THE EARLY WORKS OF KAWABATA YASUNARI

by

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B.A., The University of British Columbia, 1972

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF

THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

(Department of Asian Studies)

We accept this thesis as conforming
to the required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

September 1982

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ABSTRACT

A careful study of the literary career of Kawabata Yasunari yields an interesting supposition on the creative rhythm of the author. In a cyclical fashion of fascinating regularity, Kawabata wrote and had published most of his best works in approximate five-year periods beginning either with the first year of a new decade or the year preceding the new decade. The only exception comes with the years from 1939 to 1945 in which little was written or published; this is hardly surprising since they were the years of the Second World War.

All of his best works were published between his twenties and sixties. Eliminating the war years, we are left with four five-year periods. These four five-year periods are like the four seasons of the natural cycle. They coincide with the four seasons of the man's creative life, and the tone of the works matches these seasonal changes: in spring, the youthful traveler of "Izu no odoriko" ("The Izu Dancer," 1926); in summer, the ghosts of "Jojōka" ("Lyric Poem," 1932); in autumn, the aging man setting out to view the maples of fall of Yama no oto (The Sound of the Mountain, 1949-54); in winter, the fantasies of the old man of Nemureru bijo (House of the Sleeping Beauties, 1960-61).

The purpose of this thesis is to study the springtime of Kawabata's writings. The early works leading up to Kawabata's first masterpiece, "Izu no odoriko," have hitherto been largely neglected by critics and scholars of Japanese literature. Among the few studies already done on these early works, most have
been biographically oriented. This thesis departs from this trend to take a critical approach to the analysis of the works.

The thesis focuses on the areas of style, themes, motifs and images in Kawabata's early works. To give broader meaning to the analysis of the works, aspects of traditional Japanese culture, particularly the Japanese lyrical tradition and Buddhist and Shinto thinking and symbolism, have been introduced into the thesis. Also, comparisons are made with Western literature in the areas of style, imagery, and symbolism.

A number of general conclusions are reached on these early works. One can trace the origins of Kawabata's lyrical style back to Japan's earliest poetry. The style can be further identified with that of the haiku poet and writer of travel diaries Matsuo Bashō. On a universal level, the style corresponds to that found in the Western lyrical novel. Buddhist and Shinto thinking and symbolism can be seen as having provided Kawabata with thematic and symbolic material for his works. One especially significant connection with Shinto is the use Kawabata makes of water to symbolize purification. One other feature singled out is the role of the "maternal" virgin.
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Except for an incomplete translation of "Izu no odoriko" ("The Izu Dancer," 1926), the early works of Kawabata Yasunari 川端 康成 (1899-1972) have been passed over by English translators. They have fared almost as poorly as subjects of analysis for Japanese scholars and critics of modern Japanese literature. Among the works written prior to "Izu," only the first work in Kawabata's zenshū (complete works), "Jūrokusai no nikki" 十六歳の日記 ("Diary of a Sixteen-Year-Old," 1925), has had much analysis done on it.

The area in which many of the works I shall be examining have received some attention is the relationship between the "I" of the stories and the author. Kawabata gave the scholars any added incentive they might have needed to draw parallels between the "I" and himself by not only stating that his early works were relatively faithful to the facts, but by also publishing several of his own pieces on the autobiographical background of the works. As I shall be discussing in chapter one, it was Kawabata's assurances regarding the authenticity of the "nikki," and subsequently assurances regarding the truth of a number of incidental items contained in it, that eventually caused an outcry from doubting scholars who choose to meticulously investigate the relationship between fact and fiction. This thesis rejects this biographical approach in favor of a critical approach to the study of Kawabata's early works similar to the author's own preference for how one might analyze a work. A summary of Kawabata's position on three approaches to the study of literature is found at the beginning of chapter three of this thesis.
The paucity of critical analysis on the early works of Kawabata ends with a flood of analysis having been done on "Izu." That such a thing came to pass is understandable. There is no questioning the fact that "Izu" is the best of his early works and his first masterpiece. An interesting passage from one of Kawabata's last novels, *Utsukushisa to kanashimi to* 美しさと悲哀 (Beauty and Sadness, 1961), has the young woman Keiko talking about the literary production of an elderly writer who bears an undeniable resemblance to the real life figure of Kawabata. She says that the author probably never wrote anything better than "A Girl of Sixteen or Seventeen." This title seems to be the fictional equivalent of "Izu."

It is no surprise then that this beloved work of Kawabata's has been exhaustively analyzed by scholars and critics. Perhaps in desperation for a new slant on analysis of the work, one even finds a scholar literally counting the number of commas and periods found in a particular section of "Izu." In my own analysis of the work, I use a limited number of references to previous studies on "Izu." To have summarized even a small percentage of the more important earlier analyses would have meant the addition of several pages to an already long thesis.

In light of the fact that so much scholarship has gone into the study of "Izu," it's amazing that very little analysis has been done on the works leading up to this masterpiece. My analysis of most, if not all, of Kawabata's most important early works is being done in an attempt to provide a step by step critical look at the literary production preceding "Izu."

In chapter one, I pay particular attention to the problem
of style in the "nikki." I think it is safe to say that the style is as close as one can come to identifying a "natural" style in the author's writings. The connection this style has with Japanese lyric poetry and the Western lyrical novel as defined by Ralph Freedman is key to an understanding of the style of "Izu."

In chapter two, I place the emphasis of my analysis on recurring thematic features found in the works following the "nikki." I found there were interesting comparisons to be made between native Japanese beliefs and Western apocalyptic symbolism as explained by Northrop Frye. Of immense importance for "Izu" as well as almost all of Kawabata's later literature is the appearance of the beautiful, young virgin in his works. How she relates to "time" is of considerable importance.

In chapter three, I focus on the most important element found in the works just preceding "Izu." It is the introduction of a spiritual code into Kawabata's literature based on Eastern ideas of metempsychosis and the oneness of creation.

The thesis in a sense comes full circle with chapter four on "Izu." As part of my analysis on the style of the "nikki" in chapter one, I link Kawabata with the haiku poet and writer of travel diaries Matsuo Bashō 松尾芭蕉 (1644-1694). The format of chapter four is a comparison of Kawabata's "Izu" with Bashō's Oku no hosomichi 奥の細道 (The Narrow Road Through the Provinces, c.1693).

Kawabata Yasunari was born in Osaka in 1899. His early life was filled with a series of unfortunate events which were to have an enormous effect on his life and his work. When he was an infant of two years, his father died of tuberculosis. His mother died
the following year of the same illness. This resulted in his being sent to live with his grandparents while his older sister by four years was sent to live with his aunt. Kawabata was himself a sickly, weak child who had to have special care and attention from his grandparents. It was apparently the same weak disposition that his parents suffered from. To add to the list of deaths, his grandmother died when he was seven and his sister when he was ten. From the time of his grandmother's death until his grandfather died when Kawabata was fourteen, the young boy and his bed-ridden grandfather, who was hard of hearing and nearly blind, lived alone in their country home.

"Jūrokusai no nikki" is the diary of the final days of his grandfather's life.
CHAPTER I

Kawabata's earliest surviving piece of literary composition is "Jurokusai no Nikki" (Diary of a Sixteen-Year-Old). It was allegedly first written in 1914 but was not published until 1925 when he was twenty-six years old. The dated entries in the work begin May 4 and end May 16, a month before the author's fifteenth birthday on June 11.

The "nikki" takes the form commonly ascribed to this type of autobiography. It is a record of the day-to-day events in young Kawabata's life written apparently with little thought of its future publication. When it was published in 1925, the author explains that he added notes in parentheses to clarify the meanings of certain passages and to give standard readings of Osaka dialect terms. He has also added to the diary by giving supplementary autobiographical information.

An analysis of the kind of supplementary autobiographical information found within the parentheses clearly reveals what was at the heart of Kawabata's writing of the diary. Almost all the information concerns his grandfather. It is the events surrounding the final days of his grandfather's life which we read of.

The two longest parenthetical sections in the "nikki" are found in the entries for May 7 and 8, the diary's chronological center (entries are for May 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 14, 15, 16). Both of the sections deal with the only things in his grandfather's life which the old man could look back on with pride: the old man's publication of his teachings on divination titled Kotakuankiron (A Treatise on Safety and Danger
Factors in the Building of Houses) and the record of his success with Oriental medicine in curing an epidemic of dysentery.

With additions such as these, the author has effectively created a work with the meaning of his grandfather's life as its subject. In many respects the "nikki" reads like an epitaph, one of the literary forms Kawabata later excels in.

Not unrelated to young Kawabata's focusing on his grandfather is the remarkable absence of a purely subjective account of feelings on the part of the "I". Even when the young boy does give voice to his feelings, uncharacteristically for the "I" of a conventional diary, he seems to be placing a value judgement on these feelings in an objective or "novelistic" manner. For example, he says, "School is my paradise - Don't these words best express my circumstances at home these days?"¹

Its features such as these present in the "nikki" which have contributed to its widespread critical acclaim. The mature Kawabata himself praised the "nikki." An ironic note is that its favorable reception in literary circles must partly be to blame for a storm of controversy surrounding the dating of the work. The fact that it was published some ten years after it was originally supposed to have been written has raised doubts about the actual age Kawabata was when he wrote it. Biographical criticism has been the mainstream of modern literary criticism in Japan, and the sincerity of the "I" in an autobiographical work has been of particular interest to critics; consequently, the question of what Kawabata might have done to his original version of the "nikki" before it was published eventually received an extraordinary amount of attention.
The following are some written comments made by Kawabata in 1938 on the finished version of the work; they were published thirty years before critics first began to doubt the reliability of the author's words:

But for corrections in its wording, the work remains as it was written in the original when I was fourteen. It wouldn't have been possible to rewrite it even if I'd wanted too... It's my only sincere autobiography; it's a valuable document for me. Also, it's one of my best compositions. My literary ability was not in the least precocious. This simple sketch taken from near at hand occupies a secure position in my works.  

Such assurances by the author that the diary was virtually unchanged from the form it was originally written came to be discredited by Japanese critics as a result of a 1968 article on the "nikki" written by Hasegawa Izumi. In the September, 1968 issue of Kokubungaku magazine, Hasegawa began the controversy when he expressed doubts about the veracity of a number of incidental items in the "nikki". Hasegawa points to the line in the second appendix which reads, "The first appendix was written because I intended to turn the diary into a literary work, and in some places facts were altered." (p.35) In 1969, Kawashima Itaru wrote an unsympathetic criticism in a book titled Kawabata Yasunari no sekai (The World of Kawabata Yasunari) in which he unhesitatingly concludes that the work should be considered something Kawabata wrote in 1925. He says, "Kawabata has skillfully presented us with a composition that reads as if it were the diary of a sixteen-year-old, and the writer has succeeded magnificently in pulling that off."  

To support his claim, Kawashima offers a number of specific examples from within the text of the "nikki" which indicate Kawabata has tampered with the original. The following is an
outline of the five points he makes:

1. In the second appendix, Kawabata says he wrote the diary on a tsukuegawari no setsugi (desk); but in the text of the diary proper, the writer says he used a table.

2. In the first appendix, Kawabata says he can't remember those memories of life at the time he wrote the diary; nonetheless, Kawabata was able to jot things down concerning the "motif" of the original in the explanatory sections of the diary.

3. Omiyo is the name of the maid to young Kawabata and his grandfather in the diary, but in reality her name was Tanaka Mito.

4. In the first appendix, it says the discovery of the diary came ten years after it had been originally written. This means that it took a year after the discovery before the diary was published; Kawabata had at least a year to work on turning the material into a publishable work.

5. The composition style of the author about the time he was supposedly writing the diary was "dreadfully stereotyped," quite unlike the style of the diary.

I wish Kawashima had gone a little further in his investigation of the actual names of the people mentioned in the "nikki." A name which quickly drew my attention when I read the "nikki" was Okiku, Omiyo's daughter-in-law. Like many other writers of Japanese fiction, Kawabata selected names for his fictional characters with symbolic meaning in mind. The names Omiyo and Okiku both fit in nicely with Kawabata's aesthetic sensibility. An examination of the meaning of the names should prove my point:
Omiyo ("generations of beauty"): To locate the eternal woman of beauty, particularly the eternal virgin, is the aesthetic quest of many of Kawabata's heroes. Seen from a wider perspective, one of Kawabata's major purposes as a writer was to find and record encounters with beauty. He was especially aware of the artist's ability to reproduce for "eternity" one's particular vision of beauty.

Okiku ("chrysanthemum"): "Kiku" occupies a special position in the works of Kawabata. As Yoshimura Teiji has pointed out, Kawabata seems to associate the name with spiritualism and reincarnation. For example, in Kawabata's "Jojōka" ("Lyric Poem," 1932), the woman who has lost her lover forever in death says she would give up her life the next day if he were to be reborn as a wild chrysanthemum. Another example is found in "Ireika" ("Memorial Poem," 1932) where the appearance of the ghost Hanako is signalled by the simultaneous appearance of the miraculous growth of a chrysanthemum from a tea bowl.

One other example which Yoshimura neglects to mention is the interesting use of kikuitadaki ("chrysanthemum crown") birds in Kawabata's "Kinjū" ("Of Birds and Beasts," 1933). The protagonist is remarkably unsuccessful at keeping the birds alive, but new kikuitadaki he purchases are interchangeable and indistinguishable from the previous birds. The deaths of the birds are saddening, but with each new "reincarnation" of them life again becomes "filled with a young freshness." A more obvious hint of reincarnation occurs when neglect of a particular pair of kikuitadaki brings them to the verge of death; however, when they make a
temporary recovery, the man is moved to say, "They've come back to life."

A clue as to why Kawabata assigned such a meaning to the chrysanthemum can be found in the "Vox Populi, Vox Dei" column from the Asahi Evening News of November 17, 1979. The subject of the column is the chrysanthemum, the flower most liked by the Japanese. An explanation is given for its particular popularity among older people: "Takehiko Noguchi remarked that people see in the chrysanthemum 'the life strength that is maintained, countering the winter decay in life.'"

The writer of the column singles out the "naive freshness" of the wild chrysanthemum for special attention. Reference to a story by Itō Sachio titled "Nogiku no haka" 野菊の墓 ("Wild Chrysanthemum Grave," 1906) concludes the column:

Sachio Itō, who wrote "Nogiku-no-Haka" (Wild Chrysanthemum Grave), described Tamiko, who was like the wild chrysanthemum, as "lovely, delicate and possessing dignity." After disappointment in love, Tamiko dies and is buried amid wild chrysanthemums. As a result of being wrapped in wild chrysanthemums which are lovely, delicate and full of the power of life, the girl, like the wild chrysanthemum, lives on forever in a classic.

I think there's no question that the sentiments expressed in this 1979 column from the Asahi Evening News can be read as an echo of Kawabata's own feelings for the flower.

Kawabata was so upset by Kawashima's accusations that he wrote a rebuttal in a piece called "Tobi no mau nishizora" 鳥の舞ふ西空 ("A Kite Circling in the Western Sky") published in the March, 1970, issue of Shinchō. In line with what he wrote in the second appendix, Kawabata admitted that by discarding the original diary at the time of publication in 1925, he was unable
to present concrete evidence that it was not a corrected and revised work; nonetheless, he did give three responses to the accusations:

1. He says he used both a table and a desk when he wrote the diary.

2. Even though he wrote, "I've forgotten the things I'd written of," he says it's normal for one to recall forgotten moments once one uncovers them again.

3. In spite of lack of proof, he still insists that he didn't rework the original.

As a kind of final note to the argument between the two men over the authenticity of the work, in 1971 Isogai Hideo presented a summary of the two positions and then expressed his own opinions on the subject. Citing the author's own admissions in the second appendix of the fictionalization of the person who sold the estate and the exaggeration of the quantity of manuscript found in his father's medical bag, Isogai says one begins to doubt one's ability to distinguish truth from fiction in other areas of the diary as well. In conclusion, Isogai says that, like Kawashima, he sees the diary as the work of the author when he was twenty-six; however, Isogai goes on to say that rather than make an issue of the corrections and revisions Kawabata applied to the work and of the use of supplementary sections, he prefers to look upon them in a positive light. He says that they play an indispensable role in the structure of the work. "The diary gains a fulcrum with their inclusion, and they contribute to producing an independent, completed work. If they weren't there, no matter how beautiful the language of the diary might be, the composition would be nothing
more than a series of fragments." I agree with Isogai. As I mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, with the aid of supplementary sections Kawabata's "nikki" resembles an epitaph. The epitaph is categorized as a particular form of the lyric known as the elegy. Much of the remainder of this chapter is devoted to an examination of the correlation between the lyric and the "nikki."

One wishes that Kawabata too had chosen to emphasize the salutary effect on the "nikki" of such things as correction and revision rather than to emphasize the authenticity of the work. Why Kawabata did emphasize the authenticity of the "nikki" deserves an attempt at explanation.

It shouldn't be difficult to surmise what was in the back of Kawabata's mind when he wrote the first appendix in 1925, made his comments on the "nikki" in 1938, and added a second appendix in 1948. More than anything else he wanted a fine piece of writing done by himself at the tender age of fourteen to be recognized as his "virginal" work. By admitting to a certain amount of correction and fictionalization, he probably hoped that nobody would be concerned about any other questionable aspects of his autobiographical "nikki". One would have to conclude then that he was ultimately "hoisted by his own petard."

Incidentally, Kawabata also added an appendix to the first vignette in his collection of Tanaqokoro no shōsetsu 箏の小説 (The Palm-Sized Stories, 1922-50). "Kotsu hiroi" 離 彼い ("Gathering Ashes," 1916-49) is based on the actual episode in Kawabata's life of the retrieving of his grandfather's ashes from the crematorium. An admission of a touch of fictionalization in
the appendix to "Kotsu hiroi" seems aimed at somehow securing for it too added validity as being the literary product of Kawabata at the youthful age of eighteen. This fine work could then justifiably occupy the position of first in the collection.

A broader explanation for Kawabata's special attempts to fix these works as "virginal pieces" can be gathered from his own appreciation of juvenile and amateur literature. If he treasured the maiden work of other writers, it makes sense that he would wish his own "nikki" and "Kotsu hiroi" to be treasured for the same reason.

With the publication of the second appendix in Shinchōsha's Kawabata zenshū of 1948, Kawabata put the finishing touches to the "nikki". Its inclusion with the earlier publication of the "nikki" in 1925 in serialized form marked the completion of the work as we know it today. The twists and turns it took before this final completion exemplify an important feature of the making of most Kawabata works. They are often published in serial form under various titles, and Kawabata frequently chooses to rewrite them, and add segments, and make changes in both titles and contents. The title of the work was changed from when it was originally published. It first appeared in the August and September, 1925 issues of Bungei shunjū as "Jūshichisai no nikki" 十七歳の日記 ("Diary of a Seventeen-Year Old").

The first thorough scholarly treatment of the "nikki" was Hasegawa Izumi's analysis of the work in the aforementioned September, 1968 issue of Kokubungaku. It may come as a surprise to think it took more than forty years after its publication before someone would give the "nikki" a careful analysis, but
perhaps it's more surprising to learn that it is but one example of the neglect most Kawabata works have suffered. If one opens the pages of the *Kojien* dictionary to the listing for Kawabata, one finds four representative works listed under his name: "Izu no odoriko" 伊豆の踊子 ("The Izu Dancer," 1926), *Yukiguni* 雪国 (*Snow Country*, 1935-48), *Sembazuru* 千羽鶴 (*Thousand Cranes*, 1949-51), *Yama no oto* 山の音 (*The Sound of the Mountain*, 1949-54). It's these four titles which have been particularly favored by scholars and critics as subjects for analysis.

Most of the studies of the "nikki" done both prior and subsequent to Hasegawa's contribution have centered on what is to be learned about the author's adolescence from it and how these revelations contribute to an understanding of his personality as an individual and as a writer.

Found within the pages of the "nikki" is reference to the state in which young Kawabata seems to have been fated all along: in the end, he will have neither a home nor a family. In the passage from the beginning of the "nikki" when the boy returns from school, the dying grandfather doesn't respond to the boy's words of greeting. The youth feels lonely and sad. This feeling of loneliness and sadness results in a sense of sorrow which the boy ascribes to his grandfather as well. In the entry for May 7, he writes that with no one to talk to, and with the inability to see and hear properly, the old man suffers from "complete loneliness, the sorrow of loneliness." (p.19)

I'll be discussing the style of the "nikki" at length later, but I'd like to point out now that it is possible to make a stylistic connection along lyrical novel lines between "Bonbon"
and the grandfather. The unity of "Bonbon" as the "perceiving self" and the grandfather as the "perceived other" may be said to contribute to a picture of the boy as an "objective" rather than a "subjective" self. The common feeling of loneliness and sorrow expressed in the "nikki" could be called indicative of the lyrical novel style. Such a scheme may be only marginally valid, but we can certainly say that already in his "nikki" we find the typical Kawabata "I" or protagonist whose passive character suits the lyrical nature of the author's writing style.

The uneasiness the boy expresses in the pages of the "nikki" naturally gains in intensity as his grandfather's physical condition steadily declines. The death of his grandfather means the loss of his last close relative; he will truly become an orphan in this world, and the repercussions of such a fate are stated near the end of the first appendix: "The concept of home and family were gradually driven from my mind, I dreamt only of wandering." (p.34)

Various critics have commented on the connection between Kawabata's being orphaned and his developing literary style. Senuma Shigeki remarks that in spite of the disadvantaged upbringing Kawabata faced as an individual, his plight as an orphan was not that unfortunate if we consider its contribution to his development as an artist. Isogai Hideo says, "Through his writing the young boy connected the world of reality with the world of literature, and by doing so was probably able to make his painful reality somewhat more bearable." The outspoken Kawashima Itaru goes so far as to say, "For Kawabata, 'Sentiments of an Orphan' was a heaven-sent blessing which other creative artists could
only hope for." The question many scholars have asked themselves is exactly what was it that motivated the fourteen-year-old Kawabata to write his diary of the final days of his grandfather's life. There have been two basic theories offered as possible explanations. On one side, we have a scholar like Yamamoto Kenkichi who says, "Jurokusai no nikki* is not only a mere middle school student's diary, but is also the creation of a young boy who aspired to becoming a writer." A look at biographical information on Kawabata would seem to support Yamamoto's claim. By the time he turned thirteen, we read that Kawabata had apparently set his sights on becoming a writer. I suppose further support for this view can be found in the second appendix where Kawabata touches on the possible publication of the diary.

There are several people who hold firm to another theory and who dispute Yamamoto's suggestion. For example, Yoshimura Teiji has the following to say:

Shouldn't we say it's going too far to view the diary as the affirmation of Kawabata's wishes to become a writer? Rather wasn't the diary written as a means of overcoming the pain of facing a situation where one's sole companion was a dying old man. There was no intention to produce a work of literature; it's probably proper to view the diary as a piece of continuous writing on the old man's struggle with death.

The author himself has taken up the question of what motivated him to write the diary near the end of the second appendix. He remarks that it's one of the two problems which continue to puzzle him about the piece. "I'm sure that it was my desire to put down on paper a portrait of my dying grandfather, but what I later found strange was my choice of writing the diary in a sketch-like style
during those days I was near the dying man." (p.39)

The question of the style found in the diary has resulted in a wide scope of interpretations brought forth by critics and scholars in Japan. That there is such a breadth of opinion would seem to indicate that it's impossible to look at anyone of the interpretations as a definitive answer to the problem; however, the following summary of some of these views will suggest we can find a common denominator running through them.

Yamamoto Kenkichi calls it a "strong, concise style." He says that beginning with the "nikki" Kawabata's sentences were "short-breathed...broken with a snap." Although Kawabata was fond of the style of both *Genji monogatari* (The Tale of Genji, C.1008) and *Makura no sōshi* (The Pillow Book, C.1000), Yamamoto says the writer's own style doesn't reflect the flowing narrative style of *Genji* but resembles rather the sensuous, laconic style of *Makura no sōshi*. Yamamoto divides classical Japanese literature into two stylistic streams: the *Kokinshū* (Collection of Ancient and Modern Poetry, 905) or *Genji* stream and the *Shinkokinshū* (New Collection of Ancient and Modern Poetry, C. 1205) or haikai stream. Yamamoto says the two traditions have continued through Japanese literature to the present. He places writers such as Takahama Kyoshi (1874-1959), Tokuda Shūsei (1871-1943), and Shiga Naoya (1883-1971), together with Kawabata, in the latter stream and locates writers such as Tanizaki Junichirō (1886-1965), Satō Haruo (1892-1964), and Uno Kōji (1891-1961) in the former stream.
Yamamoto nonetheless turns around and says Kawabata's literature carries with it a feminine sense which gives it a delicate feeling of the *Genji* kind. He does emphasize though that while inheriting this sensitivity typically found in Heian lyricism, Kawabata still writes in a manner closer to the world of haikai where description of one's subject is reproduced in an objective way.

Nakamura Mitsuo supports the view that Kawabata's "nikki" is quite different from the lyrical mode found in many women writers of the Heian period. He also judges the style to be strong and concise. Nakamura goes on to say that at the time of Kawabata's youth, Shiga Naoya and Tanizaki Junichirō were the preeminent writers. The implication is that Kawabata could have been influenced by these two writers; if so, it makes sense to conclude that Shiga had the greater influence on Kawabata's writing since they share the laconic style Yamamoto speaks of.

It appears that no scholar has produced a major work comparing the writing styles of Shiga and Kawabata. There certainly would seem to be cause for it. While reading University of British Columbia student Roy Starrs' M.A. thesis of 1980 titled "An Artless Art: Fiction and Reality in the Work of Shiga Naoya," I was amazed by the number of conclusions reached on Shiga's writing style that are identical to those recognized in Kawabata's writing style.

In the thesis, Roy points out the terseness of Shiga's sentences, the way the events in the writer's stories are linked in a loosely associative manner reminiscent of the haikai related form of *renqa* (Japanese linked verse), and the aspect of "impersonality" Shiga achieves with the "I" of his works. Roy compares this sense
of the "I" with the "I" of a Bashō haiku or the "I" of a Western lyrical poem. These three points apply to Kawabata as well.

Roy later in his thesis compares Shiga with Ernest Hemingway. He says that the two of them were practitioners of the fictional form called the "lyrical novel." I shall shortly examine certain aspects of the lyrical novel in an attempt to show that Kawabata should be called a practitioner of this form also.

One more interesting feature Roy suggests Hemingway and Shiga have in common is the consideration of placing them in the category of modern "primitivists." M. H. Abrams' definition of "primitivism" is given in the thesis; in brief, "primitivism" is said to prefer the "natural to the "artificial." Critics such as Kobayashi Hideo have in effect classified Kawabata as a "primitivist" too. I find the classification appropriate and will later examine how Shinto values support the "natural" over the "artificial" of the primitivists and how Kawabata exhibits a like-minded preference.

One final discovery in Roy's thesis which deserves mention in relation to this thesis on Kawabata is the way Shiga connects images of fire and water in his literature with moments of spiritual transition. Roy points out that both fire and water play important roles in Shinto purification rites. As will be seen later in this thesis, fire and water are predominant images in Kawabata's literature with associations identical to the ones Roy points out in his thesis on Shiga.

Hasegawa Izumi says that in the early years of Taishō shaseibun ("writings sketched from life") was a popular method of writing, and in Taishō 7 (1914), composition classes at school were strongly influenced by the "artistic realism" of Suzuki
Miekichi (1882-1936) whose arinomama (candid) style of writing could be found in the children's magazine Akai tori 赤い鳥. These significant developments in composition style could also certainly have influenced the style of the "nikki."

Saeki Shōichi remarks that, except for the sections of supplementary information, the "nikki" is written almost completely in the present tense, and things are described in an objective fashion in what may be termed a "style before style." Saeki feels that in later years Kawabata recognized the style of the diary to be an ideal type. He relates the significance of the rediscovery of this style by Kawabata in the following words:

It is probably an exaggeration to say that the conscious pursuit of a style before style, an application of such being perhaps termed anti-style, was Kawabata's aim; but undoubtedly the central concern of Kawabata was the capturing of an object on paper at the instant when the object and the self become one, a moment devoid of subjective interpretation and criticism which should be called the "eternal present."

The common denominator found in each of the previous interpretations of the style of the "nikki" is far from surprising. The fourteen-year-old Kawabata has perhaps both directly and indirectly adopted a style of writing in the "nikki" whose features are characteristic of the writings found in the earliest anthology of Japanese poetry, the Manyōshū 万葉集 (Collection of Ten Thousand Leaves, C.759). The lyrical mode found in the Manyōshū established for Japanese literature what has come to be probably the single most important characteristic of the Japanese literary tradition from the ancient past to the present. Thinking of the Kokinshū and Shinkokinshū as two streams issuing from the headwaters of the lyrical tradition, it's natural for us to locate the
Manyōshū as its source. More properly, it’s more accurate to consider the Kokinshū a secondary stream of the Manyōshū which itself downstream takes the Shinkokinshū for its name.

I think we find in the Tokugawa scholar Kamo Mabuchi’s (1697-1769) words of praise for the poetry of the Manyōshū two terms, takaki and naoki, which are essentially equivalent to the respective terms of "concise" and "strong" used by Yamamoto Kenkichi and supported by Nakamura Mitsuo in their evaluations of the style of the "nikki." Tsunetsugu Muraoka, in his book Studies in Shinto Thought, explains what Mabuchi meant by takaki ("lofty") and naoki ("direct"):

"Lofty" referred to what was divorced from the tediously vulgar- to the large as opposed to the small, the broad as opposed to the narrow, the simple as opposed to the complex, and the laconic as opposed to the verbose. Its beauty was recognized as "elegance." Here we see demonstrated the greatness of that which had simple purity.

"Direct" referred to a frankness of feeling which was devoid of ostentation- the straight as opposed to the stooped, the regular as opposed to the bent, the erect as opposed to the twisted, and the easy as opposed to the labored. On that foundation he recognized a manliness that did not permit effeminacy. Here we see an understanding of the literary value of simplicity, in contrast to sentimentality.18

The directness of the poetic spirit found in the Manyōshū together with a simplicity and brevity of expression reminds us of the style of Saigyō’s poetry in the Shinkokinshū and of the style of Kawabata’s "nikki."

As Yamamoto Kenkichi points out, the laconic style of Shiga’s writings could easily be taken as an extension of the same tradition; and with the shaseibun movement which began in the Meiji period we again find ourselves looking back to the Manyōshū. The
poet most closely associated with the movement, Masaoka Shiki. 正岡子規 (1867-1902) was an ardent admirer of the anthology, and he attempted to incorporate the mode of the Manyōshū into his own poetry. At the base of Shiki's desire for "realistic description" or shasei ("sketching from life") was a return to the Manyōshū style.

Saeki's reference to how the present tense of the diary contains that aspect of the "eternal present" sought for by the author in his later writings naturally suggests more universal implications than a special emphasis of the Manyōshū warrants. We are still talking primarily about the lyrical mode though, and I think by turning for a moment to a study done on the Western lyrical novel we can find some revealing similarities between the salient characteristics of the genre and Kawabata's "nikki" and his later works.

Ralph Freedman, in The Lyrical Novel, distinguishes the lyric from epic and drama by that capturing the instant of which Saeki refers to as the "eternal present":

Conventionally, the lyric, as distinct from epic and drama, is seen either as an instantaneous expression of a feeling or as a spatial form. The reader approaches a lyric the way an onlooker regards a picture: he sees complex details in juxtaposition and experiences them as a whole. In Pound's famous phrase, the very notion of the image is defined as the rendering of "an emotional intellectual complex in an instant of time." 19

A few pages earlier, Freedman examines the difference between lyrical and non-lyrical writing:

The lyrical novel, by contrast, seeks to combine man and world in a strangely inward, yet aesthetically objective, form. This is not to say that lyrical writers are uninterested in the questions of human conduct that concern all fiction, but they view these
questions in a different light. Their stages are not those on which men usually perform in the novel, but independent designs in which the awareness of men's experiences is merged with its objects. Rather than finding its Gestalt in the imitation of an action, the lyrical novel absorbs action altogether and refashions it as a pattern of imagery. Its tradition is neither didactic nor dramatic, although features of both may be used, but poetic in the narrow sense of "lyrical." A lyrical poem's form objectifies not men and times but an experience and a theme for which men and their lives, or places and events, have been used. Similarly, lyrical novels such as Goethe's Werther, Hölderlin's Hyperion, or Djuna Barnes' Nightwood reflect the pleasure and pain or the dying of men as extended lyrics. Their objectivity lies in a form uniting self and other, a picture that detaches the writer from his persona in a separate, formal world.20

Coincidentally to Freedman's examples of lyrical novels in the above quotation, the young Kawabata's diary can to a great extent be read as the objectification of the dying of his grandfather in the manner of an extended lyric.

People such as Nakamura Mitsuo in his analysis of Kawabata's Yukiguni21 and Isogai Hideo in an analysis of the "nikki"22 both suggest an affinity with the techniques of the No drama. In Yukiguni, Nakamura contends that Komako acts the part of the shite (protagonist) in the novel and Shimamura functions as the waki (deuteragonist); the waki's role is to provide the shite with a stimulus to express her innermost thoughts and emotions. Isogai sees the boy as the waki and the grandfather as the shite in the "nikki." It's easy to see the validity of the relationship between the two art forms if we focus on the nature of the respective roles played by the characters in the two Kawabata works; but the genre of drama and prose or lyric would seem to have even less in common with each other than that other troublesome pairing of lyric and prose.
By returning to Ralph Freedman's analysis of the lyrical novel, I think we can find a much more satisfying explanation of the nature of the "I" or protagonist in Kawabata's literature. He says, "Concentration on the inner life of a passive hero and the consequent creation of a detached 'poetic' form distinguish lyrical from non-lyrical narrative." It is the passive hero in Kawabata's works which is one of the striking characteristics of his literature. Through such passivity, the self and the other are united. Here is a quotation from Freedman's book which explains the relationship between the "perceiving self" and the "perceived object" for the poetic artist:

The perceived object becomes part of the poet's experience while rendering his private sensibility public, but, in mirroring the poet's inner state, it loses its separate, independent character. In this way, perceived objects become manifestations of the poet's spirit - features of his self-portrait - as they are portrayed symbolically in the form of art. The "object" is the catalyst through which a finite, individual self is transmuted into an infinite, aesthetic self.

From such a perspective, I think Kawabata's postscript in the Sōgensha edition of Yukiquni on whether or not his characters are based on actual people suggests an author-protagonist - "object" relationship similar to the one Freedman outlines:

Shimamura is, of course, not myself. He is nothing but a foil to the geisha, Komako. This is at once the failure as well as the success of the novel. I entered deeply into the character of Komako and only very shallowly into Shimamura. In that sense it is truer to say that in many ways I am Komako rather than Shimamura. I consciously tried to keep Shimamura at a distance from me as I wrote. Also, the events and feelings expressed are the products of my imagination rather than of any lived experiences. The feelings of Komako in particular are the embodiment of my own sadness.
Just as the "object" of Kawabata's protagonist in *Yukiguni*, Komako, can be said to be the embodiment of Kawabata's own feelings of sadness, so too can we view the "object" of "Bonbon" in the "nikki," his grandfather, as the manifestation of the author's loneliness and sorrow. There's no questioning the similarity in function of Kawabata's characters to the Nō drama's *shite* and *waki*, but isn't it more reasonable to view the characters' respective roles from the perspective of the genre Kawabata fundamentally writes in, the lyrical novel. It's hard to imagine Kawabata consciously adopting such a scheme from Nō; it's easy to imagine Kawabata coming to the scheme naturally as the outcome of someone who chooses to write prose in a lyrical way.

Turning to an investigation of the "nikki" from a literally lyrical approach, that is the rhythmic or musical nature of the genre, I think we find in it early examples of that auditory sensitivity which Kawabata demonstrates so masterfully in his later works. The musical tone found in the "nikki" is reproduced in a rather naive way, as one might expect in a fourteen-year-old's composition. Like a primitive song, music-like expressions found in the "nikki" come mostly from parallelisms, repetitions, and exclamations. The following passage is taken from the first entry of the diary when the young boy gives his grandfather some tea to drink. As elsewhere in the diary, we hear a repetition in twos of syllables, words, or expressions. The repetitions are of three kinds: the same unit is repeated immediately; it is repeated after a short interval, giving the flow of words a rhyming touch; or, its repetition takes place later where it acts as the closing refrain of that particular segment:
"Un, sōka, yoshi, yoshi, gutto, un, gutto."
De, nodobotoke ga gokugoku ugoku. Kore, kemono ga nonde iru no ka? Baka, baka. Sonna myō na koto ga aru mono ka? Chūgaku no sannensei ni mo natte ite -.

"Aa, oishi. Cha wa yoi. Tanpaku de yoi. Amari oishisugiru mono wa ikan. Aa, oishi. - Tabako wa?" (p.14)

"Hum, yeah, good, good, gulp, hum, gulp."
And the Adam's apple moved as he drank in gulps. Is this the beast drinking? Crazy, crazy! How could there be such a weird thing? Here I am going into third year of middle school -.

"Ah, delicious. The tea's good. The lightness is good. Things too delicious are no good. Ah, delicious. --Got a cigarette?"

Kawabata introduces this same kind of auditory sensitivity, especially the power of the artistic repetition of sounds, into much of his later writing as well. The lines I've reproduced may not touch the reader as being particularly beautiful, especially when we compare them to the following lines from The Izu Dancer:

"Ii hito ne."
"Sore wa sō, ii hito rashii."
"Honto ni ii hito ne, Ii hito wa ii ne," (p.220)

"He's nice, isn't he."
"That's true, he does seem nice."
"He really is nice, isn't he. It's nice to know nice people, isn't it."

Nonetheless, I think we should appreciate the effective use of sound in both of the passages.

An explanation of the origin of Kawabata's artistic sensitivity to sound can be found in some of the essays the author has produced. In a piece called "Bunshō ni tsuite" ("On Style," 1954), Kawabata writes that as a young boy he enjoyed reading Genji monogatari and Makura no sōshi even though he couldn't understand the meaning of what he was reading. What he derived pleasure from was the hibiki (sound) and the tone of the language.

In higher school, the recitation of norito (Shinto prayers)
and semmyō (Imperial edicts) provided him with a revelation. He
discovered what he thought to be the heart of Japanese literary
style in the primitive songs: the essence of the "songs" in Genji
and Makura no sōshi could be traced back to norito.

Kawabata was to always revere the beauty in the tonal aspect
of language. In his Shinbuntokuhon, he writes, "'To appreciate
a literary composition by listening to it' has been a wish of mine
for years." 26

Another example of musical evocation in the "nikki" is found
in its first pages. It's the famous passage where the young boy
helps the old man urinate into a bedpan:

"Aa, aa, itata, itatatta, ittatta, a, aa."
Oshikko o suru toki ni, itamu no de aru.
Kurushii iki mo taesō na koe to tomo ni,
shibin no soko ni wa tanigawa no shimizu no oto.

"Aa, itatatta." (p.10)

"Ah, ah, ow-ow, ow- ow-aow, aow-aow, a, ah."
It hurt when he peed. With the gasping and groaning,
at the bottom of the bedpan the sound of clear water
of a valley stream.
"Ah, ow-ow-aow."

The sounds of pain the old man makes as he passes water have
been put down on paper in a musical way; and interspersed between
the "candid" sounds of the grandfather are words exhibiting
"Bonbon's" remarkable poetic sensitivity to the sound of the water.
"Bonbon" and the reader of "Bonbon's" diary experience a point of
epiphany. We are sharing with him the "divine" revelation that
the sound of urine and the sound of clear water are but two mani-
festations of the underlying auditory oneness of the sound of all
water.

This section of the "nikki" has received special attention
from critics. They have pointed out that by examining the passage we can draw stylistic conclusions about the "nikki" in general. The lines in this part of the entry for May 4 are terse and the description is both graphic and ingenuous; in other words, the passage is representative of the overall style of the diary. Critics have especially marvelled at the poetic leap the young Kawabata makes by transforming the sound of urine trickling into the bedpan into an image of the sound of clear water in a valley stream.

I can't resist outlining how two Japanese critics account for the presence of such a literary technique in the "nikki."

Hasegawa Izumi, who largely bases his method of literary analysis on much use of primary source materials, offers a "forward-looking" opinion on the issue. He says, "The description calls to mind the coming elements of Shinkankakuha ("Neo-Perceptionist School") techniques." Since we read that avant-garde European art and literature was introduced into Japan about 1920, and that the establishment of the literary journal Bungei jidai in 1924 included Kawabata's own treatise on a new kind of writing that came to be called Neo-Perceptionism, and which was based on the avant-garde movement, then aren't we to be astonished by the "pre-avant-garde" techniques the fourteen-year-old Kawabata employed in 1914? Does this mean we are forced to be as cynical as Kawashima and view the "nikki" strictly as a 1925 literary piece? I think not and will presently offer some reasons why.

Sasabuchi Tomoichi displays a similar fondness for "anachronistic literary analysis" by finding the "nikki" a most appropriate example of Kawabata's latent surrealist tendencies.
Sasabuchi makes special mention of the way Kawabata takes the unclean image of the sound of the old man's urine and through "metamorphosis" transforms the image into the beauty of the sound of clear water running in a valley stream.²⁸

In a published dialogue between Kinya Tsuruta and Hasegawa Izumi on the "nikki," Tsuruta takes issue with Hasegawa's choice of focusing on the relationship between Kawabata's writing style and the Neo-Perceptionist School, a choice Hasegawa unwaveringly carries with him in every article I've read of his on Kawabata's early works. Tsuruta would appear to refute both Neo-Perceptionist and surrealistic influences on Kawabata's style when he suggests it would be better to view Kawabata's treatment of the bedpan scene as a reflection of the author's innate method of conception.²⁹

If I were to make my own choice as to which of the three men's views to support, I would unquestionably choose Tsuruta's; but if we are to properly consider the nature of Kawabata's style, we certainly shouldn't be satisfied with dismissing it as something genetically earned.

It seems to me that many critics of modern Japanese literature in Japan such as Hasegawa and Sasabuchi suffer from an acute case of myopia: as specialists of the modern period, they consequently feel compelled to restrict their tools of analysis to the modern period. If we were to provide them with the proper corrective lenses, I think they might deduce from their own observations a much more likely influence on Kawabata's style then the ones they offer. For example, in his close analysis of the special features of the "nikki," Hasegawa lists the following four points:

1. The diary is composed mostly of short sentences
2. There is an effective use of noun-ending sentences
3. In an "artless" way, there is found the germination of the Neo-Perceptionist method
4. The young Kawabata displays a spirit which refuses to be crushed by the weight of grim reality

In the hope that I have captured the essence of Hasegawa's four points, here is my rewriting of what seems to be the salient features Hasegawa finds in the style of the "nikki":

1. terseness
2. noun-ending lines
3. the juxtaposition of diverse objects or scenes in a free, illogical way (my attempt at defining what seems to have been the essential "new" contribution the Neo-Perceptionists would add to Japanese fiction)
4. a detached manner

If we were to take the above four points and ask a student of Japanese literature whether he recognizes them to be representative of a traditional Japanese literary form, I think there's no question that he would say we're speaking of the haikai tradition. It bears repeating that the haikai tradition itself, as Yamamoto Kenkichi points out, can be understood to be a part of the Makura no sōshi, Shinkokinshū tradition.

Tsuruta has backed up his opinion that the bedpan scene is part of an innate Kawabata method of conception by pointing to the author's later masterpiece Yukiguni in which we find a similar scene. The scene is the one where the ephemeral beauty Yōko walks by carrying a chamber pot containing the urine of the dying Yukio. The comparison does not fit perfectly since in the "nikki" the
juxtaposition of the urine with the valley stream is "self-contained," whereas in Yukiguni it is the beauty of Yōko that is "externally" juxtaposed with the urine in the chamber pot. Nonetheless, Tsuruta's observation is perceptive.

Having introduced this comparison Tsuruta makes with Yukiguni, it should also be mentioned that we can make a thematic connection between "Bonbon," Yōko, and other characters in Kawabata's literature. Both "Bonbon" and Yōko are typical of one of Kawabata's favorite characters in his fiction. They are examples of the pure and self-sacrificing "nurses" who devote themselves to serving the needs of ailing or dying men. One excellent example of an extension of the "Bonbon" character is the young woman in "Suigetsu" 水月 ("The Moon on the Water," 1953) who acts as a nurse for her dying husband.

The line "At the bottom of the bedpan, the sound of clear water of a valley stream" deserves the attention it has received from critics. Its relationship to the haikai tradition and the continuation of this tradition in future Kawabata literary works is of considerable importance.

As in haiku poetry, Kawabata displays a common bond with poets of the past when he strikes his juxtaposition with nature. The images provide the reader with a concrete picture of a particular object in nature, and the picture simultaneously opens up a spectrum of association, including an inference to the human feelings felt by the individual at that particular moment.

The natural object and its parallel image need not be "logically" associated, as in the "nikki." The fact that the young Kawabata has turned the sound of urine into the sound of the
clear water of a valley stream would seem to indicate a primitive or pre-rational ability on the author's part to discover beauty in so unlikely a situation.

In this connection, I think a few words on Motoori Norinaga's (1730-1801) views on literature should prove revealing. The cornerstone of Norinaga's theory is the capturing in literature of a feeling of mono no aware (the "ahness" of things; a "sensitivity to things"). For Norinaga, the writer should cast aside the chain of unnatural moral thought which prevents him from grasping the essence of things. A heart which is pure and sensitive breaks through such chains to get to the core of the thing. "Bonbon" would appear to have just such a heart from the way he is able to sense in the sound of urine the sound of clear water. Norinaga suggests as example that such a heart can admire the beauty of a lotus flower in bloom in a muddy pond. The dirty surroundings need not interfere with the essential beauty of the flower.31

Incidentally, this aesthetic concept takes on thematic dimensions in Kawabata's later fiction. Things of beauty have a habit of being in contact with "mud" or of passing through it as they move in and out of the lives of Kawabata's male protagonists. One example would be Yukiko, the girl of the Sembazuryu, who enters Kikuji's world through the woman of the "muddy" birthmark.

The cultural wellspring which seems most responsible for the "primitive" artistic sensibility of both Norinaga and Kawabata is Shinto. Shinto itself is more a system of aesthetics than ethics; in fact, Western missionaries have found Shinto lacking almost totally an ethical code and have consequently refuted Shinto's right to be called a religion at all.
The Shinto world view sees the gods, man, and nature as one. Inherent in such a view is a pantheistic outlook which Shinto shares with Buddhism. When Buddhism was introduced to Japan, its philosophical concept of the oneness of all creation fit in smoothly with the indigenous religion. Of the two great forms of Buddhism, Hinayana and Mahayana, it is the line of Mahayana Buddhism which Japanese Buddhism belongs to. The philosophy of oneness in Mahayana Buddhism is supported by a pantheistic world view: the One is in all things, and conversely all things are the One. In Robert Schinzinger's introduction to his translation of three Nishida Kitarō essays, he talks about how Buddhists use the symbol of the mirror to explain that Dharmakaya ("the divine center of being") is "reflected" in all things. The particular example Schinzinger selects from Buddhist teachings reads like an expansion on the aesthetic principle found in Norinaga's words on the lotus:

Buddhists say that Dharmakaya is in all things, in the same way as the one and undivided moon is reflected in water, in the ocean as well as in millions of dewdrops, or even in dirty puddles. In each reflection the moon is whole and undivided.32

The oneness of the sound of water for "Bonbon" can clearly find its conceptual roots in both Shinto and Buddhism. The pantheistic overtones in the line from the "nikki" hint at what will be an important feature of later Kawabata works.

One final aspect of the line I'd like to draw attention to is the emphasis "Bonbon" places on the adjective "pure" or "clear." In the cited passage, he hears the sound of shimizu ("clear water"). In a later passage found in the May 7 entry, the old man again
urinates, and this time the young boy hears the sound as kiyoraka na oto (a "clear sound"). (p.19)

Kiyorakasa ("cleanness") is probably the single most important aesthetic consideration for Kawabata's protagonists in all of his literature. Kawabata's sense of beauty in general, and sense of female beauty in particular, revolves around cleanness or purity. In Yukiguni it is Komako's quality of purity which draws Shimamura to her.

We find the origin of this concept in Shinto as well. From as far back as the Kojiki (Record of Ancient Matters, 712), the Japanese have revered a sense of purity. In semmyō (Imperial edicts) from the eighth century, the following attributes are idealized: kiyoki kokoro ("the pure heart"), akaki kokoro ("the bright heart"), and kiyoki akaki kokoro ("the pure and bright heart").

The description of "clear water" further calls to mind the association of purity with water in Shinto ritual. The part water plays in Shinto purification rites is well documented. By bathing in rivers or streams, or by crossing them, one is purified.

The water of lakes, rivers, streams, and springs play an important part in almost every Kawabata work. Its association with Shinto purification can include its function as a symbolic passage from this earthly world to a pristine, heavenly world. In the May 8 entry, the old man appears ready to make a "real" passage from this world to a heavenly world through the agency of water. He says, "I wouldn't mind falling into a pond and dying there." (p.25) As with many other lines in the "nikki," we find these words of the old man repeated shortly after.
Another one of Kawabata's characteristics already to be found in the "nikki" is his use of contrasting images to support a thematic design. The loneliness and sorrow of the old man is underscored in the contrast between light and darkness. When darkness settles in the household, the old man's plaintive cries "shake the night air." (p.14) The sadness of the grandfather's almost complete blindness is temporarily assuaged when "Bonbon" brings a beam of light close to the old man's eyes and illuminates his "world of darkness." (p.14) After the old man expresses his desire to drown in a pond, which is then followed by his final recitation of "Namu amida butsu," the "I" says, "to me, the light of the lamp turned dark." (p.25) The undated entry of the diary discovered even later than the other sections and included in the second appendix closes with a play on light and shadow. "In the dim flicker of light from the bedside lamp, the two women sat silently with their heads between their hands." (p.38) It seems appropriate to learn that the old man passed away in the night.

It was young Kawabata's awareness of the coming death of his grandfather which prompted him to begin the diary in the first place. The result of writing a "sketch-like" description of those days before his grandfather's death would eventually lead to the first of the two questions Kawabata asked himself about the composition. In the second appendix, Kawabata writes that at fifty years of age, just as at the time when he wrote his first appendix, the thing he finds strangest is the fact he is unable to recall the days he had written of. He writes that he didn't set about explaining the meaning of memory and forgetfulness in the work; he also writes that he didn't make an effort to touch
on the meaning of "time" and "life" either.

One of the clues to the meaning of forgetfulness he does leave himself and us with is found in the first appendix. The ugliness of the old man's appearance during the days when the diary was being written has gradually been disappearing from the memory of Kawabata. He recognizes that he had "continued to wash clean" (kiyoraka ni araitsuzukete ita) (p.33) the memory of his grandfather over a ten-year period.

By reading his own diary ten years later, Kawabata was not only made to recall a forgotten past, but also to relive the immediacy of the linear passage of "natural time." As much as he admired this early composition of his, he surely must have been disturbed by the concrete reality he found there. I agree with Saeki Shōichi that Kawabata probably valued the objectivity of the style of the diary and also the effect of its being written almost totally in the present tense; however, the present tense of the composition is, in fact, not equivalent to the "eternal present" which we find in later Kawabata fiction. The "eternal present" must be beyond the perishability of "natural time." The concrete becomes abstract. For someone who sought the purifying effect of beauty in literature, the "ugliness" of the grandfather captured in the "objective" or "real" time of the pages of the diary must stand as somewhat of a counterpoint to what we find in future works by the individual. Such is the position Kawabata's "Jūrokusai no nikki" holds when compared with the rest of the author's literature.
In 1915, the year following his grandfather's death, Kawabata took up residence in the dormitory of Osaka's 1baragi Middle School. He had first started attending the school in 1912, and he stayed in the dormitory until graduation in 1917. As a fifth-year student at the school, he shared a room with a second-year student named Ogasawara. The two developed a relationship with clear homosexual overtones.

This relationship was the basis for Kawabata's autobiographical story "Shonen" 少年 ("A Boy") which was published serially in 1948 and 1949. The work is divided into seventeen sections but the final three sections exemplify the overall questionable literary merit of the work. They consist of the contents of old letters Ogasawara sent to Kawabata after the latter had graduated from the middle school and had begun to live in Tokyo.

The frankest passages dealing with their physical relationship are found in sections five and six. As frank as they are however, they are limited to the description of the two lying down together on a bed with the writer voicing the tactile experience of their physical contact which seems to have not really gone beyond a mutually passive stage.

Characteristic of how most of Kawabata's heroes describe the people they are involved with, the writer in "Shonen" has the eerie penchant for dissecting the physical charms of the young boy rather than giving a "whole" picture of him. With the boy either asleep or in a dream-like state, the author relates the pleasure to the touch of various parts of the boy's body including his forehead, neck, chest, shoulders, arms, hands, and feet. Content with this extent of a physical relationship,
the writer drifts into a state of reverie. The protagonist in "Shōnen" appears to have something in common with the protagonists in two works written by Kawabata in the 1960's. Eguchi of Nemureru bijo (House of the Sleeping Beauties, 1960) enjoys the pleasure of drifting into a state of reverie next to the drugged, sleeping bodies of young virgins. The bachelor in the surrealistic Kata Ude ("One Arm," 1963) is able to enjoy the virginity of a young girl without actually despoiling her by borrowing one of her arms for a night.

The key thing both the young girls and the boy possess is purity. In Kawabata's literature, the borderline between male and female is effectively erased when young people of physical beauty happen to be virgins as well. In Yama no oto for example, Shingo is drawn to the purity of the Nō mask of a young boy. Upon examining the mask, Shingo finds the features of the mask transformed into those of a girl.

Two years after Kawabata's dormitory life with Ogasawara, Kawabata jotted down in his diary a revealing reaction to his reading of Dostoyevsky's The House of the Dead. In the entry for January 23, 1918, Kawabata writes, "The passage about Ali especially affected me. I was brought to tears. It made me think of my Ogasawara. That immaculately pure Ogasawara will forever provide me with a sense of salvation."¹

The main character in The House of the Dead, Alexander Petrovitch, is a nobleman who has been imprisoned in Siberia. The novel is supposedly based on the recollections found in his manuscript. The brightest chapter in the novel is Chapter V which contains the passage on Ali. The following is how he is described:
Of the three Daghestan Tartars, all brothers, the elder two were well-developed men, while the youngest, Ali, was not more than twenty-two and looked still younger. He slept by my side, and when I observed his frank, intelligent countenance, thoroughly natural, I was at once attracted to him and thanked my fate that I had him for a neighbour and not some other prisoner. His whole soul could be read in his beaming countenance. His confident smile had a certain child­ish simplicity. His large black eyes expressed such friendliness, such tender feeling, that I always took pleasure in looking at him: it was a relief to me in moments of sadness and anguish....How this young man preserved his tender heart, his native honesty, his frank cordiality without becoming perverted and corrupt­ed during his period of hard labour is quite inexplicable ....Chaste as a young girl, everything that was foul, cynical, shameful, or unjust filled his fine black eyes with indignation, and made them finer than ever.2

The boy of "Shōnen" is also chaste like a young girl, and in the same manner that he writes of Ogasawara in his diary, the author here too indicates that the boy has bestowed a spiritual blessing on him. "...I feel that you are my god of salvation.... You were a fresh surprise in my life."3

Probably the finest scene in the story takes place when the author joins the boy in Saga and they make a trip to a waterfall so that the boy can perform misogi (purification by bathing). He is transfixed by the sight of the boy's body being struck by the cascading water. "The naked innocence of the boy brought him close to nature. But the figure was definitely godly (kōgōshii 神々しい [a term found in Shinto]). At the first sight of what should be described as the emanation of a spiritual light, my body turned cold."4

The passage contains examples of the essential elements in much of Kawabata's literature which designate singular moments of artistic sensibility.

The ultimate experience of misogi is to bathe completely
nude under a waterfall. The effect of the spiritual purification in such an exercise is the return to a pristine state. By arriving at this pristine state, the boy in his natural innocence possesses divine qualities. As I indicated in my analysis of "Jūrokusai no nikki," water, particularly the clear water of a mountain stream or waterfall, together with its coolness, produces a purifying effect in many of Kawabata's works.

The imagery of light and fire is another Kawabata indication of profound aesthetic moments suffused with a sense of the divine. Kawabata's use of fire images appears to correspond to the symbolic use of fire in both Western literature and Japanese Shinto rites. As pointed out by Northrop Frye, the use of fire in Western apocalyptic symbolism has been to associate it "with a spiritual or angelic world midway between the human and the divine."5 Fiery bodies are either to be identified with heaven or are to be thought of as passages to heaven. In Shinto too, fire is closely associated with the divine. It ranks on the same level as water as a purifying power.

The Shinto scholar Hirata Atsutane (1776-1843) came up with an interesting theory on the derivation of the Shinto term musubi. According to him, musu means "to beget" and bi refers to the sun. Musubi designates a synthesizing power which acts to harmonize the waxing and waning of cosmic forces.6 Fire in its various manifestations in Kawabata's literature acts in a similar manner as a synthesizing agent of a divine nature.

A final word on "Shōnen" underscores the connection Kawabata makes with the Shinto concept of purity. The fictional name he gives to Ogasawara in the story, his "god of salvation," is
In 1917, Kawabata went to Tokyo and entered the First Higher School. The autumn of the following year saw him make his first trip to Izu. It was during this walking tour that he met up with a group of wandering performers. Attracted to the young dancer in the troupe, he was accepted as a travelling companion by them for the remainder of the Izu trip. During a stay at Yugashima Hotsprings four years later, Kawabata produced a manuscript titled "Yugashima de no omoide" which draws on his relationship with Ogasawara as well as the Izu travel with the wandering performers. The manuscript was eventually turned into two stories: the one I've just dealt with titled "Shōnen" and the novelette "Izu no odoriko" which stands as the author's first masterpiece.

In 1919, at the age of twenty-one, Kawabata had his short story "Chiyo" published in the First Higher School's literary magazine. It has a rather curious plot. The "I" of the story has the uncommon fate of successively coming in contact with three girls who all happen to be called Chiyo: the daughter of Yamamoto Chiyomatsu, the Izu dancer, and the girl for whose affections he must compete with a classmate. Each time he makes contact with one of the girls called Chiyo, he recalls Chiyomatsu. The "I" feels that his failure to repay a family debt has caused a particularly painful death for the man. It is not surprising then that the hero feels a sense of fear and unnaturalness about the unfolding events. When the young man receives from the deceased man's daughter Chiyo a sum of money bequeathed to him in her father's will, his sense of uneasiness is compounded. Nonetheless, he uses the money to make a trip to Izu where he meets up with a group of
travelling performers and falls in love with the troupe's fourteen-year-old dancer named Chiyo. When he returns to Tokyo, all the while receiving letters from Chiyomatsu's daughter, the young man falls in love with a new Chiyo who has captured the attention of his classmate as well. The conclusion "I" comes to is that he has been cursed by the ghost of Chiyomatsu.

There are several possible explanations as to why Kawabata dealt with the world of the supernatural in this early short story of his. The most obvious would be to point to the fact that the author's early years were filled with the deaths of all the close members of his family. Being cut off from family relationships in this natural world, it should not be startling to find a person like Kawabata searching for a renewal of these relationships in a supernatural world. Not to be overlooked are the years Kawabata spent alone with his grandfather. In the "nikki" are found examples of the old man's belief in demons and details of his work on divination.

Another possible source of inspiration for the element of the supernatural in "Chiyo" can be uncovered in the wealth of Japanese classical literature which deals with the subject. Kawabata must certainly have appreciated the presence of ghosts in Genji monogatari, particularly the vengeful spirit of Lady Rokujō who takes possession of a number of ladies while she is alive and after she is dead. An even better example of ghostly tales are those to be found in Ugetsu monogatari of Ueda Akinari (1734-1809).

Probably in all of Kawabata's early works one can detect an element of the supernatural. His interest in the supernatural
eventually led him to take up the reading of books on spiritualism from 1925. Much of the thematic content of Kawabata's writing in the next ten years was derived from a knowledge of Eastern reincarnation and Western spiritualism. The finest piece of writing Kawabata produced which dealt with these two ideas was "Jojōka" ("Lyric Poem," 1932). With numerous references to Eastern and Western historical and literary examples of reincarnation and spiritualism, "Jojōka" makes an excellent primer for the student of the supernatural.

Minus the scholarship found in "Jojōka," "Chiyo," especially its last half, should be taken as the first of Kawabata's long line of stories centering on the world of spiritualism and reincarnation. When the hero of the story returns from his Izu trip, he notices that the cherry blossoms have fallen and senses the smell of the new leaves. This introduces a switch in the style of the short story from the prosaic to the poetic. The lines are shortened and the author makes use of visual effect by introducing a string of short paragraphs with the enclosed name Chiyo set off to the right of the paragraphs. Earlier in the work, the Chiyo most often referred to was Yamamoto Chiyomatsu whose name was written in Chinese characters. Now Chiyo is mostly written in the more ephemeral hiragana (cursive Japanese syllabic script) as the name begins to refer more to Chiyomatsu's daughter and the Izu dancer and ultimately to the ghostly power behind the name.

With the smell of the new leaves, the hero suddenly finds himself caught up in the terrifying fate of one who has been cursed. As he thinks more deeply about the events taking place, he begins to believe that he's not the only one who has been
cursed: the three Chiyos are themselves cursed. An even more startling revelation occurs later:

The three Chiyos are, of course, ghosts. At the least, they are phantoms which are being made to move about by the work of a ghost.

Yesterday my friend and I thought of how we had nervously gone to take a look at the place Chiyo had appeared. When she came close, from around the other side of that beautiful face we could only see a ghostly apparition. From behind her, a pale hand came forth and beckoned us. We couldn't think of her as being a person of this world.

The final conclusion the hero comes to about the strange turn of events in his life is that every family has its own vengeful ghosts to contend with. In the case of his family, for generations past they have been haunted by the ghost of Chiyo. He wishes to come to an understanding of the nature of the vengeance. Failure to achieve an understanding in order to appease the ghost means being perpetually pursued by the specter.

In Kawabata's "nikki" written at the age of sixteen, one finds the beginning of a lyrical style which runs throughout the author's literature. The mood of the work sets the tone for much of his later literary works: it is a piece written with a sense of loneliness and sadness. In Kawabata's "Chiyo" written at twenty-one, one finds the author's early thematic interest in the noumenal world. The author's concern with the interaction between the supernatural and natural worlds and with how people and events of the past affect people and events of the present finds its first expression in "Chiyo." Most of Kawabata's later stories share to some extent the same thematic interest found in "Chiyo." There is regularly at least a touch of the fantastic in them, and consequently the world the protagonists of his stories find themselves in normally borders on the world of the supernatural.

The three girls named Chiyo in this early short story of
Kawabata's are representative of perhaps all the women in the author's literature. If one were to point to the most fully developed and most "real" female character in all of his fiction, probably it would be Komako of *Yuki*guni; but it's of considerable interest to read that when questioned about the fleshed-out quality of Komako, Kawabata replied, "Obake desu yo." ("She's a spook."). The author would seem to be saying that behind all his female characters there is found a Chiyo.

In 1920, one year after the publication of "Chiyo," Kawabata graduated from First Higher School and entered the English Literature Department of Tokyo Imperial University. Later the same year, he was introduced to a fifteen-year-old waitress called Chiyo (Itō Hatsuyo) working at a Tokyo coffee shop. This real life Chiyo would eventually vanish from Kawabata's world and turn into a phantom of sorts like the girls in the story. Her role as a model in Kawabata's early literary works will be discussed later.

The year 1921 brought with it the initial publication of the sixth revival of the magazine *Shinshichō*. Its first three issues each contained a short story by Kawabata: "Aru konyaku" ある婚約 ("A Certain Engagement") in February, "Shōkonsai ikkei" 招魂祭一景 ("Memorial Day Sketch") in April, and "Abura" 石油 ("Oil") in July. "Shōkonsai" was well received by such influential writers as Kikuchi Kan and Kume Masao, and it was this work which really launched Kawabata's career as a writer.

Kikuchi was particularly impressed by the "power of visualization" found in the work. By "visualization" he meant Kawabata's skillful use of sensuous description. Found in the opening paragraphs are several examples of such description. The sense of
smell is one facet Kawabata works with: "I suddenly caught the scent of the sweet smell of roasting chestnuts. I'd love some." (p.43)

It is within the sensuous passages that one finds in this work the poetic response to natural description which becomes one of the trademarks of the writer. For example, a few lines after the main character smells the roasting chestnuts, she supposedly begins to hear the sound of soya beans being parched on the other side of the concourse. Her actually being able to hear this sound seems farfetched. The poet has refashioned nature for artistic ends.

Added to the terse, clear style found in his earlier "nikki" is an artistic sensibility which chooses to mold reality to suit the writer's purpose. Objective reality has been replaced by "subjective" reality.

One other conspicuous feature of "Shōkonsai" is his writing the work in a "fluid" first-person voice. The main character in the story, Omitsu, is at times described from the narrator's point of view, while at other times she herself takes the first-person voice. For instance, Omitsu's discovery of the unique smell of horses is given in her first-person: "Otome was right. There is the smell of horses." (p.51)

The subject matter for the short story was mostly obtained from the author's visit to the Memorial Day Festival held in the compound of Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo. It is the special world of the individuals who work these festivals, people living outside the boundary of typical society, that Kawabata focused on in "Shōkonsai:"

In Kawabata's essay "Bungakuteki jijoden" 文学的自叙伝 ("My Life as a Writer," 1934), the author clearly expresses his
interest in the underside of Tokyo life. In the following passage from the essay, the author places the young circus riders of "Shōkonsai" within the context of this interest:

But it's Asakusa more than Ginza, slums more than residential areas, and a group of girls working at tobacco factories more than students leaving a girls' school at the end of the day that I find lyrical. I am attracted to dirty beauty. I like visiting the tamanori (ball balancing performers), circus riders, jugglers, and inga takamono (fortune-tellers) of Egawa. I enjoy watching the fake shows put on at Asakusa's cheap playhouses. My first work to be praised was "Shōkonsai ikkei," a story about circus riders; my short piece titled "Rinkinka no yūutsu" found in the first issue of Bungei shunju is about a young girl who sells konnyaku (a paste made from the starch of devil's tongue); and "Izu no odoriko" tells of a group of travelling entertainers I met when I walked through Izu as a First Higher School student.9

The short line expressing Kawabata's attraction to "dirty beauty" deserves elaboration, particularly since Edward Seidensticker seems to have attributed much more to the meaning than Kawabata intended. In his essay "On Kawabata," Seidensticker equates "dirty beauty" with ugliness. He suggests that Kawabata had a fascination with ugliness which is apparent in much of the author's writing.10 If Seidensticker had summarized the passage quoted above from which he took the quotation, he would have given the reader a more accurate picture of what Kawabata was getting at. Kawabata is saying that it's in places of "dirtiness," in other words in locations such as the Asakusa playhouses, that he is attracted to beauty. Like Motoori Norinaga's lotus in the muddy pond, it is the presence of beauty in the mud which stirs the heart of Kawabata.

That is not to imply that Kawabata, particularly as a literary artist, had no interest in describing the mud. To restate the
formula as it certainly applies to Kawabata, it is because the flower blooms in the mud that the artist has been drawn to it. The two go hand in hand. To find beauty in such a place makes the beauty all the more poignant and precious. In addition, a degree of dramatic tension can be derived from the consideration that a slender strand of beauty is in danger of being engulfed by a greater sea of mud surrounding it.

The object of beauty in "Shōkonsai" is the central character in the story named Omitsu. Omitsu is a seventeen-year-old girl who works as a horseback rider for a circus show which puts on performances on occasions such as the Memorial Day Festival at Yasukuni Shrine. That her job as a horseback rider for the troupe draws attention to her beauty while it paradoxically threatens to degrade that beauty is the gist of the thematic design built into the sketch.

The author develops this theme more clearly by introducing into the story two other horseback riders: the star of the show, Sakurako, who represents a kind of idealized version of Omitsu and Otome who represents the probable image of a degraded future Omitsu.

The name Kawabata chooses for the star of the show, Sakurako, falls in line with the names of later ephemeral or virginal female characters in the author's fiction. Like characters such as the ghost Hanako ("flower child") in "Ireika" "Memorial Poem," 1932) and Yoko ("leaf child") in Yuki gumi, Sakurako ("cherry blossom child") is associated with images of flora. Flora can be thought of as being one stage further removed from humans than fauna is and, for Kawabata, the less human the
symbol, the more pristine the association becomes. Although the name "sakura" carries a feeling of the ostentatious in the story, it should be pointed out that the cherry tree in Shinto is a symbol of purity.

The reading for Otome includes the meanings of "stop" and "cease." It would seem an appropriate name for someone whose beauty has been irretrievably lost through her life as a horseback rider. Suffering from the consequences of having been the leader of the troupe's "plaything" and having spent long hours astride horses, she has been spiritually and physically debilitated by her experiences.

Kawabata's selection of Omitsu as the name for the main character of "Shōkonsai" makes for a slightly more complex symbolic interpretation. Possible meanings for Omitsu include "light", "a ray," and "a beam." As was mentioned earlier in this chapter, light connotes singular moments of aesthetic appreciation in Kawabata's artistic lexicon. More often than not, examples of light in the author's works are of brief duration. Borrowing a Seidensticker phrase which he used to describe the haiku manner of Kawabata's style and applying a more literal meaning to it, momentary beams of light in Kawabata's fiction often seem like "brief flashes in a void."11

Omitsu, the personification of light, could further be seen as living example of the meaning given to musubi. Similar to the synthesizing power of musubi, Omitsu represents the waxing and waning of the forces of "cosmic" beauty found in the sketch. She is the flash of light synthesizing the frigid but consummate beauty of Sakurako with the "warmed over" and degraded beauty of Otome.
"Shōkonsai" can be divided into six sections. It is in the long dialogue between Otome and Omitsu near the end of the third section that Kawabata makes most explicit the significant thematic role time plays in the story. Having not seen each other for some time, Otome repeats in amazement the fact that Omitsu has grown up. In a worried tone of voice, Otome three times asks Omitsu how old she is now. When Omitsu replies that she is seventeen, Otome proceeds to caution her to not be deceived by Isaku, the male leader of the troupe. Otome tells her it's time Omitsu quit the circus. In a line rich in literal and figurative meaning, Otome says, "Humans get to smell like horses too!" (p.48) She warns Omitsu not to become the plaything of men. Otome, who had earlier been described as looking like a "corpse doll," (p.48) says, "If you become the plaything of men, you wind up as good as dead." (p.49)

The meaning of time here is obvious. As a girl of seventeen, Omitsu has now reached the age where her virginal beauty is threatened. If she continues as a circus horseback rider, she too will have the smell of a horse. Kawabata's use in "Shōkonsai" of the horse as metaphor for the fallen woman is echoed in his masterpiece Yūki guni. The symbolic name he gives the main character is Komako ("horse child").

Omitsu is delicately balancing somewhere between the dream existence of a Sakurako and the too real existence of an Otome. In the very beginning of the sketch, she is described as lost in a dream as she performs for spectators; however, the consequences of being made to give more performances than she is humanly capable of have the ironic effect of repeatedly calling her back to the world of reality. The loss of physical and spiritual strength ultimately takes its toll.
The short fifth section of "Shōkonsai" exposes Omitsu's growing despair as she realizes the impossibility of her connecting her dreams with reality:

As the reality of the days sadly brought Omitsu more and more to the point of despondency, her dreams became all the more beautiful. But she no longer believed in a bridge between her dreams and reality. Instead, whenever the desire had been felt, she had mounted a flying horse and soared to dreams in the sky. (p.52)

She also recognizes there is an unbridgeable gap between herself and Sakurako. "...Besides, it's not only our faces. Just as Sakurako said, our personalities are different too." (p.52)

The scene ends with Omitsu being awakened from her faraway thoughts. It's time for the finale of the show.

Kawabata gives a vivid description of the final act on the program as he leads up to a dramatic ending of the sketch. The language is alive with literary devices such as the onomatopeic rendering of Isaku whistling to set the horses circling about the ring. Metaphors are effectively used. When the children take their places in the center of the ring, they "scattered like mice." (p.53) Omitsu's horse trots around the ring "like a hawk flying off with a small bird in its clutches." (p.54)

The color of the scene is red, the color of fire. Indeed, it is fire which becomes the focus of the scene; and where there is fire, one should also expect to find in Kawabata's literature beauty and a glimpse of the divine.

Two men bring out a long red cloth and stretch it tight across the ring. The girls are to execute jumps from the backs of their horses over the red cloth. It becomes apparent that the distance separating Omitsu and Sakurako has never been greater. Omitsu is unsteady in her performance while Sakurako is as superb as ever.
When Sakurako takes hold of a burning oval-shaped twist of wire and begins to skip through it from the back of her circling horse, she is a visage of divinity. "She was pictured like a goddess set within the frame of the burning oval." (p.54) Omitsu's eyes are dazzled by the sight.

It is at this moment of exceptional beauty that the author brings his story to a climactic ending. Having prepared the reader for Omitsu's eventual artistic collapse during her performance, the author finishes off "Shokonsai" with a symbolic twist, symbolic to both Omitsu and the reader. Omitsu falls from a standing position on the horse onto its back. The horse rears and charges by Sakurako's horse, grazing the second animal. The following lines conclude the sketch:

Oh! I've caught up to Sakura. I've passed Sakura. It was at the precise moment when Omitsu's thoughts were given only to having caught up to Sakurako that the two horses grazed each other; then they both staggered slightly and the star of the circus show, Sakurako, her halo of flames and all, fell to the ground. (p.55)

In a paradoxical way, Omitsu has symbolically achieved her aim. She has "overtaken" Sakurako by causing Sakurako's artistic beauty to come "falling to earth." From the opening line of the sketch where we read that the noise of the festival went straight up into the sky, the sense of movement has been upwards. Omitsu's dream direction has likewise been up: "she had mounted a flying horse and soared to dreams in the sky." In the final scene however, with the tempo of the work increasing, the upward motion of the sketch is matched by a downward motion. The fire-world of heaven has been transposed to the circus ring, and the action inside the ring takes on a vigorous vertical motion. Circling the ring on
their horses, the girls jump up and down over the long red cloth. It is at the precise moment in the performance when Sakurako is her most "unearthly" beautiful that Omitsu, who had only earlier realized the impossibility of bridging the gap between her dreams and reality, is victimized by the reality of her "earthly" physical state. The final direction in "Shōkonsai" is down. The last resounding words in the sketch are the words of Sakurako's fall. The "goddess" has fallen to earth. Surely Omitsu has "fallen" further yet herself.

The amount of actual time which elapses in "Shōkonsai" can be no more than one hour. On the symbolic level though, the meaning of the sketch takes on eternal significance. The artistic camera work of Kawabata has captured three time frames of a woman called Omitsu: Sakurako (Omitsu "beyond time"), Omitsu (actor in time), and Otome (Omitsu as victim of time). Throughout Kawabata's later literature one finds numerous examples of these three archetypal women. The usual pattern the author follows is to represent the woman of eternal beauty, the woman "beyond time," as someone whose time has been frozen just at the peak of her virginal charms. Frequently that means death or madness. It is, of course, the woman caught in time, the woman of virginal beauty on her way to losing it, who is the center of most of Kawabata's works. Usually it is either through the use of flashbacks, the development of the character in time in the novel, or through comparison with a secondary character such as Otome in "Shōkonsai" that Kawabata indicates the process of loss of virginal beauty in his main characters. It is when one recognizes the obvious abstract nature of this "woman in one, two, or three" that one might, as Kawabata
suggests, see a "spook" at the heart of even his most realistic female characters.

Kawabata's short story "Abura" ("Oil") was published in the July, 1921, issue of Shinshichō. It belongs to a list of works which can be classified as autobiographical recollections of the author's early years. The distinction between autobiographical works such as "Abura" and "Jūrokusai no nikki" is obvious. The diary style of the "nikki" captured the daily "objective" reality of the days of the fourteen-year-old Kawabata, whereas "Abura" and other autobiographical pieces were creative products developed from recollections of earlier years. In "Abura" is to be found a unity of theme symbolized by the emblematic object which gives the work its title.

The theme is death. How young Kawabata was affected by the loss of his father and mother, and later his grandmother and sister is the thematic concern of the work.

The first lines of "Abura" directly introduce the reader to the unfortunate infant years of the writer: "Because my father died when I was two and my mother died the following year, I don't remember a thing about my parents." (p.59) For the student of Kawabata, these lines are almost like makura kotoba (conventional epithets) introducing the author. This information is continually included in discussion on the author by researchers and the author himself. In fact, a good deal of the factual information in "Abura" together with a self-analysis of the possible effects of the deaths in his family on the author's personality turns up in a short piece Kawabata wrote soon after his acceptance of the Nobel prize for literature in 1968. The autobiographical essay's title is
"Omoidasu to mo naku" and was published in an April, 1969 edition of *Mainichi Shimbun*. By comparing not only the contents of the two works but also their diction and syntax, one is struck by the amazing similarity between these two pieces written almost fifty years apart. It might be said that "Abura" fails as a short story because of those passages which are reminiscent of the later autobiographical essay. Especially unwelcome in the short story are the passages much given to an emotional analysis of the self. The catchword the author comes up with for the effect of the early deaths of himself is "minashigo konjō" ("orphan complex"). The term first appears in a short paragraph following a long first-person musing on the childish tears of sadness and feelings of loneliness the writer had felt. Let me quote that paragraph which marks a change in the self's attitude in the story as he resolves to accept his fate:

As with the sudden, complete disappearance of thirty or forty pictures of my father, it's best not to distress myself over my dead relatives. It's best to avoid self-examination of the orphan complex within me. (p.64)

Unfortunately in "Abura" the author never does stray very far from a cerebral investigation into how and why he has emotionally suffered from the deaths in his family. It is when he works with the effect of sensuous experience on his memory versus memory per se, without the intrusion of psychological analysis, that the short story comes alive. In the opening paragraph of the story, the "I" mentions that since he recalls nothing when he looks at photographs of his father, he has no real sense of the man in the photographs being his own father. For the "I" of "Abura" sensuous impressions are the key to the lasting effect of early experiences.
The "I" goes on to relate the reflective effect a reunion with one of his aunts has on him. Although he can't remember at all the happiness he was said to have felt by the lively activity which took place at the time of his father's funeral, the aunt's story of the effect of sensory experiences on him as an infant makes him recall early years. The sensory experiences the aunt talks about are related to Buddhist rites for the dead. At the time of his father's funeral, the aunt tells him that he hated the sound of the striking of the bell before the Buddha and was so upset by the sound that they had to cease striking it. Also, he caused an unbearable commotion over the lighted taper on the Buddhist altar. He not only succeeded in having the light extinguished but he also made sure the candle was removed and the oil in the earthenware bowl was emptied into the garden. "I recalled the image of myself holding the earthenware bowl my infant tear-stained face dirtied (kegashite iru 𝒳 sharedInstance) by the oil on my hands." (p.60)

He ponders over the thought that his constitution rejects the sound of the bell and the sight of the oil light. Among several types of food products he dislikes, rape seed oil seems to have a particularly ill effect on him. When he puts something in his mouth which has the smell of rape seed oil, it is sure to cause him to vomit. He remarks that his sensitivity to the smell of oil remains with him to the present. The "I" suggests a possible psychological reference to this physiological sensitivity of his: "Perhaps my dislike for the oil light at the Buddhist altar comes from my having been saturated (shimikonde ita ヰ걍んでいます) with the smell of oil at my parents' deaths." (p.62)

Understanding of the use of oil as an emblematic object
has been made clear. Oil symbolizes death in the most concrete of ways. The boy has been spiritually polluted by the death of his parents. This spiritual pollution is given a physiological dimension with the thought that the oil has permeated the body of the young man.

A long passage follows in which he psychoanalyzes his actions through the years which have prevented him from attaining happiness. He realizes that he has only been playing with feelings of loneliness and sadness. Excessive feelings of self-pity for his situation as an orphan are recognized as symptoms of "orphan complex." The self-examination results in a cathartic surrender of his "orphan complex" to reveal a "beautiful spirit" found within. Now twenty years of age, he can say, "A tremendous sense of happiness could be achieved by the simple act of having been washed of my orphan complex." (emphasis added) (p.64)

He decides to test his new sense of self by trying to eat some food smelling of rape seed oil. The catharsis is apparently complete. He no longer feels nauseated by the smell and is able to eat the food without any trouble. The "I" once more reflects on the connection oil has had with death:

A heart saddened by the deaths of a father and mother had suddenly lodged itself in the light of a Buddhist altar, and it seemed that a dislike for oil came from a time when oil had been thrown into a garden. Having forgotten this causal relationship, I had come to detest oil; and it could be said that through the chance retelling of the story of my father and mother a cause and effect relationship had been tied together. (pp.64-65)

The catharsis has been spelled out in a familiar Shinto manner. To achieve happiness, the "I" of "Abura" has had to wash himself clean of the pollution (Kegare けがれ) caused by the death of his
parents. Whether one points to his dirtying himself with the oil from the overturned earthenware bowl or his being saturated with the smell of oil, the young man's pollution is in either case seen in physical terms. At the moment he purges himself of his pollution (the "orphan complex" resulting from the death of his parents), the act is described as the "washing" away of the complex.

In contrasting words which could have come straight out of Shinto terminology, the young man hopes that a pure heart (jōshin 心 ) will be his fortune and not the crooked (ibitsu いじつ ) heart he has just been purged of.

The graphic symbolism in the final sentence of the story also fits in perfectly with a Shinto order of things. The darkness of the young man's life had been symbolized since his infant years by his insistence on extinguishing the light at the Buddhist altar. Now with a purified heart, he shares a Shinto reverence for brightness clearly expressed in the final words of the work: "Before the tablet of my deceased relatives, I'd like to offer a radiantly glowing one hundred tapers of oil." (p.65) Kawabata's "I" has achieved spiritual rejuvenation precisely along Shinto lines: aspects of brightness and purity have identified his personal cleansing.

For about a year and a half after the publication of "Abura" in July, 1921, Kawabata produced almost nothing of his own fiction. His writings for publication consisted mainly of literary reviews. It was during this time, in June of 1922, that he transferred from the English Department of Tokyo Imperial University to the school's Japanese Literature Department.

Almost like a swan song to his time spent as an English Literature student at the university, Kawabata translated three
short pieces from English to Japanese in the January and February, 1922 issues of Bunshō kurabu. The two for January were John Galsworthy's "The Road" and the Irish writer Lord Dunsany's "Oasis of Death." The one for February was Anton Chekhov's "After the Theatre."

There can be little doubt that the choices for translation were Kawabata's own. Commentary on the three pieces suggests similarities with Kawabata's own writings. In "The Road," Galsworthy describes a road traveled by a long line of soldiers returning from war. Just as Kawabata might have done with the same material, Galsworthy parallels nature turning from darkness to dawn with the gradual revival of the men from their spectral state. Lord Dunsany's "Oasis of Death" is one of many supernatural tales on death this Irish master of fantasy produced. Kawabata's selection of this tale for translation would appear to be one more indication of Kawabata's fascination with the subject of the supernatural.

Chekhov's "After the Theatre" reflects Kawabata's own predilections as well. The heroine of the piece is Nadya Zelenin, a girl of sixteen whose age alone corresponds to the typical girl found in Kawabata's early works. In Chekhov's short piece, Nadya, dressed in white, is trying to write a letter to one of the two boys who love her. She begins to muse over the complicated relationship the three of them share. Even though Nadya is excited by the richly romantic and touching situation she finds herself in, she is reduced to tears at the thought of leaving her mother and brother. Nadya's thoughts lead to the idea of leaving this world rather than facing a future which will necessarily bring unhappiness to those who love her. She would appear to find her counter-
parts in two legendary maidens found in the poetry of the *Manyōshū*. The maiden Tekona of Mama in Katsushika and the maiden Unai were both courted by more than one man. Lamenting the rivalry over their respective selves, both of the maidens took their own lives. Akahito's poem in the *Manyōshū* about Tekona tells of the maiden drowning herself at the mouth of a river. Kawabata expressed a fondness for these two legendary maidens in a public lecture he delivered at the Hilo Campus of the University of Hawaii on May 16, 1969.

A month following the appearance of his translation of "After the Theatre," Kawabata exhibited his own fictional interest in girls in their mid-teens with a short story called "Issetsu" — "A Passage" — published in the March, 1922, issue of *Shinshichō*. In the story, the fifteen-year-old girl Fusayo is the focus of attention of two young men friends, Muroki and Ihara. She is representative of the type of girl who continually turns up in Kawabata's early literature. For example, Ihara speaks of Fusayo in words which might have applied to Omitsu in "Shōkonsai" and which might have been spoken by the student in Kawabata's later "Izu no odoriko" in reaction to the dancer: "The question which couldn't be clearly answered was how much of the adult and how much of the child were to be found in two sides of the girl, her heart and her body." Another instance of recognition with other young girls in Kawabata's early works is a sense of loneliness about Fusayo which in her case was caused by the loss of her mother. The author again shows a consistency of death-related images in his early fiction by having Fusayo's mother die by drowning.

Kawabata's fondness for having his fictional characters pass
from this earth by drowning makes it again possible to associate him with the *Manyōshū*. An example just given from the *Manyōshū* was the poem about Tekona of Mama who drowned herself at the mouth of a river. Muramatsu Takeshi links the *Manyōshū* poet Kakinomoto Hitomaro's use of water images with Western literary use of the image of Ophelia. A drowned girl floating on the water is an image found in one of the many poems relating to water and death written by Hitomaro. Muramatsu goes on to discuss how the ancients and poets such as Hitomaro recognized water and jewels as symbols of rebirth. The drowned girl floating along in water could be visualized as flowing towards rebirth.\(^\text{13}\) Kawabata's symbolic use of water mirrors this earlier motif.

The story of the mother near the end of "Issetsu" reminds one of another later Kawabata novel, *Sembazuru*. As in *Sembazuru*, the author pays special attention to the effect or lack of effect heredity plays in a mother-daughter relationship. Similar to the key role the first generation of characters in *Sembazuru* plays for the second generation, Ihara of "Issetsu" openly suggests that his father and Fusayo's mother had an earlier relationship. One final common feature worth mentioning is the use Kawabata makes of sensations and images relating to the passage of pristine figures from this world. Similar to Kikuji's feeling of coldness at his loss of Fumiko and Mrs. Ota, Fusayo is overcome with a sense of coldness at the thought of her lost mother. The respective works' succeeding images to feelings of coldness are similar as well. In "Issetsu," the author abruptly links Fusayo's sense of coldness with Muroki's words to the effect that in the autumn of Fusayo's fourteenth year a nova (*shinsei* 新星) was "cleanly"
In *Sembazuru*, the author also associates Kikuji's feeling of coldness at the disappearance of Fumiko with Kikuji's sighting of a heavenly body. In Kikuji's case, he looks up to the sky to see the morning star (*ake no myōjō* 明けの明星).  

It took a year before Kawabata would produce another piece of fiction which might properly be called a short story. He did, however, contribute a few short pieces of creative writing in the meantime including the first of a long line of vignettes, "Otoko to onna to niguruma" 男と女と荷車 ("Boys and Girls and a Cart," 1923), which he called his "palm-sized" stories. It would probably be erroneous to assume the three translations of vignettes from Western literature were the main inspiration behind his own decision to write in the form, but it would surely be improper to discredit the encouragement they must have given Kawabata to write in the same form.  

At any rate, Kawabata's next short story after "Issetsu" was "Kaisō no meijin" 会葬の名人 ("An Expert in Attending Funerals"). Later retitled "Sōshiki no meijin" 葬式の名人 ("Funeral Expert" or "Undertaker"), it appeared in the May, 1923 issue of *Bungei shunjū* and belongs to the same category of the author's fiction as "Abura." This autobiographical work is divided into three sections: a relatively short opening section; a long middle section; and a very short concluding section.  

The unifying element in the three sections is, as the title suggests, the nickname the young first person of the story has been given. The time period in the first and third sections is contiguous. It takes up a thirty day period of time during the summer vacation of his twenty-second year. Having attended the funerals of three distant relatives within this short space of time,
a male cousin jokingly suggests that he is an undertaker. The short concluding section consists basically of a dialogue the young man has with a female cousin who also teases him about his role as "undertaker." The author concludes the story with this cousin remarking that the young man's clothes smell of the grave. In a manner reminiscent of the use of the smell of oil in "Abura," Kawabata here has the smell of the grave represent in a sensuous way the "I" of the story's close relationship with death.

The long middle section of "Sōshiki" consists of the author's recollections of his many earlier experiences as an "undertaker." The opening line of the section is but a variation of the opening line of "Abura." "I don't remember a thing about the funerals for my mother and father." (p.71) The succeeding lines in the section's first paragraph mirror the lines about his father's photographs found in "Abura." In "Sōshiki," looking at photographs of his father leaves the "I" with an embarrassingly "in-between" (chukan \( \phi \ [\phi] \) ) feeling: the photographs seem neither like a portrait of a man nor like a living person; also, they give him no sense of the person being either a relative or a stranger.

The first-person narrator of "Sōshiki" juxtaposes these thoughts with a more recent flashback in the next paragraph. The "I" recalls an experience from the first day he came to Tokyo. He had been guided to Yushima Shrine and found himself standing in front of the statue of the president of his father's medical school. It produced an extremely curious feeling: "I felt as if the statue were half alive, and as I gazed on at it I became embarrassed." (p.72)

The reason for the narrator's insertion of this recent
flashback in the midst of the recounting of the deaths of his family members seems obvious. The "I" is indicating to the reader the lasting effect on himself of early separation from the living. His reaction to the statue in Yushima Shrine parallels his reaction to the photographs of his father. Images are the contact point with the once living; these images are at least as "real" to him as the once living themselves are. For the "I" of "Sōshiki," the line between the living and a portrait or statue of the living has become blurred.

In his psychological portrait of the "I" in this autobiographical piece, the author textually shows a continuing early interest in at least temporarily breaking down the lines which distinguish one order of things from another: in "Chiyo," it was the natural and the supernatural; in "Shōkonsai," it was dream and reality; and here in "Sōshiki," it is image and reality.

Within the overall blurring of image and reality in "Sōshiki," the young man's uncertain feelings as to whether the man in the photographs is a relative or a stranger is of particular interest when one reflects on later Kawabata fiction. The author regularly introduces the ambiguous nature of human relationships into his more famous later works. For example, at the end of the first part of Yuki guni, Kawabata almost gratuitously describes through Shimamura's eyes fellow train passengers who appear to be father and daughter. In reality, they are nothing more than strangers who chanced to meet each other on the train. Also, on another train near the end of Yama no oto, the main character Shingo similarly mistakes a couple for father and daughter. For those who place stock in biographical criticism, they would certainly
appear to have cause to connect the conception of these two fictional episodes with Kawabata's uncertain feelings about his own parents as depicted in the autobiographical "Sōshiki."

One other specific instance of the fluid interrelationship between two normally distinct states found in "Sōshiki" appears in the young man's recollections of the death of his grandmother just when he was of elementary school age. It was with the death of his grandmother that the following remarkable sensation occurred: "Concerning the death of my grandmother, it was the first time in my house that I had felt something like a living feeling toward the Buddhist altar." (emphasis added) (p.72) The residue of death has amazingly elicited sensations of life; life and death intermingle at the Buddhist altar. As in many later works by Kawabata, a sense of life in death is extracted from the deceased.

The next death the "I" reports on in his chronological recounting of his "undertaker" experiences is his sister's. Her death bears some resemblance to that of his parents. Because the deaths of his mother and father occurred when he was only an infant, he never really knew them. Likewise, because his sister had been separated from him and brought up in a different relative's house, he had no real sense of having had a sister at all. The greatest impact on the "I" at the time of his sister's death took place when he read the news of her death to his nearly blind grandfather. Once again the senses play a critical role for a Kawabata literary hero. Having taken hold of his grandfather's hand as he read aloud the news of his sister's death, here is what the "I" writes: "When I think of the feeling I got from my grandfather's hand as I read the letter, even now my left hand feels cold." (p.73) Memory is
reinforced by a sensory impression in the manner of "Abura".

An interesting parallel can be drawn here with "Sōshiki" and a later Kawabata novel. The left forefinger of Shimamura in *Yukiguni* plays an exceptional role in Shimamura's memory of his first encounter with Komako. The narrator suggests that, in fact, it is only within the hand itself that memory of Komako is locked up.

The final death of a family member taken up by the "I" of "Sōshiki" is his grandfather's. The particularly painful meaning of his grandfather's death comes from the fact that the young man is now the sole remaining member of the family. In the last line of this section, he admits that he has come to earn the title of "undertaker."

Before the "I" makes this admission that provides the three sections with their unifying element, the author brings into recollections of the grandfather's funeral two cases of the "I" suffering a nose bleed. The emphasis the author places on the nosebleed incidents calls for careful analysis.

The first nosebleed occurs at the height of activities on the funeral day when many mourners have come to offer condolences to the young man. The fact that this is the first time in his life he has suffered a nosebleed suggests portentous implications to him. He feels that the nosebleed is a way of teaching him of the pain in his heart caused by his grandfather's death.

The second nosebleed occurs the next morning when he goes with six or seven relatives and village people to pick up his grandfather's ashes from an outdoor mountain crematorium. About to pick up the ashes, the "I" discovers a slight fire still burning in the ground and suddenly his nose begins to bleed.
On both occasions, the "I" instinctively runs away from the others. The reason for such behaviour is given as a sense of embarrassment coupled with the fear of appearing frail in front of the rest of them. An analysis of the respective settings is more intriguing from a thematic point of view than study of individual pieces of self-analysis are.

Although he suffers the first nosebleed at his home and the second one in the mountains, there are a number of features the two incidents have in common. In both cases, the "I" runs to higher ground: from his house he runs up a flagstone path and lies down on top of a large rock; from the crematorium he races to the top of the mountain and lies down on the grass. Furthermore, the respective descriptions of the surroundings found at the two locations both evoke grand visions of nature: from the garden rock, dazzling rays of the sun shine down from between the open spaces of an old oak tree as he looks up to thin patches of blue sky above; on the summit, he looks down upon a pond at the bottom of the mountain where the morning sun is dancing on the surface of the water.

It shouldn't be difficult to place these images within the thematic framework Kawabata has established for himself in earlier works. In the midst of death, the "I" has suffered nosebleeds and has instinctively run to the highest places he could find. The mountain-top and the rock in his garden both function as symbolic points of epiphany. As with the use of fire images in Kawabata's works, the tops of places such as mountains and towers in his fiction appear to be used as points of symbolic presentation in much the same way as they are used in Western apocalyptic symbolism.
and native Japanese beliefs. Northrop Frye states that in poetic symbolism a setting such as a mountain-top or a lighthouse is "the symbolic presentation of the point at which the undisplaced apocalyptic world and the cyclical world of nature come into alignment."¹⁶ Hori Ichirō gives much the same meaning to mountain beliefs in Japan since ancient times: "Thus, we see that the mountain is believed to be the world of the dead; the meeting place of the living and the dead; or a passageway from this world to the next -- from the profane to the sacred and from earth to heaven."¹⁷

The "I" has made his way to two places ideally suited to act as symbolic points of epiphany. A few more touches complete the symbolism: divine fiery rays of the sun from above and water below, the water of death, are present in the settings. With the red blood of life oozing from his nose and his black stained obi covered with the darkness of death, the "I" has found himself in the meeting place of the living and dead, a point midway between the human and the divine.

A final note on "Sōshiki" relates to Kawabata's use of color symbolism. The two colors which appear most often in the work are red and white. It should be recalled that red, the color of fire, filled the climactic last scene of "Shōkonsai." As in "Shōkonsai," red here too can be associated with the sacred: the earth his sister and himself travel over up the mountain road to their grandmother's grave is red clay. Besides this connotation, red as exemplified by the blood of the boy's nosebleeds represents the life side of the life and death dichotomy found in the work. White appears six times in "Sōshiki." On each occasion it is associated with death: white tabi and white dress worn at funerals, the white
fusuma leading to his grandmother's ashes in the Buddhist altar, and memories of his dead sister summed up by the "I" as "things of white."

Kawabata's use of red and white symbolism reminds one of the Japanese proverb on the fleetingness of life (mujōkan 無常観) which reads like a statement on the aesthetics of death: "A rosy face in the morning, white bones in the evening."

With "Sōshiki," Kawabata has introduced the symbolic use of red and white into his literature. It will be seen that these two colors, with their symbolic meanings intact, become the predominant colors in all of Kawabata's works.

The August, 1923 issue of Shinshichō included Kawabata's first of three different works titled "Nanpō no hi" 南方の火 ("Fire in the South"). The publication signalled the beginning of a series of short stories based on Kawabata's actual relationship with Itō Hatsuyo (nicknamed Chiyo). In late 1920, his friend Miake Emu introduced Kawabata to the girl who was working at a Tokyo coffee shop. Kawabata fell in love with Chiyo and on October 8, 1921, he and Miake visited her and her foster parents at their home in Gifu Prefecture so that Kawabata could propose marriage. She accepted, but only a month later Kawabata received a letter from her breaking off their engagement for some unexplained reason. Kawabata was shattered by the experience. How significant the whole thing was for Kawabata can be measured by the many stories he produced beginning with "Nanpō no hi" which were based on his relationship with Chiyo. The series of works have been categorized as both "Chiyo mono" ("Chiyo affair") and "Michiko mono" ("Michiko affair"), Michiko being the fictitious name Kawabata most often used for Chiyo.
By the former Japanese way of counting ages, he was twenty-three and she was sixteen when he proposed. Another example of how deeply Kawabata was affected by his proposal and her eventual rejection of marriage enters into the opening of **Kinji** 禽獣 (*"Of Birds and Beasts,"* 1933). The taxi the "I" of the short story is riding in happens to make its way into a funeral procession. It surely isn't mere coincidence that the car following the taxi in the procession has the number twenty-three pasted on the glass in front of the driver's face.

"Nanpō no hi" was not the first of the "Michiko mono" Kawabata had worked on though. He had written an earlier unpublished piece in June, 1922 which covers the same autobiographical area that "Nanpō no hi" does. The title he gave the work was "Shinsei" 新晴. Written in the third-person narrative, "Shinsei" is based on the visit Mimei and Kawabata made to Gifu to see Chiyo in October, 1921.

One might consider the first "Nanpō no hi" to be a reworked version of "Shinsei." "Nanpō no hi" also covers the events which take place upon arrival in Gifu of the two young men. It too is written in the third-person narrative. Yet one other work Kawabata produced on the Gifu visit was a piece called "Kagaribi" 萤火 ("Fishing Fire") published in the March, 1924 issue of *Shinshōsetsu*. According to Hasegawa Izumi, "Kagaribi" was, in fact, the new title Kawabata gave to his revision of "Shinsei." The research that went into Hasegawa's pronouncement of "Kagaribi" being the revision of "Shinsei" leaves one a little unsatisfied. A perusal of "Shinsei," the first "Nanpō no hi," and "Kagaribi" gives the impression that Kawabata's "Nanpō no hi" is a polished version of "Shinsei" and that his "Kagaribi" is in turn an improvement on "Nanpō no hi."
With the three short stories being basically a factual recounting of the visit, it's clear that the three main characters in "Shinsei", "Nanpō no hi," and "Kagaribi" are modelled on Kawabata, Miake, and Itō Hatsuyo: in "Kagaribi," Suguru is Kawabata, Asakura is Miake, and Michiko is Chiyo. "Shinsei" never was published in Kawabata's lifetime; the first "Nanpō no hi" was not included by Kawabata in the selections for his collected works. Kawabata obviously came to feel that only "Kagaribi" was worthy of insertion in his collected works. Unlike the third-person narrative point of view of "Shinsei" and "Nanpō no hi," "Kagaribi" is written in the familiar early Kawabata first-person narrative.

The author has divided "Kagaribi" into two sections. The first section begins in the temple grounds where Michiko lives with her foster parents, the father being a Buddhist priest at the temple. After Suguru and Asakura enter the main temple and spend time with the family, which includes Suguru playing a game of *go* with the priest, Michiko joins the two young men for a walk to Yanagase to see a chrysanthemum display. The second section consists of the events which take place after they arrive at an inn in Yanagase.

With the work written in the first-person narrative, the author presents the reader with a lyrical voice throughout. The first section is especially given to the internal musings of Suguru. Past and present are intertwined in a manner which calls to mind the stream of consciousness technique. The second section stands in contrast. It mainly consists of dialogue in the present.

Such a technical division in writing between the two sections carries with it a thematic contrast as well. In a word, a word
which appears eight times in the first section and only three times in the second, the first half is built around the fantasies (kusô) of Suguru. With the prime exception of the fishing fire scene near the end of the second section, the second half is given over more to the "reality" of the situation.

Saying the first section is built around the fantasies of Suguru should not be taken to mean that reality has been entirely eliminated. (Contrariwise, the second section does not exclude examples of fantasy.) Reality serves as a counterpoint to Suguru's fantasies.

Just after coming face to face with Michiko after not seeing her for some twenty days, Suguru immediately flashes back to the previous evening when Asakura and himself were riding the night train to Gifu. As the use of a train ride so often does in Kawabata's later literature, the interior of the train acts as a symbolic capsule of timelessness traveling through time. Suguru is lost in a world of dreams in the train car as he fantasizes over the coming days to be spent with Michiko. Besides Suguru and Asakura, the car is occupied by girl students on a school trip. For Suguru, an image of his dream Michiko becomes superimposed over the visages of the girl students. As one frequently finds in Kawabata fiction, the girls in this world of fantasy are asleep. Sleep may be likened to a state of suspension between life and death, and the color one associates with death and innocence in Kawabata's literature is white. The girls here are colored in white too: "...the car bloomed white with the scattered travel weary sleeping faces...when the faces of the girls drifted into sleep, I could see the white color of a heightened level of
innocence surfacing in the car." (p.80) It is within this vision of the beautifully innocent sleeping faces of the girls that Suguru superimposes the even more beautiful image of his dream Michiko. The real Michiko for the most part retains the white face of Suguru's fantasies until the subject of marriage is brought up in the second section.

Once this long flashback to the train is completed, Suguru expresses astonishment at the actual appearance of Michiko and wonders what connection reality has with fantasy. He suddenly recognizes flaws in her face. Something which appears to disturb him even more is her "large bare feet." One is reminded again on a literal level of the lotus in the mud by the association the author makes with Michiko's feet. The opening scene of the story had found Michiko helping the priest cover a temple wall. In his consternation at coming face to face with the "real" Michiko, Suguru recalls what task Michiko's bare feet had been fulfilling: "These were the feet that were used to mix the wall mud." (p.81)

Another feature about Michiko which also fits in with an earlier Kawabata motif is the ambiguous nature of her sexual maturity. Michiko, like Fusayo of "Issetsu," at one point is described as being "neither a girl nor a woman." (p.81) It is the girl side of Michiko that seems to especially appeal to Suguru while simultaneously bringing into question the whole idea of marriage to her. Suguru seems obsessed by the possibility that she still is, in fact, a child (kodomo nanda 子供 な な ど ). (p.81)

Although the phrase "kodomo nanda" in "Kagaribi" lacks revelatory impact, it should be pointed out that the exact same words are also used in reference to the dancer of Kawabata's "Izu no odoriko."
In the latter work, the words are used to express the most gratifying of revelations for the young student of the story. Feeling that a sexual relationship with a child is totally out of the question, the student is at once filled with a tremendous sense of joy. In "Izu no odoriko," the denial of physical love in favor of platonic love results in personal salvation for the student. It is realization of eventual physical communion with Michiko that creates anxiety in the hero of "Kagaribi."

Up until the final passage in the second section, Michiko and Suguru don't touch on the subject of matrimony at all. As long as the subject is not discussed, Michiko retains an aura of pristine innocence. To Suguru, Michiko has continued to be a vision of whiteness. He felt that she was "a girl without the slightest smell from her body." (p.85)

In the last passage of the first section, Michiko hints at the topic of marriage and Suguru first fully contemplates the connection reality has with fantasy:

Wasn't I setting to dance in a fantasy world the Michiko living in this world with a doll Michiko through whom the same blood wasn't flowing? Is this what is called the awakening of love? And doesn't the beautiful name of marriage mean killing a girl to bring life to my fantasies?...My prayer was offered in hopes of learning if a single-minded desire to have a shining Michiko fly about in a cloudless and weightless free blue sky were tied to love or not or marriage or not. (p. 87)

The line which closes the final passage of the first section of "Kagaribi" states that they have crossed the bridge to the inn. From what follows in the section, the crossing of the bridge suggests Suguru's metaphorical displacement from a world of fantasy to a world of reality. Not once in part two will a "doll Michiko" enter the thoughts of Suguru. Similar to the fate of Omitsu's
personal dreams of soaring through the sky atop a flying horse, Suguru's fantasies of seeing Michiko fly through the sky come to an end as well.

At the inn, Suguru asks Michiko if Asakura has broached the subject of Suguru and Michiko's impending marriage: "Suddenly the color of life which had drained from Michiko's face in an instant could be seen to faintly return; then she was colored in red." (p.91) As was the case in "Sōshiki," red representing life stands in contrast to white representing death (and purity). Later in the second section Suguru again remarks on how Michiko's facial color has been transformed from white to red. The transformation coincides with their talk turning to the rather serious business of the meaning of their forthcoming marriage. Ranging from matters such as future happiness in matrimony to the task of getting family registers in order, the tone of the second section becomes decidedly mundane.

It is only with cessation of mundane talk about marriage that in the quietness Suguru is able to attain a momentary blissful state. The word choice Kawabata selects to describe this state is virtually identical to the final lines to be found in "Izu no odoriko." "Then with everything perfectly quiet, my tranquil heart turned into quiet, clear water (sunda mizu ざんざん spreading out lapping against some distant shore. It was as if I wanted to fall completely into sleep." (p.93)

The images are fully recognizable. Kawabata has used water to symbolize the sense of purification Suguru feels by contact with the maidenly Michiko. Purification, in turn, induces a wish to fall into a deep sleep similar to one experiencing nirvana.
The sense of purification followed by a desire to attain a state of nothingness quickly gives way to an opposing sense of gloom which overcomes Suguru. He feels sorry for Michiko being engaged to a person like himself. The mood calls for an allusion to darkness: "Suddenly falling deeply into an extended darkness, I was looking at two fireballs." (p.93) The appearance of the two fireballs literally lights up the darkness. The dichotomy between fiery light and darkness set here is soon mirrored in the climatic scene of the work.

Just at the point where Michiko begins to speak excitedly about her being born in the year of hinoe 丙午, an inauspicious year for a girl wishing to marry since superstition has it that she will kill her husband, Suguru shouts that he sees the fishing fires of the cormorant fishermen's boats. As the boats get closer, the sensuous relationship between the fire and themselves becomes increasingly intense: at first the fires only faintly light up the darkness; next the fires appear to hurry closer to the "lights of their hearts;" then Michiko and Suguru "are standing in the middle of the fishing fires." (p.95)

At one stage, the fishing fires at the bows of the boat "set fire to the water." (p.95) From investigations of earlier Kawabata literature, the image of these two great forces of fire and water interacting with each other should signify a moment of unparalleled aesthetic appreciation. So it does here:

Then I held the fishing fires, brightly. I was looking at the flickering of the flames reflected in Michiko's face. It's unlikely that there'll ever be a time in Michiko's life when she'll look as beautiful. (p.95)
With these words, the spell of the fishing fires is effectively broken. The succeeding final paragraph of "Kagaribi" acts like a denouement in the work. Asakura sees Michiko and Suguru off at the train station. In symbolic contrast to the bright fishing fires which had lit up the darkness along the river, the final line of "Kagaribi" describes the two of them passing through the town poorly lit up in lights.

The author is clearly hinting that Michiko and Suguru's future is ill-fated. Whether the fact that Kawabata's relationship with Chiyo was behind the ominous note in the final line makes grist for the mill of the biographical critic.
Kawabata graduated from Tokyo Imperial University in March, 1924, the same month "Kagaribi" was published in Shinshōsetsu. His bachelor's thesis was titled "Nihon shōsetsu shi shōron 日本小說史小論 ("A Short Treatise on the History of Japanese Novels").

The opening paragraph of the preface to the thesis outlines three approaches to how one might study literature: the historical, the biographical, and the critical. Kawabata acknowledges later in the preface that the idea of the divisions into these three possible approaches came from his reading of the American scholar C. T. Winchester's Some Principles of Literary Criticism. The approach he prefers to choose for himself is the critical approach. He says that the meaning of the critical approach is to take a work from the past and evaluate it in the present strictly on its intrinsic artistic worth. Kawabata says he would have novels of the Heian, Kamakura, and Muromachi periods, together with the novels of modern writers such as Tanizaki Junichirō and Akutagawa Ryūnosuke 芥川竜之介 (1892-1927), measured for their artistic worth by the same critical yardstick.

In a line of reasoning which reveals Kawabata's vision of the meaning of literature, he continues his preface with a discussion on beauty. Beauty would apparently be his sole criterion for judging the artistic merit of an individual work. He says that to decide what constitutes eternal beauty one must reach conclusions based on an investigation of the works of every period. The author quickly introduces a caveat though. He says that deciding on what constitutes eternal beauty, in other words determining a fixed set
of ideas of what the essence of art is, one must keep in mind Bashō's dictum of "tradition and novelty" (fueki ryūkō 不易流行) the poet advocated in haikai.

Kawabata says that the demise of "novelty," in other words demise of the transitional nature of art, would mean the death of art history: "A work of art would become a cold tombstone. Moreover, each new golden age of art comes into bloom as a result of this transitional nature." Kawabata decries the outcome of an inability to strike a proper balance between "tradition" and "novelty." On the one hand, he expresses displeasure that Japanese literary history is filled with examples of how feckless adoration of Japanese classics such as the novel Genji monogatari and the poetry of the Kokinshū hindered the development of Japanese literature. On the other hand, he chastises the Japanese naturalists of the early twentieth century for failure to recognize how antithetical their writings were to Japanese national character and the traditional spirit of Japanese literature.

The consensus among critics of modern Japanese literature is that Kawabata was able to realize in his own literature exactly what he preached in the bachelor's thesis. He has been praised by many for his ability to be at the same time traditional and modern. By modern, most critics mean the influence on Kawabata of imported avant-garde European art and literature which began to enter the country in about 1920. Most of the works I will analyze in this chapter were influenced by the new movements. The most experimental of the works I'll be taking up is "Aoi umi kuroi umi" (青い海 黒い海, "Blue Sea, Black Sea," 1925). With this piece, it might be argued that Kawabata comes perilously
close to tipping the scales too far to the side of "novelty."

Two months after graduating from Tokyo Imperial University, Kawabata had a short story titled "Sora ni ugoku hi" (Lights That Move in the Sky) published in the May, 1924 issue of Gakan. The historical background for the story is the Kanto earthquake and fire of September 1, 1923 which claimed the lives of more than one hundred thousand people.

Considering Kawabata's personal history, some kind of spiritual interpretation of the human predicament resulting from the aftermath of this catastrophe seems almost a task willed to him by fate.

Since infancy Kawabata had faced a string of deaths in his family which left him an orphan in the truest sense of the word a month before his fifteenth birthday. As a young man, he had found himself "without home or family." Many of the survivors of the Kanto earthquake suddenly found themselves more or less "without home or family" as well. In autobiographical essays and early autobiographical short stories such as "Abura" and "Sōshiki no meijin," the message comes through clearly that Kawabata went through a great deal of personal anguish before coming to terms with his "orphan complex." If the hero of "Abura" and "Sōshiki" couldn't overcome the condition he found himself in as an orphan, he at any rate realized that it was best not to distress himself over his dead relatives: "It's best to avoid self-examination of the orphan complex within me." (p.64)

The consequences of the Kanto earthquake brought forth from Kawabata a spiritual treatise based on a fatalistic outlook which in its implications does provide the way for the orphan to overcome
his sorrow. This spiritual treatise turns up in the first of the three sections of "Sora." At the heart of the discourse are two philosophic concepts with long traditions in the East: metempsychosis (rinne tensei 輪廻転生) and the oneness of all creation (babutsu ichinyo 万物一如). Kawabata as a literary artist sets down his spiritual code in a framework of dialectical argument.

The opening line of "Sora" calls to mind the opening line of "Shōkonsai ikkei." In "Shōkonsai," the narrator writes that the noise of the festival went straight up into the autumn sky. In "Sora," the narrator more concisely describes a similar scene: "The autumn sky was clear to the heights." (p. 99) The narrator follows up this description in "Sora" with an interesting observation on the supposed habits of Tokyo people of the time: "In those days it was the habit of people living in Tokyo to climb to high places, and in the instant they obtained a view they would experience the joy which comes from losing a sense of self, thereby refreshing their hearts." (p. 99) Whether this is true or not is beside the point. From a literary point of view, Kawabata is being perhaps a little too clear in stating right at the beginning of "Sora" that the tops of high places function as points of epiphany. As I mentioned earlier, Northrop Frye has pointed out that high locations act as "the symbolic presentation of the point at which the undisplaced apocalyptic world and the cyclical world of nature come into alignment." The boy of "Sōshiki no meijin" reached his symbolic points of epiphany at the highest point in his garden and on top of a mountain. In "Sora," the specific setting for symbolic points of epiphany in the work is
the roof garden tower of a three-storied elementary school at the back of Asakusa Park. The school and a police station were the only two buildings in the area not destroyed by fires accompanying the earthquake. The roof garden tower acts as a point of epiphany twice in the story: it is the location for the long dialectical argument of a fatalistic nature which takes up most of the first section, and it is the location for the aesthetic moment of a divine nature which concludes the work. It's not surprising then that the characters of "Sora" are looking down on humanity from the tower in the first section and up to the heavens in the concluding passage.

In the opening scene of "Sora," a school teacher named Kanehara has taken some children to draw pictures at the top of the tower. Kanehara has been joined by an old friend and the two are looking down on the reconstruction taking place in the city. The time of the story is less than two months after the earthquake. Kanehara's old friend is one of the rarest characters found in Kawabata's literature. The extraordinary case of the "anti-intellectual" writer Kawabata turning his talents to a spiritual treatise calls for the introduction of a character given to verbosity.

As Masao Miyoshi points out in the preface to his Accomplices of Silence, the narrator's attitude toward the story in the typical Japanese novel shows a "passion for silence." Suggestion and evocation determine the scene of the Japanese novel rather than description. Miyoshi gives Kawabata's Yama no oto as an excellent example of how "this silence fairly resonates with meaning." In "Sora," the narrator would appear to be a little nervous about
introducing the nameless "old friend" whose thoughts on life are contained in undoubtedly four of the longest paragraphs (they cover five pages of Kawabata's zenshū) found in the entire literary works of the author. Before the old friend begins his discourse, the narrator goes to the trouble of twice warning the reader through Kanehara's understanding of the friend's personality that the loquacious man is showing the usual signs of getting ready to talk at length on some topic.

The friend opens his talk by remarking about how beneficial the conditions in Tokyo have become for the police. Since the citizens are relegated to living in barracks devoid of "roofs and walls," it has become very easy for the police to spot crime and apprehend criminals. He surmises the reaction of the survivors to the deceased before returning to the meaning of a possible time with no roofs or walls. The man says that in such a time there would be no need for police. This line of reasoning leads him to the consideration that the concepts of "good" and "bad" might disappear. Not surprisingly, a link is then made with a "primitive" time free of human morality and the city.

The old friend contends that the worst thing about the earthquake disaster was death. He says that the finality of death is a problem he has wrestled with continuously. He suggests that the god who created man slipped up on this one point. The friend says the sending of the dead to the moon through the heavens in a flower bedecked boat is fine, but he exclaims that god is wrong in making man go to the trouble of depicting the dream of a journey to paradise. The dream of a journey to paradise leads him to bring up the concept of metempsychosis:
Together with the dream of a journey to paradise in ancient times in Japan, there was an appealing belief held by the people. A princess in a previous life is a beggar in this life and a linnet in a future one, and in the next world a white lily of the valley. It was said that a poet in this life is a Buddha in a future life and was a white rat in a previous life. What do you think of this theory of metempsychosis? (p.102)

The old friend temporarily strays a little from the subject of metempsychosis and takes up the role fate plays in life. He observes that uptown people didn't suffer as much as downtown people. This point leads him to say that to live uptown or to live downtown, to die or to be saved, is largely determined by fate. The comments on fate he makes before returning to the subject of metempsychosis stress that chance and inevitability are one and the same thing.

A resumption of words on metempsychosis introduce the concept of oneness into the argument:

This theory of metempsychosis was based on the notion that to ride on a lotus in a future life one must perform good deeds in this life. It seems that admonitions to not be reincarnated as a snake served the purposes of priests in their teachings. The inspiration of a new life offered by someone would be received as a welcome truth. It would be scientifically explained both materially and spiritually. Generally man has chosen to make a distinction between himself and all things found in the natural world and continuation of this long historical practice is not very welcome. I wonder if most of the hearts which feel the void of human existence haven't sprung from the legacy of such a practice. I think that when man perhaps some day turns around and begins to walk back along the road he has taken, it will be similar to a stone thrown into the sky which upon reaching as high as it can go comes falling back to earth. I think that at the end of this retraced road the many is the world of the one. That's where the salvation of most people lies. (p.103)
The man's discourse turns to the fleetingness of life and thoughts on belief in the continuation of the human race. It is at this point that the old friend offers his final thoughts on metempsychosis and the oneness of creation:

It's not the idea of man being reborn as a penguin or an evening primrose that I find favor with; what pleases me more is the thought that an evening primrose and man are one. It is in this way only that the world of the heart of man, in other words love, might become expansive and free. The one is the many and all things and their spirits are part of one deity. (p.104)

Upon completion of the discourse, the narrator steps in to remark that "on top of the tall tower, only the long talk of the friend was being played with by the autumn breeze...." (p.105) The end of the discourse signals the end of Kanehara and the old friend's purpose in the short story. They will never appear in the story again. Kawabata links the two men and the setting with what follows in a rather interesting way. All the while the men had been carrying on their one-sided conversation, an elementary school student named Hirata had been working on a crayon sketch of the surrounding view from the top of the tower. The focus of the first section shifts from the men to this young boy. Two physical features about the boy are emphasized: his eyes are "penetrating" (surudoku ☣ < ) and he has a large head. He is said to have a talent for pictures. The picture he had been working on during the men's discussion is described as bright, but it doesn't display the heart of a child. Physical description of this boy coupled with recognition of a predisposition and talent for painting make it clear that the twenty-four-year old Kawabata has introduced a minor character into "Sora" who represents a portrait
of himself as a young boy. This is not the first time Kawabata has drawn his self-portrait in an early work. In the only work taken up in the second chapter of this thesis which was not written in the first-person narrative, "Shōkonsai ikkei," the narrator describes two university students who are gazing at Omitsu. One of them is depicted with goggly eyes and terribly large ears, and he is wearing a hunting cap. This portrait fits the appearance of Kawabata when he was a university student. Kawabata's wearing a hunting cap during his university days can be interpreted as a gesture of protest against the elite status that came with being a student of Tokyo Imperial University. The "I" of "Izu no odoriko" is clearly a fictional representation of Kawabata who, in the course of the story, replaces his school cap with a hunting cap in a symbolic gesture of becoming one with the traveling performers.

The young boy in "Sora" leaves the tower and goes down to the second floor of the school where he meets his older sister Ohana in the hallway broiling some salted salmon for dinner. Their family is but one of many families who have taken refuge in the building. Ohana leaves her task for a moment and looks down on the school courtyard from one of the windows. The sight is in keeping with the symbolism Kawabata has established in earlier works. She sees rows of brand new Western towels hanging out to dry after having been dampened by the wind and rain. Found on the towels are two red lateral stripes. The red here is clearly symbolic of the ascendancy of the life force following the death and destruction wrought by the earthquake and fire:
The movement in the garden of the bright red lines on the wet new towels drew a fond look from Ohana, and it was enough to cause her a slight feeling of sadness. There had not been until now such a vivid color at the shelter. It was near noon on a bright autumn day and the weather was perfect for drying out the towels dampened by the earlier wind and rain. (p.106)

These three lines bring the first part of "Sora" to a close. The author has finally introduced his main character, Ohana, into the short story, but the seemingly haphazard manner Kawabata has his characters in "Sora" move in and out of the scenes continues with the opening passage of part two. No sooner had Ohana been introduced in the story than she temporarily disappears. Instead, the next section begins with Ohana's mother waking from a dream; but the mother herself is around just long enough to hear the cry of a beggar woman's baby.

The beggar woman fares better than Ohana's mother in the attention she receives from the narrator. The story of how she and her family cope with life at the shelter is the main episode found in part two dealing with the activities going on at the school. This lengthy episode has obviously been designed to show the beggar woman's style of living in a favorable light when compared to the style of living exhibited by other families there. Their life-style as beggars in a world outdoors has meant they are perfectly suited for the communal style of living in the shelter without "roofs and walls." In unison with the "old friend" in part one who expressed contempt for roofs and walls which shut off people from each other, the narrator's tone in part two reveals a distaste for those who attempt to duplicate their lives prior to the earthquake by establishing barriers between themselves and
others at the school. The beggar woman's family are considerate of others and show no desire to seal themselves off from the rest of them.

Extolling the virtues of a class of people normally berated by society is but one example in "Sora" of the narrator taking a position counter to popular moral views. Another episode in the story which similarly finds the narrator admiring people who are usually cast as unacceptable members of society takes place in part three. It involves the story of brothers who by profession are artisans. They have been a source of happiness at the school with their good-natured concern for the welfare of their fellow members in the shelter. Their cheerful demeanor in the midst of the chaotic situation caused by the earthquake allows acceptance of minor transgressions they commit such as stealing umeboshi (Japanese pickled plums) from the school garden at night. When the brothers are arrested by police on gambling charges, the narrator explains that they were missed at the shelter.

What Kawabata has set out to do in much of parts two and three of "Sora" is to provide through episodes such as those of the beggar woman and the brothers particular examples of an approach to living which mirror the points made by the "old friend" in part one. The stories of the beggar woman and the brothers can be taken as parables of the thesis presented by the friend. In part one, the old friend found appealing a world without "roofs and walls" and associated this state with the disappearance of the concepts of "good" and "evil." He further associated these conditions with a "primitive" time free of human morality and the city. The beggar woman and her family, and the brothers represent
ideal members of this world free of "roofs and walls" and imposed concepts of good and evil.

To give these ideas presented in "Sora" wider perspective, it is useful to return to, and expand on, some of the points I made in chapter one of this thesis on the significance of the oneness of the sound of urine and the sound of clear water of a valley stream found in "Jūrokusai no nikki." I wrote that by expressing a oneness of the sounds, Kawabata had shown a "primitive" or pre-rational ability to discover beauty in what would customarily appear to be an unlikely situation. This ability indicated to me that Kawabata possessed a "primitive" artistic sensibility admired by Motoori Norinaga. Contempt for "unnatural" moral percepts was then examined in connection with Shinto. In Makoto Ueda's chapter titled "Shintoism and the Theory of Literature" in his book Literature and Art Theories in Japan, the scholar reproduces words by Norinaga on how Shinto views the concepts of "good" and "evil." The following quotation taken from Ueda's book links Norinaga's theory of literature with Shinto:

"Unlike Confucianism or Buddhism, Shintoism does not indulge in any of the noisy debates over Good and Evil, or over Right and Wrong," Norinaga says "It is all-inclusive, bountiful, and gracious -- exactly what poetry aims at." In short, literature helps one to return to basic humanity, as Shintoism does.

The stories of the beggar woman and her family and the brothers in "Sora" represent parables of the doctrine expounded by the "old friend" in part one. The "old friend" in turn could be taken as a spokesman for Norinaga's interpretation of a Shinto attitude towards "good" and "evil."
A further connection I made with Kawabata's oneness of the sound of water and Shinto in chapter one was with one of the aspects of Shinto that it shares with Buddhism. Both Shinto and Mahayana Buddhism believe in the oneness of all creation. The pantheistic world view set out by the "old friend" in part one makes it all the more clear that the man's ideas fall into line with Shinto thinking. There was one feature of Buddhist metempsychosis identified by the "old friend" as of utilitarian value to priests in their teachings. It was given as the idea that if one hoped "to ride on a lotus in a future life one must perform good deeds in this life." The attaching of "moral" strings to a pantheistic world view obviously runs counter to an "amoral" Shinto pantheistic world view. The "old friend" in "Sora" doesn't explicitly express disapproval of this moral aspect found in Buddhist metempsychosis, but the first-person narrator in Kawabata's best work on metempsychosis and the oneness of creation, Tatsue of "Lyric Poem," says eloquently what the friend implies:

The Buddhist doctrine of transmigration can also be taken as a symbol of moral life in this world. That a hawk should be reborn as a man, or a man as a butterfly or as a Buddha, is thought to be in retribution for conduct in the present life.

This way of thinking is a stain on an otherwise pleasing lyric poem.5

The final episode in "Sora" centers on the individual whose name has most often slipped in and out of the pages of the work, the girl Ohana. Her story too reads like a parable to the thesis found in part one. She gives her love in a most "expansive and free" way. How she began a relationship with a nameless man is described near the end of part two in the following way: "It was
as if the man had been blown away in a violent storm one night and had chanced to fall on top of Ohana." (p.109)

The final episode in the work begins immediately upon conclusion of the story of the artisan brothers. Ohana is found listening to the activity of school girls who are on top of the roof. Mixed with recollections of her own elementary school years is a momentary feeling of self-reproach. She realizes that her liaison with a man had taken place on the outlook tower of the roof near where the girls were sketching. Quickly Ohana's strong-minded nature allows her to disparage the girls and in so doing she vanquishes her thoughts of self-reproach.

The narrator takes up how Ohana has been revitalized after the earthquake. We read that without the least thought, she had given up her purity and it had brought her body to life again. The narrator goes on to say that this had inspired her to wash off the sweat and grime her body had accumulated since the earthquake and to put on new underwear. In the evening after the lights went out, her love became as expansive and free as the "old friend" outlined in his discourse. Although she deeply loved but one of the men in the shelter, she gave herself freely to any man who desired her. She was pleased with her self-image as a liberated woman. The red lines of the towels are here explicitly said to have evoked in Ohana a sense of rejuvenation. A new world had opened up for the girl and Ohana is said to have been made aware that she had "obtained a pair of young wings with which she could take flight." (p.114)

With Ohana receiving her metaphorical wings, the author has established a link with the opening and final passages in "Sora."
The line which began the short story, "The autumn sky was clear to the heights," gave the work an upward direction. The location of the final scene in "Sora" is identical to the beginning of the work. There are however two important fundamental differences: it is night and not the daytime of the opening scene; and, the two characters here are silently looking up to the sky and not garrulously looking down on humanity as the two men are in the opening scene.

As I've pointed out several times already, manifestations of fire have indicated singular moments of aesthetic appreciation of a divine nature in the early works of Kawabata. The manifestations of fire found in the ending of "Sora" are unique. They are the two lights of an airship which flies twenty-four hours a day over Tokyo. A sound in the sky announces the appearance of the airship. The two lights of the airship are red and blue. Within this ethereal setting, the pristine beauty of Ohana shines forth:

As if her eyes were washed in clear water, Ohana fully stretched the line of her beautiful throat and looked up at the lights. Her eyes instantly looked far off to the east. At that moment, the blue light suddenly fell and disappeared from the night sky. In the midst of this surprise, the red light was hidden by a rain cloud and the sound was gone from the night turned cloudy.

Ohana felt that she was alone on top of the tall tower, and it seemed to her that her heart had gone and joined the lights that move in the sky. Apparently remembering for the first time that a man was next to her, she dropped her head (kushi o otoshite 木に落して literally, "dropped her comb") to his chest and cried. (p.115)

The underlying pristine nature of Ohana has been metaphorically identified when "her heart had gone and joined the lights that move in the sky." In the end though, the author finishes
off "Sora" in the same "downbeat" manner he showed in "Shōkonsai ikkei" and "Kagaribi."

It's probably just coincidence, but it's an intriguing thought that Kawabata's word choice of Ohana's kushi (comb) dropping to the man's chest in the downward movement which ends "Sora" was selected as an allusion to the Shinto term kushi-mitama. Kushi-mitama is the waning side and saki-mitama the waxing side of a dialectical pairing seen as aspects of musubi, a synthesizing power which harmonizes the waxing and waning of cosmic forces. When her head fell to the man's chest, Ohana cried. Her spiritual purity may remain unstained, but her physical purity has gone forever.

About a year after "Sora ni ugoku hi," Kawabata had his short story "Kaeru ōjō 蛙往生 ('Frog Paradise')" published in the March, 1925 issue of Bungei jidai. The material for the short story comes from a Buddhist folk tale. The tone of the work is satirical. Why Kawabata chose to write his own satirical version of the tale is quite understandable when one keeps "Sora" in mind. "Kaeru" is the tale of how a mother's self-serving belief in the "moral" retribution side of Buddhist metempsychosis contributes to the tragic, yet humorous, end of her son Jizaemon.

Jizaemon's father was the headman of his village, and the son succeeds to the position when his father dies. One day two orphaned sisters pass by the house on a pilgrimage. The sixteen-year-old sister Oshizu is eventually taken in by Jizaemon to do work in the house. Her willingness to accept the blame for trouble she didn't actually cause touches the heart of Jizaemon and his senile mother. Her goodness would seem to be a match for Jizaemon who
shows great filial devotion to his mother.

Things begin to go wrong at the home when the mother discovers that Oshizu is five months pregnant. Through a misunderstanding on Jizaemon's part, the mother comes to believe that her son is the father of Oshizu's baby and the two are married. The real father of the boy Oshizu gives birth to is a ne'er-do-well named Shinsuke who is constantly on the move as a gardener. When he returns to the village the following year, Oshizu is unable to resist his advances. She hands over the baby to a messenger to take to Shinsuke in hopes that he will take care of the boy, and then she asks forgiveness for her sins before drowning herself in a well.

The tale jumps ahead to obon season eighteen years later. Jizaemon is nearing fifty and the mother eighty. On the fifteenth, the mother had dreamt of dying and going to paradise. It was a welcome dream. She had ridden on a large lotus flower to heaven. Excitedly she had told Jizaemon that the rope to the lotus flower was pulled by frogs. Paradise was filled with frogs. The mother gets Jizaemon to gather up all the frogs in the village and set them free in their garden pond; however, the sound of the frogs croaking on the night of the sixteenth is more than the mother can stand. She asks Jizaemon to go out and quieten the noisy frogs so she can sleep.

Following his mother's wishes this time proves to be the dutiful son's undoing. The son of Oshizu and Shinsuke comes on the scene, accuses Jizaemon of killing his mother; and casts him into the pond. Festival dancers pass near the pond and discover Jizaemon's dead body in the water. The following quotation comes after the dancers carry the old mother to the pond:
One of the young men spoke.
"What happened? It's full of frogs!"
"It's just like Frog Paradise!"
"Frog Paradise!"
"Frog Paradise!"
The young men and women chanted in unison.
Jizaemon was floating on top of a wave of frogs. Even on top of the dead body countless frogs sat lined up triumphantly in a row. (p.130)

Preceded and followed by several shouts of "oi" ("hey") are the old woman's words exclaiming that her dream had come true.

"Kaeru ōjō" is a lightweight story when compared with other Kawabata literary works, but an effective use of terse lines and spoken country dialect make this humorous tale of Buddhist metempsychosis enjoyable reading.

A short story of Kawabata's published later in 1925 is anything but lightweight. "Shiroi mangetsu" 白い満月 ("A White Full Moon") is a busy work filled with internal and external literary reverberations.

It is written in the first-person narrative, and the "I" of the story reminds one of the chief male characters in both earlier and later Kawabata literature. Several times in the second part of the five parts which make up the story his sense of loneliness is directly expressed. This sense of loneliness in the male protagonist reaches back to the "I" of Kawabata's "nikki." The vocation of the "I" in "Shiroi" is not made clear. This is similar to male heroes found in later Kawabata literature where either the man's vocation is not given or it's of no relevance to the work anyway. What the male hero does to earn a living holds little fictional interest for the author.

The "I" of "Shiroi" has come to a hot springs resort to
recuperate from tuberculosis. The natural surroundings of the region are instrumental in his hopes for physical recovery. There is certainly more than just physical recovery at work here though. Just as we find in later Kawabata stories such as "Izu no odoriko" and Yukiguni, a travel or sojourn in the country is taken for spiritual rejuvenation. Indeed, the focus of "Shiroi" is more spiritual than physical.

As we also find in "Izu no odoriko" and Yukiguni, nature alone is not sufficient to bring about spiritual rejuvenation for the male character. He must come in contact with a girl of purity to help cleanse him of his physical or spiritual pollution. In "Izu no odoriko" it is the dancer who performs this service and in Yukiguni it is Komako and Yōko. In "Shiroi," the girl who plays this role is the seventeen-year-old Onatsu, a girl the approximate age of most of the girls we've come across in earlier stories. She belongs to the line of characters in the author's literature that I outlined in the first chapter. Employed as a nurse by the "I," she is one more example of the pure and self-sacrificing "nurses" who devote themselves to serving the needs of ailing or dying men in Kawabata's works. The first example is "Bonbon" in the "nikki" and a later example is Yōko in Yukiguni who acts as a nurse to the dying Yukio. The ethereal nature of the mysterious Yōko is adeptly handled by Kawabata in how he limits his description of her: the only physical feature described by the author is her strangely beautiful eyes. Onatsu is equally mysterious and ethereal; and like Yōko, the author limits his physical description of her to her eyes. In the celebrated train window mirror scene at the beginning of Yukiguni, one of the eyes of Yōko acts
like a mirror within a mirror. I think that Kawabata has the eye of Yōko's operate in much the same manner Kinya Tsuruta suggests the train window does. Her eye is a "translucent mirror" which merges the snow country world with the celestial world. Super-imposed on the "translucent mirror" that is Yōko's eye (her face is said to appear translucent as well) is a ray of light graphically symbolizing the fire-world of heaven.

Onatsu's eyes are even more mysterious than Yōko's. In fact, they are the subject of the opening line of the work: "The older sister's eyes are clear, but the younger sister's eyes are muddy (nigotte iru)." (p.135) An explanation for the younger sister Onatsu's misfortune is that she has inherited the malady from her father. As I've often pointed out, things of beauty have a habit of being in contact with mud in Kawabata's literature. The significance of mud in the work as epitomized by the girl's muddy eyes is all encompassing. The fact that her muddy eyes are said to have been caused by heredity is a concrete representation in microcosm of the theme of the short story: in both "major and minor chords" in the story, the unpleasant consequences of a parent's physical or spiritual legacy is the work's thematic concern.

I think if one were to name the color of mud, one would say it was light brown or yellow. Yellow is the dominant color of the "natural" world found in the first three parts of "Shiroi." The muddy color in Omitsu's eyes is a reflection of this. The emblematic object which gives the work its title, a full moon, is in Japanese culture and in this short story not the color of white (shiroi) that modifies the full moon in the title but the
color of yellow (pp.144, 157). A full moon seems to be a universal sign of mysterious happenings, and certainly "Shiroi" is filled with such happenings. Yellow is also the color of sickness in the work. In a flashback to two or three years earlier found in part two, the "I" fears paper money he has received from the wife of a friend suffering from tuberculosis might cause him to catch the disease. The bills turn yellow as he burns them in his hibachi. The "I" utters an apology to the woman, but he says he burnt the money because his father had died of tuberculosis. Reverberations abound in the story: the dead father, the friend's wife, and the "I" himself all suffering from tuberculosis is one of the more acceptable examples of a tedious number of re-echoed images of characters and events in "Shiroi."

The "translucent mirror" eye of Onatsu's, like Yōko's, has the celestial world superimposed over the "natural" world. At the end of part two, the "I," his sister Yaeko, and Onatsu are walking in the woods when the "I" refers to the full moon. The comment causes the girls to look up to the evening sky. An amazing thing takes place:

> At that moment, the eyes of Onatsu whose eyelids presented a morbid line were miraculously shining clearly. The white full moon of the summer sky in the mountain depths was lightly superimposed on her black pupils. (p.147)

The full moon superimposed on Onatsu's eyes is not the color of yellow but the color of white, the color of purity.

The second line quoted above resembles a line from the train window mirror scene in Yukiguni at the moment Yōko's "translucent mirror eye has a celestial light superimposed on it which simultaneously merges with the evening mountains of the snow country:
"As it sent its small ray through the pupil of the girl's eye, as the eye and the light were superimposed one on the other, the eye became a weirdly beautiful bit of phosphorescence on the sea of evening mountains."\(^8\)

One finds a correspondence in Western apocalyptic symbolism and native Japanese beliefs and literature with the moon which fits into the common overall meaning of fire and water found in their respective traditions. Northrop Frye says that innocence in analogical imagery is often associated with chastity. Among the fiery bodies of heaven, it is the moon which he says is most closely associated with the innocent world: "The moon, the coolest and hence most chaste of all the fiery heavenly bodies, has a special importance for this world."\(^9\) In his book *Nihonjin no shinjō ronri* (The Sentiment Logic of the Japanese, 1975) which centers on the relationship between cleanness and the Japanese sense of beauty, Araki Hiroyuki takes up the traditional Japanese adoration of the moon: "The moon was 'clean,' and the moon was a symbol of spotless 'clearness'."\(^{10}\) Araki refers to the first few pages of Kawabata's Nobel Prize acceptance speech which include the author's own feelings for the moon. In his speech, Kawabata quotes several poems on the moon written by famous Japanese poet-priests. The following is Kawabata's interpretation of some moon poems written by Myōe (1173-1232):

> Seeing the moon, he becomes the moon, the moon seen by him becomes him. He sinks into nature, becomes one with nature. The light of the "clear heart" of the priest, seated in the meditation hall in the darkness before the dawn, becomes for the dawn moon its own light.\(^{11}\)

The white full moon superimposed on Onatsu's black pupils carries the same analogical imagery to be found in Kawabata's words
that the "light of the 'clear heart' of the priest...becomes for the dawn moon its own light." The pristine beauty of Onatsu has been clearly identified at the end of part two in "Shiroi." She possesses the purity the "I" needs to help cleanse him of his spiritual pollution.

The spiritual pollution he must cleanse himself of relates to unclean thoughts he shares with his sister Yaeko on the truth behind their births. The dramatic tension found in "Shiroi" springs from the uncertainty of who it was that fathered the two of them. It should be recalled that in Kawabata's earlier work "Sōshiki no meijin," a precedent is found for the ambiguous nature of human relationships seen in "Shiroi" and later works. It is part three of "Shiroi" which especially deals with this traumatic uncertainty. Yaeko and the "I" are joined by one other sister born from the same mother; however, her father is probably neither the father of the "I" nor the father of Yaeko. She is Shizue who is three years younger than Yaeko who, in turn, is three years younger than the "I". Shizue is unaware of the uncertain thoughts the "I" and Yaeko share about the births of the three of them. In perhaps the worst example of what I find to be an overuse of motifs in "Shiroi," we later learn that Onatsu shares a similar fate with the "I." She has two brothers born to the same father as herself, but the boys are children of a different mother than her own.

Yaeko is an extension of the free spirited woman Ohana in "Sora." She shares with Ohana an "expansive and free" attitude towards sexual relations which can be inferred from her pet saying: "Wipe away the notion of individual existence." (p.148) The philosophical import of this saying as it is explained by the "I"
comes down to the idea of the oneness of all creation expressed in "Sora." Yaeko's presence in the work acts at times as a painful reminder to the "I" of the immoral nature of their brother and sister background. Moreover, her amoral sexual attitude leaves open the possibility of an incestuous relationship between them. One feature of Yaeko's personality not really seen in Ohana of "Sora" is a sense of jealousy towards other women. She makes rude comments about Onatsu behind the girl's back, and she has deviously orchestrated the life of her younger sister Shizue. For example, Yaeko managed to bring about the marriage of Shizue to a former boyfriend she had decided to discard.

There is one more unique aspect of Yaeko that makes one recall the ghost of "Chiyo" in Kawabata's early work of the same name. The "I" is convinced that Yaeko has sinister powers through which she unwittingly or not has inflicted grievous harm to himself and Shizue. The "I" believes that both the suicide of Shizue and his subsequent necessary admission to the hospital were a result of Yaeko's powers: "The unseen power of Yaeko did this to me. It was this same unseen power that led Shizue to suicide. It's frightening because Yaeko possesses this power and works these deeds without her being aware of it." (p.170)

The closer one analyzes "Shiroi," the more apparent it becomes that the work reads like something of a blueprint for Kawabata's later novel Sembazuru. Sembazuru, like "Shiroi," is the story of the spiritual quest of a young man to cleanse himself of the legacy of a parent's illicit sexual relationships. A pristine figure in both, Mrs. Ota in Sembazuru and Shizue in "Shiroi," is induced to commit suicide through the machinations of a jealous
woman. That jealous woman, Chikako in *Sembazuru* and Yaeko in "Shiroi," has a vengeful spirit capable of taking possession of people reminiscent of Lady Rokujō in *The Tale of Genji*. Another pristine figure, Fumiko in *Sembazuru* and Onatsu in "Shiroi," helps the young man cleanse himself of the spiritual pollution originally caused by his parent.

It is in the fifth and final part of "Shiroi" that Shizue succeeds in spiritually cleansing the "I." Throughout the final part, life is balanced with death and purity. Images of life include the *nanten* from which a tree frog, a symbol of renewed life with its bright green color, jumps and lands on the shoulder of the "I." The "I" later in part five describes Shizue being "like the berries of the red *nanten* which had fallen on the autumn of his illness." (p.167) In the midst of Onatsu's recollections of her dream of her death, she tries to relate the sighting of pure red irises in her dream to reality. Following the *nanten* and tree frog images of life in the opening lines of part five, Kawabata describes the stones of the river bed as having turned the "luster of autumn," the color white. White is the color we have come to associate with death and purity in Kawabata's literature. In Onatsu's dream, the leaves of the *nanten* and the white of snow are merged: "Then the snow of the tree's leaves began falling." (p.172)

The final lines of "Shiroi" give to the work an unqualified positive ending which eluded the characters in "Shōkonsai ikkei," "Kagaribi," and "Sora ni ugoku hi." The reason for the positive ending is easy to explain: through to the final lines of the fifth and last part of "Shiroi," life on one side and
death and purity on the other have been in perfect balance; reality and dream have merged. Here are those final lines:

While frightened by the presentiment of two deaths, I held Onatsu in an attempt to bring back the world of reality this girl who didn't appear to be living in a world of reality. I was listening to sounds flowing to the bottom of the silence. (p.174)

In "Sora," when the divine lights disappear from the sky, the sound of these lights ceases to be heard. Sound and silence are separate. In the last line of "Shiroi," sound and silence merge.

In closing my analysis of the work, it would be remiss of me to fail to mention two Japanese scholars who have, in the scope of special studies they've done on Kawabata's literature, analyzed "Shiroi." One of them is Hadori Tetsuya. In an article on the influence of spiritualism on Kawabata, he classifies "Shiroi" as the first literary piece in which the author has clearly borrowed ideas from readings he had begun doing on spiritualism in 1925.\(^{12}\) Kawabata endows Onatsu with powers of telesthesia and presentiment; and, as I pointed out, the author gives Yaeko the ability to take spirit possession of others. The other scholar is Takeda Katsuhiko. In a book which examines Kawabata's use of biblical quotations in his literature, Takeda looks at one of the first times the author has introduced a biblical quotation in his fiction.\(^{13}\) The quotation is actually an "amalgamation" of two quotations from Proverbs: "My son, forsake not thy mother, for thou wilt lose the light of the lamp in the midst of a deep darkness." (p.149) Onatsu uses the quotation facetiously when referring to her mother's wanton ways.

A year before the publication of "Shiroi mangetsu," Kawabata had his main contribution to the platform of the literary school he had become a member of, the Shinkankakuha ("Neo-Perceptionist
School"), published in the January, 1925 issue of *Bungei jidai*. It was an essay titled "Shinshin sakka no shinkeikō kaisetsu" 新進作家の新傾向解説 ("The New Tendency of the Avant-Garde Writers"). In the essay, Kawabata called for new expression and style in the Japanese novel, and he emphasized the importance of sense perception for the novelist. As with the school itself, the author relied on imported concepts. For example, the final section of the essay is devoted to Kawabata's interpretation of Dadaism. Masao Miyoshi has summarized the meaning of a new language Kawabata outlines in the essay:

He would have a language for the novel that would reflect immediately the inchoate state of a man's thoughts, feelings, and sensory experience.... In such a language, the seer is not yet separated from the seen, the speaker from the spoken. To illustrate his point, Kawabata provides a sample sentence or two ("My eyes were red roses" as preferable to "My eyes saw red roses"), but unfortunately this tends to muddle the discussion more than clarify it.14

As first best exemplified in Kawabata's short story "Aoi umi kuroi umi" 青い海 黒い海 ("Blue Sea, Black Sea") published in the August, 1925 issue of *Bungei jidai*, the influence of Neo-Perceptionism on Kawabata's literature would be clearly recognizable for the following ten years.

"Aoi" is pure fantasy. The work is divided into two sections given the titles "The First Testament" and "The Second Testament." It is written in the first-person narrative, a first-person who successfully commits suicide with a young woman named Rikako. The first section deals with events prior to the double suicide, and the second section focuses on the suicide itself.
Most of the earlier Kawabata motifs, images, and characters are bountifully found in "Aoi." In fact, so much so that it is beyond the scope of this thesis to attempt a comprehensive analysis of the work. Floral symbols of metempsychosis are abundant in "Aoi." The following is a list of the flora mentioned in the work; in parentheses is the number of times the flora appears: a reed (10), peony (2), wisteria (1), dandelion (4), banana plant (3), maple (1), dahlia (2), wild chrysanthemum (2). It is with the image of the wild chrysanthemum that "Aoi" comes to a close. As I discussed in the first chapter, the chrysanthemum occupies a special position in the works of Kawabata. It seems to be the flower that the author especially likes to associate with spiritualism and reincarnation. The following is the final line in "Aoi": "In loving a wild chrysanthemum, I think it would be unnecessary to rewrite this testament even though one was dead atop the waves of a wild chrysanthemum fantasy." (p.195) The wild chrysanthemum represents the beauty and happiness which comes with a trust in metempsychosis and the oneness of creation.

Life is certainly mixed with death in "Aoi"; however, no matter how much of the life force finds its way into the pages of the testaments, the theme of "Aoi" is basically a theme of death. Kawabata is true to form: white, the color he used to symbolize death and purity, is the color most often found in the work.

The motifs, images, and characters deviate only slightly from earlier Kawabata works, but the kind of experimenting with language advocated by the author in his essay is clearly being attempted in "Aoi." The following lines in the work resemble
closely Kawabata's "My eyes were red roses" sample sentence in the essay: "'Look at the black sea. Because I'm looking at the black sea, I am the black sea.'" (p. 189)

Besides this experimenting with language, Kawabata fills "Aoi" with sudden transitions of time and space (and characters) detected as well in the earlier "Sora ni ugoku hi." The transitions frequently follow so rapidly and are so startling that one is tempted to accuse Kawabata of relying too much on novelty in "Aoi" and not enough on a traditional "renga technique of writing" which would have brought the transitions about in a more "organic" way.

An important consideration to keep in mind about why the Neo-Perceptionist School came into existence is to see it as a reaction to other literary movements that were in vogue in Japan at the time. The purpose of the formation of the school, particularly in Kawabata's case, can be thought of more as a means of protecting Japanese literary traditions from imported European models such as naturalism and proletarian literature than it was a means of bringing innovation into modern Japanese literature. Although members of the movement themselves looked to European models such as surrealism for their "new" language of the novel, what they were advocating was a language not very different from traditional haiku. The next chapter, in fact, compares Kawabata with Japan's most famous haiku poet, Matsuo Bashō.
It is perhaps a little ironic that Kawabata's reputation as a writer was firmly established with "Izu no odoriko" ("The Izu Dancer"), a work published in the January and February, 1926 issues of Bunpei jidai. Kawabata's call for new expression and style in the Japanese novel in his "Shinshin sakka no shinkeikō kaisetsu" was already a year old when "Izu" was published, yet the novelette at best shows only a marginal degree of new expression and style. In fact, it's obvious that "Izu" owes much more to Japanese literary forms from the past; for instance, the very nature of the work calls to mind the genre of the literary diary (nikki).

The literary diary has a long tradition in Japanese literature. Although bearing some resemblance to what actually takes place, the contents of the diary are often a fictionalized version of fact. The diaries are, as one might expect, mostly written in the first person, and the reader is given a vivid account of the inner emotional world of the writer. The earliest literary diary was Tosa nikki (Tosa Diary, 935) written by the poet Ki no Tsurayuki (869-945). It is a travel diary and as we also find much later in Bashō's accounts of his journeys, truth is altered to satisfy artistic ends. With Bashō's travel diaries, the tradition is said to have reached its zenith.

The "I" of Bashō's travel diaries may have a quality of self-confession about him, but Bashō the artist has set down his experiences with the aim of achieving a kind of objectivity of the self. The experiences are made to take on a universal aspect; the "I" is a universal "I"; and the persona of the "I" merges with that
of the traveler.

Nakamura Mitsuo's comments on "Izu" include almost identical remarks on the format Kawabata uses in his novelette. He says that although "Izu" may be called a watakushi-shōsetsu ("I-novel"), a form of fiction which consists of the personal accounts of an author's experiences written normally in the first-person and much maligned by critics such as Nakamura, as an artist Kawabata worked towards objectifying his "I." Nakamura says the fact that the story has become so popular is testimony to the success Kawabata has had in realizing objectivity in his "I." The universal is to be found in the "I" and, as in Bashō's travel diaries, this universal "I" has taken on the persona of the traveler.

Although not technically a travel diary, Kawabata's "Izu" nonetheless shares a great deal with the form as epitomized by Bashō. Kawabata's novelette is a fictionalized account of the author's own walk down the Izu Peninsula when he was a First Higher School student. The actual experience precedes the publication of "Izu" by eight years. Through the author's own published comments on the story's background, including autobiographical information, it has been possible for Japanese scholars to endlessly produce pieces on what went into the making of the work. Also, in the earlier Kawabata story "Chiyo" we find a section dealing with his Izu experience; and there was an "Izu" prototype originally found in "Yugashima de no omoide" and then partially reproduced in "Shōnen". "Yugashima de no omoide" is no longer available since the author subsequently burned the manuscript. The following is a chronological list of the making of "Izu" relating to the preceding information:
1918 (19 years old): Kawabata travels through Izu with the dancer's group of strolling performers.

1919 (20 years old): "Chiyo" is published. It includes a section based on Kawabata's Izu experience.

1922 (23 years old): Kawabata produces a manuscript titled "Yugashima de no omoide." The first half of the draft is the prototype of "Izu." It is later partially reproduced in "Shōnen" which is published serially in 1948 and 1949.

1926 (26 years old): "Izu" is published.

The following passage dealing with the author's Izu trip is taken from "Shōnen":

Wandering performers who travel from hot spring resort to hot spring resort are passing from sight with the years. My recollections of Yugashima begin with these wandering performers. Memories of my first Izu travel flow in the light of the tail of the comet left by the beautiful dancer in the scenery between Shuzenji and Shimoda. Autumn was half over and I had just entered second year of higher school. It was the first real traveling I'd done since coming to Tokyo. Having stayed a night in Shuzenji, I was walking along the Shimoda Road to Yugashima and had just crossed Yugawa Bridge when I came across three girls who were wandering performers. They were going to Shuzenji. The dancer carried a big drum; she stood out from a long way off. I looked back again and again, thinking that I'd now acquired the heart of a traveler.

In the line from "Yugashima de no omoide" reproduced in "Shōnen" which reads, "Wandering performers who travel from hot spring resort to hot spring resort are passing from sight with the years," we find expressed a poetic sentiment that resembles the celebrated opening lines of Bashō's most famous travel diary, *Oku no hosomichi* 奥の細道 (The Narrow Road Through the Provinces, C.1693):

The months and days are the wayfarers of the centuries, and as yet another year comes round, it, too, turns traveler. Sailors whose lives float away as they labor on boats, horsemen who
encounter old age as they draw the horse around once more by the bit, they also spend their days in travel and make their home in wayfaring.  

Although Kawabata's line from "Yugashima de no omoide" does not appear in "Izu," the last lines from the same passage were reproduced almost word for word in the novelette:

I had seen the little dancer twice. Once I passed her and the other two young women on a long bridge half way down the peninsula. She was carrying a big drum. I looked back and looked back again, congratulating myself that here finally I had the flavor of travel.  

The key phrase "here finally I had the flavor of travel" has the "I" undergo precisely the same process Bashō's "I" goes through. The persona of the "I" merges with that of the traveler.

Another example of common ground shared between the works can be seen by the kind of people Kawabata's "I" joins up with in his travel. By becoming a fellow traveler with the touring performers, his persona assumes the same type of role the sailors and horsemen do in Bashō's opening lines of Oku no hosomichi. The vocation of itinerate entertainer ties one to the seasonal passage of time:

They were from Oshima in the Izu Islands, the man told me. In the spring they left to wander over the peninsula, but now it was getting cold and they had no winter clothes with them. After ten days or so at Shimoda in the south they would sail back to the islands.  

One further step Kawabata takes to hint at their link with a seasonal flow of time is found near the beginning of chapter six. He likens the gathering of troupes of wandering performers and peddlers in Shimoda to migratory birds returning to the nest. Incidentally, in the same way Bashō goes to the extent of using proper nouns such as place names to contribute to the total
effect of the work, Kawabata in a like manner fills "Izu" with names which achieve a similar effect. The storybook the dancer has read for her is *Mito Kōmon Manyūki* 水戸黄門漫游記 (*Travel Sketches of Mito Kōmon*), the popular story of another group of famous travelers in Japan, Tokugawa Mitsukuni and his retinue.

In the years immediately preceding Bashō's travels, he had increasingly begun to feel alienated from the world around him. In his poetry could be seen a tremendous spiritual suffering which attested to his estrangement. In a similar way, Kawabata's "I" had also been going through painful stages of self-scrutiny in the years prior to his journey. It is as if there were no alternative for their respective selves other than to take to the road. In the climactic scene found at the end of chapter five we learn what the personal anguish of Kawabata's "I" had been: "I had come at nineteen to think of myself as a misanthrope, a lonely misfit, and it was my depression at the thought that had driven me to this Izu trip." 6

Miki Kiyoshi wrote some interesting thoughts on loneliness. He says in a rather paradoxical fashion that it is to escape from loneliness that people live alone or become recluse. Miki further says that loneliness doesn't mean that people shut themselves off from the outside world. He says that people get out and experience the feeling of loneliness. To do so, he suggests that Westerners enter the city, whereas Easterners enter nature. Miki finds an attractive side to loneliness: "There is an aesthetic allurement in loneliness. There is pleasure. If someone likes loneliness, it's because of this pleasure. Young girls understand the aesthetic
allurement in loneliness."

Kawabata, who was captivated by the hearts of beautiful young girls, would seem to be a person that fits in perfectly with Miki's words on loneliness.

The journey Bashō takes in Oku no hosomichi to revitalize himself is representative of life itself. His travel through the North becomes a microcosm of the travel man makes during his short span of life. Within that life, the traveler achieves a vision of eternity through recognition that things by their very nature are destined to perish. The effect of Bashō's study of eternity is to produce a literary work which transcends time and place. The travel Kawabata's "I" makes through Izu works much the same way.

When one analyzes the experiences described in Oku no hosomichi, it seems that Bashō consciously built in a circular pattern to the order of the events. Events on one side of the circle have corresponding events on the other side. As with Bashō's "I", the traveler in "Izu" never returns the way he has come; his journey too comes full circle and nothing is repeated exactly as before. Nevertheless, there is a cyclical sequence of events to be found in "Izu" as well. The effect is to give the reader a sense of life's cycle with its eternal transient nature.

The mutability of life as it particularly applies to man's mortality is best exemplified in "Izu" by two incidents which take place at opposite ends of its circle. At the beginning of the "I's" trip as well as at the end, he is confronted with images of death. They are incidents involving old people. The first occasion takes place in the tea-house near Amagi Pass:
An old man with the pale complexion of a drowned person was sitting cross-legged near the fireside. His eyes, yellow and decayed to the pupils, wearily turned in my direction. With a mountain of old letters and paper bags built up around him, you could say he was buried in waste paper. The sight of this man who could hardly be thought of as living stopped me in my tracks... Apparently he had come to live a life of staring at the letters and paper bags that surrounded him without throwing one of them away. The mountain of old waste paper had been built up over a period of many years. I looked at the open fire, not replying to the old woman. A car crossing the mountain shook the house. With it being this cold for autumn and snow about to fall on the pass, I wondered why the old man hadn't come down from the mountains. (pp. 200-01)

Suffering from dropsy, the old man has the appearance of someone who has drowned. The "I" perceives the old man's eyes to be yellow, the color symbolic of impurity and decay in "Shiroi mangetsu" and in "Izu" as well. Later in "Izu", the creek near the "I's" inn in Yugano becomes yellow and muddy from the heavy rain which began to fall about sunset. In the darkness of his room, the image of the yellow, muddy creek together with the sound of the heavy rain heralds the distant beating of a taiko with its ominous meaning for the dancer's purity.

Kawabata's description of the old man staring at the mountain of old letters and paper bags acts on both a concrete and symbolic level. As a long-time sufferer of paralysis—a contrast to those travelers who actively make their way through the mountains outside the tea-house. The only mountain of relevance to him is the one he stares at day in and day out; his mountain of waste paper is a token of the passage of time and of his suffering, increasingly so as it gains in height. The "I" ponders over why the old man has not come down from the mountains; surely if we take it a symbolic step further we might also question what keeps this
lifeless, motionless old man in the midst of the cyclic flow of
the mountain's travelers of life.

The image of death at the other end of the "I's" cyclical
journey occurs when he is about to depart from Shimoda. A harbor
worker comes up to ask a favor of the "I":

"Say, you're going to Tokyo, aren't you. How about
looking after this old woman who's on her way to
Tokyo, too. She's really unlucky. Her son was
working in the silver mine at Rendaiji, but both
he and his wife died in the epidemic of influenza.
They left three grandchildren. We told her she'd
better go back with them to the province she comes
from. She's from Mito and doesn't know what's going
on, so after you arrive at Reiganjima could you
see that she gets on the train to Ueno...." (p.224)

The unfortunate old woman has lost her son and daughter-in-law
to influenza. A worker on the waterfront has solicited the "I's"
help to put her on the train bound for Ueno once they arrive at
Reiganjima ("the island of the shore of spirits"). The old woman
and her grandchildren are on their way to her hometown of Mito,
the same hometown as the travelers in the dancer's storybook.
Aren't we to assume that the orphaned grandchildren are fated to
make their own "Izu journey" just as the "I," a sufferer of "orphan
complex" (koji konjō), has had to?

Kawabata enhances the cyclical pattern found in "Izu" with his
treatment of the weather. In spite of the season being in reality
restricted to autumn in the story, Kawabata pens a variety of
weather conditions which virtually span the seasons. The two
scenes involving the old people share features befitting the cycle
of the "I's" journey and the weather seems typical of the season we
would naturally assign for them, winter. There is a cold wind
blowing through Shimoda when we are introduced to the old woman,
and the scene with the old man takes place with the weather abnorm-
ally cold for autumn.

A summary of how the "I's" travel relates to a figurative turn of the seasons would begin with the opening lines of the novelette. In the second paragraph of the story, we find the kind of information one might expect from a travel diary: background on the "I," where his travel has so far taken him, where he presently is, and the direction he is taking. Also, mention is made for the first time that the season is autumn. Autumn is, of course, a seasonal constant in the story but, as I've indicated, there is a cyclical pattern to the events in "Izu" and they are supported by conditions which suggest a turn of the seasons. Chapter one, which includes the scene of the old man at the tea-house, is winter-like: it's cold and the pass will soon be covered in snow. When the "I" enters the tunnel of Amagi Pass at the beginning of chapter two, it proves to be a transitional boundary between winter-like and spring-like conditions. We find at the beginning of chapter three the day described as *koharubiyori* 小春日和. The expression is translateable in terms such as "a balmy autumn day" or "an Indian summer day" but from the original Japanese is revealed an affinity with spring. When the "I" and the wandering performers leave for Shimoda in chapter five, their walk through the mountains affords them a vista of the sea. The sight is reminiscent of spring: "For some reason--was it the clearness of the autumn sky that made it seem so?--the sea where the sun rose over it was veiled in a springlike mist." Their arrival in Shimoda brings with it weather which has a touch of winter in it, and it is where the "I" is introduced to the old woman; and we also find that a cycle has come to an end.
I wonder if it's not too outrageous to find in the dancer qualities of a similar nature to the tunnel at Amagi Pass. She too is at a point of transition, a transition from girl to woman. The tunnel represents a confluence of winter-like and spring-like attributes; the dancer represents a confluence of girlish and womanly attributes. In a conversation between the dancer and the "I" once through the tunnel, Kawabata seems to mirror this fusion by showing her incapable of delineating the boundary between two contrasting seasons. The "I" has been asking questions about Oshima:

"Students come to Oshima to swim, you know," the girl remarked to the young woman beside her.

"In the summer, I suppose." I looked back. She was flustered. "In the winter too," she answered in an almost inaudible little voice.

"Even in the winter?"
She looked at the other woman and laughed uncertainly.

"Do they swim even in the winter?" I asked again. She flushed and nodded very slightly, a serious expression on her face.

"The child is crazy," the older woman laughed. It is the ambivalent nature of the dancer's sexuality which is responsible for much of the dramatic tension in "Izu." There seem to be three divergent ways of viewing this ambivalence: through the eyes of the dancer herself, the eyes of the forty-year old woman, and the eyes of the "I." To repeat again, the dancer is in the midst of changing from a girl to a woman and appears to not yet fully comprehend the significance of her state of transition. She indiscriminately acts at one time like a girl and at
other times like a woman. The forty-year old woman, however, is startled into recognition of the situation from the behavior the dancer exhibits when the girl brings tea up to them at the inn in Yugano:

We went up to the second floor and laid down our baggage. The straw carpeting and the doors were worn and dirty. The little dancer brought up tea from below. As she came to me the teacup clattered in its saucer. She set it down sharply in an effort to save herself, but she succeeded only in spilling it. I was hardly prepared for confusion so extreme.

"Dear me. The child's come to a dangerous age," the older woman said, arching her eyebrows as she tossed over a cloth. The girl wiped tensely at the tea."

The reader comes to find that after this awakening to the girl's budding sexuality, the woman takes it upon herself to protect the dancer's purity. She takes the responsibility of seeing to it that the precarious balance of the dancer's girl/woman "scale" doesn't suddenly make a sharp swing in the womanly direction. Revealed is a sense of anguish should the dancer's purity be stained. It's a matter of course then to conceive of the woman's deepening concern for the dancer's purity to be based on the woman's perception of the girl turning into a woman.

Of critical importance to the revitalization of the "I" in "Izu" is quite the opposite direction his perception of the dancer takes. He is relieved of a sense of anguish when she is suddenly "transformed" before his very eyes from a woman to a girl. The girl he had originally mistaken for about sixteen is in reality thirteen. The scene where the "transformation" takes place contains one of the most famous passages found in the story. The "I" and the dancer's brother are looking over at the public bath from the other side of the river:
"One small figure ran out into the sunlight and stood for a moment at the edge of the platform calling something to us, arms raised as though for a plunge into the river. It was the little dancer. I looked at her, at the young legs, at the sculptured white body, and suddenly a draught of fresh water seemed to wash over my heart. I laughed happily. She was a child, a mere child, a child who could run out naked into the sun and stand there on her tiptoes in her delight at seeing a friend. I laughed on, a soft, happy laugh. It was as though a layer of dust had been cleared from my head. And I laughed on and on. It was because of her too-rich hair that she had seemed older, and because she was dressed like a girl of fifteen or sixteen. I had made an extraordinary mistake indeed."

(Lustful ideas the "I" had harbored for the "woman" in the dancer and the anguish he had felt over fear that her purity had been stained by someone from the party she attended the night before are quickly erased from his consciousness. It is as if these spiritual pollutions had been "wiped clear from his head."

Looking at her innocent, white nakedness, the "I" experiences a sensation akin to clear water washing his heart. His inner sense of purification by water acknowledges an undercurrent of Shinto ideas which permeate the work. The sight of the naked dancer is able to accomplish what the "I" had been unsuccessful in achieving the night before. In a fit of agitation, he had splashed about in the bath in what could easily be taken for a Shinto style method of purification by bathing called misogi. A measure of the success of the "I's" purification near the public bath can be construed from the fact that we find no further examples in "Izu" of mental anguish related to the dancer's sexuality. In fact, so successful has the purification been that he becomes incapable of understanding why anyone would see him representing a threat to the dancer's purity, a threat he very much posed earlier in the story. The
verity of this reversal is attested to in Shimoda when the "I" is puzzled by the older woman's refusal to allow the dancer and himself to go by themselves to the movies: "'I don't see anything wrong. Why can't she go with him by herself?' Eikichi argued. I found it hard to understand myself, but the woman was unbending."

It was the "I's" depressing self-awareness of his so-called "orphan complex" which prompted him to make the Izu trip. In this connection, the purgation of his impure thoughts as he witnesses the dancer at the public bath have had immense importance thematically: if his spirit wasn't purified, he wouldn't earn the cathartic experience found near the end of the story. The following is the celebrated passage where his complex is ostensibly eliminated:

"But all he would have to do would be to get a gold tooth. Then you'd never notice," the dancer's voice come to me suddenly. I looked back.

They were obviously talking about my crooked teeth. Chiyoko must have brought the matter up, and the little dancer suggested a gold tooth for me. I felt no resentment at being talked about and no particular need to hear more. The conversation was subdued for a time.

"He's nice, isn't he," the girl's voice came again.

"He seems to be very nice."

"He really is nice. I like having someone so nice."

She had an open way of speaking, a youthful, honest way of saying exactly what came to her that made it possible for me to think of myself as, frankly, "nice." I looked up anew at the mountains, so bright that they made my eyes ache a little. I had come at nineteen to think of myself as a misanthrope, a lonely misfit, and it was my depression at the thought that had driven me to this Izu trip. And now I was able to look upon myself as "a nice person" in the everyday sense of the expression. I find no way to describe what this meant to me. The mountains grew brighter - we were getting near Shimoda and the sea. 14
After saying that his sense of purification has had important repercussions thematically, I nonetheless find the scene relevant stylistically as well. It has the effect of depersonalizing the "I" since his "active" pursuit of the dancer retreats into a more "passive" position. One way of looking at the "I's" role has been to see him as Nakamura Mitsuo does, much like the waki (supporting player) of the Nō drama, and the dancer as the shite (protagonist).

Another way of looking at the "I's" role is to return to a comparison with Bashō. On this particular point, I think a review of some of the characteristics of Bashō's art of writing haiku will prove revealing. 15

Bashō chose to look at the things of the world from an aesthetic distance. For him, the haiku poet's attitude toward life is to function as a by-stander. Haiku calls for a passive, leisurely personality. There is no room for passionate emotion or strong sentiment in haiku; rather, one denotes only a shadow of an emotion or a vague mood.

There may be times when the "I" in "Izu" displays a passionate emotion, but, for the most part, I think Bashō would find a "poetic spirit" in Kawabata's "I" not out of step with what he would have for the haiku poet.

To accomplish the kind of "poetic spirit" Bashō sought for in his poems, he talked about certain features they might possess. Included were the concepts of sabi, "fragrance," "reverberation," "reflection," and "lightness." Sabi and "lightness" refer to certain attitudes toward life. "Fragrance," "reverberation," and "reflection" deal with the technique of haiku composition.

Sabi derives from the adjective sabishi ("lonely" or "desolate").
In Bashō's poetic context, loneliness represents an impersonal mood in contrast to the personal emotion of sorrow. One of Bashō's followers, Kyorai, argued that sabi lies not in the substance or technique of a poem but in its "color." "Color" refers to the quality of the mood found in the poem.

As I indicated earlier, I believe that the "I's" thematic purification in "Izu" has stylistic relevance as well. In a reverse manner to the poet who seeks a purification of his soul through transforming the personal into the impersonal, the "I" undergoes a transfer from the personal to the impersonal through purification. I don't mean to imply that we dramatically notice a shift in Kawabata's "I" from the personal to the impersonal after the public bath scene. What I mean is that the impersonal tone the artist Kawabata sought for from his "I" has been afforded textual validity.

There is more a mood pervading "Izu" of sabi, not so much an emotion of sorrow. Much of the description in the novelette has a coloring of loneliness about it, and Kawabata restrains the "I's" emotions so that loneliness is seldom relegated to a personal level of sorrow.

The predominant color found in "Izu" is white. It appears seven times. Besides symbolizing qualities of purity and innocence, white is said to be also suggestive of universal loneliness. The "I's" final, distant view of the dancer from the ship finds her making a traditional Japanese gesture at a time of parting which has overtones of loneliness: "The lighter pulled off. Eikichi waved the hunting cap, and as the town retreated into the distance the girl began to wave something white."
The principles of "fragrance," "reverberation," and "reflection" all have the same object in mind: to produce in a poem an atmospheric harmony divorced from logical coherence as a whole. The basic differences in the terms may be summed up as follows: "fragrance" accompanies a calm, elegant mood, "reverberation" is found when the mood is of tension, excitement, grandeur, or magnitude, and "reflection" is used with any mood, quiet or violent.

The result of these concepts is the bringing together of two widely different things and yet creating a harmonious mood as a whole.

In line with Bashō's view of the universe to be a unity between man and nature, we find in the spirit and technique of his haiku a poetic union or harmony of the two. When the techniques I've outlined were put into practice, they often juxtaposed man with nature.

I think a lesson to be learned from Kawabata's "Izu" is that part of its appeal is due to a number of haiku-like passages, and that in reality, critics who might detect Neo-Perceptionist influences in some of these passages could be accused of making too much of later, rather than earlier, influences on Kawabata's style.

For instance, after acknowledging that there isn't much in the way of Neo-Perceptionist elements in "Izu," Hasegawa Izumi still quotes a few lines which he says contain a germ of an influence in them. Here is one of the examples he gives: "Lined on one side by a white fence, the road twisted down from the mouth of the tunnel like a streak of lightning." Since the line reflects a mood of "grandeur or magnitude," I don't see why we can't consider it an application of "reverbera-
tion" in a haiku-like way. To say that such a line doesn't contain much in the way of Neo-Perceptionism might indirectly confirm my point.

When Bashō talks of "lightness," he is basically referring to an attitude toward life. "Lightness" is to find beauty in common, everyday things; it implies a naivety and familiarity in style as well as in subject matter. The haiku accepts human life as a whole. Although as an artist he is expected to behave like a bystander, he lives and travels together with ordinary men and understands and shares their feelings.

In Bashō's Oku no hosomichi is to be found a sense of compassion for those whose lives were hardest. Arising out of his compassion was a feeling of unity with them and an essential mutual oneness with nature. The following is a haiku found in Bashō's Oku no hosomichi which exhibits this attitude:

Prostitutes and priest
Slept under a roof lent a beauty
By bush clover and moon.

With Kawabata's "I" we find a similar sense of compassion for the troupe of entertainers whose status ranked as one of the lowest in the society of his time:

I was not held to them by curiosity, and I felt no condescension toward them. Indeed I was no longer conscious that they belonged to that low order, traveling performers. They seemed to know it and to be moved by it. Before long they decided that I must visit them on Oshima.

They also possess a fundamental spirit in harmony with nature akin to his own:

I came to see that the life of the traveling performer was not the forbidding one I had imagined. Rather it was easy-going, relaxed, carrying with it the scent of meadows and mountains.
Through an act of clear symbolic significance to himself, he sheds his school cap in favor of a hunting cap. The cap which symbolizes his belonging to the other end of the social scale from themselves is replaced by one which has a leveling effect on their disparate statuses.

The "I" hands over the hunting cap to the dancer's brother as he is about to board ship. Besides a simple gesture of friendship, it's certainly possible to see it in symbolic light as well. The hunting cap has represented a feeling of oneness with the traveling performers, a oneness with fellow travelers on the road, and now that his journey through Izu is over he must relinquish his persona of the traveler.

In Bashō's poetry as well as in his travel diaries, his "poetic spirit" does not deny the values of the present world for the sake of life in a world after death. It could be said that for a Buddhist, life exists because there is death. Bashō would embrace such a concept, but he would also point out that there is equal validity in saying that death exists because there is life.

In _Oku no Hosomichi_ and "Izu" we find both life and death. As in life itself, the microcosm of life with its mutability found in the respective works has made us aware of this; but being aware of this has not brought a feeling of sorrow, rather it seems that we the readers are invited to partake in a mutual experience of "purification" with the "I" of each work.

In Kawabata's "Izu," "purification" operates at both a stylistic and thematic level. At its thematic level, Kawabata has used recurring water images which point to an implicit acknowledgement of the role water plays in Shintoism. Just one example of an
incident in the story which has overtones of Shinto concepts occurs in the final chapter. One of the gifts the dancer's brother gives the "I" at the pier is **kōchūseiryōzai** (breath freshener tablets). The brother says he bought the tablets for him because they are called "Kaoru," the same name as the dancer. Kawabata seems to suggest more than just a sentimental meaning, however; taking into consideration that one of the characters in the expression is the term for purity, it's possible to associate the purpose of the present with the Shinto practice of ablution.

Behind Bashō's artistic detachment was a view of the cosmos being a unity between man and nature. It is a concept found in Buddhism and Shinto as well. With this essential idea in common, there would seem to be no reason a synthesis of their unique characteristics could not find expression. A feeling of being dissolved in the world outside oneself, a Buddhist tinged reference to the void, and a Shinto inspired association with the purifying nature of water might be integrated. In the last lines of "Izu" that is precisely what Kawabata has done:

> I floated in a beautiful emptiness...Everything sank into an enfolding harmony. The lights went out, the smell of the sea and of the fish in the hold grew stronger. In the darkness, warmed by the boy beside me, I gave myself up to my tears. It was as though my head had turned to clear water, it was falling pleasantly away drop by drop; soon nothing would remain. (emphasis added)
CONCLUSION

The final lines of "Izu no odoriko" indicate that the "I" has attained what many of the characters in Kawabata's earliest literary pieces seem to have ultimately been seeking: he has returned to a state of harmony with nature, a state akin to nirvana in which he is found "floating in a beautiful emptiness," and he had his original state of innocence restored in a manner metaphorically related to Shinto when his "head had turned to clear water." The final line in "Izu" is almost identical to the two lines from "Kagaribi" I quoted earlier. Here are those two lines: "Then with everything perfectly quiet, my heart turned into quiet, clear water spreading out lapping against some distant shore. It was as if I wanted to fall completely into sleep."

As early as "Jūokusai no nikki," the image of "clear water" has been used by Kawabata to denote purity and a return to a primordial oneness. Connected to purity and a return to the original unity is a longing for emptiness or death. Death is as natural as life; and in death, one returns to an original state of harmony with nature. In "Sora ni ugoku hi," the "old friend" in the work rejects the notion of the "finality" of death. He looks to metempsychosis to find man's salvation: the example of man being reborn as an evening primrose, man and the evening primrose being one, lends poetic credence to the idea.

Water has been the vehicle through which man in Kawabata's early works either "actually" or metaphorically will float away to rebirth. Most of the instances of death or death-like states in the early works of Kawabata and covered in this thesis have been
associated with water. The list reaches from the grandfather in "Jūrokusai no nikki" who talks about falling into a pond and dying there to the old man in "Izu" who looks like a drowned person.

The main characters in the early works of Kawabata have been in need of the spiritual rejuvenation which comes with a return to a pristine, pre-rational state. At the heart of the need for spiritual renewal in the typical character found in Kawabata's early works has been a sense of loneliness and sadness. If Kawabata came by this sense of loneliness and sadness naturally as a result of his orphaned upbringing, then one would have to agree with Kawashima Itaru that the author had bestowed on him "a heaven-sent blessing which other creative artists could only hope for."

As perhaps best exemplified in the "nikki" and "Izu," Kawabata as a literary artist aimed at the objectification of the "I" (or male heroes) in his works to achieve an infinite, aesthetic "I." In chapters one and four, I examined how this infinite, aesthetic "I" could be seen in terms of the passive or detached hero one finds in the lyric and in the travel diaries of Bashō. In chapter one, I used quotations from Ralph Freedman's *The Lyrical Novel* to explain the relationship between the "perceiving self" and the "perceived object" in the lyrical novel. The "object" becomes the embodiment of the self's own experience just as the grandfather and the dancer represented manifestations of the "I's" own loneliness and sadness.

In the preface to his book, Freedman gives a brief summary of the history of the lyrical novel. He says, "Dante's *La Vita Nuova* suggested features of lyrical narrative before there had been a novel in the current sense at all." Kawabata's novels and
short stories share this lyrical feature with *La Vita Nuova*. They also share something of perhaps equal importance: the male hero of *La Vita Nuova* is able to transcend earthly sorrows and attain a kind of salvation through the help of the woman Beatrice; Kawabata's male heroes in works such as "Shiroi mangetsu" and "Izu" transcend their sadness and attain spiritual rebirth through the help of young girls.

Beatrice and the girls in Kawabata's works are women who represent the fusion of a maternal and virginal figure. Watsuji Tetsurō's words on the figure of the Chūgū-ji Miroku (the Buddha of the Future) depict the image in precisely the same terms: "...the 'woman' is the crystallization of the love of a mother and the cleanness of a virgin..."²

This image of "woman" is just one of many examples of the universality of Western and Eastern traditions I found in analyzing the works in this thesis. They are testimony to the universality of one of Japan's greatest writers.
NOTES

Chapter I


8 Kawashima, p.36.


10 Yoshimura, p. 28.

11 Yamamoto, p. 21.

12 Yamamoto, p. 58.


16 Saeki Shōichi, "Kawabata Yasunari no buntai" in Chikuma Shōbō's *Kawabata*, p. 140.

17 Saeki, pp.140-141.


20 Freedman, pp.2-3.


23 Freedman, p.18.

24 Freedman, p.20.


26 Both the paraphrasing of the passage from "Bunshō ni tsuite" and the quotation from *Shinbuntokuhon* are taken from Yamamoto's *Kawabata Yasunari*, pp.14-15.


CHAPTER II


Chapter III

1 The quotation comes from Kawabata's preface to his bachelor's thesis found in Ryūdō, June, 1979, p. 314.

2 Hadōri Tetsuya has produced a fine piece of scholarship on these two concepts in Kawabata's literature in his "Kawabata Yasunari to banbutsu ichin'yō. rinne tensei shisō," Kokugo to Kokubungaku, March, 1966.


4 Ueda, p.212


6 Herbert, pp.67-68.


9 Frye, p.152.


14 Miyoshi, p.47.
Chapter IV


5 ibid, p.12.

6 ibid., p.25.


8 The idea of the circular pattern as well as much of the previous commentary on Bashō's *Oku no hosomichi* was gleaned from Nobuyuki Yuasa's introduction to his translations of Bashō travel diaries in *The Narrow Road to the Deep North and Other Travel Sketches* (Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books, 1966).


11 ibid., p.13.

12 ibid., p.16.

13 ibid., p.27.


15 The following section dealing with Bashō's art of writing haiku is based on material I gathered from two books by Makoto Ueda: *Zeami, Basho, Yeats, Pound: A Study in Japanese and English Poetics* (The Hague: Mouton and Co., 1965) and *Literary and Art Theories in Japan* (Cleveland: Press of Western Reserve University, 1967).


19 Matsuo, p. 188.


21 ibid, pp. 21-22.

22 ibid., p. 29.
Conclusion

1Freedman, p.vii.

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