客女郎のよしあしを書けりよ  
める人に嶋の内のいきかたをしたしむんとの作者の微意也文法奇妙に  
や<sup>229</sup>

The beginning of this booklet provides instruction on Shima-no-uchi and records the merits and weaknesses of patrons and courtesans. The author humbly hopes that readers will familiarize themselves with the etiquette of Shima-no-uchi. The style of this work may be seen as strange.

Shima-no-uchi refers to the entertainment district in Osaka known as Dōtonbori 道頓堀, and more specifically to an establishment of private courtesans.<sup>230</sup>

The work consists of twenty-five *mono*-type lists and one *wa*-type list. The didactic nature of the work is evident from the classification of primarily negative and undesirable

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<sup>228</sup> Burton Watson, trans., *The Tales of the Heike* (New York: Columbia Press, 2003), 16.

<sup>229</sup> *Kagaishō*, 292.

<sup>230</sup> Matsudaira, no. 1, 24.

behaviours. The work begins with “Nikuki mono” (Hateful Things) and continues with “Kitanaki mono” (Unclean Things) “Abunaki mono,” (Dangerous Things), “Susamajiki mono” (Depressing Things). The only lists that convey positive aspects of one’s conduct are “Omoimasari suru mono” (Things That Make Your Heart Swell), “Aware naru mono” (Things that Move the Heart), “Kokochi yoki mono” (Pleasant Things), and “Ureshiki mono” (Pleasing Things). The list entitled “Hateful Things” (Nikuki mono) reads:

かねつかはぬ客のんめすぎたると。はじめてよびたる女郎、またハー  
二座をもかさねながら、いまだ心もしらぬが、中居と内しやうばなし  
のみさゝやきたるいとにくし。そひたるとおもふとおとこなれども、  
身うけするちからなければすゑをたのめど、いやなともふかたへゆき  
て、あかるゝしかけ。<sup>231</sup>

--A patron who does not squander money but acts disrespectfully.

--When a courtesan meeting a patron for the first time, or who has met him  
once or twice, does not come to know his feelings, but engages only in  
private talk with the intermediary.

--Although there is a man whom a courtesan wants to marry, if he is unable  
to buy her contract out even when she asks him to look after her, she goes to  
someone she dislikes and strategically flatters him.

A desirable behaviour is illustrated through the list entitled “Things That Make Your Heart Swell” (*omoi masari suru mono*). It reads:

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<sup>231</sup> Ibid., 25.

わかき女の文うるハしくかきてせたるハさらなりあひみるよすがなく  
て恋しふ折から消息したる<sup>232</sup>

When a young woman receives a letter with beautiful handwriting, but even more when a letter from a loved one arrives despite being prevented from meeting.

The episode is intended to teach men what courtesans regard as appealing. It underscores the importance of beautiful handwriting and correspondence as a way to reveal one's steadfastness. This reference to the significance of correspondence recalls *Makura no sōshi* and its emphasis on elegant handwriting and the choice of paper.<sup>233</sup> Aristocratic culture is thus presented as a model upon which the culture associated with courtesans is developed.

Another aspect of the *Kagaishō* that signals the presence of *Makura no sōshi* is the style and specifically the inclusion of sections that open in a way identical to Sei Shōnagon's work but then shift. For example, the section entitled "Months" (*koro wa*) in *Makura no sōshi* provides a list of all the months except for the second, the sixth, and the tenth, and concludes that since there are annual events in every month, all of them are interesting. In the *Kagaishō*, however, the list comments on the events for the courtesans in each month

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<sup>232</sup> *Kagaishō*, 296.

<sup>233</sup> Some of the references to writing appear in sections such as "Hateful Things" (Section 27, IM) ["I hate people whose letters show disrespect to worldly civilities..."], "Unsuitable Things" (Section 47, IM) "Ugly handwriting on red paper," A Young Bachelor (S. 317, IM) "...starts to write his next-morning letter. He does not let his brush run down the paper in a careless scrawl, but puts his heart and soul into the calligraphy"

throughout the year. It tells of the special atmosphere during the first and second months when new courtesans visit the teahouses to introduce themselves, the sightseeing excursions during the third and fourth months, the growth of intimacy during the seventh and eighth months, the cold days during the eleventh month and the intermediaries' busy preparations for the end of the year, and finally the bustling atmosphere during the twelfth month. In addition to the modeling of the text upon *Makura no sōshi*, the writer informs readers through a note that the passage which follows is Sei Shōnagon's well-known (*rei no*) "play of the brush" (*fude-zusami* 筆ずさみ), an allusion to Kigin's commentary. This section presents the pleasure district of Shima-no-uchi as one that has its own culture, its own events, and its own calendar. By modeling the *Kagaishō* on *The Pillow Book* the author draws multiple parallels between court culture and that of the courtesans in Shima-no-uchi. The author of the eighteenth-century text uses Sei Shōnagon's work to present different content through a familiar form. He construes the Heian court and the pleasure district as similar but not identical, as "almost the same but not quite."<sup>234</sup> On the one hand, such representations stress the commonality between the cultures. On the other hand, through content diverging from *Makura no sōshi*, the *Kagaishō* depicts the world of Shima-no-uchi as self-contained, with its own order, customs, and festivities.

The work ends with a passage entitled "Epigraph to the *Kagaishō*" (*Kagaishō no daiji* 花街抄題辞). It portrays *Makura no sōshi* and Sei Shōnagon in the following way:

...清女の女詞を閨語嬉談に託し、交合の面と影を模して、天の浮橋の  
昔をこゝにす、此全編を古枕草紙に省しハ神秘のあた々しく洩ん事

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<sup>234</sup> Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York & London: Routledge: 1994), 89.

をおそれしなり、誠に菊理媛の跡をたづね、男女の道に通ぜし粹女と  
言べし<sup>235</sup>

...I have expressed Sei's feminine words through an entertaining story in an erotic language, copying scenes of sexual intercourse and imitating the past of the heavenly floating bridge. This whole work was omitted from the old *Makura no sōshi* because (Sei) feared that its secret would be revealed carelessly. Truly, [she] followed in the footsteps of Princess Kukuri,<sup>236</sup> became well-versed in the way of love between men and women, and was naturally called a woman of elegance.

This passage resembles the colophon of *The Pillow Book* which claims that Sei Shōnagon's work was not originally intended for circulation. The respective section reads:

As for these notes about things that struck my eyes and mind, I wrote them down and collected them together at home when I had nothing else to do, thinking to myself all the while, "Is anyone going to see this? Probably not." However, since there are places here and there where I have likely gone too far and said embarrassing things about others, I thought to hide them away

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<sup>235</sup> *Kagaishō*, 302.

<sup>236</sup> Kukuri no mikoto appears in *Nihon shoki*. In the Land of Yomi when Izanami refuses to accompany Izanagi and prefers to stay in the land of the dead, the deity Kukuri convinces Izanagi to leave. Since she reconciled Izanami and Izanagi, she is considered the deity of matchmaking.



carefully. Nonetheless, they leaked out, as they say, “like tears overflowing a dam.”<sup>237</sup>

In this passage Sei expresses her concern over the fact that her notes, which she hoped would not be read by others, have begun to circulate. According to the colophon, she is reluctant to have her writings read due to criticisms she has made of others and the fact that they may see this and take offence. Drawing from this idea of Sei’s hidden booklet, the *Kagaishō* replaces the concern over disparaging comments about members of the aristocracy with concern over the erotic content of the work. Sei’s *Pillow Book* is represented as a collection of “woman’s words” (*onna kotoba*) and is transformed into one of “bedroom words” (*keigo* 閨語), implying erotic content. The *Kagaishō* also asserts that *Makura no sōshi* contained scenes of sexual intercourse and constructs Sei as an exceedingly knowledgeable courtesan. The allusion to the deity Kukuri suggests that Sei is regarded as a matchmaker and her *Pillow Book* was intended to unite men and women. The *Kagaishō* projects an image of *Makura no sōshi* as a manual of the manners associated with the Heian imperial court, which is construed as a pleasure quarter in the distant past. By modelling his work on the Heian predecessor, the author of the eighteenth-century text provides a contemporary version of the etiquette of pleasure-seeking, and situates his text within a literary tradition whose progenitor is Sei Shōnagon’s *Pillow Book*.

## 2.5 Conclusion

As the three rewritings of *Makura no sōshi* show, erotic parodies of *The Pillow Book* encompassed a range of intended readers and contexts. The collection of *zappai* verses

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<sup>237</sup> NKBZ 11, 463-465. The translation is mine.

entitled *Inu makura* appropriates the style of Sei Shōnagon's work to assert masculinity and ownership of knowledge about literature from the past. *Ahō makura kotoba* examines various licensed quarters throughout the country and remaps Japan into a world of pleasure-seeking that offers a critique of dominant Confucian and Buddhist discourses. The *Kagaishō* serves as a guide to the manners of the district of unlicensed brothels known as Shima-no-uchi. It likens the process of courtship, which was central to Heian literary culture, to the practice of wooing courtesans. All three works function as sources of a specific kind of knowledge related to eroticism and sexuality.

These erotic rewritings of *Makura no sōshi* transform the imperial court into a pleasure quarter and its author into a knowledgeable courtesan from the past. Although such transformations may be seen as attempts to construct a distinct tradition of sexuality rooted in the Heian imperial court, the early modern texts reduce court culture to the politics of the sex trade. In a similar fashion, Sei Shōnagon is reduced to a courtesan who, through her writing, conveys her sexual experiences to later readers.

## Chapter Three

### Rewriting Sei Shōnagon's *Pillow Book* for a Female Readership

#### 3.1 Introduction

Having considered the popularization of *Makura no sōshi* among male readers, I now turn to illustrated adaptations of the work which appear to have been targeted towards female readers. Unlike *The Tale of Genji* and *The Ise Stories*, *The Pillow Book* was not viewed as amenable to illustration, as the scant number of editions that contain images suggests. From the mid-eighteenth to the early nineteenth centuries, however, three illustrated adaptations of *The Pillow Book* were produced: *Ehon Asahi yama* 画本朝日山 (Illustrated Book: Asahi/Morning Sun Mountain, 1741), *Ehon Haru no akebono* 笑本春の曙 (Erotic Book: Spring Dawn, 1772), and “Sei Shōnagon no kisai; dō *Makura no sōshi* no kigo” 清少納言の奇才・同『枕草子』の奇語 (Sei Shōnagon's unmatched talent; Prodigious words from Sei Shōnagon's *Pillow Book*) included in *Onna yō bunshō yukikaiburi* 女用文章往かひ振 (Conduct Guidebook for Women, 1818; reprinted in 1833). All three texts are illustrated, focus on the list-like passages of *Makura no sōshi*, claim Sei Shōnagon as their author, were composed and illustrated by men, and, as I will argue, were intended for women. Although sections that introduce Sei Shōnagon and her text appeared as early as 1661 in *Honchō jōkan* 本朝女鑑 (A Mirror for Women of Our Country) and *Ominaeshi monogatari*, which contain anecdotes about Heian women writers in a fashion similar to the much earlier *setsuwa* collection *Jikkishō* and the treatise on poetry *Etsumokushō*, adaptations of *The Pillow Book* were not produced until the mid-eighteenth century, and the pioneer is *Ehon Asahi yama*.

What necessitated the popularization of *The Pillow Book* through editions accompanied by images in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries? What kind of intended readership do such new versions project? What forms of knowledge was Sei Shōnagon's work believed to transmit to Tokugawa-era readers? What image of the author did such works construct? The first section of this chapter considers the production and dissemination of the earliest illustrated digest of *The Pillow Book* in the Edo period; this work, in fact became the base text for subsequent rewritings of Sei Shōnagon's text. An examination of an erotic book that was intended for girls' education pertaining to marriage follows in the second section. Finally, the last section of the chapter takes up an adaptation of *Makura no sōshi* included in a conduct book for girls and shows that sexual allure was presented as important to women even outside the genre of erotic books.

Literary works composed especially for women, such as the *Sanbōe kotoba* 三宝絵詞 (Three Jewels, 984),<sup>238</sup> and *Menoto no fumi* 乳母の文 (The Wet Nurse's Letter, ca. 1264)<sup>239</sup> among many others, existed well before the seventeenth century. But it was during the second half of the seventeenth century that the genre of "books for women" (*jōsho/nyōsho* 女書) developed.<sup>240</sup> Such books have been retrospectively divided into four

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<sup>238</sup> Edward Kamens, *The Three Jewels: A Study and Translation of Minamoto Tamenori's Sanbōe* (University of Michigan, Center for Japanese Studies, 1988).

<sup>239</sup> Christina Laffin, "Grappling with Women's Education: Gender and Sociality in Nun Abutsu's *Menoto no fumi*," 62-70, *New Horizons in Japanese Literary Studies: Canon Formation, Gender, and Media*, edited by Haruo Shirane (Tokyo: Bensei Publishing Inc., 2009).

<sup>240</sup> P. F. Kornicki, "Unsuitable Books for Women? *Genji monogatari* and *Ise monogatari* in Late Seventeenth-Century Japan," *Monumenta Nipponica* 60, no. 2 (Summer 2005): 147-193, 160. Kornicki refers to the catalogue of books included in *Shorin shuppan* 1, 94-5.

main categories.<sup>241</sup> Following the divisions established by Matsubara Hidee, the first type of books such as *Onna imagawa* 女今川 (A Woman's Imagawa, 1687) and *Onna daigaku* 女大学 (Greater Learning for Women, 1716), focuses on Confucian values including filial piety, mercy, faithfulness, education, tolerance, the three obediences (*sanjū* 三従),<sup>242</sup> and the seven grounds for divorce (*shichikyo* 七去).<sup>243</sup> Another category comprises books that discuss details about everyday life such as clothing, food, dwellings, marriage, childbirth, annual events, female comportment, Shinto and Buddhist practices, and kimono sewing. A third category consists of books that centre on the arts, such as flower arrangement, tea ceremony, music (*koto* and *shamisen*), calligraphy, painting, and games such as *sugoroku*. Finally, the last category contains works related to literature, specifically to the Japanese poetry recorded within the twenty-one imperial anthologies. This final group owed its existence to the centrality of *waka* composition in young women's education.

Peter Kornicki has observed that the birth of the category of “books for women” (*joshō* 女書) signals “professional recognition of a new class of reader, if not of purchaser, and identification of certain types of books as appropriate for women.”<sup>244</sup> This gendering of the book market also suggests that there emerged a need for specific knowledge to be transmitted to Tokugawa women that outlined the ways in which women were required to

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<sup>241</sup> Matsubara Hidee, “Edo jidai ni okeru josei no bungakuteki kyōyō ni tsuite: Sagoromo no tōsho keishiki no hanpon o chūshin ni,” *Himeji tanki daigaku kenkyūhōkoku*, no. 23 (Jan., 1978), 80.

<sup>242</sup> A woman's obligations to her father, husband, and son.

<sup>243</sup> The seven reasons for which a man could divorce his wife were the following: sterility, adultery, disobedience to the father-in-law or the mother-in-law, talkativeness, theft, jealousy, and disease.

<sup>244</sup> Kornicki, “Unsuitable Books,” 160.

sustain a specifically gendered performance. However, classical Japanese texts were not initially included in the genre of women's books, because the gendering of such works did not begin until the end of the seventeenth century, as Mostow convincingly contends.<sup>245</sup> The trend of repackaging Heian literary works for female audiences in the eighteenth century was preceded by a debate over the appropriateness of such texts as reading material for non-aristocratic women both young and old.<sup>246</sup> Japanese classics were criticized as immoral due to a number of factors, including the association of literary creativity and composition with lewdness (as asserted by Nagata Zensai 永田善斎 [1597–1664]); the female gender of the Heian writers, which “naturally” implied a lack of knowledge of Chinese classics and virtues (following the writings of Fujii Ransai 藤井懶斎 [1618?–1705?]); and the focus on *waka* in such texts, which was linked to lechery, as well as the perception of female learnedness as equal to conceitedness (according to Nakayama Sanryū 中山三柳 [1614–

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<sup>245</sup> Mostow has shown that the production of books designed particularly for female audiences burgeoned after the end of the seventeenth century, the main reason for which, he suggests, was the desire of “wealthy *chōnin*, rich farmer, and low-ranking samurai families [...] to place their daughters in service”.<sup>245</sup> Mostow also notes that *Hyakunin isshu* was central to women's education from the late seventeenth century on, and the *Ise* was favored as appropriate for women and included in their trousseaux from the end of the seventeenth through the end of the eighteenth centuries, whereas the *Genji* was represented by the chapter titles and poems associated with them, while there was no edition particularly targeted at women. Joshua S. Mostow, “Illustrated Classical Texts for Women in the Edo Period,” *The Female Subject: Reading and Writing in Early Modern Japan*, edited by P. F. Kornicki et al., 59-86, Michigan Monograph Series in Japanese Studies no. 70 (Ann Arbor: Centre for Japanese Studies, The University of Michigan, 2010).

<sup>246</sup> Kornicki, “Unsuitable Books,” 160.

1684] and Nagaoka Itan 長岡意丹 (seventeenth century).<sup>247</sup> Commentary by Nakayama

Sanryū from 1670 exemplifies this stance:

[...] the way of the Buddhist prelates is in ruins and the girls immerse themselves solely in vice. Ono no Komachi, Sei Shōnagon, Murasaki Shikibu, and Izumi Shikibu were all accomplished writers and skilled in *waka* composition, and it was probably for that reason that they were all strumpets. It must be realized that in another country [i.e., China], too, women skilled in the poetic arts all became strumpets. A woman follows her husband, so even if she is learned it is of no benefit.<sup>248</sup>

Instead of reading Heian literature, Confucian scholars advised women to turn to Chinese classics, specifically didactic texts, such as *The Classic of Filial Piety* (孝經 Xiao Jing) and *Biographies of Notable Women* (列女伝 Lie Nü Zhuan).<sup>249</sup> Despite the fact that the voices of Confucianists initially dominated the debate over what texts women should read, other scholars resisted such criticism of literary works from the distant past. Some examples include Ikkadō Setsurin 一華堂切臨 (1591-1662) and Kitamura Kigin 北村季吟 (1624-1705), who asserted that Heian texts, and particularly *The Tale of Genji*, were composed to teach moral lessons.<sup>250</sup>

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<sup>247</sup> Ibid, 152-9.

<sup>248</sup> Ibid., 159.

<sup>249</sup> Ibid., 156.

<sup>250</sup> Ibid., 162-6.

Unlike the *Genji* and the *Ise*, the three complete commentaries on *Makura no sōshi* that emerged in the second half of the seventeenth century—precisely when these debates were most heated—did not criticize Sei Shōnagon’s work for its perceived lewdness.<sup>251</sup> Although *The Pillow Book* contains passages that focus on encounters between a man and a woman, or a woman’s demonstration of knowledge and learnedness, the authors of annotated editions—Katō Bansai, Kitamura Kigin, and Okanishi Ichū—did not express concern about the readings and interpretations of these sections. Why was Sei Shōnagon’s text overlooked? Perhaps the morality of *The Pillow Book* remained uncontested because the work was already relegated to the periphery of the literary canon. The scant number of poems included in *The Pillow Book* likely made this Heian classic unappealing to the producers of instructional manuals for women. Since the main purpose of such textbooks was to cultivate poetry composition skills, unlike the *Ise* and the *Genji* sections of *The Pillow Book* do not appear in *jokunsho*. Moreover, the text’s focus on Chinese classics rather than Japanese poetry might have elevated *The Pillow Book* in the eyes of Confucian scholars.

### 3.2 An Illustrated Digest of *The Pillow Book*

There is no extant edition that presents the complete original text of *The Pillow Book* with illustrations. The earliest example of an illustrated version of the work is the fourteenth-

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<sup>251</sup> For instance, in *Kogetsushō* 湖月抄 Kigin cites Kujō Tanemichi’s (1507-1594) commentary *Mōshinshō* 孟津抄 (1575) that warns readers of the *Genji* about its moral dangers. See Kornicki, 2005, 165. On the moral implications of *Ise monogatari* and Asai Ryōi’s 浅井了意 assessment in *Ise monogatari jokai* 伊勢物語抒海 (after 1655), see Newhard, 161-4.



century *Makura no sōshi emaki*. It is a *hakubyō emaki* 白描絵巻 with text brushed by either Retired Emperor Fushimi 伏見院 (1265-1317, r. 1287-1298) or his daughter Princess Shinshi 進子内親王 (dates unknown).<sup>252</sup> In its present form it consists of a single scroll that features seven of the diary-like passages from *The Pillow Book*.<sup>253</sup> Five of the sections focus on Emperor Ichijō and Empress Teishi, all of which depict episodes between 995 and 999 when Teishi's salon was in decline, as Mitamura Masako observes. Mitamura notes that the tension between Teishi's court and the faction of Fujiwara no Michinaga at the end of the tenth century parallels the rivalry between the two lines, the “junior” Daikakuji line 大覚寺統 of Emperor Kameyama (1249-1305, r. 1260-1274) and the “senior” Jimyōin line 持明院統 of Emperor Go-Fukakusa (1243-1304, r. 1246-1260) who were competing for the

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<sup>252</sup> Mitamura Masako, “Tennōsei kara *Makura no sōshi* o yomu,” *Kokubungaku: kaishaku to kyōzai no kenkyū*, Special Issue: *Makura no sōshiteki jinsei sekkei* 52, no. 6 (2006): 44-51, 44.

<sup>253</sup> The sections it includes are the following: “When the Lady of the Shigei Sha Entered the Crown Prince's Palace” (Section 100) (*Shigeisha tōgū ni* 淑景舎東宮に, Section 101), “On a Dark, Moonless Night in the Fifth Month” (*Satsuki bakari tsuki mo nō ito kuraki ni* 五月はかりつきもなういとくらきに, Section 132), “On the Tenth Day of Each Month” (Section 128) (*Kotono no otame ni* 故殿の御ために, Section 130), “One day when the Emperor Visited Her majesty's Rooms” (Section 87) (*Mumyō to iu biwa no okoto* 無名といふ琵琶の御琴, Section 90), two scenes from “Once when her Majesty was residing” (Section 83) (*Shiki no mizōshi ni owashimasu koro* 職の御曹司におはしすころ, Section 84), “When the Emperor returned from his visit to Yawata” (Section 121) (*Hashitanaki mono* はしたなきもの, Section 124).

imperial throne three centuries later.<sup>254</sup> Mitamura argues that the production of a scroll that focused on the splendor and harmony of the empress's court, despite the tragic consequences for Teishi and her entourage, reflects a desire to underscore and restore the imperial authority of the Jimyōin line.<sup>255</sup>

Four centuries after the production of the picture scroll, another illustrated version of Sei Shōnagon's text appeared in 1741. Entitled *Ehon Asahiyama* (Illustrated Book: Asahi Mountain), it presents an abridged version of *The Pillow Book* that features forty of the *mono*-type lists. The work follows Kigin's *Shunshoshō*, the most influential commentary circulated in the Edo period.<sup>256</sup> The editor, signed in the preface as Minamoto Oriie 源折江, kept only six of the sections as they appear in *The Pillow Book* and significantly abridged the others, selecting no more than five entries for most of the lists from among the plentiful examples included in *The Pillow Book*.<sup>257</sup> Oriie omitted all the diary-like and essay-like passages within the selected sections, many of the references to Heian culture and everyday life—such as festivals and actual historical figures—and descriptions of clothing and

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<sup>254</sup> Michelle Marra, *Representations of Power: The Literary Politics of Medieval Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1993), 6-12.

<sup>255</sup> Mitamura, "Tennnōsei," 46-7.

<sup>256</sup> The only list which has not been included in any of the extant versions of *Makura no sōshi* is the section entitled "Things pleasing to watch" 見て心地よきもの.

<sup>257</sup> The sections that appear as they do in *The Pillow Book* are the following: つねよりもことにきこゆる物 "Common things that suddenly sound special," みじかくてありぬべき物 "Things that should be small," 他にあなづらるる物 "Things that people despise," 見ならひする物 "Things that imitate," いひにくき物 "Things that are hard to say," ただ過ぎに過ぐるもの "Things that just keep passing by."

furniture. By stripping away *The Pillow Book*'s rich thematic and historical content, he shaped it into a work in which topics related to women prevailed. For instance, readers are told that a frivolous woman is despicable ("Things people despise"), an unattractive woman who takes a nap is unsightly ("Things unpleasant to see"), a son-in-law who neglects his wife is unpromising ("Situations you have a feeling will turn out badly"), and a young girl's voice should be soft and the hair of a woman from the lower classes should be short ("Things that should be small").

The illustrations provided by Nishikawa Sukenobu 西川祐信 (1671-1750) abound in images of women, often within a group. There are many that show them engaged in daily activities such as combing their hair, sewing, playing *go*, holding and playing with children, reading, writing, playing the *koto*, and others that focus on travel and transportation (including images of carriages, boats, horses, and pilgrims).

Although the epilogue explains that the book was intended for children (*yo no jidō* 世の児童), several aspects of the work point to the fact that it was targeted at female readership.<sup>258</sup> First, most of the topics taken up in the *Asahiyama* dominate educational texts for women, whose purpose was to equip female readers with the knowledge required of them as wives, mothers, daughters, daughters-in-law, and servants. Second, the illustrations focus on women and various aspects of their everyday life (Figures 3.1, 3.2). Furthermore, in the catalogue of upcoming books attached to the end of the *Asahiyama*, works targeting a female audience (i.e. belonging to the category of "women's books") prevail, as is evident from titles such as *Nyohitsu kasugano* 女筆春日野 (Women's Calligraphy: Fields of Kasuga), *Nyohitsu shinosusuki* 女筆しのすゝき (Women's Calligraphy: Bamboo and

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<sup>258</sup> See Tanaka, *Inu makurashū*, 356-7 for the full text of the epilogue.

Pampas Grass), *Fujin yashinaigusa* 婦人養草 (Cultivation of Wives), and *Onna chūyō kyōkun kagami* 女中庸教訓鑑 (A Mirror of the Mean and Moral Teachings for Women) (Figure 3.3). The inclusion of the catalogue suggests that the work was advertised as reading material for young women.<sup>259</sup> Accordingly, the illustrations, the catalogue, and the producers' choice about what to select from the original text, suggest that this rewriting of *Makura no sōshi* was intended primarily for female readers.

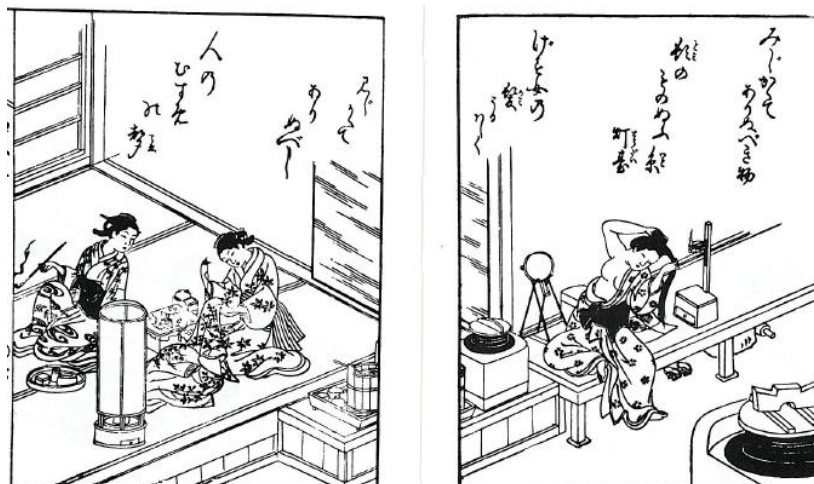
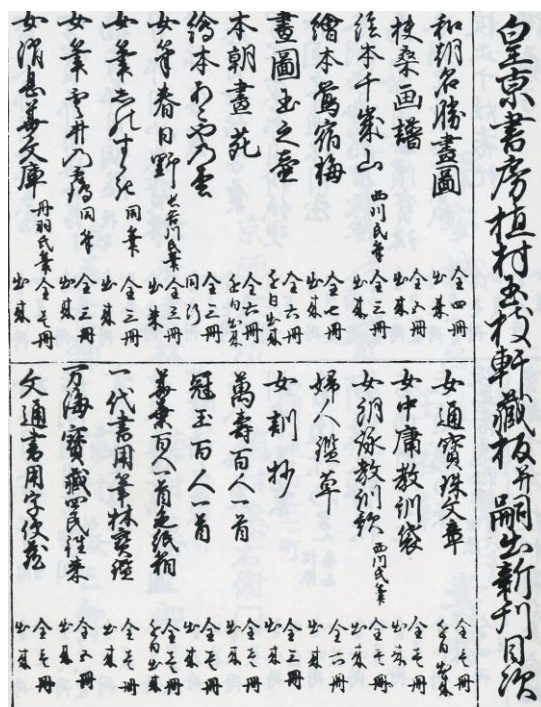


Figure 3.1: *Asahiyama*, Book One (Detail: “Things that should be small”). 1741. “Ehon Asahiyama” in Tanaka Jūtarō, *Sei Shōnagon inu makurashū*, Koten Bunko, vol. 49 (Tokyo: Koten Bunko, 1982), 114-5.

<sup>259</sup>The catalogue's title is the following: 皇京書房植村玉枝軒藏板并嗣出新刊目次. Ibid, 189-90.



The preface to the first edition reads:

前聞少納言は清原元輔の女にて上東門院にめしまつわされ才賢世に絶倫女房にぞありけるそれが後々讃岐にすまゐける頃むかししたはしく都のゆかしきあまり自かきつらねをきたる草子の中より情に切なる詞どもを撰み絵になんうつして朝日山と題し鄙のつれくを消遣けるとぞ予此言の見まくほしく年月おもひ居けるに此ほど他のもとにて古物語集など見侍る中不図此三巻を見あらはしければいみじううれしく思ひて独見んもそうぐしからんこと人にも見せてしがなと更に其絵を今様の筆にあやなし侍りぬ猶ゝやけに伝て蘭閨の弄ものともながらばふみのはやしのさいはゐおほきのみ。<sup>260</sup>

Shōnagon, known from the past, was a daughter of Kiyohara no Motosuke. She served Jōtōmon'in, and was a lady-in-waiting of unmatched talent and intelligence. When she lived in Sanuki in her later years, she [remembered] the past with great fondness, [and] her thoughts went back to the capital. As a way to pass the time while in the countryside, she selected from the notes she wrote moving words, illustrated them through pictures, and entitled the book *Asahiyama*. I wanted to see this for years and when I recently unexpectedly spotted these three volumes as I was looking at someone's collection of old tales, I was greatly delighted, but if I looked through them alone, I would not be content, so wishing to show them to others, it was by no means senseless to [apply] to those [original] pictures

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<sup>260</sup> Ibid., 345.

a [more] contemporary brush. Regardless, the happiness of the bookstore will be great, should the book be transmitted broadly and become the bedroom companion of beautiful women.

The preface claims that Sei lived in Sanuki (present-day Kagawa prefecture) in Shikoku after her service at court had ended, and erroneously introduces her as a lady-in-waiting to Jōtōmon'in (Fujiwara no Shōshi).<sup>261</sup> Although the title does not refer directly to *The Pillow Book*, the preface claims that Sei wrote *Asahiyama* as a digest of her work and illustrated it. It further explains that the producers have altered the illustrations, but does not acknowledge

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<sup>261</sup> Although there are no historical records showing that Sei Shōnagon visited Sanuki or that she was in the service of Fujiwara no Shōshi, many legends recreate her life after Empress Teishi's death as wandering along Shikoku, specifically in Sanuki and Awa (present day Tokushima prefecture). In addition, writers and scholars such as Andō Tameakira 安藤為章 (1659—1716) commented in *Nenzan kibun* 年山記聞 that, according to Keichū 契沖 (1640-1701), Sei spent her old age in Shikoku. See Shioda Ryōhei, *Shosetsu ichiran Makura no sōshi* (Tokyo: Meiji Shoin, 1970), 42-44. Sei's construction as a lady-in-waiting to Shōshi began as early as the thirteenth century in texts such as *Jikkinshō* and *Etsumokushō* and continued through the Edo period, most persistently within the *jokunsho* (instruction manuals for women) genre.

the fact that the text, too, has been shaped by the hands of the editor.<sup>262</sup> In short, despite the fact that the *Asahiyama* is a male-authored adaptation, the preface presents it as a supplementary text to *Makura no sōshi* and asserts Sei Shōnagon's authorship, thus constructing the *Asahiyama* as one composed by a female, with a female readership in mind. By repackaging a literary text from the past and attributing the product to a Heian woman writer, Sukenobu and Oriie create a work that proposes to be a source of knowledge that an experienced female relays to younger women. I consider the content of the work in greater detail in Sections 3.3 and 3.4. Sei Shōnagon's affiliation with the imperial court adds to the *Asahiyama* an aura of a repository of aristocratic culture and further enhances the work. By extension, *Makura no sōshi*, as the full-length version of the *Asahiyama*, is constructed as a predecessor of the early-modern books for female readership. Within this genre, however,

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<sup>262</sup> Sukenobu has signed the preface of the 1772 edition of the *Asahiyama* which is an abridged version of the original preface. Sukenobu's preface reads:

前聞少納言は清原元輔の女にて上東門院にめしまつわされ才賢世に絶倫女房にぞありけるそれがかきつらねをきたる草子の中より此三巻を見あらはし今様の筆にあやなし侍りぬ猶おゝやけに伝て蘭閨の弄ものともながらばふみのはやしのさいはゐおほきのみ。

Shōnagon, known from the past, was a daughter of Kiyohara no Motosuke. She served Jōtōmon'in, and was a lady-in-waiting of unmatched talent and intelligence. These are three volumes from the notes she wrote which I spotted and [thought] it was by no means senseless to [apply] to those [original] pictures a [more] contemporary brush. Regardless, the happiness of the bookstore will be great, should the book be transmitted broadly and become the bedroom companion of beautiful women.

Tanaka Jūtarō, *Sei Shōnagon Makura no sōshi kenkyū*, Kasama Sōsho, no. 10 (Tokyo: Kasama Shoin, 1971), 440-1.



the *Asahiyama* replaces and comes to represent *The Pillow Book* for the remainder of the Edo period, giving rise to new adaptations of Sei Shōnagon's text.

### 3.3 An Erotic Rendition of *Makura no sōshi*

A few months after its reprint in 1772, the *Asahiyama* inspired the production of another work entitled *Ehon Haru no akebono* (Erotic Book: Spring Dawn).<sup>263</sup> It was published in Edo, authored by *gesaku* writer Komatsuya Hyakki 小松百亀 (1720-1794), and illustrated by *ukiyo-e* artist Kitao Shigemasa 北尾重政 (1739-1820). The illustrations were long attributed to Suzuki Harunobu, as artists stopped signing their actual names on erotica (*shunga*) following the ban on erotic books by the Kyōho Reforms 享保改革 of 1722.<sup>264</sup> *Haru no akebono* is one of the parodies of Sukenobu's books that Komatsuya Hyakki and Kitao Shigemasa produced in collaboration. Other works of this kind include *Suichōkōkei*

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<sup>263</sup> This work has been made accessible to modern readers through a 1980 annotated edition that contains a translation into modern Japanese by scholar Hayashi Yoshikazu, another edition by literary scholar Hayakawa Monta with notes to the original text only, published nineteen years later; and a recent annotated edition accompanied with partial English translation. Both Hayashi and Hayakawa provide commentary on the illustrations and draw parallels to *Ehon Asahiyama*. However, neither considers the work as intended for a female audience. See Hayashi Yoshikazu, *Hatsuhana, Ehon Haru no akebono*, Hihon Edo Bungakushū, vol. 9 (Tokyo: Nichirinkaku, 1980), Hayakawa Monta, *Ehon Haru no akebono* (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 1999), and Hayakawa Monta, ed., *Ehon Haru no akebono*, trans. by P. Fister and Yoneyama Shigehisa, Kinsei Enpon Shiryō Shūsei III, Nichibunken shozō Nichibun kenkyū sōsho 33 (Kyoto: Nichibun Kenkyū Sentā, 2004).

<sup>264</sup> Andrew Gerstle, *Edo onna no shungabon: En to shō no fūfu shinan* (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 2011), 74. See also Hayashi, 15-17.

*ehon kaikasen* 翠張紅閨笑本開詞僊 (1770) which is a parody of *Ehon kaikasen* 絵本界歌仙 (1759); *Imayō shunsatsu fūryū enshi ehon tōwa kagami* 時妝春冊風流艶詞咲本當和鑑 (1774), a parody of *Ehon tōwa kagami* (1727); and *Dankon nyomon hiruirizume Ehon Hime Komatsu* 男根女門昼入詰笑本姫小松 (1774?), a parody of *Hime komatsu* 姫小松 (1742).<sup>265</sup>

The title of *Ehon Haru no akebono* is based on the opening of *Makura no sōshi* (*haru wa akebono*). Although it is tempting to associate the character for “spring” 春 with “erotic book” (*shunpon* 春本) or “erotic images” (*shunga* 春画), these terms are modern and would not have been familiar to Edo audiences.<sup>266</sup> Instead, terms such as *makura-e* 枕絵 (“pillow pictures”), *warai-e* 笑い絵 (“laughing pictures”), *abuna-e* 危絵 (“dangerous pictures”) and *kōshokubon* 好色本 (“sexual books”) were in currency in the early modern period.<sup>267</sup> Here *ehon* 笑本 indicates an “erotic book” and at the same time parodies *ehon* 画本/ 絵本 (‘illustrated book’) in the title of *Ehon Asahiyama*. In other words, *Haru no akebono* (*Spring dawn*), conjures up instead Kigin’s commentary *Shunshoshō* (*Spring dawn*

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<sup>265</sup> Hayashi, 18.

<sup>266</sup> Saeki Junko, “Iro to ninjō no Edo: ‘seiyoku’ izen” in *‘Ai’ to ‘sei’ no bunkashi* (Tokyo: Kadokawa Gakugei Shuppan, 2008), 8. In the late-Edo period a large number of books that contained “*shunshoku*” 春色 (lit. “spring colors”) in their title emerged. Many of these works were erotica or belonged to the *ninjōbon* 人情本 (“books of romance and sentiment”) genre which developed in the nineteenth century. However, since they appeared a century after the production of *Haru no akebono*, it is unlikely that the title of *Haru no akebono* signaled a work with an erotic content to readers.

<sup>267</sup> Timon Screech, *Sex and the Floating World: Erotic Images in Japan, 1700-1820* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1999), 14.

commentary) which was the predominant annotated edition of *Makura no sōshi* and as such must have been well-known among early modern readers. Like the *Asahiyama*, this adaptation was in three volumes, each starting with a love poem drawn from an imperial anthology.<sup>268</sup> It comprises a selection of lists with headings in the same order as those included in the *Asahiyama*. Although this adaptation does not signal influence from *Makura no sōshi* (similarly to the *Asahiyama*), it does make references to the *Asahiyama* itself. Its preface adapted the preface to the *Asahiyama* in the following way:

朝日山といへるさうしは、清女さぬきにて都ゆかしきあまり、おのが作れる言葉の情にせちなるを選みて絵にうつしけるとなん。今や其倂を繁艷のすがたにものして、春のあけぼのと題し世に行ひぬ。もし蘭閨のもてあそびともなりなば、ふみのはやしの幸すくなからじ。よい春。<sup>269</sup>

The book entitled *Asahiyama* states that when Sei remembered the capital fondly while she was in Sanuki, she selected moving words from her writings and reproduced them in pictures. Now I have restored the work to its most elegant form, entitled it *Spring Dawn*, and circulated it widely. It would bring this bookstore no little happiness should this work become the bedroom companion of beautiful women. Happy spring!

Similarly to the *Asahiyama*, *Haru no akebono* introduces Sei as a lady-in-waiting to Shōshi who later lived in Sanuki. However, having transformed the content into an erotic narrative

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<sup>268</sup> *Shin Shūi Wakashū* (1363) and *Shin Goshūi Wakashū* (1375).

<sup>269</sup> Hayashi, 91-2.

and replaced the images with ones depicting heterosexual intercourse, the producers claim that this is the best version of Sei's work (*han'en no sugata ni moto shite*). Each section contains an illustration that features a couple or couples, inscription of a list, and a dialogue between the depicted figures written within the picture itself.

The first section of both *Asahiyama* and *Haru no akebono* is entitled “Common things that suddenly sound special” (*tsune yori mo koto ni kikoyuru mono* つねより も こと に きこゆる もの). The caption in the *Asahiyama* reads:

元三の車のをと 鶏の声 あかつきのしはぶき 管絃の調はさりなり<sup>270</sup>

The sound of carriages on the first day of the first month of the year.

The song of the birds on that day.

The sound of a cough—and also, I need hardly say, of a musical instrument—at dawn.<sup>271</sup>

As Figure 3.4 shows, the *Asahiyama* illustration features an oxcart accompanied by several courtiers passing by the gate of a residence. The pine tree decoration in front of the gate indicates the beginning of the year. Although this passage appears much later in *The Pillow Book*, it may have been perceived as appropriate for the opening of the work due to its focus

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<sup>270</sup> Tanaka, *Inu makurashū*, 108-9.

<sup>271</sup> Ivan Morris, 124. This appears as Section 109.

on the beginning of the year, as well as the beginning of the new day.<sup>272</sup> This opening imitates the first section of *The Pillow Book*, with its passage about spring and dawn, as well as the seasonal structure of imperial poetry anthologies, which open with a selection of spring poems. This rearrangement of the passages to prioritize spring sets a celebratory tone for the work.



Figure 3.4: *Asahi-yama*, Book One (Detail: “Common things that suddenly sound special”). 1741.

*Ibid.*, 108-9.

The producers of *Haru no akebono*, on the other hand, have retained the focus of the passage on *beginnings* and *sounds* but have adapted it as follows:

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<sup>272</sup> Depending on the edition of *The Pillow Book*, this passage is usually numbered as 109 or 110, but the producers of the *Asahi-yama* have decided to open their work with it. The focus on beginnings in the opening of the work can be also related to the fact that books in the Edo period were usually published for the New Year.

新まぐらの鼻息 金もらふたやりでばゝが笑 夜泊りしてかえったと  
き女房のあいさつ<sup>273</sup>

The breathing of newly-weds

The laughter of the madam of a brothel having received a tip from a client

The wife's greeting after one has spent the night away

The beginning of the year has been replaced with the beginning of a married life, and the sound of a carriage, the songs of the birds, coughing, and the sound of a musical instrument have been substituted with breathing, laughter, and greeting. All three examples of the *Asahi-yama* have been rewritten so that they feature relations between a man and a woman, namely between married couples, and a female owner of a brothel and a male client. The illustration in *Haru no akebono* (Figure 3.5) visualizes the first example, that is, “newly-weds’ huffing and puffing on their first night together,” and depicts an intimate moment between a newly-married couple. The “island shelf” (*shimadai* 島台) placed in the alcove (*tokonoma* 床の間) next to the bride and the bridegroom, along with other auspicious symbols, such as the pine pattern of the bedding, the crane, and the bamboo that is partly seen on the “island shelf,” suggest a wedding ceremony. In the next room, two maids, aroused by the lovers’ talk which they overhear, have brought out a dildo, which they scrutinize while taking turns toying with it. The two scenes are placed on separate pages—the one with the maids occupies the right page and the one with the couple is on the left page. The dialogues between the characters included within the pictures are as follows:

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<sup>273</sup> Hayashi, 94.

新郎「どうじゃ、寒くはないかや、ちとこちらを向きや、灯を消さうか」

新婦「あいあい、あのわたしやね」

**Husband:** “Are you alright? You’re not too cold? Here turn this way! Shall I extinguish the lamp?”

**Wife:** “No, I’m fine, really.”

腰元一「今夜はどうも寐つかれそうもないから秘蔵男を頼みやす」

腰元二「わたしにもちと貸して御くれ。あれ睦言が聞こへる。いつそどうしやの」<sup>274</sup>

**Servant Girl One:** “There’s no way I’m going to be able to sleep tonight. Do you think you could help me with my little secret man?”

**Servant Girl Two:** “Oh, let me use it too. You can really hear them making out. Oh, it’s too much.”

The reader’s gaze, moving from right to left, first encounters the picture of the girls playing with a dildo and then sneaks into the bedroom of the newly-married couple. In other words, readers are first introduced to the dildo and then shown a real scene of love making. These

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<sup>274</sup> Hayashi, 96-98. English translation of the lists and the dialogues inscribed within the illustrations is included in the edition published by the International Research Center for Japanese Studies. However, the transcription of this dialogue differs from the base text because it breaks down the man’s speech into two. I have thus cited from the translation of the dialogues but adjusted for any discrepancies with the base text. See Hayakawa 2004, 11.

educational overtones are mixed with the amusement invoked from the juxtaposition of the proactive maids and the reticent bride.



Figure 3.5: *Haru no akebono*, Book One (Detail: “Common things that suddenly sound special”). 1771.

Hayakawa Monta, ed. *Ehon Haru no akebono*, trans. by P. Fister and Yoneyama Shigehisa Kinsei Enpon Shiryō Shūsei III. Nichibunken shozō Nichibun kenkyū sōsho 33 (Kyoto: Nichibun Kenkyū Sentā, 2004), 10-1.

The work thus opens with a section that features the beginning of a married life and continues with lists that present various aspects of intimate relationship that are evaluated by the headings of the respective lists. For example, the list entitled “Things pleasing to watch” (*Mite kokochi yoki mono* 見て心知よき物) depicts a couple in intimate embrace. Another entitled “Things that make your heart beat faster” (*Kokoro tokimeki suru mono* 心ときめきする物) illustrates a married woman consorting with a lover inside her house, while her husband is knocking on the front door. “Things that give a pleasant feeling” (*Kokoro yuku mono* こゝろゆく物) shows a couple drinking together. “Rare things” (*Arigataki* 有がたき物) features a sexual encounter during which the woman describes her frustration with the



man's failure to visit, and the man makes excuses. The caption to the section entitled  
“Pleasing things” (*Ureshiki mono* うれしき物) reads:

久しく千話ばかりしてゐたる中の、おもはずよい首尾にて、しつぽりと契  
りたると待ちこがれたる返事の来たるひらき見て起請だてなだしたるぞ、  
いよ々々うれし<sup>275</sup>

A couple, who has quarreled for a long time, has unexpectedly reconciled and is affectionately making love; a long-awaited letter has arrived and when one opens it, one is even more delighted to see that it is a pledge of eternal love.



Figure 3.6: *Haru no akebono*, Book Two (Detail: “Pleasing things”). 1771. Ibid., 60-1.

The illustration (Figure 3.6) features a girl reading a letter inside a room while a couple is depicted copulating against a bamboo dividing wall outside. The dialogues within the illustrations are as follows:

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<sup>275</sup> Hayashi, 191.

手紙を読む女 「これでおちついた。よふ人にきをもませる。」

**Woman with a letter:** “Now I feel relieved. He made me so nervous.”

男 「久しいものだが上かいだぞだぞ。此身はきついせうでんさまだ」

女 「もつたいないことをいはねへものだにへ」<sup>276</sup>

**Man:** “It’s an old friend, but your cunt is really top-class. Like this, we’re the spitting image of those embracing Buddhist deities.”

**Woman:** “What blasphemy.”<sup>277</sup>

Hayakawa Monta observes that what triggers laughter in this scene is the man’s comparison of entwined bodies to the image of embracing Buddhist deities, while the woman displays her religiosity even during sexual intercourse.<sup>278</sup> However, apart from its amusing aspect, this list and the accompanying illustration align the long-awaited pledge of eternal love with the long-awaited opportunity for intimacy with one’s lover. Both the list that features a couple making love after quarreling for a long time (*hisashiku*) and the dialogue between the lovers depicted *in flagrante* begin with the adjective *hisashi* (“long”, “for a long time”). This aspect of waiting for a long time is further shared with the scene that depicts a woman reading a marriage proposal. Thus, the episode draws a link between eternal love and sex. This idea is further reinforced by the last illustrated section of the book which is entitled “Splendid things” (*Medetaki mono* めでたき物). The text reads:

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<sup>276</sup> Hayashi, 192-4.

<sup>277</sup> Hayakawa 2004, 61.

<sup>278</sup> Hayakawa 1999, 52-3.

中のよゐ夫婦 いくらしても腎虚せぬ人 ぼゞまらのはなしぞ、わら  
ひを催していとおかし<sup>279</sup>

Spouses who get along well;

A man who does not suffer kidney deficiency no matter how many times he  
has sex; It is very enjoyable when a conversation about a man's and a  
woman's sex organs triggers laughter.

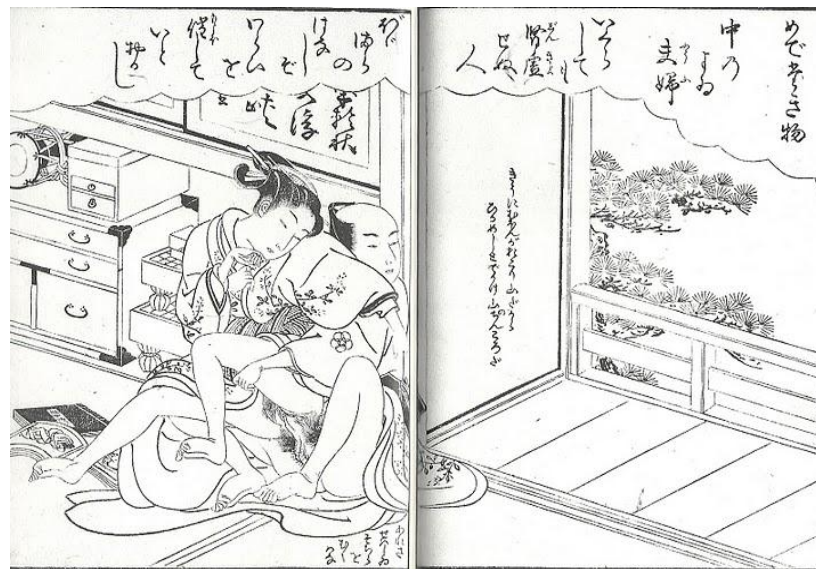


Figure 3.7: *Haru no akebono*, Book Three (Detail: “Splendid things”). 1771. Ibid., 100-1.

The illustration features a man and a woman making love with an erotic book open next to them, and suggests a definition of “spouses being on good terms” that centres on sex, which is hailed by the work as “a splendid thing” (Figure 3.7).

The dialogues between the couples that populate the pages of *Haru no akebono* are a new element that is missing in *Asahiyama*. All the conversations, which are concise but

<sup>279</sup> Hayashi, 256.

sensuous, reveal the characters' passion and affection for their partners. They abound in topics such as flirting, praising of the partner's sex organs, and expressing sexual desire. As Nakano Setsuko's examination of *kanazōshi* stories has shown, sexual intercourse and intimate talk were considered essential for married couples. Thus, the dialogues included in *Haru no akebono* can be interpreted as attempts to provide readers with models for love talk, an important aspect of intimate relations with one's husband.<sup>280</sup>

In addition to the assortment of illustrated lists, *Erotic Book: Spring Dawn* offers readers two stories about the marriages of merchants' daughters. O-Taka お鷹, the protagonist of the first story, is the daughter of a small merchant in the vicinity of Asakusa. Readers are told that "[she] has been taught *shamisen* from a tender age, has a beautiful voice from birth and sings well, dresses properly, and has a personality that everyone would appreciate."<sup>281</sup> At the age of seventeen O-Taka marries a man of high station, but after three years she is sent back to her parents due to her inability to bear a child. Becoming mentally unstable and developing an eye disease, O-Taka begins visiting an eye doctor on a daily basis. It is during these visits that a wealthy sixty-year-old pawnbroker named Yojiemon 与次衛門 takes a fancy to O-Taka and eventually marries her. When O-Taka's sight recovers, she is terrified to realize that she has married a much older man and wonders about the future of their intimacy. Yojiemon becomes sexually obsessed from their first night onward, but, after two years of love making, is bedridden due to his excessive sexual activity (*mizu*

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<sup>280</sup> Nakano Setsuko, *Kangaeru onnatachi* (Tokyo: Ōzorasha, 1997), 24-5.

<sup>281</sup> いとけなき比より三味線ならわせ。うまれつきこへよく。歌もあぢをやり目鼻立よく風俗もしゃんとして。諸人めのつく生れ立。Hayashi, 144.

*asobi ga sugite* 水あそびが過て).<sup>282</sup> When Yojiemon becomes aware of his twenty-two year-old wife's affair with a cotton merchant from Echizen named Tesuke 手助 he is outraged, but eventually comes to terms with it by divorcing O-Taka, giving her half of his wealth, and becoming a recluse.

This story echoes the medieval narratives known as *hiren-tonsei-tan* 悲恋遁世譚, in which failure in love leads to the male protagonist's religious awakening. Although the typical plot of such stories centres around the sudden death of a female lover, in the story about O-Taka, it is the wife's infidelity that causes the husband to take holy vows. Haruo Shirane notes that the medieval structure of *hirei-tonsei* tales "reveal that love, being transitory and illusory, carries within it the seeds of its own destruction and that excessive attachment can only result in frustration and suffering."<sup>283</sup> Similarly, in *Haru no akebono*, the over-sexed older man, whose lasciviousness has destroyed his body, is spiritually awakened by the unexpected loss of his wife to a much younger man. The early-modern story parodies its medieval predecessors by substituting the death of the woman with her infidelity. Yet, despite the fact that sterility and adultery were two of the seven reasons for divorce in the Edo period, the heroine is not punished for her transgression. The story does end with a divorce, but it is a happy ending for O-Taka, who walks away from an onerous marriage with significant wealth.

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<sup>282</sup> Ibid., 203.

<sup>283</sup> Haruo Shirane, *The Bridge of Dreams: A Poetics of 'The Tale of Genji'* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987), 190.

The second story is about O-Tsuya おつや, the daughter of a famous wealthy merchant in Edo.<sup>284</sup> O-Tsuya is introduced to readers in the following way:

ゑど中にさたしたる美女。嫁入盛りなれば。あなたこなたの所望。此へんじに。母おやもこまり、色々と申のべぬ。もとより手前よろしければ、かねて手道具ハ。高まき絵に美をつくし。衣類はさまざまそろい置。京から仕付形の女をよび寄せ、万叟おとなしく身をもたせ。「今ハ誰どのゝよめ子にも、おそらくハ」と。母おや、娘じまんに鼻高ふせらるれど。<sup>285</sup>

She was a famous beauty in Edo. When she reached the appropriate age for marriage, people from here and there asked for her hand. Her mother was at a loss how to reply. She explained her daughter's situation in detail, showing off: "Since she comes from a wealthy family, her trousseau of *maki-e* lacquer-ware has been prepared in advance, her clothing is in order, she has been taught proper conduct by a woman summoned from Kyoto—in all aspects she has been trained to behave gently—and now she is no inferior to anyone's daughter," [...]

In addition, readers are told that the girl's expectations from her future husband were the following: "[a] handsome man with no mother [...], [from a] family with similar values,

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<sup>284</sup> The name of the character puns on *tsuya* 艶 "love."

<sup>285</sup> Hayashi, 214.

[and] of a clean trade.”<sup>286</sup> O-Tsuya marries at fourteen but is returned to her parents in three days for unknown reasons. Within the next four to five years she remarries unsuccessfully seven times. In the end, when her parents decide to make her a nun, O-Tsuya’s wet nurse opposes them and attempts to intervene. When the girl tells her wet nurse about the “embarrassing thing about her body” (*ware mi no jō ni hazukashii koto* 我身の上にはづかしいこと), the older woman realizes that O-Tsuya’s marriages have failed due to her excessive and uncontrollable sexual desire. The wet nurse takes the girl to a famous lecherous man named Shikijirō 色次郎 who heals her and makes her a “normal” woman (*tsune no onna no goto ni* つねの女のごとに).<sup>287</sup> O-Tsuya’s parents are overjoyed and marry her to the owner of a liquor shop. The story ends as follows: “The couple got along well, and even had a child, and lived happily for many years into old age.”<sup>288</sup> This anecdote marks the end of the *Haru no akebono* text.

Unlike the previous story, this narrative ends with a successful marriage. The insatiable female protagonist is converted into a “normal” woman, who becomes a wife and a mother. The two stories, however, share similarities in plot. The sexual urges of the man in the story about O-Taka and the woman in the story of O-Tsuya are presented as problematic, and are resolved by the end of each narrative. The old man becomes sexually inactive due to illness and enters the Buddhist path, while the young woman, faced with the prospect of a similar path, has her excessive sexuality restored to normal and enters a successful marriage.

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<sup>286</sup> 「男よく姑なく。同じ宗旨のきれいな商売の家に行事を」といへり。Ibid., 214.

<sup>287</sup> Ibid., 217.

<sup>288</sup> 夫婦なかよく、しかも子までもうけられ、幾千代つきぬ友しらが、めでたくさかへ給ひける。Hayashi, 271.

The moral that the two tales convey is that insatiable sexuality destroys marriages and triggers misfortune. Each of the narratives described above depicts in detail the girl's first bridal night, explains the reasons for her failed initial marriage (due to the sterility of one and the sexual obsession of the other), and describes the girl's subsequent marriages. In other words, the stories tell readers what makes a marriage succeed or fail, with sexuality and fecundity being central to both.

The final illustration of *Haru no akebono* (Figure 3.8) features a woman writer, most likely to be understood as Sei Shōnagon, holding a brush and sitting at a writing table in front of an open book. Next to her is a pile of books, and in front of the table is a blooming cherry branch in a vase. The *tsuitate* screen next to the table depicts a Chinese landscape with a plum branch in its centre. The image of the woman writer, and the cherry and plum branches evoke ancient aristocratic culture. Since Heian women were held as exemplary in early-modern manuals for women, as Nakano argues, the image of the Heian female at the end of the work further reinforces the idea that *Haru no akebono* transmits knowledge from the past and fosters courtly comportment.





Figure 3.8: *Haru no akebono*, Book Three (Detail: A modern-day Sei Shōnagon sitting at her desk). 1771.

Ibid., 102.

The two stories about marriage and women's sexuality, along with the majority of scenes that feature male-female sexual encounters, and topics such as weddings, matrimony, deflowering, and spousal relations, transform *Makura no sōshi* into a narrative about successful marriage at the core of which is sex. The opening scene of the book that features the first night of a married couple, discussed above, suggests that this work was intended as a manual for the sexual education of young women. Although erotic, this book can be viewed as sharing similarities with female educational texts, which construct women as subservient to their husbands and provide practical advice for improving spousal relations.<sup>289</sup> One such example is *Jokyō hidensho* 女鏡秘伝書 (*A Mirror of Womanhood: The Book of Secret Transmissions*) which came out in 1650, and was published several times

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<sup>289</sup> Nakano, 124-7.

in both Kyoto and Edo between 1688 and 1704 due to its popularity.<sup>290</sup> Nakano uses this work to demonstrate the existence of books that provided women with strategies on how to improve their spousal relations, specifically how to win a husband's affections. Such tactics included unconditional obedience to a husband's will and taste, such as planting flowers, pouring sake and drinking together, and playing the *biwa* or *koto*.<sup>291</sup> Nakano also points out that one of the common themes in books for women's education is the focus on interpersonal relations, such as with one's husband, father-in-law, mother-in-law, servants, family, and friends. Among these, the woman's relation to her husband was viewed as central since the securing of one's husband's affection played an essential role in a woman's life.<sup>292</sup>

Andrew Gerstle has further shown that erotic books, such as *Konrei hiji bukuro* 婚礼秘事袋 (ca. 1756) and *Onna dairaku takarabeki* 女大楽宝開 (1751-1763), which are close parodies of the works for women entitled, respectively, *Konrei keshibukuro* 婚礼罌粟袋 (1750) and *Onna daigaku takarabako* 女大学宝箱 (1716), were included in girls' trousseaux.<sup>293</sup> He argues that both types of works are didactic. Whereas the latter, imbued with Confucian overtones, create an image of the ideal woman as one who is a spiritless

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<sup>290</sup> Ibid., 124. I borrow Sumiko Sekiguchi's translation of the title. See "Gender in the Meiji Renovation [sic]: Confucian 'Lessons for Women' and the Making of Modern Japan," *Social Science Journal Japan* 11, no. 2 (2008): 201-221.

<sup>291</sup> See Nakano, 125.

<sup>292</sup> Ibid., 126.

<sup>293</sup> Andrew Gerstle, *Edo onna no shungabon: En to shō no fūfu shinan* (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 2011), 21-2.

servant of her husband, the former, through laughter and parody, construct their heroines as “proactive and attractive for men.”<sup>294</sup> Unlike the Confucian works which unilaterally delineate the duties of and expectation from a woman, the erotic parodies portray successful couples as those able to build a mutually acceptable relationship.<sup>295</sup> The advice which each work offers to women regarding techniques for alleviating their husbands’ anger is one of the examples that Gerstle provides. *Onna daigaku* appeals to its readers to simply obey their husbands and avoid arguing with them. The erotic parody *Onna dairaku*, on the other hand, provides detailed instructions about how a woman should sexually please her husband during the night following a quarrel. The passage ends: “No doubt that [when] a prudent (*tsutsushimu*) woman never makes domestic quarrels known to others, and the husband understands his wife’s heart, then the family will be able to continuously thrive.”<sup>296</sup> Thus, Gerstle demonstrates that erotic parodies of Confucian texts for women offered a new type of education which viewed a woman’s enjoyment of her sexuality as essential to the well-being of her family. Central to such texts, Gerstle notes, was laughter, which functioned as a device that mitigated embarrassment related to the topic of sex across gender and class.<sup>297</sup> By featuring spousal harmony and sexually active and pro-active women, he argues, such works also attempted to liberate women who were trapped by Confucian morals and beliefs about the logic of society and family.<sup>298</sup> Likewise, the erotic parody *Haru no akebono* can be

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<sup>294</sup> Ibid., 108.

<sup>295</sup> Ibid.

<sup>296</sup> Ibid., 109.

<sup>297</sup> Ibid., 222-3.

<sup>298</sup> Ibid.

situated within the genre of didactic works for female readers that, through parody and laughter, educated women about the sexual aspect of spousal relations.

What settings can be imagined in which women read erotic parodies? Many of the illustrations in *Haru no akebono* include a couple looking at another couple engaged in sexual intercourse. In other cases, such as Figure 3.7, a couple is depicted making love while looking at erotica. Such illustrations are an imaginative rendering of possibilities and do not necessarily depict reality, but they allow us to discern the intended readership, specifically the couples who consumed these works together while enjoying the erotic and entertaining content.

### 3.4 Sexual Allure beyond Erotic Books

In 1818 *Asahiyama* became the base text for another adaptation of *Makura no sōshi* entitled “Sei Shōnagon’s unmatched talent; Prodigious words from Sei Shōnagon’s *Pillow Book*” (Sei Shōnagon no kisai; dō *Makura no sōshi* no kigo) which was included in *Onna yō bunshō yukikaiburi* (Conduct guidebook for women). The title of this section of *Onna yō bunshō yukikaiburi*, which I will refer to hereafter as “Sei Shōnagon no kisai,” projects an image of an exceptionally talented woman from the past. The section features fourteen lists in exactly the same form as they appear in the 1741 *Asahiyama*, though reordered. Its preface does not acknowledge *Asahiyama* as its base text, but like the prefaces of the earlier two works, it introduces Sei as Kiyohara no Motosuke’s daughter and a lady-in-waiting to Jōtōmon’in, and states that the work is a digest of *Makura no sōshi* that Sei produced while in Sanuki. In other words, the preface of “Sei Shōnagon no kisai” follows closely the content of *Asahiyama*’s preface. Unlike the earlier two works, however, the preface of the 1818 text

includes the episode about the snow of Kōro Peak to draw a fuller portrait of Sei Shōnagon. This episode had become representative of *Makura no sōshi* since the thirteenth century and was repeatedly reproduced to introduce Sei Shōnagon and her work to generations of readers over a broad range of texts. Texts highlighting this episode include medieval collections of anecdotes such as *Jikkinshō* and *Etsumokushō*, Edo-period educational books for women, as well as *nishiki-e*, such as Kunisada's *Kokin meifu den* 古今名婦伝 (Biographies of famous exceptional ladies from the past, 1860-1864), Meiji-period Japanese language readers (*kokugo tokuhon* 国語読本), and modern-day junior high school textbooks.<sup>299</sup> I will quote the episode as it appears in *The Pillow Book* and then its adaptation in “Sei Shōnagon no kisai” below, since they differ significantly from each other. The episode in *Makura no sōshi* reads:

雪いと高く降りたるを、例ならず御格子まゐらせて、炭櫃に火おこして、  
物語などして、集まり侍ふに、「少納言よ、香炉峯の雪はいかならん」  
と仰られければ、御格子上げさせて、御簾高く巻き上げたれば、笑はせ

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<sup>299</sup> Nakajima Wakako examines the reception of this episode in a number of *setsuwa* collections from the medieval and early modern periods such as *Jikkinshō* 十訓抄 (1259), *Etsumokushō* 悦目抄 (1317-1319), *Waka kimyōdan* 和歌奇妙談 (1699), *Waka kitoku monogatari* 和歌奇徳物語 (1699), *Dai Nihonshi* 大日本史 (1809), and *Hyakunin isshu hitoyo gatari* 百人一首一夕語 (1833). She notes that as early as the thirteenth century when *Jikkinshō* was completed, Empress Teishi was replaced with Emperor Ichijō as the one who makes the allusion to the Chinese poem within the episode. This tendency continued until 1809 within the *setsuwa* genre when *Dainihonshi* corrected the mistake and quoted directly from *Makura no sōshi*. Nakajima Wakako, “Makura no sōshi ‘Kōrohō no yuki’ no dan no juyō o megutte: Chūsei, kinsei no setsuwashū o chūshin ni,” *Kokubunronsō* no. 18 (March, 1991): 1-15, 13.

給ふ。人々も皆さる事は知り、歌などにさへうたへども、思ひこそよらざりつれ。「猶此宮の人にはさるべきなめり」といふ。<sup>300</sup>

One day, when the snow lay thick on the ground and it was so cold that the lattices had all been closed, I and the other ladies were sitting with her Majesty, chatting and poking the embers in the brazier.

“Tell me, Shōnagon,” said the Empress, ‘how is the snow on Hsiang-lu peak?’

I told the maid to raise one of the lattices and then rolled up the blind all the way.

Her Majesty smiled. I was not alone in recognizing the Chinese poem she had quoted; in fact all the ladies knew the lines and had even rewritten them in Japanese. Yet, no one but me had managed to think of it instantly.

‘Yes, indeed,’ people said when they heard the story. ‘She was born to serve an Empress like ours.’<sup>301</sup>

“Sei Shōnagon no kisai” has adapted the episode as follows:

清少納言は、清原元輔の女にて、上東門院につかへし女房なりき。或雪の日、主上伺公の人々に「香炉峰はいかに」と詔ありければ、清女つと立て、御前なる御簾をあげしとなん。これ、唐土人の詩に、「香炉峰之雪撥簾見」と作れることを思ひもてきたる当意即妙なり。帝はなはだ叡感ありしとぞ。此奥に図したる空ごとは、彼才女讃岐にすまゐける頃、書きつらねたる『枕の草子』をいさゝか摘て出せるなり。こゝろあるの

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<sup>300</sup> Kigin, *Shunshoshō*, vol. 3, 92.

<sup>301</sup> Morris, vol. 1, 243.

女子、此意言にめで給はゞ、全きかのさうしを取て見給へ。是におもひをこめなば、日頃のふるまひ、のどやかになりて、能く友にまじはるに情に通じ、おのづから心みやびになりて、月・花を詠むるにも其なさけふかるべし。<sup>302</sup>

One snowy day when the Emperor asked his courtiers, “What does Kōro Peak look like?” Sei quickly stood up, and raised the blind that was in front of him. This is a repartee based on an allusion to a Chinese poem saying “I raise the blind and gaze at the snow of Kōro Peak.” The emperor was greatly impressed. The following illustrated fictions (*soragoto*) are based on a selection from *The Pillow Book* that Sei wrote while she was in Sanuki. Girls with heart, read *The Pillow Book* in its entirety! If you attend to it intently, your daily comportment will no doubt become self-possessed, your feelings will be comprehended when you mingle with friends, your heart will acquire natural gracefulness, and when you compose poems about the moon and the flowers, they will be imbued with feeling.

The 1818 preface has transformed the original all-female setting of Empress Teishi’s court as described in *Makura no sōshi* and placed Sei in the company of men. Sei emerges as more quick-witted and knowledgeable than any of the men present, and by raising the blind

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<sup>302</sup> “Sei Shōnagon no kisai,” in *Waka, Koten bungaku*, edited by Emori Ichirō, Edo jidai josei seikatsu ezu daijiten vol. 8 (Tokyo: Ōzorasha, 1994), 303.

she shows that she has recognized the allusion to Bo Juyi's poem.<sup>303</sup> In *Makura no sōshi*, Empress Teishi laughs and the other ladies-in-waiting express their astonishment at Sei's quick-wittedness, but in "Sei Shōnagon no kisai" the praise comes from the emperor. In other words, Sei's behavior is not commended within a community of women, but evaluated by a man.

The strong presence of the male gaze through which Sei is constructed is further evident in the accompanying illustration (Figure 3.9).<sup>304</sup> It depicts Sei from behind, raising the blind, while surrounded by elite men. Although omitted from the illustration, the emperor in front of whom she is lifting the blind can be imagined as the holder of the gaze, which overlaps with that of the reader. Such textual and visual depictions of Sei as a knowledgeable and attractive female through men's eyes, construe her as a woman to be emulated within male-centred society, and at the same time evoke an image of a talented courtesan. Despite the fact that women in literary works from the Heian period are depicted as hidden from the male gaze, here she is surrounded and viewed directly by several men.<sup>305</sup> In the illustration, Sei's face is invisible to the viewer (and the male characters in the scene), but she is represented by her long hair and her graceful garment with swaying sleeves. This portrayal of Sei as an object of desire follows the conventional depiction of aristocratic women and courtesans in educational books for female readers as representatives of a court culture known for *yasashisa* (courtliness, refinement, and allure). *Yasashisa* encompassed

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<sup>303</sup> Hanabusa Hideki, trans., *Hakushi monjū no hihanteki kenkyū* (Kyoto: Nakamura Insatsu Shuppanbu, 1960).

<sup>304</sup> "Sei Shōnagon no kisai," 303.

<sup>305</sup> See Joshua S. Mostow, "E no gotoshi: The Picture simile and the Feminine Re-guard in Japanese Illustrated Romances," *Word & Image* 11, no. 1 (January-March, 1995): 37-54.



various aspects of demeanor, but poetry composition and elegant handwriting were hailed as its major aspects. Nakano has argued that a fundamental aspect of Tokugawa women's education was acquiring the comportment of the nobility, and Heian aristocratic women and courtesans were employed as vehicles for transmitting such culture. By comparing illustrations of the social classes included in *Onna chōhōki* 女重宝記 and *Nan chōhōki* 男重宝記, Nakano has shown that the world of women (as depicted in *onna fūzokuzu* 女風俗図) was less stratified than that of men. By comparing pictures of women of the four classes (*onna shi-kō-nō-shō-zu* 女士工農商図)—warrior, artisan, farmer, and merchant—to those of *onna fūzokuzu*, Nakano concludes that the women of the four classes are portrayed as wives to men from their corresponding class, whereas the women in *onna fūzokuzu* are depicted with regard to their relation to men at the core of which is courtliness and allure.<sup>306</sup> Aristocrats were excluded from the four classes and yet aristocratic comportment conveyed through women from the same class was upheld for emulation.

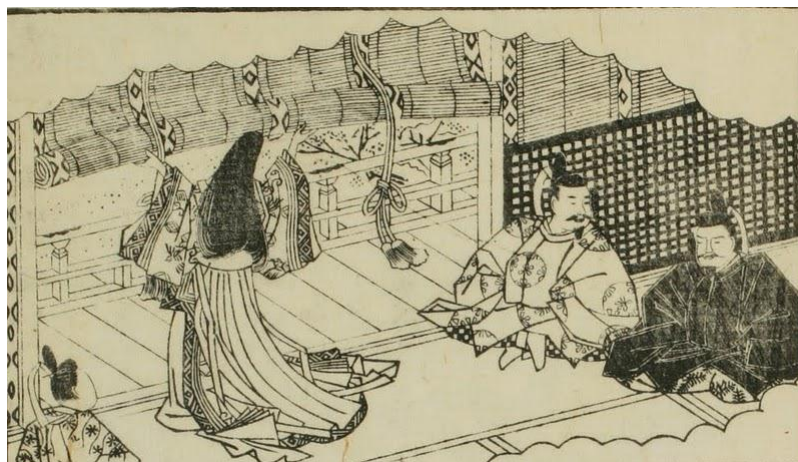


Figure 3.9: “Sei Shōnagon no kisai; dō Makura no sōshi no kigo.” (Detail: Sei Shōnagon surrounded by male courtiers). 1818. Emori Ichirō, ed., *Waka, koten, bungaku*, Edo jidai josei seikatsu ezu daijiten vol. 8 (Tokyo: Ōzorasha, 1994), 303.

<sup>306</sup> Nakano, 83-7.

“Sei Shōnagon no kisai” presents a selection of fourteen out of the forty lists that appear in the *Asahiyama*.<sup>307</sup> The producers have further abridged the *Asahiyama*, and by extension *The Pillow Book*, selecting sections with entries that focus on courtship and relations between men and women, as can be seen in the following examples:

- 1) A person in whose company one feels awkward asks one to supply the opening or closing line of a poem. If one happens to recall it, one is very pleased. (“Pleasing things”)
- 2) Relations between a man and a woman. (“Things that are near though distant”)
- 3) The cry of a deer. (“Moving things”)
- 4) It is quite late at night and a woman has been expecting a visitor. Hearing finally a stealthy tapping, she sends her maid to open the gate and lies waiting excitedly. But the name announced by the maid is that of someone with whom she has absolutely no connection. Of all the depressing things this is by far the worst. (“Depressing things”)

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<sup>307</sup> “Sei Shōnagon no kisai; kigo” includes the following sections: “Common things that suddenly sound special” つねよりもことにきこゆる物, “Pleasing things” うれしき物, “Things that are distant though near” ちかくてとをき物, “Things that are near though distant” とをくてちかき物, “Moving things” あはれなる物, “Depressing things” すさまじき物, “People who look as though things are difficult for them” くるしげなる物, “Startling and disconcerting things” あさましき物, “Things of elegant beauty” なまめかしき物, “Things now useless that recall a glorious past” 昔おぼえてふやうなる物, “Things it’s frustrating and embarrassing to witness” かたはらいたき物, “Things that are unpleasant to see” 見くるしき物, “Things that make you feel nostalgic” 過にしかた恋しき物, “Things that are hard to say” いひにくき物, “Unreliable things” たのもしげなき物.

- 5) A man with two mistresses who is obliged to see them being bitter and jealous towards each other [...] A woman passionately loved by a man who is absurdly jealous. (“People who look as though things are difficult for them”)
- 6) All night long one has been waiting for a man who one thought was sure to arrive. At dawn, just when one has forgotten about him for a moment and dozed off, a crow caws loudly. (“Startling and disconcerting things”)
- 7) A slim, handsome young nobleman in a Court cloak.... An attractive young woman raises the lower part of a white curtain of state and attaches it to the cross-bar on top. Over her unlined robe of white damask she wears a coat of violet gauze. She is engaged in writing practice, and the fine, smooth sheets of her notebook are elegantly bound by threads of uneven shading. (“Things of elegant beauty”)
- 8) A man whom one loves gets drunk and keeps repeating himself.... Lying awake at night, one says something to one’s companion, who simply goes on sleeping... An adopted son-in-law who has long stopped visiting his wife runs into his father-in-law in a public place. (“Things it’s frustrating and embarrassing to witness”)
- 9) It is a rainy day and one is feeling bored. To pass the time, one starts looking through some old papers. And then one comes across the letters of a man one used to love (“Things that make you feel nostalgic”)
- 10) It is very hard to frame a reply to a message one has received from a person with whom one feels ill at ease. (“Things that are hard to say”)
- 11) An adopted son-in-law who spends the night away from his wife. (“Unreliable things”)

This selection demonstrates the range of topics deemed worthy of inclusion in the “Sei

Shōnagon no kisai” chapter of the 1818 conduct book for women. The chapter uses Sei’s text to introduce woman’s literary erudition shown in the presence of men (“Pleasing things”, “Things of elegant beauty”); a man’s upsetting behavior; a lover who fails to visit (“Things that move the heart,” “Depressing things,” “Startling and disconcerting things”), a disappointing lover (“Things it’s frustrating and embarrassing to witness”), a husband’s neglect of his wife (“Things it’s frustrating and embarrassing to witness,” “Unreliable things”); jealousy (“People who look as though things are difficult for them”), and letters from a former lover (“Things that make you feel nostalgic”). Thus the strong focus on relations between men and women within the lists in this condensed version of Sei Shōnagon’s text projects an image of *The Pillow Book* as a work in which the motif of love prevails.

The illustrations resemble those in the *Asahiyama* but, like the text, these, too, have been adapted by altering, zooming in, or cropping. For example, although the text accompanying the lists “Things that move the heart” and “Startling and disconcerting things” suggests longing for a loved one or the inability to meet with a lover, the illustrations portray the lovers together. The text in *The Pillow Book* to “Moving things” reads:

人の子の孝なる 鹿のね 秋の野 山里の雪 川竹の風にふかれたる夕ぐ  
れ あれたる 家にむぐらはひかかりよもぎなどおひたる庭に月のくま  
なくあかき いとあらふはあらぬ風の吹たる<sup>308</sup>

A child who is full of filial piety. The cry of a deer. River bamboo swaying in the evening breeze. A mountain village in the snow. A dilapidated house

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<sup>308</sup> Emori, *Waka*, 307.

overgrown with goose-grass; the garden is rank with sage-brush and other weeds; the moon shines so brightly over the whole scene that there is not a single dark corner; and the wind blows gently.<sup>309</sup>

The illustration in the *Asahiyama* in Figure 3.10 depicts each aspect of the text, including a man digging out bamboo shoots, a deer, a dilapidated house, a garden, the moon, and a mountain covered with snow. The figure of the man evokes one of the stories included in the *Twenty-four Filial Exemplars* (*Nijūshikō* 二十四孝), specifically the tale of filial son Meng Zōng, whose tears due to his powerlessness to provide bamboo shoot soup to his gravely ill mother cause bamboo shoots to grow in the midst of the winter.<sup>310</sup> This scene occupies the right-hand side of the page and is the first element in the picture to catch the reader's gaze. In addition to its centrality within the illustration, this reference to filial piety is the first entry in the list. In “Sei Shōnagon no kisai,” however, the figure of the filial son is replaced by an image of two deer, a motif that suggests love between a man and a woman rather than love for one's parents (Figure 3.11). Placed on the right-hand side of the illustration in “Sei Shōnagon no kisai” the two deer, representing love between a man and a woman, become central to the picture and to the message it transmits to readers. Contrary to the text in which “the cry of a stag” suggests longing for one's mate, the illustration portrays a scene of the reunion of the two deer, rather than separation.

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<sup>309</sup> Morris, 124-5. This appears as Section 112.

<sup>310</sup> Fujii Otoo, *Otogizōshi*, Yūhōdō Bunko (Tokyo: Yūhōdō Shoten, 1915).

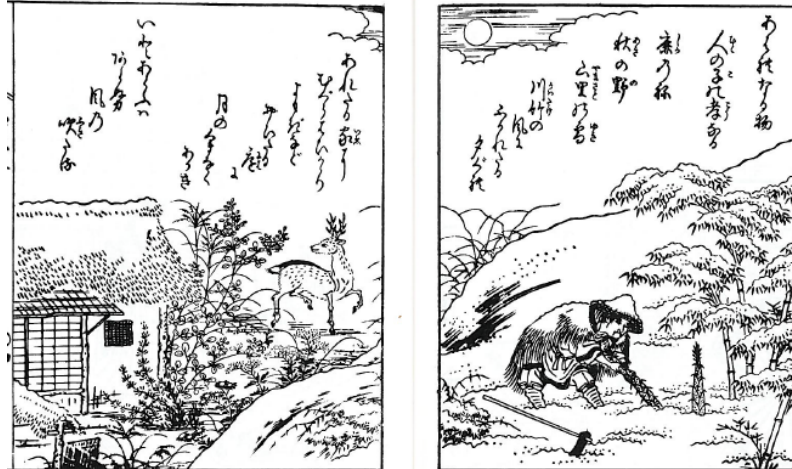


Figure 3.10: *Asahiyama*, Book One (Detail: “Things that move the heart”). 1741. “Ehon Asahiyama” in Tanaka Jūtarō, *Sei Shōnagon inu makurashū*, Koten Bunko, vol. 49 (Tokyo: Koten Bunko, 1982), 110-1.



Figure 3.11: “*Sei Shōnagon no kisai*.” (Detail: “Things that move the heart”). 1818. Emori, at al., *Ezu daijiten*, vol. 8, 307.

Next, the list entitled “Startling and disconcerting things” contains a similar alteration to its illustration. The text reads:

さしぐしみがくほどに物にさへておりたる 人のためにはづかしきこ  
とつゝみもなく児も成人もいひたる かならず来なんとおもふ人を待

あかして暁がたに只いさゝかわすれて寝いりたるに鴉のいとちかくか  
うと鳴に見上たればひるに成たるいとあさまし<sup>311</sup>

While one is cleaning a decorative comb, something catches in the teeth and the comb breaks. A child or grown-up blurts out something that is bound to make people uncomfortable. All night long one has been waiting for a man who one thought was sure to arrive. At dawn, just when one has forgotten about him for a moment and dozed off, a crow caws loudly. One wakes up with a start and sees that it is daytime—most astonishing.<sup>312</sup>

The illustration shown in Figure 3.12 in *Asahiyama* features women looking at combs, a woman brushing her hair, and a child speaking while pointing to the comb. In the next room a woman is waiting for her lover who has failed to visit and is looking up at a crow. In the illustration to “Sei Shōnagon no kisai” (Figure 3.13), the woman is depicted facing someone, most likely a man, whose robe is only partly revealed to the viewer. Here, similar to the list “Moving things,” lovers are portrayed reunited, contrary to the text.

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<sup>311</sup> Emori, *Ezu daijiten*, vol. 8, 310.

<sup>312</sup> Morris, 103. This appears as Section 93.



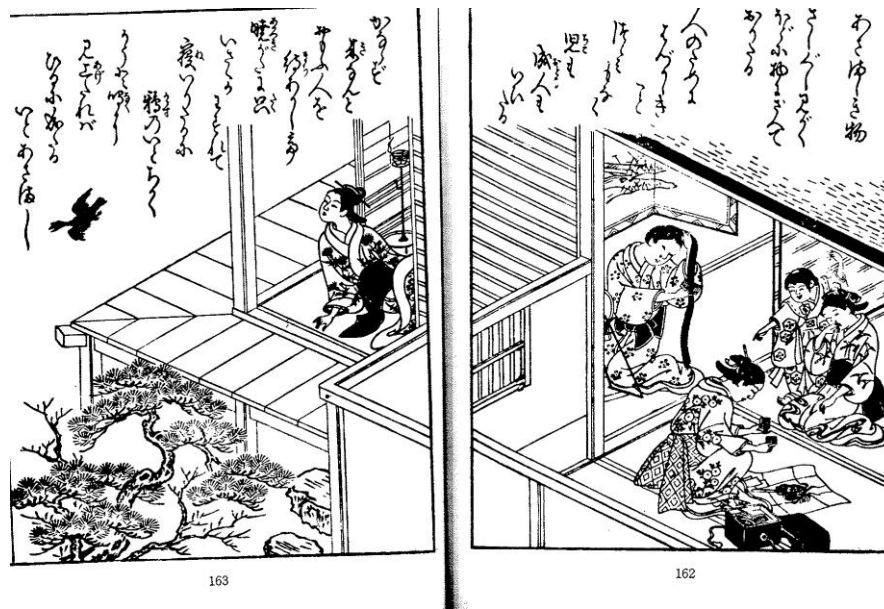


Figure 3.12: *Asahi-yama*, Book Two (“Surprising and distressing things”). 1741. Tanaka, *Inu makurashū*, 160-1.



Figure 3.13: “*Sei Shōnagon no kisai*.” (Detail: “Surprising and distressing things”). 1818. Emori, *Waka*, 308.



Another change to the illustrations suggests an emphasis on women's erudition as sexually alluring. The text in the section "Pleasing things" reads: "Pleasing Things: A person in whose company one feels awkward asks one to supply the opening or closing line of a poem. If one happens to recall it, one is very pleased."<sup>313</sup> In the *Asahiyama*, the illustration features a woman and a man facing each other with a book open in front of the man, as well as three women engaged in grooming in the next room (Figure 3.14). While in the earlier text, *Asahiyama*, the illustration includes other people as well, "Sei Shōnagon no kisai" provides a close-up of the man and the woman, with the woman ardently engaged in conversation with the man who is now holding a book (Figure 3.15). The scene recalls the episode about Emperor Murakami and the Sen'yōden Consort whom he asked to recite all the poems in *Kokinshū* based on the headnote and the poet's name.<sup>314</sup> Both illustrations suggest a private rather than a public context, but the focus on the two figures in "Sei Shōnagon no kisai" underscores the intimate overtones of the scene. It also places an emphasis on women brimming with confidence and erudition, which the producers of the work convey as pleasing.<sup>315</sup>

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<sup>313</sup> うれしき物 はづかしき人の歌のもとすゑたづねたるにふとおぼへ居たる我ながらうれしさしぐし為作ておかしげなるもうれし

For "Sei Shōnagon no kisai" see Emori 1993, 308, for *Asahiyama*, see Tanaka 1982, 152-3.

<sup>314</sup> This episode appears within Section 22 in Morris' translation. Morris, 17-19.

<sup>315</sup> The 1818 illustration that depicts the woman reaching out with her hand also recalls the Poem 60 by Koshikibu in the *Hyakunin isshu* (1235). The poem accompanies an anecdote which demonstrates Koshikibu's literary prowess when challenged by Middle Counselor Sadayori. See Joshua S. Mostow, *Pictures of the Heart: The Hyakunin Isshu in Word and Image* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1996), 319-21.

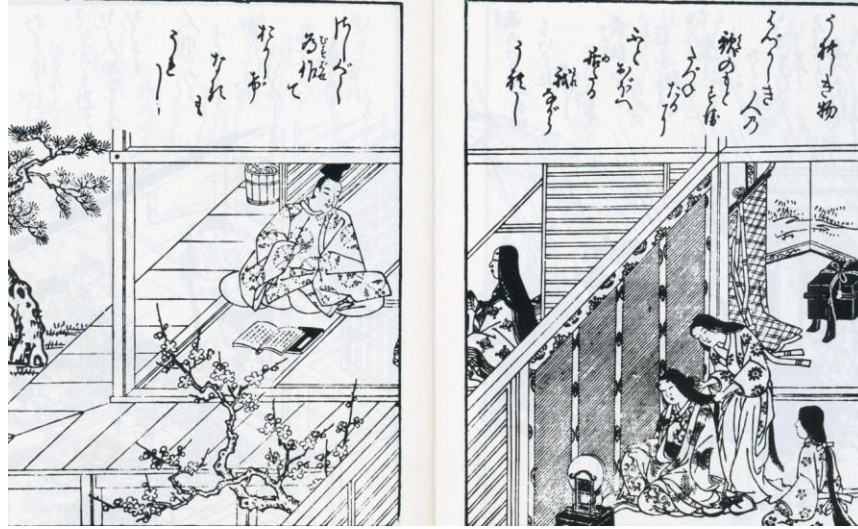


Figure 3.14: *Asahi-yama*, Book Two (Detail: “Pleasing things”). 1741. Tanaka, *Inu makurashū*, 160-1.



Figure 3.15: “*Sei Shōnagon no kisai*” (Detail: “Pleasing things”). 1818. Emori, *Waka*, 306.

Another example of a scene that features woman’s learnedness is the illustration accompanying “Graceful things” (*Namamekashiki mono* なまめかしきもの). The picture is reminiscent of the “*Kawachigoe*” episode of *Ise monogatari* (Episode 23).<sup>316</sup> In this

episode a man is peeping through a fence at his wife, who has made up her face and is reciting a poem revealing her affection toward her husband (Figure 3.16). The woman's fidelity and lack of jealousy rekindle the husband's affection and help her win him back. The adaptations of *The Pillow Book* portray educated women. In the illustration to *Asahiyama* the woman is reading (Figure 3.17), and in "Sei Shōnagon no kisai" she is writing (Figure 3.18). Moreover, in the later edition, the man is not behind a fence but in front of the woman, and although she is fully aware of his presence she continues writing, smiling at him. In other words, by appropriating the illustration to the *Ise* episode, the two adaptations of *The Pillow Book* hail woman's education, particularly reading and writing skills, as powerful enough to lure a man.

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<sup>316</sup> The relevant section of the episode is as follows:

The years passed, and the young woman lost support when her father died. What's the good of staying on with her *now*? The man said to himself, and he began visiting a woman in Takayasu County of Kawachi province. His original wife, though, saw him off without ever reproaching him. Suspecting her of having a lover, he pretended to set off for Kawachi but hid instead in the nearby shrubbery to spy on her. She made herself up very prettily and, gazing sadly before her:

<i>kaze fukeba</i>	When the wild wind blows,
<i>okitsu shira-nami</i>	out upon the sea white waves
<i>tatsuta yama</i>	rise—Mount Tatsuta!
<i>yoha ni ya kimi ga</i>	can you, by night, truly mean
<i>hitori koyuran</i>	to cross those hills all alone?

He was so moved that he gave up going to Kawachi.

Cited from Mostow and Tyler, 66-7.



Figure 3.16: *Saga-bon Ise monogatari* (Detail: Episode 23).1608.

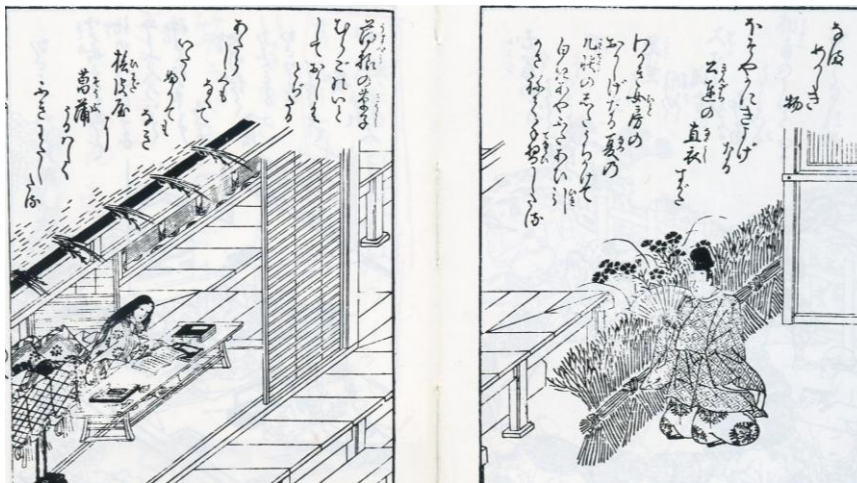


Figure 3.17: *Asahiyama*, Book Two (Detail: “Graceful things”). 1741. Tanaka, *Inu makurashū*, 152-3.

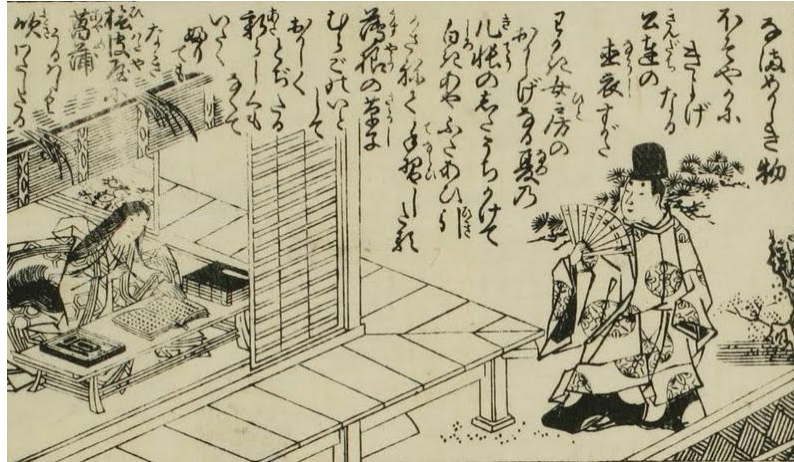


Figure 3.18: “Sei Shōnagon no kisai” (Detail: “Graceful things”). 1818. Emori, *Waka*, 310.

As the representation of Sei in the preface and the illustrations above suggest, this last adaptation of *Makura no sōshi* overflows with images of women who display their erudition in front of men. As a section of a book for women’s conduct, “Sei Shōnagon no kisai” demonstrates that in the nineteenth century the image of Sei Shōnagon was employed to foster the link between women’s sexuality and literacy. In addition, the preface’s approbation of *Makura no sōshi* as a text essential for women’s education suggests that literary erudition as sexual allure was an important aspect of the construction of early-modern femininity.

### 3.5 Conclusion

Although the three works discussed above have been defined respectively as a textbook for letter writing (*ōraimono*), an erotic book (*ehon*), and an educational text for female readers (*jokunsho*), they can all be situated within the same genre of edifying texts for women. First, the 1741 *Asahi-yama* provides a digest of *Makura no sōshi* that aims to cultivate skills necessary for a woman in everyday life, such as letter-writing. Next, the 1772 *Haru no Akebono* features topics such as marriage and erotic behavior, and attempts to educate

women about the intimate aspects of male-female relations. Finally, the 1818 “Sei Shōnagon no kisai” focuses on women’s literary erudition as an essential aspect of the ideal of womanhood within male-centred society.

These rewritings frame themselves as supplementary to the “real” *Makura no sōshi* by adding erotic overtones to what was originally a narrative about the riches of an empress under attack by a rival. They present their fictitious author Sei Shōnagon as exceptionally gifted and intelligent, and, by adding erotic overtones to her work, transform her from a lady-in-waiting serving a Heian-era empress into a talented courtesan. “Sei Shōnagon no kisai,” included in a book for female comportment, shows that Sei’s image even outside erotica carried sexual allure, and that she was consistently held up as a model for female comportment. Although these narratives focus on sex and women’s display of erudition, they do not convey anxiety over unruly femininity and do not present this Heian writer as a transgressor of social norms. Women’s sexuality in these works is trained by the dominant male, and women’s erudition is constructed within a woman’s relation to a man. By hailing *Makura no sōshi* as a source of important knowledge for women’s conduct, thereby endorsing the “feminine” nature of Heian literature, the male producers of the early-modern adaptations of *The Pillow Book* transformed the work into a tool for training women. The ability of Sei Shōnagon’s work to perform such functions that were perceived as desirable in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries contributed to the durability of the text as reading material to which women were advised to devote time.<sup>317</sup>

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<sup>317</sup> I follow Herrnstein Smith. See Herrnstein, *Contingencies of Value*, 51.



## Chapter Four

### Constructing Sei Shōnagon for Tokugawa Women

#### 4.1 Introduction

Having explored the reception of *Makura no sōshi* within texts for female readers from the eighteenth through the nineteenth centuries, in this chapter I take up the predominant representations of Sei Shōnagon herself during the Edo period. By analyzing instructional manuals for women, I examine the shifts in the construction of this writer and their implications about changing views of femininity in early modern Japan. What role was Sei Shōnagon assigned within Edo-period women's education? What influenced her reception the most: her career as a lady-in-waiting in the imperial court, her literary work, or the lack of information about her life after her career at court? Sei Shōnagon's *Makura no sōshi* does not relate its author's destiny following the death of her patron Empress Teishi. In fact, a scholarly consensus has been reached that the latest event depicted in *Makura no sōshi* is the one recounted in the section "When Her Majesty was in the Sanjō Palace" (*Sanjō no Miya ni owashimasu koro* 三条の宮におはしますころ).<sup>318</sup> It describes the move of Empress Teishi and her retinue to Taira no Narimasa's residence in the fifth month of the year 1000 to give birth for the third time.<sup>319</sup> Teishi died in the twelfth month of the same year. Despite the absence of historical accounts about Sei following the year 1000, scholars and writers

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<sup>318</sup> This episode is described in Section 222 in McKinney's translation and Section 224 in Tsushima and Nakajima. See *Shinpen Makura no sōshi*, ed. by Tsushima Tomoaki and Nakajima Wakako (Tokyo: Ōfū, 2010), 234. See also Meredith McKinney, trans., *The Pillow Book* (Penguin Books, 2006), 190.

<sup>319</sup> Fujiwara no Teishi is pregnant with Princess Bishi (1000-1008).

have repeatedly attempted to recreate her life, thus giving rise to multiple anecdotes about her destiny and personality.<sup>320</sup> Today, the image commonly associated with Sei Shōnagon is that of the arrogant and conceited aristocratic woman. When did such a representation come into being and what was the foundation for it?

The first section of this chapter focuses on the use of Heian women writers as an allegorical device since the twelfth century. It takes up dominant representations of the images of Heian women in medieval Japan. In the next section, I explore the ways the image of Sei Shōnagon was shaped in instructional manuals for women in early modern Japan. Analyzing narratives accompanied by visual representations of the Heian writer, I show how her image in the early-Edo period as seen in the seventeenth-century *Ominaeshi monogatari* shifted significantly in the nineteenth century, as *Onna yūshoku mibae bunko* 女有職葦文庫 (1866) reveals. Next, I turn to an examination of an erotic book entitled *Fūfu narabi no oka* 夫婦双の岡 (The Lined-up Hill of Spouses/ The Hill of Spouses, 1714) and argue that literary creativity was viewed as linked to women's sexuality even outside the Confucian-inspired manuals for women. The last section takes up the reception of Sei Shōnagon in Meiji Japan when the image of the Heian writer embodied negative aspects of femininity.

## 4.2 The Trope of the Heian Woman Writer

Following the twelfth century, an extensive body of narratives regarding accomplished literate women related to the Heian imperial court emerged. By concocting historical “facts” and embellished or creatively manipulated stories, the producers of such works employed

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<sup>320</sup> See R. Keller Kimbrough, “Apocryphal Texts and Literary Identity: Sei Shōnagon and ‘The Matsushima Diary,’” *Monumenta Nipponica* 57, no. 2 (Summer, 2002):133-171, 135.



women writers, including Ono no Komachi, Sei Shōnagon, Murasaki Shikibu, Izumi Shikibu, and Akazome Emon, in narratives intended for a larger audience beyond the court. These women were regarded as having a similar destiny in their later years because of their common background as daughters of provincial governors, and because of their association with the Heian imperial court and with literary prowess. Women writers from the tenth and eleventh centuries came to be viewed as “symbols of the elegance, sophistication, and the decadence of the Heian court,”<sup>321</sup> and their images began to populate various forms of literature, including *setsuwa* (anecdotes), *otogizōshi* (late-medieval fiction), Noh and *jōruri* plays, and instruction manuals for women.

The dominant representations of Heian women during the Kamakura and Muromachi periods were greatly influenced by Buddhist attitudes toward women in general, and specifically, the view of women as inherently evil.<sup>322</sup> In medieval narratives known as *reiraku rurōtan* 零落流浪譚 (“stories of fall and wandering”), women are incessantly punished for their beauty, creativity, erudition, and female gender. As R. Keller Kimbrough has noted, “Heian and medieval Japanese literature display a fetishistic fascination with the plight of aristocratic women in distress.”<sup>323</sup> For instance, in the Noh plays entitled “Kayoi Komachi” (Komachi and the Hundred Nights) and “Sotoba Komachi” (The Stupa Komachi), Ono no Komachi is portrayed as an old woman living “in moors of Ichiwara where the wild

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<sup>321</sup> R. Keller Kimbrough, *Preachers, Poets, Women, and the Way: Izumi Shikibu and the Buddhist Literature of Medieval Japan* (University of Michigan, Center for Japanese Studies, 2008), 2.

<sup>322</sup> Michelle Osterfeld Li, *Ambiguous Bodies: Reading the Grotesque in Japanese Setsuwa Tales* (Stanford, CA: Stanford California Press, 2009), 154-6.

<sup>323</sup> Kimbrough, *Preachers*, 137.

pampas grass grows,”<sup>324</sup> who asks a priest to pray for her repose because her relentless attitude toward Fukakusa no Shōshō has impeded her salvation. In *Jōruri monogatari* (The Tale of Jōruri) Izumi Shikibu is depicted as a woman who makes a vow to sleep with one thousand men in order to save her parents who have fallen into hell due to their daughter’s unparalleled beauty and poetic talent.<sup>325</sup> Murasaki Shikibu, on the other hand, in *Genji kuyō* (A Sutra for Genji, 1168) appears in people’s dreams pleading with them to destroy their copies of *The Tale of Genji* and to write out the chapters of the Lotus Sutra, thus emancipating her from hell, where she has been sent and suffers for having produced an immoral literary work.<sup>326</sup>

Likewise, Sei Shōnagon is frequently depicted as an old and impoverished nun or a wanderer. The earliest accounts are found in *Mumyōzōshi* 無名草子 (Nameless Tale, 1198-1202), *Kojidan* 故事談 (Tales of the Past, 1212-1215), *Matsushima nikki* 松島日記 (Matsushima Diary, mid-Kamakura period), and the postscript to the *Nōinbon* manuscript of *Makura no sōshi* (late 15<sup>th</sup>-early 16<sup>th</sup> centuries). *Mumyōzōshi* depicts Sei as living in the distant countryside, dressed in shabby clothes, picking vegetables outside her dwelling and longing for her glorious past.<sup>327</sup> Approximately ten years later, Sei’s unattractive and decrepit figure appears twice in *Kojidan*. The two stories construct a highly sexualized

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<sup>324</sup> Eileen Kato, trans., “Komachi and the Hundred Nights,” in *Twenty Plays of the Nō Theatre*, ed. by Donald Keene (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970), 56.

<sup>325</sup> Kimbrough, *Preachers*, 219-43.

<sup>326</sup> Richard Bowring, *Murasaki Shikibu: The Tale of Genji*, Landmarks of World Literature (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (2004), 80-84.

<sup>327</sup> Kimbrough, “Matsushima,” 136-7.

image of the Heian writer. The first narrative took as inspiration Sei's banter: "Won't you buy the bones of a fast horse? Someone else did."<sup>328</sup> It shows how, through an allusion to a Chinese story, Sei teases the courtiers who have commented on her destitution as they pass by her run-down dwelling.<sup>329</sup> The second story presents her as a nun who shows her sexual organs to a group of warriors to dispel their doubts about her female identity and thus escape death.<sup>330</sup> Another medieval narrative entitled *Matsushima nikki*, which was traditionally read as Sei's lost diary, also depicts her as an aged and impoverished nun, this time traveling from the capital to Matsushima in search of a relative.<sup>331</sup> Finally, the *Nōinbon* postscript reports that Sei lived in Shikoku, specifically in Awa. The postscript concludes: "Thus it seems that the things one would think about a person at the end of her life are not the things one would expect from the glory of her youth."<sup>332</sup> Kimbrough observes that this postscript offers readers a glimpse into Sei's life after court service, and by showing "the unfortunate future of [the] elegant, arrogant author," has transformed *Makura no sōshi* into a "medieval morality play."<sup>333</sup> He further argues that "[b]y informing readers of Sei Shōnagon's supposedly sad fate, the epilogue also contributed to the medieval reshaping of Sei Shōnagon's persona, recreating her (within the context of *Makura no sōshi*) as a haughty

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<sup>328</sup> Ibid., 135.

<sup>329</sup> Ibid., 136.

<sup>330</sup> Ibid., 136.

<sup>331</sup> Ibid.

<sup>332</sup> Ibid., 137. Matsuo Satoshi and Nagai Kazuko, eds. *Makura no soshi*, Nihon koten bungaku zenshū 11 (Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 1974), 470.

<sup>333</sup> Kimbrough, *Preachers*, 138.

woman author who blithely passes judgment on others while unaware of her own approaching destiny.”<sup>334</sup>

Despite the conventional modern representation of Sei as arrogant and derisive, there is insufficient evidence that she was viewed as a “haughty woman author,” as Kimbrough suggests, in premodern Japan. Although she is represented in an unfavorable way, medieval and early-modern texts are not explicitly critical of the author. Rather, Sei’s reception is shaped by the perception of her as a Heian woman associated with the court, and the construction of her gloomy old age results from the tendency to treat all women writers from the past equally. Except for Murasaki Shikibu’s well-known comment on Sei, which describes the author of *Makura no sōshi* as “dreadfully conceited”<sup>335</sup> because of her profuse use of Chinese characters in her writing, the majority of medieval and early modern texts do not construe her as a woman who flaunts her erudition. On the contrary, many of the narratives from the thirteenth through the nineteenth centuries consistently hail her as an exemplary woman due to her erudition and elegant way of displaying it.

The earliest medieval *setsuwa* collection that constructs Sei as an exemplary woman is the thirteenth-century *Jikkinshō*.<sup>336</sup> In its ten chapters, the work recounts episodes from the

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<sup>334</sup> Ibid., 138.

<sup>335</sup> Richard Bowring, *Murasaki Shikibu: Her Diary and Poetic Memoirs*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Library of Asian Translations, 1982), 131.

<sup>336</sup> For a study of the work and partial translation, see John Van Ward Geddes, “A Study of the *Jikkinshō*,” Ph.D. diss., 2 vols. (Washington University in St. Louis, 1976). The ten maxims described are as follows: “Be of consistent temperament in your actions,” “One should forsake pride,” “Do not despise others,” “Do not talk too much of the affairs of others,” “One should choose one’s friends,” “One must have

lives of male and female figures from the past presented as models to be emulated or shunned. As the preface states, the *Jikkinshō* was intended “to serve as an aid in forming the moral character of youth as yet untutored in the ways of the world,”<sup>337</sup> which suggests that it targeted both male and female readers. Among the many legendary figures from the past included in this collection are Heian women writers, including Ono no Komachi, Sei Shōnagon, Murasaki Shikibu, Shunzei’s Daughter, Akazome Emon, Izumi Shikibu, and Koshikibu no Naishi. Sei Shōnagon appears as the first Heian woman writer to be introduced in Chapter One, entitled “Be of consistent temperament in your actions” (*Hito ni megumi wo hodokosu beki koto* 一不施人恵事).<sup>338</sup> The episode reads:

The same Ex-Emperor one morning when the snow was falling intriguingly went out to the veranda to watch it and said, “I wonder what Kōro Peak looks like?”

Sei Shōnagon was in the royal presence and without saying a word she raised the bamboo lattice. This story has been handed down to the present day as an outstanding example of sensibility.

This Kōro Peak appears in a poem composed by Bo Juyi when he was old and in retreat in a grass hut at its foot:

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principles of loyalty and integrity,” “One must carefully consider everything,” “One should endure all things,” “One should not bear rancor,” “One should seek to develop talent and artistic ability.”

<sup>337</sup> Geddes, vol. 1, 116. Japanese text reads: いまだこの道を学び知らざらむ少年のたぐひをして、心をつくり便りとなさしめむがために. See Asami Kazuhiko, ed., *Jikkinshō*, Shinpen Nihon koten bungaku zenshū 51 (Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 1997), 17.

<sup>338</sup> Empress Teishi is the only Heian woman who precedes Sei Shōnagon.

Leaning my head on my pillow I listen to the bell of Iai Temple;  
Raising the blind, I look upon the snow of Kōro Peak.

This Sei Shōnagon was the daughter of Kiyohara no Motosuke, one of the Five Poets of the Pear Jar Room of Tenryaku times. In addition to carrying on the family traditions of learning and the arts, she was of elegant and straightforward character frequently displaying an uncanny ability to fit her actions to the occasion.

In addition, at that time there were many sensitive ladies such as Murasaki Shikibu, the author of *Genji monogatari*, Akazome Emon, Izumi Shikibu, Koshikibu no Naishi, Ise no Ōsuke, Dewa no Ben, Koben, Kura no Naishi, Taka no Naishi, Gō no Jijū, Otsu no Jijū, Shin Saishō, Konoe no Naishi, and Chūjō.<sup>339</sup>

Sei's portrait is based on the episode about the snow of Kōro Peak recorded in one of the final sections of *The Pillow Book*, which I discussed briefly in the previous chapter. Through his assessment of Sei that follows the recap of the episode, the author of *Jikkinshō* constructs her as well-versed in poetry composition and of a sensitive nature. He then provides a list of exemplary women, headed by Sei, which underscores her superiority.

However, *Jikkinshō* has adapted the respective passage from *The Pillow Book* by changing the gender of the interlocutor, thus having the riddle posed by Emperor Ichijō instead of Empress Teishi. Such a shift automatically places Sei in a heterosocial setting in which her erudition is put to test by a man. Moreover, in *The Pillow Book* the empress challenges Sei, while in *Jikkinshō* Sei emerges as the most knowledgeable among all in the

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<sup>339</sup> Adapted from Geddes, 160-3, following Asami Kazuhiko ed., *Jikkinshō*, 56.

presence of the emperor by solving the riddle. The writer evaluates Sei's behaviour by defining it as a paragon of refined comportment (*yū naru rei* 優なる例),<sup>340</sup> along with her *waka* prowess. Nakajima Wakako, in her study of the reception of this episode in medieval and early modern *setsuwa* collections, argues that the phrase “superior example” (*yū naru rei*) refers to the way Sei displayed her knowledge, namely by raising the blind without saying a word (*mōsu koto wa naku*).<sup>341</sup> In addition, Nakajima notes that unlike *Makura no sōshi*, this adaptation excludes the word “snow” from the riddle, effectively making the test more difficult.<sup>342</sup>

A similar representation of Sei appeared less than a century later in the *setsuwa* collection *Etsumokushō*. The text introduces Sei as Kiyohara no Motosuke's daughter and notes that during her time there were other famous women, including “Murasaki Shikibu who wrote *The Tale of Genji*, and also Akazome Emon, Ise no Taiyū, Izumi Shikibu, and Uma no Naishi.” The author further states that “although they were all different, they all were sensible and elegant/refined” (*kokoro aru sama yasashiku koso habere*).<sup>343</sup>

This cataloguing of Heian women and their poetic talents in medieval didactic texts continued throughout the Edo period and thrived within the genre of texts for women's

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<sup>340</sup> *Jikkinshō*, SNKBZ, 56.

<sup>341</sup> Nakajima, 13.

<sup>342</sup> The empress's question “What does the snow of Kōro Peak look like” as included in *The Pillow Book*, is adapted by the author of *Jikkinshō* as follows: “What does Kōro Peak look like?” See Nakajima, 4.

<sup>343</sup> Nakajima, 5-6. The Japanese text reads: 一人は其頃源氏物がたり作れる紫式部、並びに赤染衛門、伊勢大輔、和泉式部、馬内侍など、聞こゆる人々也。いと取り（取り）に心有りて優なる人ども也。あたらしくよみ出たらむはさる事なれども、心ある様やさしくこそ侍れ

moral instruction. Recreated through brief episodes from their lives and illustrations, such images of aristocratic women from the Heian court were put to use by writers and scholars concerned with girls' education. Evocation of legendary women from the past served as an effective tool in constructing a concept of traditional femininity, which although constantly revised, at various historical junctures was promoted to female readers as universal and abiding.

### 4.3 Recreating Sei Shōnagon for Tokugawa Women

Creative manipulations of the episode that depicts Sei as raising the blind continued throughout the early modern period. Within educational books for women, Sei Shōnagon appears alongside other female poets in sections such as “biographies of women poets of our country” (*honchō kajin den* 本朝歌人伝),<sup>344</sup> “a collection of famous exceptional women of our country” (*honchō meijoshū* 本朝名女集),<sup>345</sup> “biographies of famous exceptional ladies from the past” (*kokin meifuden* 古今名婦伝),<sup>346</sup> and “a section of talented women writers” (*bungaku saiyo no bu* 文学才女の部).<sup>347</sup> These category headings and the placement of women writers from the Heian imperial court within them show how Edo-period educational

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<sup>344</sup> *Hyakunin isshu jokyōyasabunko* 百人一首女教艶文庫 (1769).

<sup>345</sup> *Onna yūshoku mibae bunko* 女有職亭文庫 (1866).

<sup>346</sup> *Kokin meifu den* 古今名婦伝 (1860-1864).

<sup>347</sup> *Hinadzuru hyakunin isshu hana monzen* 雛鶴百人一首花文選 (1756).



texts for women linked ideal womanhood to literary women.<sup>348</sup> This link was based on the central position that poetry occupied in women's education, as Nakano Setsuko has argued.<sup>349</sup> Why was Sei Shōnagon included in the lists of famous women poets despite the scarcity of poems in her *Pillow Book*?<sup>350</sup> What do shifts in her representation suggest about the changing views of femininity and the reception of Heian women?

Among the earliest texts from the Edo period in which Sei Shōnagon appears is *Ominaeshi monogatari*, a work authored by Kitamura Kigin and published in 1661. Through a collection of fifty-five narratives about and illustrations of Chinese and Japanese literary women from the past, most of whom were active during the Heian period, the text presents itself as a preliminary handwriting manual for girls, and promotes virtues such as sexual chastity, obedience, filial piety, avoidance of jealousy, and moderation in drinking. As Paul Schalow has noted, this work made “the woman poet visible for the first time as a woman.”<sup>351</sup> Women discussed within this text are mainly Heian period poets such as

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<sup>348</sup> Nakano Setsuko notes that among the eighteen women constructed as exemplary in *Onna yūshoku mibae bunko* 女有職享文庫 (1866), fifteen are Heian-period women (twelve of which are aristocrats, two courtesans, and one commoner), one Muromachi-period commoner, and only two Edo-period samurai women. See Nakano, 84-5.

<sup>349</sup> Nakano, 87-98.

<sup>350</sup> Within *The Pillow Book* there are twenty poems composed by Sei Shōnagon and seventeen by others.

<sup>351</sup> Paul Gordon Schalow, “Formulating a Theory of Women's Writing in 17th Century Japan: Kitamura Kigin's *Ominaeshi monogatari* [Tales of the Maidenflower],” *Early Modern Japan* 5, no. 2 (December, 1995): 14-18, 16.

Princess Yūshi of Kii 祐子内親王家紀伊 (dates unknown),<sup>352</sup> Suō no Naishi 周防内侍 (?-1110?),<sup>353</sup> Taira no Nakaki's Daughter 平中興女 (dates unknown), Koshikibu Naishi 康資王母 (dates unknown), Murasaki Shikibu, Koben 小弁 (dates unknown), Senshi Naishinnō 選子内親王 (964-1035), Fujiwara no Toshinari's Daughter (dates unknown), Akazome Emon, Kenreimon'in Ukyō no Daibu, and Izumi Shikibu. Among the other women included are Yamato Hime, Konohanasakuya Hime 木花開耶姫, Oshisaka Ōnaka Hime 忍坂大中姫, Sotoori Hime 衣通姫, and Tachibana no Kachiko (Empress Danrin) (786-850).<sup>354</sup>

Compared to other books for women produced in Edo-period Japan, Kigin's text draws considerable attention to Sei Shōnagon. The section on Sei begins with two episodes that appear in *The Pillow Book* and demonstrate her literary talent. Despite the fact that thirteen years after the publication of *Ominaeshi monogatari* Kigin had produced his commentary *Shunshoshō*, *Ominaeshi monogatari* does not follow the base-text faithfully. The first episode centres around the poetic exchange between Sei and Fujiwara no Kintō 藤原公任 (966-1041), one of the leading poets and critics in mid-Heian Japan. The episode, as recounted in *Ominaeshi monogatari*, states that when a group of male courtiers had gathered, Fujiwara no Kintō sent the lower verse of a poem to Sei, urging her to provide the upper verse impromptu. Sei capped Kintō's verse and was later praised by Minamoto no Toshikata 源俊賢 (960-1027), who, along with Kintō, belonged to the cultural and political elite of the day, specifically the celebrated quartet of *shinagon* 四納言 or "four counselors" during the

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<sup>352</sup> Her poem appears as Poem 72 in *Hyakunin Isshu*. See Joshua S. Mostow, trans., *Pictures of the Heart: The Hyakunin Isshu in Word and Image* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1990), 354-6.

<sup>353</sup> Her poem appears as Poem 67 in *Hyakunin Isshu*. See Mostow, *Picture of the Heart*, 340-2.

<sup>354</sup> Empress Saga's wife.

reign of Emperor Ichijō (980-1011, r. 987-1011). Minamoto no Toshikata suggested that Sei be promoted to a high-ranking female office (*naishi* 掌侍).<sup>355</sup> In other words, Sei's ability to cap verses extemporaneously offers her an opportunity for social mobility. However, *Ominaeshi monogatari* does not reveal to readers that Sei, as described in *The Pillow Book*, was perplexed and under time pressure when asked to complete the poem. Neither does it say that she wished she could receive advice from her patron, Empress Teishi, who at that time happened to be secluded with Emperor Ichijō. Thus *Ominaeshi monogatari* shapes Sei as one who responds effortlessly to men's challenges and displays her poetic skills. The recap of this episode is followed by the narrator's comment:

[...] 女も連歌など心得たらん。あしかるましき事にやあらん。わざとさしいてゝいはんこそつきならめ。折ふしにしたがひて、興をもよほす事もあるべき也。すべて何わざもよき事とならばこゝろ得ゐてあしき事なかるべし。<sup>356</sup>

[...] I suppose women, too, understand linked verses. This is probably appropriate. It is unbecoming if [a woman] deliberately speaks flauntingly.

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<sup>355</sup> In *Makura no sōshi* the following characters are used: 内侍 (*naishi*), which McKinney translates as “High Gentlewoman of the highest rank.” See McKinney, 287. *Ominaeshi monogatari*, however, uses the characters 掌侍, which are usually read as “*naishi no jō*,” and mean a third-level official in the Office of Staff, while Kigin's text provides the reading as “*naishi*.” See McKinney, 113-4. The officials known as “The Four Counselors” are Minamoto no Toshikata, Fujiwara no Kintō, Fujiwara no Narinobu 藤原斉信, and Fujiwara no Yukinari 藤原行成.

<sup>356</sup> *Ominaeshi monogatari*, Koten Bunko vol. 282 (Tokyo: Koten Bunko, 1975), 220-1.

Depending on the occasion, [however] it is natural to invite someone's interest. Having knowledge of everything that may be valuable is not a bad thing, I suppose.

Here the narrator underscores the idea that mastery of poetry composition enhances a woman's marriageability, but warns women to be cautious when putting such knowledge to use.

The second story recounts the episode about the snow of Kōro Peak. *Ominaeshi monogatari* follows the *Jikkinshō* and has Sei challenged by the emperor. In doing so, Kigin continues the tradition of transforming the original all-female setting of Empress Teishi's court as described in *Makura no sōshi* into a male-centred setting with the emperor posing the riddle. In *Makura no sōshi*, Empress Teishi laughs and the other ladies-in-waiting express their astonishment at Sei's quick-wittedness, whereas in *Ominaeshi monogatari* the praise comes from the emperor, who is said to be greatly impressed (いみじく感ぜさせ給ひしとかや).<sup>357</sup> In his commentary on *The Pillow Book*, Kigin points to the fact that the challenge comes from Teishi, whereas in *Ominaeshi monogatari* he follows the *setsuwa* adaptation of Sei being challenged by the emperor.<sup>358</sup> Thus Kigin demonstrates that Sei is a woman to be emulated and shows it by placing her in a "heterosocial setting." What is common between these two episodes included in *Ominaeshi monogatari* is that men of high

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<sup>357</sup> Ibid., 221.

<sup>358</sup> The note reads: 此詞后宮なるべし。但基俊の悦目抄には、一条院の勅言とあり。See Kigin, *Shunshoshō*, vol. 3, 92.

station put Sei's skills to test and applaud her response, which attests to her accomplishments, namely poetic mastery and competence in the Chinese classics.

Having introduced Sei as an outstanding literary woman, the narrator goes on to discuss her work, comparing it to men's literature and to *The Tale of Genji*, which the text defines as the utmost treasure of Japan, concluding that *The Pillow Book* is equal in quality to the *Genji* and by no means inferior to works written in the male hand (*otoko moji*), implying *kanbun* literature. The text recommends *Makura no sōshi* to female readers, asserting that it is a work that should not be ignored, since it teaches much about polite manners.

The narrator then illustrates the value of Sei's work through fragments from two sections among the approximately three hundred sections of *The Pillow Book*. One of them, "A child full of filial piety" (*kō aru hito no ko* 孝ある人の子), is an example of moving things that appears in the section of the same name (*aware naru mono* あはれなるもの), and the other one, "The heart of a man" (*otoko no kokoro no uchi* 男の心のうち), is included in the list "Embarrassing things" (*hazukashiki mono* はづかしきもの). The narrator expounds at length on filial piety, telling readers that it is the most essential human virtue. The text advises its audience to serve their husbands and parents-in-law, raise and educate their children, and never neglect housework (specifically weaving and sewing); otherwise a woman would be estranged from her husband and hated by her mother-in-law, thus disappointing her parents, which would make her unfilial.<sup>359</sup> Although the topic of filial piety appears briefly and only in this section of *The Pillow Book*, *Ominaeshi monogatari* presents it as a fundamental issue within Sei's text. The narrator links the idea of love for

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<sup>359</sup> See *Ominaeshi monogatari*, 222.

one's parents to obedience to one's husband, thus constructing the relation of a woman to her husband as central to a woman's life.

This idea is further developed through the second example from *The Pillow Book*, “the heart of a man,” which instructs women that they should not hold resentment against their husbands.<sup>360</sup> The narrator goes on to illustrate this moral lesson through Episode 23 of *The Ise Stories*, in which Narihira began visiting a woman in the Takayasu district of Kawachi Province while his first wife showed no jealousy, as discussed in the previous chapter. By incorporating the *Ise* episode into the introduction to *The Pillow Book*, the narrator attempts to show that Heian texts shared moral values, on the one hand, and that *The Pillow Book*—thus constructed as a work about woman's filial piety and lack of jealousy—promoted virtues that were timeless. In other words, it demonstrates that what was hailed as essential six hundred years ago, when *The Pillow Book* was composed, is still valid in the seventeenth century. Thus Kigin elevates the status of *The Pillow Book* by showing that it is in line with Confucian didacticism and appropriate reading material for Tokugawa women. *Ominaeshi monogatari* is the first attempt to present a detailed rendering of Sei Shōnagon's work to early modern readers, and specifically women, since commentaries on *The Pillow Book* were yet to appear. By selecting fragments from the work and appropriating the episodes that introduce Sei, Kigin, in contrast with the arguments of Confucian scholars against women reading classical literature from Japan's past, presents

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<sup>360</sup> Ibid., 223-4. The text reads: “If you are diffident with men, strive to improve your comportment! You should not harbor ignoble thoughts, be jealous, and behave selfishly in any way! It is a woman's drawback due to her shallow-mindedness to be bashful at the beginning of her relationship with a man, but later she opens her heart and her unseemly behavior becomes visible more and more, and since such conduct can estrange [a man], you should be prudent about such shameful behaviour.”

her as talented in *waka* composition yet not immoral, well-versed in Chinese classics and virtues despite her female gender, and knowledgeable of literature but not conceited.<sup>361</sup>

In *Honchō jōkan* published in the same year as *Ominaeshi monogatari*, Sei is again introduced through her poetic exchange with Fujiwara no Kintō and her skillfully demonstrating that she has guessed the emperor's allusion to the poem about the snow of Kōro Peak. Sei is further presented as the author of *The Pillow Book*. The text reads:

枕草子を作りて心を述べたり、其詞優艶にして、やさしさ事限りなし

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She wrote *The Pillow Book* and expressed herself within it. The language is elegant and boundlessly refined.

In addition, the emperor is reported to have been “extremely impressed” (*imijiku kanjisasetamaishi to ka ya* いみじく感じさせたまひしとかや).<sup>363</sup>

In the years following the printing of *Ominaeshi monogatari* and *Honchō jōkan*, writers of *jōkunsho* elided the anecdote about Kintō's poetic challenge, and ignored Kigin's moralistic approach. Attempts to provide a detailed evaluation of *The Pillow Book* continued through the early eighteenth century, as shown, for example, in *Onna kanninki yamatobumi* 女堪忍記大倭文 (1713). This text praises the elegance of language and the depth of *The*

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<sup>361</sup> Kornicki, “Unsuitable Books for Women,” 152-9.

<sup>362</sup> *Honchō jōkan*, Kinsei Bungaku Shiryō Ruijū Kanazōshi hen 7, (Tokyo: Benseisha, 1942), 39.

<sup>363</sup> Ibid.

*Pillow Book* and hails it as equal to the *Genji*.<sup>364</sup> However, books for women's instruction from the mid-eighteenth through the nineteenth centuries focus on Sei as an exemplary woman who was skillful in poetry composition, knowledgeable of Chinese classics, and good at repartee, thus presenting her as an unparalleled *saijo* (a woman of literary talent).<sup>365</sup> Such works focus on Sei's character rather than showing interest in *The Pillow Book* itself. In other words, while earlier educational texts construct Sei as a woman to be emulated by demonstrating the value of her work, later texts attempt to prove the work's worth based on the author's superior qualities as a woman.

*Onna kanninki yamatobumi* was published in Osaka in 1713 and written by Hasegawa Myōtei 長谷川妙貞, the female writer of *jokunsho*, including books on elegant handwriting for women such as *Nyohitsu wakamidori* 女筆若みと里 (18<sup>th</sup> c.) and *Nyohitsu shinanshū* 女筆指南集 (1734). According to Myōtei's version of the episode about the snow of Kōro Peak, the emperor addresses the ladies-in-waiting who are in his presence, and only Sei is capable of guessing the allusion. The emperor is boundlessly impressed (*Mikado wikan kagiri nakarishi to nari* みかど、ゑいがかんかぎりなかりしとなり), a comment

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<sup>364</sup> 『枕双紙』といふをつくれり。その詞ゆうびに、その心のゆうげん、更にいはんかたなし。『源氏物かたり』にならび、もちひらる。

<sup>365</sup> Sei is described in later instruction books in the following ways:

その生質さはやかにして、才学世にこえたりける。(Hyakunin isschu jokyōyasabunko 百人一首女教艶文庫, 1769); 当意即妙...才女 (Onna yō yukikaiburi 女用文章往かい振, 1833); 幼より和歌に才かしこく、ひろく漢和の文に通じ、当意即妙・不思議の才女也。(Onna yūshoku mibae bunko 女有職亭文庫, 1866).



which underscores Sei's eminence.<sup>366</sup> Despite the fact that by the time *Onna kanninki yamatobumi* was published in the early eighteenth century the fully annotated text of *Makura no sōshi* was available widely in print through its three complete commentaries, Myōtei does not follow the story as it appears in Sei Shōnagon's work but offers a retelling that recalls the versions transmitted through the earlier *setsuwa* collections. Yet, the author must have been familiar with the *Shunshoshō*, since this section reveals traces of heavy borrowing from the commentary's preface. Copying directly from Kigin's work, this retelling praises *Makura no sōshi*'s style (*fude no aya* 筆のあや), its "elegant language" (*kotoba no yūbi* 詞の優美), the "depth and mystery of its meaning" (*kokoro no yūgen* 心の幽玄), and acclaims it as equal to *The Tale of Genji* in greatness. The influence of the

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<sup>366</sup> Emori, *Denki*, 243-5. The text reads:

少納言は、清原の深養父孫・元輔の子。一条院の皇后・定子と申に宮つかへしたり。清原の氏をとりて清少なこんと申也。『枕双紙』といふをつくれり。その詞ゆうびに、その心のゆうげん、更にいはんかたなし。『源氏物かたり』にならび、もちひらる。一条院の御とき、雪のいみしくふりて、おもしろかりあした、みかと、女官たちに「香炉峯の雪はいかに」とおゝせられたりければ、そのまゝたちて御まへのみすをさら々とまきあげたり。みかど、ゑいかなかぎりなかりしとなり。此こゝろは、白楽天の詩に、「香炉峯雪撥簾看」と云句のこゝろなり。

Shōnagon was Kiyohara no Fukayabu's granddaughter and Motosuke's daughter. She served Teishi, the empress of the retired Emperor Ichijō. She took the family name Kiyohara and was called Sei Shōnagon. She wrote *Makura no sōshi*. All one could say is that its language is elegant and its meaning was deep. It began to be read widely along with *Genji monogatari*. During the reign of the Retired Emperor Ichijō, on a delightful morning when it was snowing heavily, when the emperor asked the women courtiers: "What does the snow of Kōro Peak look like?" [Sei] stood up and gently raised the blind. The emperor was boundlessly impressed. This was an allusion to Bo Juyi's poem "I raise the blind and gaze at the snow of Kōro Peak."

*Shunshoshō* is also seen in the inclusion of the legend about Sei's life after her service at Teishi's court, according to which she wandered on Shikoku, but later served at the Seiganji temple as a nun, which enabled her to attain enlightenment.

The text constructs Sei as a writer. It introduces her as a descendant of prominent poets such as her great-grandfather Fukayabu and her father Motosuke, and as the author of *Makura no sōshi*. This image is reinforced by the accompanying illustration, which depicts Sei Shōnagon standing outside the chamber of the emperor and raising the blind in front of him (Figure 4.1). Her attempt to lift the blind, behind which the emperor's garb is partially seen, implies her desire to uncover the life at the Heian imperial court and show it to the Edo-period readers. The illustration parallels the idea of Sei being the author of *Makura no sōshi*, which reveals various aspects of the imperial court to the early modern readership.



Figure 4.1: *Onna kanninki yamatobumi*. (Detail: Sei Shōnagon raising the blind). 1713. Emori, *Denki*,

Approximately fifty years later, in 1769, *Hyakunin isschu jokyōyasabunko* was published in Kyoto. Its text by Higashitsuru 東鶴 and illustrations by Nishikawa Sukenobu construct Sei in the presence of the emperor and male courtiers (*gunkei* 群卿). The text stresses the fact that since no one knew the answer (*aete kotaeru hito mo nakarishi ni* あへて答る人もなかりしに), Sei emerges as the only one who is capable of solving the riddle and her erudition is acknowledged by the emperor's reaction, as the following quote suggests: "the emperor was extremely impressed" (*mikado wa hanahada eikan arikeru to ya* 帝ははなはだ叡感ありけるとや). Thus she is constructed as a gentlewoman who surpasses high-ranking male courtiers in knowledge. Moreover, Sei is described as eloquent by nature and outstanding in talent and learning (*shōshitsu sawayaka ni shite saigaku yo ni koetarikeru* 生質さはやかにして、才学世にこえたりける).<sup>367</sup>

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<sup>367</sup> Emori, *Denki*, 166-7. The text reads:

ある年の冬、雪のいとふふりけるに、帝、紫閣に出御ありて、「香炉峰の雪はいかに」と群卿に仰ければ、あへて答る人もなかりしに、清少納言かたはらに侍りしが、つとたちて御簾を巻揚しかば、帝ははなはだ叡感ありけるとや。これは、もろこしの白楽天が詩に「香炉峰の雪は簾を撥て看」とあるを思ひ出して御簾をまきたるなり。

One winter, when it had snowed heavily, the emperor came out of the main ceremonial hall of the inner palace.<sup>367</sup> When he said to the courtiers "What does the snow on Mt. Kōro look like?" no one could answer. Sei Shōnagon was by his side and she stood up quickly and raised the blind—the emperor was extremely impressed. She recalled the poem by Bo Juyi from China "I raise the blind and gaze out at the snow of Kōro Peak."

This representation of Sei as exceptionally gifted is reinforced by the accompanying illustration (Figure 4.2). It depicts a woman, most likely to be understood as Sei, lifting a blind, and provides a close-up of her that excludes both emperor and courtiers. The cloud-like caption that occupies approximately half of the illustration is positioned above the blind and underscores its heaviness. This weighty impression is echoed by the snow that has piled on the pine tree branch nearby. Regardless of the ostensible heaviness of the blind, however, Sei is portrayed as lifting it effortlessly with her elegant hands. The structural organization of the illustration thus highlights both the difficulty of the riddle and the ease with which Sei solves it. The depiction of Sei facing the implied reader suggests an acknowledgement of the viewer's presence. The orientation of her figure and the exclusion of other characters from the painting transform the illustration into a mirror, as if inviting the viewer to identify with Sei Shōnagon, who is construed as a reification of ideal womanhood.



Figure 4.2: *Hyakunin isshu jokyōyasabunko*. (Detail: Sei Shōnagon raising the blind). 1769.

Emori, *Denki*, 166.

A similar depiction of Sei Shōnagon is found in the series of portraits of legendary women entitled *Kokin meifuden* (Tales of Famous Women from the Past, 1860-1864), produced by Utagawa Toyokuni III almost a century later.<sup>368</sup> Each of the thirty-three extant paintings features a woman who is introduced through captions inscribed within the pictures. Sei Shōnagon's introduction reads:

<sup>368</sup> Within the title which is included in each of the paintings the character *ima* 今 “now/present” is reversed. Inagaki Shin'ichi interprets such a reversal as intended to mean “the opposite of ‘the present,’ that is, ‘the past.’” See Inagaki Shin'ichi, “Ukiyoe ni miru onna no kagami,” in *Edo jidai josei seikatsu kenkyū*, edited by Emori Ichirō et al., *Edo jidai josei seikatsu ezu daijiten*: Bekkan (Tokyo: Ōzorasha 1994), 14.

清少納言 肥後守清原元輔の女にして一条天皇の皇后に宮仕し、時の博士にも口開せぬ才女なり。和歌を能賦、文章尤自在の筆なり。或年の冬、雪なるらんと仰られければ、御答も申さで、つと立て御格子上させ、翠簾高く卷上げたれば、うち點頭て莞尔たまひ、其当意即妙を感じたまひけりとなん。こは白楽天の時に香炉峯雪揆簾看とある意なり。これ禪家の問答の如し。才機満たる者ならでは、なしがたきことなり。此婦人の作、枕冊子の一書、当時の世能を尽くして紫文の絶妙に亞たり。

Sei Shōnagon: A daughter to the Governor of Higo Kiyohara no Motosuke in service of the empress of Emperor Ichijō, she was a woman of literary talent, acknowledged even by the scholars of the time. She was skilled in poetry and her writing flowed freely. One winter, when asked [by a superior] “What does the snow look like?” she quickly stood up, had the lattice lifted, and when she raised the blind, [the superior] nodded and smiled, and was greatly impressed with her talent for repartee. It alludes to Bo Juyi’s poem, “I raise the blind and gaze at the snow of Kōro Peak.” This is like a Zen dialogue. It can only be solved by someone who brims with wit. This lady’s literary work is *Makura no sōshi* and stood next to *Genji monogatari* in exquisiteness.

*Kokin meifuden* introduces Sei as a woman of literary talent whose exceptional skills in poetry and prose writing were acknowledged by her contemporaries. Unlike the earlier

representations of Sei, this text does not underscore her poetic lineage, i.e. does not mention her great-grandfather Fukayabu and introduces her father Motosuke as one of the provincial governors at the time, rather than one of the five members of the Pear Chamber. Moreover, it stresses her talent for repartee and wit through the use of the words *tōi sokumyō* and *saiki*. The text further alludes to the Flower sermon, a story which describes the foundation of Zen Buddhism. Sei's ability to solve the riddle by lifting the blind is linked to the sermon which focuses on the transmission of wisdom without words.<sup>369</sup> The illustration features an aristocratic woman lifting a blind (Figure 4.3). The exclusion of the superior who posed the riddle and a background that suggests a snowy day decontextualizes the depicted female figure. The elaborate patterns of her kimono and its amplified shape, along with the rich colours, offer viewers a portrait of a beautiful woman pleasing to the eye. Inagaki Shin'ichi argues that the production of the print series of beautiful women (*bijinga*) such as *Kokin meifuden* and Kuniyoshi's *Kenjo reppuden* 賢女烈婦伝 (Biographies of Wise and Exemplary Women, 1843-1847) was greatly influenced by the censorship of paintings that portrayed kabuki actors, female entertainers, and courtesans. Since such themes were no longer available to artists, they employed women from the past to recreate themes such as filial piety, chastity, and morality.<sup>370</sup> In other words, Heian women were transformed into surrogates of courtesans and entertainers. Undoubtedly, due to the existing censorship regarding this genre of painting, Sei was not depicted within a heterosocial context. In addition, the caption that construes her as a woman worthy of emulation can be viewed as an

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<sup>369</sup> Albert Welter, "Mahākāśyapa's Smile: Silent Transmission and the Kung-an (Kōan) Tradition," in *The Kōan: Texts and Contexts in Zen Buddhism*, edited by Steven Heine & Dale S. Wright (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 75–109.

<sup>370</sup> Inagaki, 14.

attempt to justify the series' production. However, rather than qualities such as filial piety, chastity, and morality, the image of Sei suggests that literary talent and the talent for repartee were qualities that were hailed as exceptionally valued in women.



Figure 4.3: *Kokin meifuden*. (Detail: Sei Shōnagon raising the blind). 1860-1864.

The idea of Sei's quick-wittedness as exemplary started much earlier, as *Onna yō bunshō yukikaiburi* demonstrates. As I have noted in the previous chapter, it portrays Sei inside the emperor's chamber with male courtiers surrounding her (Figure 3.9).<sup>371</sup> The narrator praises Sei for her talent for repartee (*tōi sokumyō*), and explains that this is what triggered the emperor's admiration. Unlike earlier paintings of the Heian court, the picture portrays Sei within the same space with male courtiers and not separated by a lattice

<sup>371</sup> *Waka, koten, bungaku*, 303-5.



shutter.<sup>372</sup> She has turned her back to the courtiers and is transformed into an object of the male gaze.

Depictions of Sei in the company of men continued to be reproduced as the Edo period drew to a close. A work entitled *Onna yūshoku mibae bunko*, published in Osaka in 1866, illustrated by Matsukawa Hanzan 松川半山, and with a preface by Bunkaidō Kameyama 文海堂竜山, contains a retelling of the episode that differs significantly from earlier versions. The text reads:

或冬の朝、雪いとおもしろくふりつみければ、帝、南殿の端ちかく出御ありて  
参内の公卿・官女などちかくめされ、御酒器たまはり、いと興ありける時、  
たゞ何となき御口すさびに、「香炉峯の雪はいかに」と仰ければ、人々其意  
をしらず。清女御座にありけるが、つと立て、御前の御簾をから々と巻あ  
げたり。みかど限なくぬいかんまし々々、ものおゝく給りける。此心は、白樂  
天が詩に、「香炉峰之雪撥簾看」といふ句をおぼしいでゝくちすさびたまひし  
を、かしこくものしけるよとときの人々かんじあへり。<sup>373</sup>

One snowy morning when the snow had piled beautifully, the emperor came out near a corner of the main ceremonial hall of the inner palace.<sup>374</sup> Male courtiers and female attendants were nearby [attending the emperor] and

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<sup>372</sup> For an examination of the relation between women and illustrated court romances in the Heian period, see Mostow, “*E no gotoshi*,” 37-54.

<sup>373</sup> *Denki, shinkō, hoka*, 182.

<sup>374</sup> Naden 南殿 is another name for the Shishinden 紫宸殿.

[they] were served sake. As things became more entertaining, [the emperor] happened to say, for amusement, “What does the snow of Kōro Peak look like?” and no one guessed the allusion. Sei was seated, but quickly rose and lifted the rattling blinds. The emperor was extremely impressed and greatly praised her. This was an allusion to the Chinese poem, “I raise the blind and gaze out at the snow of Kōro Peak,” which he recalled and mentioned for amusement. This moved the people at the time to exclaim how knowledgeable and accomplished she was.

In this episode Sei raises the blind during a drinking party attended by the emperor and male and female courtiers, but the illustration portrays her as the only woman in the presence of the emperor and male courtiers (Figure 4.4). Amongst them, Sei emerges as the only one who could solve the riddle by the emperor, since “the others did not know what [the riddle] meant” (*hitobito sono i wo shirazu* 人々 其意をしらず). Her superiority is further reinforced by the emperor’s praise and the astonishment of those present. The illustration features Sei depicted from behind. Her face is hidden and only her hands, long hair and the gracefully swaying sleeves of her kimono are visible to the viewer. This picture emphasizes Sei’s femininity by amplifying the length and movement of her hair and kimono, which occupy almost half the picture. Unlike the illustrated Heian-period literary works in which women are hidden from the male gaze and the only way to catch a glimpse of a woman with whom one was not intimate was through *kaimami* (“peeking through the hedge”),<sup>375</sup> this text depicts her as being viewed directly by men. Bearing the male gaze, Sei lifts the blind and

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<sup>375</sup> I use Mostow’s definition. See Mostow, “*E no gotoshi*,” 44.

brings smiles and expressions of delight to the men's faces. Despite her highly sexualized representation, however, she is not depicted as unguarded. In his study of women and illustrated tales in the Heian period, Mostow explains that "the absorption" of the object, in Michael Fried's words, refers to "a loss of control" and "vulnerability, "and acknowledges the importance of "the obliviousness" of the object of the gaze for the voyeur's pleasure.<sup>376</sup> In this painting, however, Sei is completely aware of the masculine gaze upon her, although she has turned her back to the three high-ranking courtiers included in the illustration. What does this signify? Sei is constructed as if performing on stage after being challenged by the emperor. The performative aspect is further reinforced by the explanation of the setting, namely a drinking party in the imperial court. Sei's depiction as a performer evokes an image of a high-ranking courtesan who is an accomplished artist and entertainer. The text and the illustration construct Sei as exceptionally gifted and appealing in the eyes of men. Thus, by employing Sei Shōnagon as an embodiment of ideal femininity, this work instructs readers about the skills necessary to perform femininity successfully, i.e. to acquire a feminine appeal.<sup>377</sup>

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<sup>376</sup> Ibid., 46

<sup>377</sup> Such an approach in the instructional manuals for women evokes the training of kabuki actors in the staging of feminine roles of *onnagata*. In her study of *onnagata*, Maki Morinaga argues that portrayals of females on the kabuki stage become successful not through "somatic characteristics" but through "artistic skills of acting" acquired through gender training. See Maki Morinaga, "The Gender of Onnagata As the Imitating Imitated: Its Historicity, Performativity, and Involvement in the Circulation of Femininity," *positions* 10, no. 2 (2002):245-7.

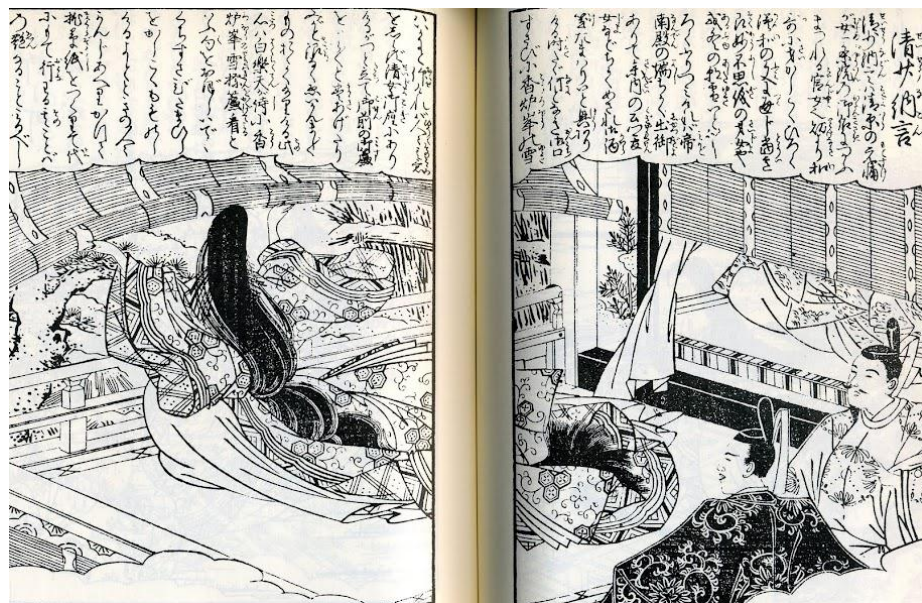


Figure 4.4: *Onna yūshoku mibae bunko*. (Detail: Sei Shōnagon raising the blind). 1866. Emori, Denki, 182.

Sei's image gradually transformed from the talented author of *Makura no sōshi* in the early Edo period to an outstanding woman whose learnedness is held in high esteem by high-ranking men. The image of Sei as exceptionally erudite as constructed in books for women refers to her knowledge of Chinese and Japanese literature (*hiroku kanwa no fumi ni tsūji* ひろく漢和の文に通じ), gift for *waka* composition since a young age (*osana yori waka ni sai kashikoku* 幼より和歌に才かしこく), and exceptional talent for repartee (*tōi sokumyō fushigi no saijo* 当意即妙・不思議の才女). The importance of familiarity with Chinese classics is suggested by the explanation of the origin of the allusion that follows the episode about Sei raising the blind in every version. The emphasis on Sei's quick-wittedness appears in the mid-Edo period, as shown in *Hyakunin isshu jokyōyasabunko* by the phrase (*tonchi naru koto tagui naku* 頓智なること類ひなく, “unmatched quick-wittedness”), and continues into the nineteenth century, in texts that repeatedly note her capability/talent for “quick and

witty rejoinder” (*tōi sokumyō*). Finally, despite the fact that the sections on Sei included in *jokunsho* are centred around an allusion to a Chinese poem, in the nineteenth century she is hailed for her talent for *waka* composition. The portrayal of Sei in the company of men, the emphasis on her femininity, and the focus on her as a poet rather than the author of *Makura no sōshi*, conjure up an image of the *keisei*, a high-ranking courtesan who excelled in the arts, such as poetry composition, calligraphy, flower arrangement, and tea ceremony.

#### 4.5 Further Sexualizing Sei Shōnagon

The cataloguing of Heian women spread beyond Confucian texts for female education through an erotic work entitled *Fūfu narabi no oka* 夫婦双の岡 (The Lined-up Hill of Spouses). Written by Hachimonjiya Jishō 八文字屋其笑 (?-1750) and illustrated by Nishikawa Sukenobu, this text recounts erotic stories regarding twelve Heian women writers. The heroines are introduced in the following order: Princess Shokushi (called Kōshokushi Naishinnō, “Amorous Princess Shokushi”), Ono no Komachi, Ise, Ukon, Izumi Shikibu, Koshikibu, Akazome Emon, Ise no Tayū, Murasaki Shikibu, Daini no Sanmi, Suō no Naishi, and Sei Shōnagon. The preface, extant copies of which are barely legible, states that the work was produced as an alternative to the festival for the pacification of the souls (*tama matsuri*) of “truly amorous people from the past” (*irobukaki inishie no hito* 色深きいにしへの人). Jishō explains that since the festival for the spirit of male-male eroticism (*nanshoku*) was held in the seventh month, he tried to find an appropriate place to hold a commemoration service for the deceased women. Alluding to poems from the *Kokinshū*, he

states that since Mitarashi River was polluted, he went to the Ōi River and read a sutra.<sup>378</sup>

Both poems centre around the topic of fervent love: in the former, the gods have refused the poet's prayers, and in the latter, the poet's feelings are compared to the Ōi River, where Ōi also means "numerous." Although the damaged texts prevent us from knowing what followed after the appeasing of the souls of the ancestors, the preface shapes women from the past as highly amorous and draws a link to Heian-era poetry.

Each of the three volumes of the work features four Heian women poets. The stories begin with an allusion to the poem of the respective writer included in Fujiwara no Teika's *Hyakunin isschu* (One Hundred Poets, One Poem Each, 13<sup>th</sup> c.) In fact, the poems have been transformed into highly erotic verses with only one line left unchanged to evoke the original. The women are paired with their actual husbands or imagined lovers, and are depicted

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<sup>378</sup> "Fūfu narabi no oka," in *Nishikawa Sukenobu makurabon issō* 西川祐信枕本一双, ed. by Taihei Shujin 太平主人, Sumizuri Ehonsen 墨摺絵本選 2 (Tokyo: Taihei Shooku 太平書屋, 2008), 17. The texts alludes to the following two poems: poem 501 in Book 11, "Love 1" and poem 1106 in "Deleted Poems." The former reads:

koi seji to	I shall not love I
mitarashigawa ni	thought and purified myself
seshi misogi	in the river of
kami wa ukezu zo	ablutions yet it seems the
narinikerashi mo	gods have refused all my prayers

The latter reads:

kyō hito o	the tumult in my
kouru kokoro wa	heart today yearning for the
ōi gawa	one I hold so dear
nagaruru mizu ni	is no less frenzied than the
otorazarikeri	Ōi River current

Laurel Resplica Rodd and Mary Catherine Henkenius, trans., *Kokin Wakashū: A Collection of Poems Ancient and Modern* (Cheng and Tsui Company, 1996, repr. 2004), 193 and 376.

trysting. Each episode portrays a sexual encounter, and demonstrates how each of the women retained her male partner through sex. For example, Izumi Shikibu marries Fujiwara no Yasumasa 藤原保昌 (958-1036) upon Jōtōmon'in's insistence, who catches a glimpse of their love-making and finds them to be an ideal couple; Murasaki Shikibu is visited by Nobutaka at Ishiyama Temple and in the midst of vigorous sexual intercourse pleads with him to stop visiting other courtesans and to remain with her. Each episode portrays the heroine as enjoying her sexuality, yet within a monogamous relationship. The focus on women's sexuality is reinforced by captions within the illustrations which only voice the women's sexual pleasure. The illustrations accompanying the episodes feature love-making scenes of couples that are observed by other couples, women, or men who in turn have also become aroused.

The section that introduces Sei is entitled "Sei Shōnagon who [authored] *The Pillow Book* of "nightly reality" (*yo o komete utsutsu no Makura no sōshi no Sei Shōnagon* 夜をこめてうつつの枕草子の清少納言),<sup>379</sup> alluding to her poem in *Hyakunin Isshu*.<sup>380</sup> The section opens with an introduction of Sei as "a famous beauty whose literary talent was unparalleled" (*tenka ni kakurenaki bijo ni shite bonsai ni tagui nashi* 天下にかくれなき美

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<sup>379</sup> *Fūfu narabi no oka*, 100.

<sup>380</sup> The poem reads:

yo wo komete	Although, still wrapped in night,
tori no sora-ne ha	the cock's false cry
hakaru tomo	some may deceive,
yo ni afusaka no	never will the Barrier
seki ha yurusaji	of the Meeting Hill let you pass.

Mostow, *Pictures of the Heart*, 325.

女にして文才世にたぐひなし).<sup>381</sup> Readers are then told about her older brother Kiyomi no Tarō 清監の太郎, whose parents have cut their ties with him due to his passion for *jōruri* and lack of interest in poetry. He promises Narimasa, who is in love with Sei, to help him access his sister's chamber during the night. The unsuspecting Sei is practicing calligraphy (*tenarai*), facing the lamplight. Yukinari, having been asked by her father to tutor her in handwriting, is visiting, and both are discussing poems. As he takes her hand from behind, he becomes aroused and eventually embraces her. Sei pleads: “Yukinari, if your heart is true, please do as you wish” (*Yukinari-san, jijitsu nara gojiyū ni* 行成さん、実事なら御自由に).<sup>382</sup> A detailed description of their sexual encounter follows, and the narrator explains that this is Sei's sexual initiation. She rejoices at discovering the superiority of actual intercourse over masturbation with a dildo, which she frequently practiced.<sup>383</sup> As Yukinari is about to leave, she implores him to stay on, since her father is away for the night, a rare occurrence. The text tells readers that from that day on, Yukinari instructed Sei regarding her *Pillow Book* and thus it began to circulate broadly.

The illustration depicts Sei and Yukinari *in flagrante* (Figure 4.5). She faces a writing table and holds a brush, while Yukinari embraces her from behind. Booklets are spread around the couple. Readers are allowed a peek through the *fuki-nuki yatai* (blown-off roof) technique that was commonly used in illustrated picture scrolls from the Heian and Kamakura periods. Beside the veranda outside Kiyomi is peeping through the raised blind and masturbating. The text justifies his behaviour by reminding readers that he has severed

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<sup>381</sup> *Fūfu narabi no oka*, 100.

<sup>382</sup> *Ibid.*, 106.

<sup>383</sup> *Ibid.*



his ties with his family. A hen and a rooster are also included in the illustration sitting on a branch of a tree, though not actually mating. The reader and the masturbating male share their position as viewers observing the couple, which suggests that such an illustration was intended to sexually stimulate male readers. Yet, it is tempting to interpret the depiction of Sei as a virgin who asserts the superiority of real sexual intercourse over the use of a dildo as an attempt to convince inexperienced women of the pleasures of sex. This representation of Sei is influenced by the medieval understanding of Heian court women (*nyōbō*) as courtesans (*yūjo*). This attitude resulted from the understanding of Japanese poetry as centred on love, and women poets came to be construed as amorous (*irogonomi*).<sup>384</sup>

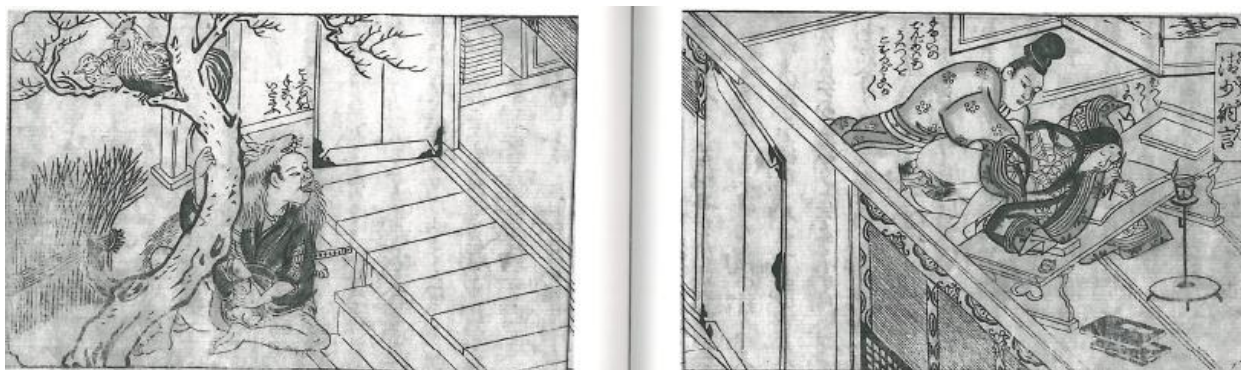


Figure 4.5: *Fūfu narabi no oka*. (Detail: Sei Shōnagon and Yukinari). 1714.

## 4.5 Sei Shōnagon in Meiji Japan

The image of Sei Shōnagon as a symbol of literary erudition worthy of emulation shifted as Japan opened to the world in 1868. Over the course of the Meiji Restoration (1868), various reforms took place in an effort to situate Japan on equal footing with the advanced nations of

<sup>384</sup> See Saeki Junko, *Yūjo no bunkashi: Hare no onnatachi*, Chūō Shinsho 853 (Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1987), 61-81. Saeki supports her claim through an examination of the image of Izumi Shikibu in Muromachi fiction. She points that Izumi Shikibu was referred to as a *yūjō* in the otogizōshi *Izumi Shikibu*.

the West.<sup>385</sup> As Michael Brownstein notes, the Meiji period (1868-1912) was “an age dominated by two conflicting impulses in Japanese society: the desire to be recognized by the West as a civilized nation and the fear of losing essential Japanese characteristics in the process of achieving that recognition through Westernization.”<sup>386</sup> Concern for the state of Japan and its position in the world manifested itself in gendered terms. The perception that Japan was a “‘feminine’ nation vis-à-vis the more ‘masculine’ and more civilized Anglo-European world”<sup>387</sup> resulted in new attitudes toward women. As Rebecca Copeland has shown, reformers of the new nation-state regarded women’s education as central to their efforts to “civilize” Japan. She notes that “woman,” as a designation, became “a metaphor for all that was backward and shameful in Japan.”<sup>388</sup> That women’s education was viewed as absolutely necessary for the betterment of the state is evident from the increased educational opportunities for women twenty years after the establishment of the new order. By the 1880s nine women’s secondary schools and three Christian private academies had opened their doors, and much educational literature for women was being produced, including the

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<sup>385</sup> Sharalyn Orbaugh, “The Problem of the Modern Subject,” in *The Columbia Companion to Modern East Asian Literature*, edited by Joshua S. Mostow et al. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 24-35.

<sup>386</sup> Michael C. Brownstein, “*Jogaku Zasshi* and the Founding of Bungakukai,” *Monumenta Nipponica* 35, No. 3 (Autumn, 1980): 319-336, 335-6. Also cited in Rebecca L. Copeland, *Lost Leaves: Women Writers of Meiji Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2000), 49.

<sup>387</sup> I cite Orbaugh. See Sharalyn Orbaugh, “Gender, Family, and Sexualities in Modern Literature,” in *Columbia Companion*, 43-52, 43.

<sup>388</sup> Copeland, 11.

pioneering *Jogaku zasshi* (*Woman's Education Magazine*, inaugurated in 1885).<sup>389</sup>

Underlying all the reforms was the attempt to create “a national citizenry” deemed as “a group of individuals all bound equally to the idea of Japan-as-nation by ties of nationalism/patriotism, and a sense of common goal and identity,” in Sharalyn Orbaugh’s words.<sup>390</sup> Edo-period women’s education that aimed at making young women more marriageable, thus leading to greater social mobility for an individual or family, was replaced in the new age by an ideal that “would produce a stronger Japan.”<sup>391</sup> Within the emerging ideology of “good wives and wise mothers” (*ryōsai kenbo* 良妻賢母) women were to “provide the religious and moral foundations of the home, educating their children and acting as the ‘better half’ to their husbands.”<sup>392</sup> Meiji women’s newly constructed identities were determined by their relations to husbands and children.

What did Sei Shōnagon come to symbolize in this new age? What function did her image perform in women’s education? The two important factors that influenced the reception of Sei Shōnagon and her work were the new attitudes toward women and the construction of the genre of “national literature” (*kokubungaku*). In contrast to the preceding historical period, in Meiji-era Japan Sei Shōnagon became frequently paired with Murasaki Shikibu and defined in comparison with the *Genji* author. Within the scholarly discourse of “Seishiron” 清紫論 or (with the names of the authors reversed) “Shiseiron” 紫清論, literally,

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<sup>389</sup> Copeland, 10-12.

<sup>390</sup> Sharalyn Orbaugh, “Nation and Nationalism,” in *Columbia Companion* 36-42, 37.

<sup>391</sup> Sharon L. Sievers, *Flowers in Salt: the Beginnings of Feminist Consciousness in Modern Japan* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University press, 1983), 22.

<sup>392</sup> Sievers, 22.

the “Sei and Murasaki debate,” *The Pillow Book* and *The Tale of Genji* were placed on an equal footing, and compared and contrasted. The origins of this debate can be traced to the early thirteenth century but comparison of the two authors remains common today both in scholarly circles and within popular culture.<sup>393</sup> A particularly antagonistic relationship between the two writers was constructed in the eighteenth century when they were placed for the first time in an antagonistic dyad in Andō Tameakira’s 安藤為明 (1659-1716) *Shijo shichiron* 紫女七論, known also as *Shika shichiron* 紫家七論 (Seven Essays on Murasaki Shikibu, 1703).<sup>394</sup> *Genji monogatari* had been characterized as immoral, as “senseless and deceiving fiction” that ran counter to both Buddhist and Confucian tenets, thus causing “moral depravity.”<sup>395</sup> In an attempt to redefine the *Genji* as a work of moral value, Tameakira contrasted the *Genji* author with Sei Shōnagon in order to hail Murasaki Shikibu’s superiority, as can be seen in his critique below.

女の筆にてはめづらかにあやしく、式部は誠に古今独歩の才と云べし。  
いにしへより清紫といひならはしたれど、清少納言は才気狭小にして  
さかしだちたる跡あらはに、にくさげおほき物なり。同日にも論ずべ  
からず。<sup>396</sup>

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<sup>393</sup> *Mumyōzōshi* (1196-1202) is considered the first text that pairs Sei Shōnagon’s *Makura no sōshi* and Murasaki Shikibu’s *Genji monogatari*.

<sup>394</sup> Miyazaki Sōhei, *Sei Shōnagon to Murasaki Shikibu: sono taihiron josetsu* (Tokyo: Chōbunsha, 1993), 1.

<sup>395</sup> Both quotes come from Shirane, *Early Modern Japanese Literature*, 360.

<sup>396</sup> Miyazaki, 27.

Shikibu, whose brush is brilliant and extraordinary, should be regarded as having a talent unparalleled in all ages. Since the old days it has been a custom to speak of them as “Sei and Murasaki” (*SeiShi*), but, as has been revealed in writing and is most disagreeable, Sei Shōnagon is not very talented and she thought herself clever.

They cannot be discussed on an equal footing.

Although Tameakira’s assessment did not dominate scholarly discourse during the Edo period, this “rivalry” between Murasaki Shikibu and Sei Shōnagon was skillfully used by later Meiji (1868-1912) and Taishō (1912-1926) intellectuals as precedents for different types of women in discourses on morality and womanhood.<sup>397</sup>

One of the “Japanese language readers” (*kokugo tokuhon* 国語読本), in other words, a text approved by the Ministry of Education and a predecessor to state-compiled textbooks (*kokutei kyōkasho* 国定教科書), illustrates how Sei Shōnagon’s image was construed to promote a specific kind of womanhood. Entitled *High-School Japanese Language Reader: Girls’ Edition* (*Kōtō kokugo tokuhon: joshiyō hen* 高等国語読本 女子用編, 1899), it contains the following anecdote:

一条天皇の御世は、名高き才女、一時に出でし時なり。中にも世に知られたるは、紫式部と清少納言となり。清少納言は、梨壺五人の一人なる清原元輔が娘にして、皇后の御許に宮仕へし、紫式部は中宮東上門院に仕へ奉りき。

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<sup>397</sup> Ibid., 119-80.

ある年雪の降り積りける日、清少納言等、皇后の御前に侍りけるに、  
皇后は遺愛寺の鐘は枕をそばたててきき、高炉峰の雪は簾をかゝげて  
みる、という唐詩を思し出でて「少納言よ。高炉峰の雪は如何に。」  
と仰せありければ、少納言は直に立ちて、御前の御簾を掲き上げたり。  
皇宮うち笑ませ給ひて、少納言の敏才を感じ給ひきとぞ。  
この人、学問に誇り、才氣を恃み、故老の学士を言ひ込めしことなど  
ありて、自らの草紙にも、面白げに記したれど、紫式部が日記には、  
それと言わずに、之を譏りて、夫人に似げなき所行とせり。<sup>398</sup>

The reign of Emperor Ichijō was a time when literary women noted for their talent emerged. Among them, those who became well-known were Murasaki Shikibu and Sei Shōnagon. Sei Shōnagon was a daughter of Kiyohara no Motosuke who was one of the Five Men of the Pear Chamber, and she served in the court of Empress Teishi. Murasaki Shikibu was an attendant to Empress Jōtōmon-in.

Once, on a day when snow had piled up and when Sei Shōnagon and others were in the presence of Her Majesty, the Empress recalled the following Chinese poem:

The bell of the Temple of Bequeathed Love—  
I hear it striking against my pillow;  
The snow on top of Incense Burner Peak—  
I see it through the rolled-up blind.<sup>399</sup>

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<sup>398</sup> Ibid., 125.

When she said, “Shōnagon, what does the snow of the Incense Burner Peak look like?” Shōnagon rose immediately and lifted the blind for Her Majesty. The Empress smiled and was impressed by her exceptional quick-wittedness. This woman [Sei Shōnagon] took pride in her learnedness, relied on her sharp, clever nature, and outwitted aged scholars. She wrote of this amusingly in her own book, yet Murasaki Shikibu does not speak of this in her diary, and censures Sei for her unladylike behaviour.

The section then introduces Murasaki Shikibu, tells of her outstanding knowledge of Chinese and her discretion since she never flaunted her erudition, and concludes:

其の頃作りし源氏物語といふ小説は、話の面白きのみならず、文章の勝れたること、前後比類少なく、永く和文の手本となれり。  
式部が娘たちも、母の淑徳をや受け継ぎけん、長女大貳三位は、名高き歌人にて、後一条天皇の御乳母に選まれ、次女弁局は、後冷泉天皇の御乳母に選まれき。<sup>400</sup>

The novel entitled *The Tale of Genji* which she wrote at that time is not only interesting in content, but has never been surpassed, and has served as a model for Japanese [vernacular] writing for a long time.

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<sup>399</sup> This poem by Bo Juyi appears as poem 554 in the anthology of Chinese and Japanese poems *Wakan rōei shū* 和漢朗詠集 compiled by Fujiwara no Kintō (966-1041) around 1013. See Thomas Rimer and Jonathan Chaves, trans., *Japanese and Chinese Poems to Sing: The Wakan rōei shū* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 167.

<sup>400</sup> Miyazaki, 125-6.

Shikibu's daughters, too, must have inherited their mother's virtues, [as] the elder, Daini no Sanmi, was a prominent poet and was appointed a wet nurse to Emperor GoIchijō. The younger, Ben no Tsubone, was appointed a wet nurse to Emperor GoReizei.

The producers of this textbook focus on the two women writers from the Heian period rather than on their literary works. The episode of the Incense Burner Peak through which Sei Shōnagon had been represented over the centuries is used to demonstrate her arrogance and lack of modesty. The textbook depicts Sei as being challenged by her patron, Teishi, rather than the Emperor. It thus follows the *Makura no sōshi* text rather than later commentaries that attributed the request to the Emperor. The “restoration” of the all-female setting after six centuries indicates not only a scholarly approach within educational texts for girls, but also the emergence of a new ideal of womanhood for which a depiction of Sei surrounded by men, as in the Edo-period versions, was deemed inappropriate. Murasaki is depicted as the embodiment of feminine virtue which is reflected in her production of a celebrated literary work and the birth of two daughters who each took on one of the most respected posts at court, that of imperial wet nurse. Although the textbook discusses literary works from the past, it focuses on the personal qualities of their writers. Addressing the high-school girls of Meiji Japan, the producers disparage Sei Shōnagon's conceitedness and praise Murasaki Shikibu's discretion. Depicting the latter as a mother and her daughters as having advanced in the world as wet nurses, a profession that involved surrogate motherhood, the text clearly promotes an ideal femininity that centres on women's domesticity and maternity. Sei Shōnagon's literary erudition—deemed sexually alluring in the Edo period—did not fit the agenda of the Meiji reformers. The focus on asceticism and restrained natural impulses that



supported the idea of nationalism precluded attention to women's appeal as sexual partners.<sup>401</sup>

As state-compiled textbooks emerged in 1903, however, Sei Shōnagon was no longer portrayed antagonistically, in opposition to an idealized Murasaki Shikibu. Among the three editions of the *Upper Elementary Reader* (*Kōtō shōgaku tokuhon* 高等小学読本), Sei Shōnagon appears only once in the second edition. She is again paired with Murasaki Shikibu, and is introduced after Murasaki Shikibu. Following a summary of the snow of Kōro (Incense Burning) Peak episode, the author notes Sei's competence in all things (*yorozu ni kokoro kikitaru*), though this commendation is tempered by the emphasis placed on Murasaki's humbleness and discretion. In the third edition of the textbook, however, references to Sei are entirely omitted. As textbooks were no longer gendered and aimed at solely a female or male audience, Sei's function to illustrate the opposite of ideal femininity within school textbooks was no longer useful. In other texts for women, however, representations varied. Her loyalty to Teishi was seen as manly (*ōōshiki* 雄雄しき) in *Lady's Journal* (*Fujo zasshi* 婦女雑誌, 1893), and her erudition (*gakushiki*) was used in *An Outline of Women's Education* (*Joshi kyōiku yōgen* 女子教育要言, 1897) to show middle-class women that without education they would not be able to maintain their status.<sup>402</sup>

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<sup>401</sup> Gregory M. Pflugfelder, *Cartographies of Desire: Male-Male Sexuality in Japanese Discourse, 1600-1950* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1999), 193.

<sup>402</sup> Ando Tōru, "Kindai nihon no kyōiku to 'ShiSei'", in *Buke no bunka to Genji monogatari-e: Owari Tokugawake denraihin wo kiten toshite*, edited by Takahashi Tōru et al., 431-47 (Tokyo: Kanrin Shobō, 2012), 436.

Modernization of the nation was also encouraged through the establishment of the institution of “national literature” in the 1880s. A number of histories and anthologies of Japanese literary works were produced over the 1890s in order to systematize this newly configured national literature.<sup>403</sup> Summarizing their objectives, Tomi Suzuki notes:

All of them considered literature as “reflections of national life” (*ikkoku seikatsu no shaei*) and tried to present, through concrete literary examples, “the development of the mentality of the nation” in order that “the nation’s people will deepen their love for the nation,” that “the national spirit” (*kokumin no seishin*) will be elevated, and that the “social progress and development of the nation will be furthered.”<sup>404</sup>

Suzuki further argues that these works focused on native literary works and aimed for “a comprehensive representation of the historical development of national literature, stressing both the continuity and the progress of the national spirit—‘continuity’ and ‘progress’ being signs of a civilized and advanced nation.”<sup>405</sup> Heian literature played a central role in the construction of Japanese literary tradition. Women’s writing offered the basis for genre categorization and the authors acted as models of “traditional” Japanese womanhood.

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<sup>403</sup> Ueda Kazutoshi’s *Kokubungaku* (1890), Haga Yaichi and Tachibana Senzaburō’s *Kokubungaku tokuhon* (1890), Ochiai Naobumi, Hagino Yoshiyuki and Konakamura Yoshikata’s *Nihon bungaku zensho* (1890-1892), and Mikami Sanji and Takatsu Kuwasaburō’s *Nihon bungakushi* (1890). See Tomi Suzuki, “Gender and Genre: Modern Literary Histories and Women’s Diary Literature,” in *Inventing the Classics*, 74.

<sup>404</sup> Suzuki, 74.

<sup>405</sup> Suzuki, 74.

However, even within the field of literary criticism, a strong focus was placed on the women writers rather than their works.

Although *Makura no sōshi* and *Genji monogatari* were repeatedly recognized as masterpieces, their authors were dramatically juxtaposed and evaluated. In his *Ten Lectures on the History of National Literature* (*Kokubungakushi jikkō* 国文学史十講, 1899), Haga Yaichi 芳賀矢一 positions *Makura no sōshi* and *Genji monogatari* on equal footing, and views them as “the two unsurpassed works in the national literature of our country” (*waga kuni no kokubun ni sōzetsu*).<sup>406</sup> However, he introduces Sei Shōnagon as follows:

男には負けぬと云ふ氣象がある。学才のあるにまかせて、男を虐めたことなども沢山書いてある。高炉峰の雪の話などでも分かりますが、機敏で頓智があった人らしい。紫式部のように温厚な所はない、極めて鋭敏な所があるから、其の筆は批評的である。<sup>407</sup>

It was in her nature not to lose to men. Relying on her own scholarly ability, she was frequently hard on men. As becomes evident from an episode like that about the snow of Incense Burner Peak, she seems to have been apt and quick-witted. She was not mild-mannered like Murasaki Shikibu but extremely sharp-witted, and therefore her writing abounds in criticism.

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<sup>406</sup> Shioda, 241.

<sup>407</sup> Nomura Seiichi, “Sakuhin-ron, sakka-ron: sono hyōka o megutte” in *Shosetsu ichiran: Makura no sōshi*, edited by Shioda Ryōhei, 226-279 (Tokyo: Yanagizawa, 1970), 240-1.

Haga Yaichi contrasts “mild-mannered” nature (*onkō na tokoro*) with sharp-wittedness, displays of learnedness, and attitudes that challenge men. He uses Sei and Murasaki to offer two models of feminine behavior, both of which are determined by women’s attitudes to men. The authors’ personalities serve as a basis on which to judge their writing.

This critique of Sei’s failure to fulfill gendered norms of femininity can be seen even more pointedly in a work published six years later, Fujioka Sakutarō’s 藤岡作太郎 *Complete History of Japanese Literature: The Heian Court* (*Nihon bungaku zenshi* 日本文学全史 平安朝編, 1905). Fujioka selects episodes from Sei’s work and construes her as lacking in femininity (*ikani onnarashikarazaru onna*). His examples include Sei’s judgment passed on parents who did not scold mischievous children as hateful, her laughter when she heard that a man’s house was burning, and her lack of sympathy toward lowly people. He also notes:

清少納言にして女らしき心あらば、魯直にして世に軽んぜらるゝものは、却って憐みいたわるべきを、驕念強く、我意深き癖として、惻隱の念は殆ど求むべからず。<sup>408</sup>

If Sei Shōnagon had a feminine nature, she should have treated with compassion those who were naively honest and belittled by others; however, she was too boastful and willful, and [therefore] does not deserve any sympathy.

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<sup>408</sup> Fujioka Sakutarō, “Makura no sōshi,” *Kokubungaku zenshi: heianchō hen* vol. 2, edited by Akiyama Ken, Tōyō Bunko 247 (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1974), 77-78.

Again, ideal womanhood is defined by compassion and self-denial. This focus can be seen throughout the Meiji period, and thus, rather than analyzing *Genji monogatari* and *Makura no sōshi*, scholars tended to engage in debates about the personal qualities of the Heian authors. What became the basis for Sei's perceived "arrogant" display of knowledge were Sei's own accounts recorded in *Makura no sōshi* and Murasaki Shikibu's criticism of Sei as documented in the *Murasaki Shikibu nikki*. As Fujimoto Munetoshi observes, aspects of self-praise were not unique to Sei Shōnagon but also seen in other Heian works, including *Kagerō nikki* and *Sarashina nikki*.<sup>409</sup> However, Sei was selected to perform the role of a boastful literary woman whose negative image was used to train Meiji-period girls. Despite Sei's inclusion of episodes that portray her as being embarrassed by her insufficient knowledge or unsatisfactory poetic skills, Meiji scholars disregarded these sections of the text and only focused on what was later labeled "self-praise episodes" (*jisandan* 自賛談); in other words, those that portrayed the Heian author as accomplished and confident. As a result, Sei was repeatedly criticized for her arrogance, haughtiness, and impertinence for displaying superiority over men, because such qualities did not fit the newly-constructed parameters of "traditional" femininity that emphasized "gentleness and sweetness."<sup>410</sup>

#### 4.6 Conclusion

Medieval and early-modern representations of Sei Shōnagon were shaped by dominant ideologies, rather than through references to historical documents and direct interactions with her literary work. In medieval Japan, Buddhist views of women as the ultimate source of suffering led to the depiction of aristocratic women associated with the imperial court as

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<sup>409</sup> Fujimoto Munetoshi, "Kenkyū, hyōronshi," in *Makura no sōshi daijiten*, 824-5.

<sup>410</sup> Copeland, 13.

destitute in their old age, and yielded images of Sei as desolate, impoverished, and wandering. While medieval texts with Buddhist overtones reveal an obsession with Sei's fate after her court service, early-modern works focus on her life as a lady-in-waiting. Thus, Edo-period instructional manuals for women hail Sei as a paragon of femininity rather than depicting her as unattractive and suffering. Until the mid-eighteenth century, such representations were based on Sei's production of *Makura no sōshi*. As a result, she was frequently constructed as the gifted author of a literary work whose excellence paralleled that of *Genji monogatari*. In subsequent decades, however, Sei's image was transformed into that of an ideal woman who was an accomplished poet with an exceptional talent for repartee, much like the idealized image of top-rank prostitutes.

As the government focused all its efforts on the centralization of the country and the formation of a nation-state of civilized citizens on the late nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, the image of Sei Shōnagon was transformed into an antipode of ideal femininity. No longer portrayed on her own but paired with her contemporary Murasaki Shikibu, the author of *Makura no sōshi* came to represent negative qualities which were strongly discouraged in Meiji-period women. Thus Sei's image continued to be readapted and reinvented over time as selective representations of her were employed as an efficient tool for gender training in new historical settings.

## Conclusion

The complex reception history of *Makura no sōshi* shows that it is a fluid text that cannot be pinpointed to a specific origin, definitive version, or a singular meaning. Instead, it is an “agglomerate” that challenges the ways we think about textual identities, transmission, and canonization. Texts like *Makura no sōshi* that have been reconstructed through history show that set notions of identity and authenticity are not productive when discussing works that encompass multiple textual variants, narratorial voices, and readings.

The advent of commercial printing and publishing in the seventeenth century necessitated for the first time a definitive text of *Makura no sōshi*. Challenged by the diverse manuscript variants of Sei Shōnagon’s work, seventeenth-century scholars collated texts that became the basis for their exegeses on the work. Reorganizing its content and dividing it into segments, annotators grappled with the form of *Makura no sōshi*, some regarding it as a collection of logically ordered sections and others as a “play of the brush” that resulted in randomly organized musings. They all agreed that *The Pillow Book* was a work resistant to easy categorization. The conceptualization of the work as a “play of the brush” was solidified through the broad dissemination of Kitamura Kigin’s commentary in subsequent decades, and encouraged its further categorization as a miscellany (*zuihitsu*). Throwing Sei Shōnagon’s work into a hodgepodge of male-authored texts of diverse thematic content, and time and place of production, late Edo-period scholars disregarded the literary aspects of the work and used it as a precedent to justify the literary tradition of the *zuihitsu* genre.

Although the definition of *zuihitsu* underwent reevaluation in the twentieth century, when the genre was no longer seen as linked to Chinese literature but as influenced by Western literature, *The Pillow Book* remained within this category. As a result, it continued to be

viewed as an anomaly whose literary value was based on its relation to the Heian imperial court. In the twentieth century, the status of the text was again transformed as it gained a place in the national literary canon due to its presumed commensurability with Western literary standards.

Despite early-modern scholars' understanding of *Makura no sōshi* as a miscellany, within popular culture Sei Shōnagon's text came to be understood as a collection of lists that catalogued knowledge rather than representing an assemblage of random jottings. By excluding episodes that recount events from the Heian court, later writers removed the work from its historical context and used *The Pillow Book* and other eleventh-century texts as a tool to comment on the present. Organizing the work into lists that evaluated various behaviours while still maintaining a link to *Makura no sōshi* enabled early-modern writers to assert masculine ideals about gender and to demonstrate their possession of classical literary knowledge. These writers used the text selectively to educate readers in proper decorum as sexual partners both within the pleasure quarters and in marriage.

Erotic rewritings of *Makura no sōshi* intended for male readers transformed the imperial court into a pleasure quarter and its author into a courtesan from the past who was well-versed in the ways of love. Although such transformations may be seen as attempts to construct a distinct tradition of sexuality rooted in the Heian imperial court, the early-modern texts reduce court culture to the politics of the sex trade. As a consequence, these erotic parodies presented *The Pillow Book* as a work permeated with topics related to sex rather than courtship, authored by a woman whose sexual experiences as a courtesan could be conveyed to later readers.



Other writers promoted the text as a source of didactic instruction for women. Adaptations of Sei Shōnagon's work for female readers focused on skills that were considered important for women's education within male-centred society, such as letter-writing, intimacy in male-female relations, and female virtue. Framing these later works as supplementary to the "real" *Makura no sōshi*, the producers hailed their fictitious author Sei Shōnagon as exceptionally gifted and intelligent. They transformed Sei from a lady-in-waiting serving a Heian-era empress into a talented courtesan. To this new kind of readership, however, Sei's image was sexually alluring particularly because she represented literary erudition. She was consistently held up as a model for female comportment and a woman embodying the feminine ideal for marriage. Sei Shōnagon's image shifted as attitudes towards women changed following the Meiji Restoration. Hailed as a paragon of femininity in the Edo period, Sei Shōnagon came to represent negative qualities which were discouraged in Meiji-period women. The characterization of her text as anomalous in terms of genre was viewed as a natural extension of the author's transgressive and eccentric nature.

The past that one recreates is only "a version and no more than one version of all the hundreds of millions of possible versions," in Salman Rushdie's words.<sup>411</sup> Thus the literary past arrives into the present cultural terrain in the form of multiple versions, constructed to perform specific functions in various cultural, social and political contexts. It is important to recognize the unattainability of "origins" and "authenticity" because the "true" past is out of reach. Therefore, insistence on the validity of ideas such as authority, authenticity, and origin(ality) only signals a desire to create constructs such as (cultural or national) identity

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<sup>411</sup> Salman Rushdie, "Imaginary Homelands," *Imaginary Homelands: Essays and Criticism 1981-1991* (Granta Books and Viking: 1991), 10.

and hierarchies with centres and peripheries. What is borne out of the attempts to translate the (imaginary) past into the present should not be confined to dichotomies, because each of these creative engagements with the past has fostered new horizons of expectations, and thus enriched and innovated the “present” for generations of readers. Accordingly, all readings of *The Pillow Book* over the course of a millennium attest to the vibrant roles the text has played in shifting contexts. Although the *Makura no sōshi* that Sei Shōnagon wrote is lost and irretrievable, its subsequent rewritings show desire to give an afterlife to the work in new contexts and for new readerships. Each “trace” of such “engagements”<sup>412</sup> is secondary to the final text that Sei intended but equally important, for it reveals how later readers “imagined” the literary past. Likewise, the copious accounts concerning its author, Sei Shōnagon, show how she was (re-)imagined and (re-)invented, and thus kept alive over the centuries. Despite the relegation of *Makura no sōshi* to a marginal position within literary history due to the instability of its textual identity and its reduction to the genre of miscellany, the multiple engagements with the text over the centuries are indicative of the significance the text has had for generations of readers.

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<sup>412</sup> The quote comes from Mostow, “Introduction,” *Pictures of the Heart*, 8.

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## Appendix

### Selected Works related to the Reception History of *Makura no sōshi*

1. **14<sup>th</sup> c.** *Makura no sōshi emaki* 枕草子絵巻 (Illustrated Scroll of the Pillow Book).
2. **14<sup>th</sup> c.** *Matsushima nikki* 松島日記 (Matsushima Diary).
3. **1607.** *Inu makura narabi ni kyōka* 犬枕並狂歌 (Dog Pillow and Mad Verses).
4. **1650.** *Ominaeshi monogatari* 女郎花物語 (Tales of the Maidenflower).
5. **1674.** *Sei Shōnagon Makura no sōshishō* 清少納言枕双紙抄 (Commentary of Sei Shōnagon's Pillow Book), also known as *Makura no sōshishō* 枕草子抄 (Commentary on The Pillow Book), *Bansaishō* 磐斎抄 (Bansai's Commentary), and *Makura no sōshi bansaishō* 枕草子万歳抄 (Bansai's Commentary of The Pillow Book). A commentary produced by Katō Bansai 加藤磐斎 (1621-1674).
6. **1674.** *Shunshoshō* 春曙抄 (The Spring Dawn Commentary). A commentary produced by Kitamura Kigin 北村季吟 (1624-1705).
7. **1681.** *Makura no sōshi bōchū* 枕草紙傍註 (Marginal Notes to The Pillow Book), also known as *Sei Shōnagon bōchū* 清少納言傍注 (Sei Shōnagon's Marginal Notes) and *Makura no sōshi shūsuishō* 枕草紙拾穂抄 (Notes on Gathered Grains of The Pillow Book). A commentary produced by Okanishi Ichū 岡西惟中 (1639-1711).
8. **1749.** *Ahō makura kotoba* 阿房枕言葉 (The Fool's Pillow Words).
9. **1741.** *Ehon Asahi-yama* 画本朝日山 (Illustrated Book: Asahi/Morning Sun Mountain).

10. **1751.** *Shūi makura zōshi kagaishō* 拾遺枕草紙花街抄 (Gleanings of the Pillow Book and the Pleasure District).
11. **1772.** *Ehon Haru no akebono* 笑本春の曙 (Erotic Book: Spring Dawn).
12. **1881.** “Sei Shōnagon no kisai; dō *Makura no sōshi* no kigo” 清少納言の奇才・同『枕草子』の奇語 (Sei Shōnagon’s unmatched talent; Prodigious words from Sei Shōnagon’s *Pillow Book*), included in *Onna yō bunshō yukikaiburi* 女用文章往かひ振 (Conduct Guidebook for Women; reprinted in 1833).