

THE EVOLUTION OF TANIZAKI JUN'ICHIRO  
AS A NARRATIVE ARTIST

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by

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis traces the growth of Tanizaki Jun'ichirō as a narrative artist through the three stages of his long career. A number of representative works are studied, with varying emphasis on narrative perspective, structure, character creation, and style, depending on the prominence of these aspects of fiction in each work. Underlying the individual analyses is the basic question: how does the author resolve the problem of rendering himself in his fiction?

Chapter I, covering the initial period (1910-1928), first deals with a split in the author's sensibility. The emerging storyteller is most successful as an anti-realist, in a small number of stories with idealized, remote settings, such as "Shisei." In contrast, he fails when seeking to represent himself and his immediate environment in the shi-shōsetsu. Near the end of this period, with Chijin no ai, Tanizaki begins to reconcile his need for illusion with the rendering of mundane experience.

Tanizaki's technical skills are in germ in this period. The author often demonstrates an ability to build firm structures, and to forge an elaborate style. He also establishes a conception of characters as powerful psychic forces, not as pedestrian, "realistic" creations.

Chapter II shows the fully mature artist, in his second period (1928-1950), which contains most of his major achievements. The author's continuing attachment to distant, illusory worlds is fully expressed in works drawing on Japanese tradition, such as Mōmoku monogatari, a romance. He also resolves the dichotomy between the demands of the imagination and those of external realities; he projects himself into his fiction with complete success. He is able to represent everyday experience

in Tade kuu mushi and Sasameyuki, but these are not novels of bourgeois realism. Idealization still moves below the surface, creating a balance between verisimilitude and fantasy. The rendering of the characters as idealized types is explored particularly in the study of Sasameyuki.

Tanizaki's enormous advances in method include an intricate treatment of narrative viewpoints, as in "Shunkinshō," a subtle approach to structure, notably in "Yoshino kuzu," and a new style unique in its fluidity and amplitude, as in "Ashikari."

Chapter III treats the last phase of Tanizaki's writing (1951-1965), a period of renewal and purification. Abandoning the filter of history and romance, he now tends to observe and record contemporary circumstance. He also returns to the concerns of his first phase, most significantly the shi-shōsetsu, fictionalizing himself in Fūten rōjin nikki; in the forceful portrayal of the protagonist of this novel Tanizaki reaches the climactic point in his characterizations.

Sobriety of manner marks the writing of this phase. The characters often appear in distilled, stylized form, most remarkably in Kagi. The rich, full style of the second period disappears; instead, the author often uses notations, as in the diary form. He loses none of his skill in structure, as the two contrasting novels using the diary genre show: while Kagi is an obvious craftsman's triumph, Fūten rōjin is constructed with equal care but deceptive naturalness.

It is hoped that this study, concentrating on the development of Tanizaki's techniques and of his outlook, helps to account for his singularly strong grip on the reader.



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## THE EVOLUTION OF TANIZAKI JUN'ICHIRO AS A NARRATIVE ARTIST

### Introduction

The work of Tanizaki Jun'ichirō 谷崎潤一郎<sup>1</sup> (1886-1965) generates enormous interest among his readers, but like that of so many other Japanese authors, it suffers from misdirected critical appreciation. The mass of writing on Tanizaki shows a strong tendency to concentrate on the man rather than the writer, and even when the critics turn to the writer, they too often deal with his position in literary history or with his general themes, rather than his art.<sup>2</sup> He fares even worse than those authors who may be profitably studied for their intellectual value, or examined through the relationship between biography and literature, such as Natsume Sōseki 夏目漱石 or Mishima Yukio 三島由紀夫, for the secret of his appeal does not lie in these areas.

Many commentaries on Tanizaki also dwell excessively on such aspects of the content of his writings as masochism, foot-fetishism, or the idealization of an elusive female principle. In their totality, these studies have a certain value, since they suggest some of the impulses which drive this novelist, in particular an intense physicality wedded to a longing for an imaginary world, but they do little to explain the value of the texts as fictional creations. Though recent years have seen a welcome development in Tanizaki criticism, with the publication of several articles dealing with narrative techniques,<sup>3</sup> much remains to be done in the field of textual interpretation.

The situation is not surprising, for this author to whom the reader succumbs so readily is not easy to discuss. Though Tanizaki was one of

the most deliberate of artists, acutely conscious of formal values, the surface of his writing does not at once yield to analysis. Unlike authors so different from each other as Kawabata Yasunari 川端康成 or Abe Kōbō 安部公房, he does not make the reader aware of a maze of images and symbols to explore as clues to his essence.

Tanizaki's readers are captivated not only by his singular creative vitality but particularly by the narrative form it takes. In short, Tanizaki is a storyteller of genius. This thesis attempts to show in a chronological perspective the making of a major narrative artist, dealing specifically with the process of resolution of a basic novelistic problem: the fictionalization of the author's self.

We have established a rough progression in three phases in the writing career of Tanizaki, which ranged over fifty years, from 1910 to the end of his life in 1965. These periods are as follows: the early phase runs from "Shisei" 刺青 ("Tattoo,"<sup>4</sup> 1910) to 卅 Manji (The Whirlpool, 1928-30), the second period from Tade kuu mushi 蓼喰う虫 (Some Prefer Nettles, 1928-29) to Shōshō Shigemoto no haha 少將滋幹の母 (The Mother of Captain Shigemoto, 1949-50), and the third period from 1951 to 1965.

The splitting of the first and second periods between two works written concurrently in 1928 and 1929 underlines a significant change in the writing of Tanizaki at that time. It is indisputable that the author's first major novel, Tade kuu mushi, marks a new departure. Critical literature usually relates it to the author's move to the Kansai area and his return to traditional Japanese themes, but the artistic importance of the change, a maturation in technical skills, is at issue here. The division between periods two and three rests on a shift in the author's perspective on his own material, expressed in a reconciliation of the author's self to his

characters which culminates in Fūten rōjin nikki 癡癡老人日記  
(Diary of a Mad Old Man, 1961-62).

The present study is not based on the total fictional production of Tanizaki, a prolific writer, but on a reading of roughly three-fifths of the prose fiction, six of the thirty-odd dramatic works, and the most important of his many essays, to make up a representative sampling of his work.<sup>5</sup> An evolutionary perspective of an author would, strictly speaking, require a reading of the entirety of his work. In defense it can be argued that virtually all of the unread fictional works are those of the first period, a phase of generally mediocre writing. On the other hand, all but a handful of the fictional works of the second and third periods, which contain nearly all the masterpieces, have been read.

The chronological arrangement and the overall concept of evolution do not imply a steady qualitative progression in the writing of Tanizaki with the passage of time. Fūten rōjin nikki is no "better" a novel than Tade kuu mushi. It is true that the second phase presents so remarkably different an aspect in quality that the word "improvement" must be used to distinguish it from the first period, but from the second to the third, the shift does not lie in a change in intrinsic merit, but rather in authorial perspective.

A chronological study is in order for another reason. No one who has read representative works by Tanizaki from various points of his career, in whatever order, can fail to notice a decided consistency in the author's view of the world. Most critics have stressed changes in Tanizaki's attitudes and in choice of subject matter, such as those which occurred after his move to the Kansai area, but others, like E. G. Seidensticker, take exception to this view: "The most remarkable thing about Tanizaki's writing is his steadfastness to a single theme through all the decades of

apparent change... . Tanizaki scarcely ever talks about anything except a masochistic wish...to submit abjectly and absolutely to a being of lesser import than himself... ."6 With a slight shift of emphasis, Donald Keene observes: "The writings of Tanizaki Jun'ichirō are apt to surprise equally by their exceptional diversity of subject and manner and by their equally exceptional consistency of themes."7

This thesis deals with "diversity of... manner," in a tracing of Tanizaki's works over the three stages of his writing career. A number of individual works will be discussed, with the focus on one or more of the following aspects, depending on their pertinence to each work: narrative perspective, structure, character creation, and style. Underlying all of these are the questions relating to the author's general outlook: to what extent, and in what ways does the author succeed in fictionalizing himself? Discussion of theme, though inevitable, will not assume primary significance, for what matters is the tracing of the stages in the maturation of a narrative artist of the first order.

## CHAPTER I

THE GENESIS OF THE STORYTELLER:  
FROM "SHISEI" TO MANJI, 1910-1928

A study of narrative evolution in Tanizaki presents the reader with the task of sorting out a great mass of material from his first period, much of it of limited intrinsic value. This extremely productive writer began his literary career at the age of twenty-five with a brilliant short story, "Shisei" 刺青 ("Tattoo," 1910) but it was not until 1928-29 that he published another work of outstanding quality, Tade kuu mushi, which marked the start of his flourishing as a novelist. In this eighteen-year-period, he turned out over half the volume of his total fictional and dramatic works, the rest being written in the years from the pivotal date of 1928 to the end of his life in 1965. To give some idea of the extensiveness of his production, "over half the volume" represents more than twice the number of individual works in his second and third periods combined. Most of the works in the first period are short stories or novellas, with a few full-length novels, and some thirty dramas. There are also essays, including a few travel journals.

Why examine this early period at all, if the writing is of minor value? Without running to the extreme of attempting to rehabilitate works which do not deserve a second reading, we may observe that Tanizaki sometimes succeeds in the creation of a strong secondary character here, an arresting descriptive passage there. Although many works may not be of the highest calibre individually, they may often be considered in groups by affinities which can be highly suggestive, in the context of Tanizaki's entire work. A study of these early works tells us much about certain basic problems of the fiction writer. How is his vision exteriorized? Does he write more

or less overtly about himself, or does he set a considerable distance between himself and his materials? In general, the author, not yet mature, fails to the extent that he is too close to his material. Section A of this chapter deals with his success when he escapes into fantasy, and B discusses his failure when attempting a more representational mode of writing. Sections C and D show how the emerging storyteller starts to resolve this split in his sensibility.

#### A. The author as anti-realist

Tanizaki is clearly an anti-realist in a small number of his early works. These are in the main far superior to the others in the autobiographical manner, in which he is hedged in by the necessity of conveying mundane, everyday circumstance. The element of fantasy is crucial to an understanding of Tanizaki. Flight from actuality is closely linked with a marked difference in fictional treatment, for it releases the author from the need to represent himself, in the outward sense of being an aspiring writer in contemporary Tokyo. This flight translates into the use of subject matter with a strong flavor of the exotic and sometimes even the supernatural, demanding stylization of treatment.

The young Tanizaki thrives in the realm of the fairy tale. Not until maturity does he bring his powerful imagination to bear on his daily existence. The successes of this period indicate his demand for far-away settings. "Shisei" and "Kirin" 麒麟 ("Unicorn," 1910), are both art stories, the former set in an idealized Edo and the latter in ancient China, and "Ningyo no nageki" 人魚の嘆き ("The Lament of the Mermaid," 1917) is a pure fantasy, also on an art theme.

Most conveniently for the purposes of our discussion, "Shisei" (I, 61-72)<sup>8</sup> stands not only as Tanizaki's maiden work<sup>9</sup> but also as the most



famous and best-realized of all his early works. It represents, moreover, the prototypical Tanizaki, containing the germ of themes, situations and attitudes to recur throughout his long writing career. It is therefore the ideal point of departure for an examination of narrative development in Tanizaki, and a detailed commentary will reveal the extent of its significance.

"Shisei" is a gaudy tale which at times skirts the ludicrous but succeeds brilliantly because of Tanizaki's artistic energy. One of the great mysteries in Tanizaki is the question of how he makes the reader submit to him, despite situations and characters which are outlandish by common standards. In this story he sets out to seduce the reader at once. The introduction is of the utmost importance, since the author is about to lure us into a never-never land, and to the extent that he achieves his goal, we will be disposed to accept a great deal more. The first sentence runs:

It was an age when people still possessed the noble virtue of frivolity and the world was not, as in our times, a place of painful striving (I, 63).<sup>10</sup>

This glamorized view of the past introduces a tale glorifying not only art but artifice, the term being in no sense pejorative, since the further Tanizaki removes himself from the actual in this period, the better the fictional result.

The author then sets out to recreate the Edo world of his fantasies. The next two sentences are packed with references to the society of Edo, which by their very presence aid in the creation of a mood of gaiety and splendor.

Tonosama ya wakadanna no nodoka na kao ga kumoranu  
yō ni, goten jochū ya oiran no warai no tane ga tsukinu  
yō ni to, jōzetsu wo uru ochabōzu dano hōkan dano to iu  
shokugyō ga, rippa ni sonzai shite iketa hodo, seken ga  
nonbiri shite ita jibun de atta. Onna Sadakurō, onna  
Jiraiya, onna Narukami, tōji no shibai demo kusazōshi  
demo, subete utsukushii mono wa tsuwamono de ari,  
minikui mono wa yowamono de atta (I, 63).

A literal translation, attempting to preserve the structure of the original, runs as follows:

So that the tranquil faces of the great lords and young nobles would not cloud over, so that ladies-in-waiting and courtesans would never lack for laughter, jesters and buffoons dealt in witticisms and to the extent that they flourished, it was an age when the world was free of care. Like Sadakurō, Jiraiya and Narukami -- heroes become women in the dramas and picture books of the day -- all the beautiful were strong; the ugly were weak.

The effect cannot be explained merely by a mass of allusions or even by the presence of terms denoting laughter, splendor and ease; it depends far more on Tanizaki's handling of rhythms. Most of the syntactical elements in these sentences are paired, with two parallel clauses ending in yō ni, and each clause containing two nouns: tonosama/wakadanna, goten jochū/oiran. These are followed by another pairing: ochabōzu dano/hōkan dano. For variation a ternary rhythm is then used: Onna Sadakurō/onna Jiraiya/onna Narukami, but the coupled rhythm returns to end the passage.

These rhythms, expressive of the author's warm attachment to his Edo that never was, lull the reader into acceptance. To acknowledge this effect on the reader is to reach the core of Tanizaki's appeal. Everyone is agreed that Tanizaki is an intensely physical writer, but this view centers on his subject matter. It is equally important to realize that often, as in the passage just cited, he makes a primal appeal to physiological responses. Rhythmical prose is, like poetry, apprehended by the heartbeat.<sup>11</sup>

The symmetries of this carefully written passage -- some might even call it too carefully written -- are conspicuous. Rarely in this early period does he handle rhythms so well as in "Shisei." In his later work, the cadences of the prose become more fluid and complex. This early example enables us to observe one way in which he makes prose mechanisms function, and to understand how the reader absorbs, almost unconsciously, the shifts

in meaning along with the sound. For example, carried along by the 2/2 rhythms in the above passage, the reader might even miss the full import of the balanced clauses at the end: "subete utsukushii mono wa tsuwamono de ari, minukui mono wa yowamono de atta ("All the beautiful were strong and the ugly were weak")."

The statement contained in this sentence is significant, for it touches on one of the central concerns of "Shisei" and a constant one in Tanizaki: the terrible power of beauty, or in more specific terms, the dominance of art. The frame of reference of the entire paragraph is the colorful world of popular fiction and drama, one of villains and heroes.

A sense of the stylized and the artificial continues into the next sentence, which describes the contemporary craze for tattoos: "In rivalry to see who could be the most beautiful, everyone poured paint into his natural body" (I, 63). Two comments could be made on this sentence; one about the superiority of art to nature, the other on the periphrastic turn of phrase. The skin is not a background for the work of art; the work of art is poured into the body. In a most Tanizaki-like manner the expression affects the reader almost physically. The final sentence in the paragraph, tying off the introduction with the author's comment on gorgeous lines and colors dancing on bodies, hints at the brilliant visual effects which will characterize this story.

The mood once set and the reader acquiescent, the story moves into the particular, in a far less elaborate narrative style marking the first of several changes of manner and pace in the tale. "Once upon a time," as it were, "there was a skilful young tattooer named Seikichi" (I, 63). It is clear at once that Seikichi is a symbol of the artist, for we learn that dozens of human skins become canvasses for him, that he is distinguished by the originality and elegance of his designs, and even that he

is a former ukiyo-e painter.

"Shisei," however, differs from other works of fiction about art and artists, like those of Akutagawa Ryūnosuke 芥川龍之介, which tend to be highly intellectualized. Seikichi is distinguished by an intense secret pleasure derived from inflicting physical pain, as in the terrifying little scene which shows him at work on an anonymous customer. The tattooer's words alone are given, so that the one-way dialogue is a sign of his supremacy, and the reader shares in the extreme pain of the tattooing process. This scene dramatizes the ferocity of the artist's will, which is ultimately to be undone through its own workings. It also has a preparatory function in the plot, as it forecasts the scene in which Seikichi tattoos the heroine.

His impulse to create must find expression in a living body. Seikichi's long-held desire is to etch his soul into the skin of a "radiantly beautiful" woman. His longing is not for woman in the abstract or for any particular woman; it is an esthetic ideal he pursues. It is not stated that he will also derive pleasure from her pain, but this passage follows immediately upon the torture scene, and the connection is to be made later.

In order to show the demands of the artistic conscience, the author delays the encounter of the hero with his ideal. Not until four years later does he finally catch sight of a foot which embodies the ideal.

With the appearance of this foot "spilling out" from under a palanquin blind, the rhythms slow from narrative to lyrical. The foot is first perceived through a metaphor: "for him this was a jewel made of flesh." The impression of sharp contours and lustre is carried on: "...nails pink as shells on Enoshima beach, the heel like a jewel, skin as lustrous as if pure water ran over it constantly." Finally, in Seikichi's mind, it is "a foot to feed on men's blood, to trample on men's bodies" (I, 65).

The foot motif often appears in Tanizaki's writings, as in "Fumiko no ashi" 富美子の足 ("Fumiko's Feet," 1919), and most prominently in his last major work, Fūten rōjin nikki (1961-62). Far too much critical attention has been paid to Tanizaki's foot-fetishism, as to his other "complexes," and it is difficult to see what any discussion of it may contribute to an understanding of his works as artifacts. In the context of the narrative perspective, mood and characterizations of this story, the emphasis lies not so much on Seikichi's fascination with the foot as such, but rather on the idea that the perceptions of an artist can transform reality. In Seikichi's eyes, according to the text, a foot is as expressive as a human face.

Once concretized, his esthetic ideal vanishes and it is about a year before he encounters it again. Emotional and temporal changes are noted with great economy in a single sentence: "Seikichi's longing turned into violent love; that year drew to a close, and it was one morning when the fifth year was halfway into spring" (I, 65). The owner of the foot reappears as the messenger of a geisha who, as it happens, is known to Seikichi. The coincidence bringing her into the plot is noticeable, but most readers would not seriously question its plausibility because, for one thing, it is the coincidence of the fairy tale where anything may happen, and is even appropriate to the faraway atmosphere of this story. Even more, this meeting comes about through narrative destiny, having been prepared by the account of Seikichi's long and patient search for the perfect medium for his art, and by the description of the foot. That this character will reappear is inevitable.

This ideal is seen through Seikichi's eyes and never individualized. Indeed, Seikichi himself, like almost all the characters of Tanizaki's early fiction, is a type and not "real" by the canons of traditional Western

fiction, but this stylized tale hardly calls for bourgeois realism. The young woman is identified by profession, by speech, and finally by Seikichi's interpretation of her face, which seems to be that of a courtesan well beyond her actual years. The face is not described, as the faces of Tanizaki characters seldom are -- the better to preserve the ideal in the imagination -- and the author suppresses her individuality even more purposefully by adding: "Her beauty was born from the many dreams of countless beautiful men and women who had lived and died for generations in this great capital where the sins and treasures of the entire country flowed" (I, 66). If she were too carefully particularized, the effect would destroy her mystery. Indeed, seen by Seikichi as an ideal, she is never even given a name in the story. This sentence generalizing her appeal as the product of Edo history also has a unifying structural function, pointing back as it does to the opening paragraph.

Immediately after Seikichi speaks to the young messenger about his long wait for her, and his invitation to see something in his house, a very rapid sequence of events follows. "Seikichi took the hand of the girl who was preparing to leave, and after leading her into the second-storey room looking out onto the Sumida River, he took out two scroll paintings and rolled them out before her" (I, 67). This transition, like the one previously noted, compresses many elements into a single swiftly-moving sentence.

The narrative slows to a description of the two scrolls and their use by Seikichi to awaken the young woman to a knowledge of her secret self. This section has a double interest. In the first place, the strikingly mannered quality of the story is underlined by the use of works of art to bring the heroine to self-awareness. The artist is using artifacts to aid in the creation of another, for they contain a truth recognized by the

living woman. Secondly, the theme of metamorphosis gains prominence. This point is closely related to the first, since the work of the artist is that of transformation.

The scrolls section shows the young author revelling in his already well-developed technical skills, particularly in the description of the first painting. The complex and even baroque sentence displaying the Chou princess gives off a gemlike effect in keeping with the hard, bright surface of the story. Later in his career, Tanizaki was to abandon the use of ornate, unusual Sino-Japanese compounds, just as he abandoned sculptural values in favor of blurred light and shade effects, but this early achievement clearly fulfils its intended purpose.

The heroine's terror on viewing the first scroll undergoes a modification as she gazes at the second. Now pleasure is added to fear. In this scroll, a young woman stares with pride and joy at the corpses of her victims in a garden where birds are singing a victory song. Significantly enough, the passage is entirely devoid of morbidity. One sentence furnishes a clue to an interpretation of the pleasure-pain element in Tanizaki: "Was it a landscape after a battle, or a view of a flower garden in spring?" (I, 68). What is usually considered as perverted and repellent is the opposite, and it is indeed difficult to think of another writer who assumes so naturally that physical suffering may be a source of joy.

As fear returns to seize the young woman, she begs Seikichi to put away the scrolls, but at his urging she comes to confess that she is indeed like the woman represented in one of them. At this point, the author is dealing specifically with the buried impulses which anyone may harbor, and if this idea is accepted, "Shisei" cannot be dismissed as trivial or ludicrous.

The artist proceeds to ready his ideal canvas for a masterpiece, but the sequence of actions is not motivated in an altogether satisfactory manner. The vial of anesthetic which happens to be concealed in Seikichi's bosom is a device making excessive demands on the reader's indulgence, even though he may have accepted a previous coincidence, that of the meeting of Seikichi and the young woman.

The next section, dealing with the tattooing process, is strongly marked by alternations of light and shadow, so characteristic of Tanizaki's means of visualizing decors. First comes a phase of stillness as sunlight strikes the river, illuminating the room, and Seikichi gazes at the now unconscious woman. The mood of reflectiveness is then interrupted by an exceedingly unfortunate figure of speech: "Just as the people of ancient Memphis decorated the splendid land of Egypt with pyramids and sphinxes, Seikichi was to adorn a pure human skin with his love" (I, 69). A certain degree of preciousness is acceptable and even desirable in this tale, but the comparison fails utterly to function, as the grandiose architectural image is in no way compatible with the tattooer's precise and limited art or with the quality of his love. In this first period, Tanizaki frequently makes use of lavish figurative language, whose content and expression often betray Western influence. As he matures, it will be seen that he stops needing the stylistic support of figurative language, evidently considered by him as purely ornamental in this phase.

Another transformation now takes place, this time in Seikichi. As he works, his spirit melts into the tattooing liquid to seep into the skin of the young woman, so that when at last the masterpiece, the giant spider, has been completed on her back, he is drained of energy. "The two shadows remained motionless for a time. Then a low, hoarse voice reverberated from the four walls of the room" (I, 70). The impersonal mode of



expression suggests that this time it is Seikichi whose personality is being negated, as the climactic scene will reveal.

In Seikichi's esthetic, pure beauty is not the only goal. The result of his creation is power; all men, he tells the heroine, will become her victims. The newly created artifact is linked to another through the word for "victim," koyashi 肥料, literally, "manure," written with the same characters as for Hiryō, the title of the second scroll painting. Hence Seikichi has created a fearful beauty which has the power to destroy.

Throughout his writing career Tanizaki shows a strong inclination to write dramatic, forceful endings, often compressed in time and therefore indicative of the care he takes in pacing the narrative flow. In "Shisei" the final paragraphs show with astonishing logic the interplay of aggressor and victim, with the creation taking over its creator. Then the transformed woman asks Seikichi to wait for her upstairs. Even he who has willed the change is startled. The last scene assimilates her to the women in the scroll paintings. As she ascends the stairs, her posture recalls a detail of the first scroll, in which the princess is leaning on a balustrade. The parallel is far from accidental; it exists in the minds of both characters, for Seikichi makes a specific reference to the scrolls and the heroine declares that he has become her first victim. In her ears rings a cry of triumph (kachidoki), as in the description of the second scroll. The paintings have come to life and art has been changed into reality, but the reality in this case is itself an artifact.

The triumph of the victim over her creator is now complete, and the story concludes in blazing light as the morning sun strikes the tattoo on the heroine's back. Though the spider had at first symbolized Seikichi's supremacy, its power has been transferred to the woman. The visual splendor of the ending brings to mind the warm illumination of the initial

paragraph, but it has been intensified by many degrees. The final words of the story are sanran to shita 燦爛とした ("shone dazzlingly"), and on referring to the first lines the reader is not surprised to find the closely related adjectival expression kenran na 絢爛な ("radiant"), though it refers to the lines and colors of tattoos. The lighting of the initial paragraph is the glow of an imaginary Edo which at the end is specified as sanran, whose visual connotations are sharper, to describe the spider tattoo. Throughout his entire career Tanizaki demonstrates a tendency to tie the ending of a piece of fiction to the beginning, in the interests of structural unity. The method is sometimes worked out with crude simplicity, especially in the first period, but this is one of the more effective and subtle examples of its use.

"Shisei" contains many features of Tanizaki's writing to remain constant throughout a lifetime of writing, such as the search for an absolute, the power of beauty, the blending of pleasure and pain, the glorification of art and artifice, and the metamorphosis which an artist works on himself. The young author already shows himself capable of tight pacing in narrative, lavish description, a strong structural sense, and control over prose rhythms. Just as important for the purposes of this study is the marriage of imagination and physicality so characteristic of Tanizaki's better works. Among all the writings of his earliest period, "Shisei," the first, represents the most successful artistic expression of the need for fantasy and escape to another land.

Another short story published in 1910, "Kirin" (I, 73-90) is a companion piece to "Shisei" through its estheticism, but where "Shisei" reads specifically as an artist story, the stress in this tale lies on beauty and its terrifying force. It is also an expression of the same desire to flee to a world of the imagination.

Now the setting is the state of Wei in China, in the time of Confucius. Though Tanizaki draws on the Analects of Confucius and the Shih chi 史記 (Historical Records) of Ssu-ma Ch'ien 司馬遷 for his principal characters, Reikō (Ling-kung the ruler, and his consort Nanshi (Nan-tzu), and for the episode of Confucius' encounter with Nanshi,<sup>12</sup> his treatment of these sources is original. According to Tanizaki, the immediate inspiration for the story came from the characters for kirin (ch'i lin), a mythological beast.<sup>13</sup> This is an obvious sign of the writer's early infatuation with unusual and exotic words, particularly in their visual aspect; in other stories, words or phrases from Western languages in Roman type frequently appear in the text. And yet, Tanizaki, with an abundance of respect for the reader which is to be one of his most enduring traits, takes care to explain the allusion -- a kirin was an animal which appeared miraculously at the time of Confucius' birth -- in the body of the text, even though he could have expected many of his readers in 1910, with a knowledge of Chinese mythology which no longer exists in Japan, to understand its significance.

The central struggle in "Kirin" is between Virtue, personified by Confucius, and Beauty, embodied in Nanshi. The epigraph is a warning to Confucius that his virtue is on the wane, and the plot develops as a fulfilment of the prophecy. "In the year 493 B.C. by the Western calendar," the aged Confucius comes to Wei in the course of his travels, accompanied by several disciples. After a discussion with an old Taoist, whose denial of life Confucius judges to be not quite in accordance with the Way -- the episode is an ironic preparation for the outcome of the plot -- the party reaches the capital city, where the devastated, starving inhabitants hope that the sage will be able to instruct their violent and cruel rulers, Reikō and Nanshi, in justice. Eventually Confucius wins

Reikō over to his teachings. Nanshi, a powerful creation, one of the earliest of ferocious Tanizaki women characters, is enraged at losing her hold over her husband, until now slavishly devoted to her, and swears to recover him from Confucius. Causing the sage to be brought before her, she challenges him directly with her beauty; in an elaborate and descriptively ritualized passage she offers him many temptations. As in "Shisei," there is a scene of torment with a lovely spring light on the scene, but this time the sight is of living people, criminals undergoing torture. Nanshi explains that she sometimes goes out in the streets with Reikō, and that if he should glance at a woman with a trace of compassion, Nanshi has her captured and put to torture. Now, she declares, she will accompany both Confucius and Reikō through the capital. The narration breaks off here and there is a pause, typographically as well as temporally marked, just before the conclusion for the sake of suspense. The technique is typical of Tanizaki's better-paced works.

This conclusion begins with a recall of the opening: "On a spring day in the year 493 B.C. by the Western calendar... ." Now the viewpoint is that of the onlookers; they see two carts on the street, one with Reikō, Nanshi and attendants, the second with Confucius. Confucius, they conclude, was not equal to Nanshi, as he looks unhappy, and Nanshi's will is no doubt to become law again. That evening, in fact, Nanshi welcomes back her king to her chambers; though he expresses his hatred and horror of her, he cannot leave her. The final lines show Confucius from the same remote perspective as the opening, leaving the city with his party, and a quotation from the Analects: "Not yet have I seen a man who loved virtue as much as a beautiful woman" (I, 90).<sup>14</sup>

"Kirin" is not as compelling a fictional creation as "Shisei." As a story about Beauty, it carries a heavy burden of self-conscious

ornamentation. "Shisei," though also gaudy, does not fall into the trivial or the ridiculous because of the inner narrative coherence, in great part attributable to the author's vitality as expressed through the perspective of Seikichi. "Kirin" lacks this vital passion, for it does not have the viewpoint of a man in worship of a fierce ideal. It focusses instead on the female protagonist Nanshi, and the story must stand or fall on the portrayal of this character. It is true that Reikō is torn between two forces but the accent is not on his inner struggle; indeed the story is not seen through him. The conflict takes place between Nanshi and Confucius, and Confucian virtue is not a force remotely capable of withstanding the force of Beauty; Tanizaki has treated the sage as a fictional straw man. Moreover, the shifts in viewpoints throughout the story, first an outside view of Confucius and his disciples, then the standpoint of the people of the capital, then that of Confucius, are not integrated in such a way as to convey the full impact of Nanshi on the two male characters. One has only to think of "Shunkinshō" 春琴抄 ("A Tale of Shunkin," 1933) to realize how far Tanizaki has yet to go with the reconciliation of differing points of view in narration.

Yet, the budding storyteller demonstrates a firm grasp of structure. The use of two quotations from the Analects to encircle the body of the tale creates a sense of completeness. The admonitory epigraph gives the reader a strong suggestion that Virtue is to be defeated, and the quotation at the end is a fulfilment of the prophecy. The structure also coheres through the repetition of sections beginning "In the year 493 B.C. of the Western calendar," with the second marking the outcome of the plot.

It has been pointed out that the use of an epigraph is a novelty at this point in the history of Japanese letters, Akutagawa being another contemporary writer of short stories who did the same.<sup>15</sup> Thus the young

Tanizaki is already showing signs of a willingness to experiment with technique, especially characteristic of his first and second periods.

Another aspect of Tanizaki's early manner which should be stressed is the use of a florid descriptive style similar to that of certain passages in "Shisei," but surpassing it in elaboration. The following paragraph, on the people of the capital city as Confucius and his party make their entrance, will serve as an example.

Kono hitobito no kao wa ui to tsukare ni yaseotoroe,  
ieie no kabe wa nageki to kanashimi no iro wo tataete  
ita. Kono kuni no uruwashii hana wa, kyūden no  
kisaki no me wo yorokobasu tame ni utsushiuerare,  
koetaru inoko wa kisaki no shita wo tsuchikau tame  
ni meshiagerare, nodoka na haru no hi ga, haiiro  
no sabireta michi wo itazura ni terashita. Sōshite,  
miyako no oka no ue ni wa, gosai no niji wo nuida-  
shita kyūden ga, chi ni aita mōjū no gotoku ni,  
shigai no yō na michi wo mioroshite ita. Sono kyū-  
den no oku de uchinarasu kane no hibiki wa, mōjū  
no usobuku yō ni kuni no shihō e todooroita (I, 78).

The faces of these people were wasted away with starvation and weariness, and the walls of the houses wore the colors of lamentation and sadness. The lovely flowers of the country had been transplanted in order to gladden the eyes of the Queen, the fattened pigs had been confiscated in order to cultivate her palate, and the tranquil spring sun shone in vain on the ash-colored streets. And on the hilltop in the middle of the capital, the palace threaded with the five colors of the rainbow looked down on the corpse-like streets like a wild beast sated with blood. The bell tolling in the depths of the palace resounded in the four corners of the realm like the roaring of a wild beast.

The passage, along with the first paragraph of "Shisei," is said to have been influenced by the direct translation style from Western languages.<sup>16</sup> The comment may be valid, as these sentences do translate easily into English far more readily than the more supple prose of Tanizaki's maturity, because of the familiarity of the constructions. Secondly, we may note the prominent, even immoderate use of figurative language, whose quality is decidedly not characteristic of Japanese prose, even the

Westernized prose of the late Meiji period when "Kirin" was composed.

In his later years, Tanizaki was to look back on both "Shisei" and "Kirin" with dissatisfaction, criticizing his own rashness in tackling such subject matter without a sufficient period of research. In his maturity he would prefer as an ideal to saturate himself in the spirit of his material before attempting to write.<sup>17</sup>

He would surely have placed a third early tale in the same category: "Ningyo no nageki" 人魚の嘆き ("The Lament of the Mermaid," 1917, IV, 185-212). It shows the young author taking aspects of the other two stories to an extreme limit, including the self-indulgence of approach which embarrassed him later. He reaches the end in exoticism and fantasy, but curiously enough, this exceedingly precious tale causes the reader to accept its premises and its fabulous incidents much in the same way as "Shisei."

The tale deals with the unending quest for ideal beauty. Though the reader may not be receptive to the theme if he has scanned the many early works of Tanizaki with similar concerns, he can still respond to the primitive appeal of the fairy tale and the creation of marvels. The overt use of the genre appears in the very first words, "Mukashi, mukashi" ("long, long ago"). The tale is related in the conversational masu form of the verb, used by Tanizaki only once before, in "Hōkan" 坊間 ("The Jester," 1911, I, 187-208), where its appearance suited a lowly character, a jester. In this story, its function is different, lending as it does to the narration the flavor of a tale in the process of being told. The use of the colloquial style also creates greater intimacy with the reader.

The far-away setting is established as the first sentence continues: "...when the dynasty of Aishin Kakura (Aisin Gioro) was still flowering like a peony in summer, a young nobleman named Mō Sei-chū (Meng

Shih-tao) lived in the great city of Nanking" (IV, 187). The author, for the sake of stylistic embellishment, uses the periphrastic expression "the dynasty of Aisin Gioro" instead of "the Ch'ing dynasty." The male protagonist thus introduced enjoys youth, beauty, fortune, intelligence and talent. From this point the characterization takes on the taint of the young alter egos of the author in Tanizaki's early shi-shōsetsu, with his listlessness, unsatisfied longings, and his need for greater and greater stimulation.

A means of escape eventually appears, and the reader realizes it before the hero does. A marvellous being, a European, is introduced in an appropriately visualized perspective. The scene, like one in a foreign country, is a crossroads brilliantly lit by lanterns and enlivened by street performances. The strange-looking man who gradually comes into Mō's vision from a distance is at length identified as a Dutch merchant. Pure fantasy is piled on exoticism as the merchant presents Mō with a being only slightly more marvellous than himself, a mermaid. Why has he brought the mermaid to Mō? Because he has heard that the young nobleman is the only person for her. If some incidents of "Shisei" cause the reader to wonder about motivation, the very conception of this story abolishes the need for realistic plot logic.

The merchant, having been assured that Mō, weary of earthly pleasures, desires a fabulous beauty, has no doubt that he will purchase her, and for his part, Mō feels that the transaction is predestined. The mermaid is, of course, the figuration of Beauty; the word bi (beauty) appears recurrently in the passage describing her cold perfection. Mō would like to descend to being a creature like her, and to take pleasure in her eternal love. Tanizaki's rendering of this character tells us much of his esthetic values at this time: sculptural qualities are important,



but the accent is on the singular whiteness of the skin. She turns out to be more than a symbol of the beautiful; in more specific terms she is a symbol of Western literature and art. When Mō begs the merchant to take him to Europe, the land of wonders which produced this mermaid, the Hollander dissuades him, saying that the reality of the people of his country would be disappointing; it is far better that he remain in China with the mermaid as a constant reminder of the ideal beauty of Europe. Mō will be able to contemplate the essence of Western poetry and art in this living beauty. The purposeful avoidance of reality in Tanizaki's first period is nowhere better stated than in this tale.

The mermaid's unhappiness in her tank shows that this ideal cannot be realized, either. Totally in the realm of the fantastic, the tale soon develops with the mermaid begging the hero to return her to her home in the Mediterranean, promising to show him her occult powers if she is placed in the ocean. As the prince agrees, she uses magic to change into an eel; in obedience to her wishes he boards a steamship at Hong Kong, en route for England. Significantly, flight from reality takes the actual form of travel. When the ship leaves Singapore, Mō takes a jar out of his bosom and removes the eel. Twining several times around his wrist, it slides into the sea, and several minutes later the mermaid appears, only to plunge into the depths. The story concludes with Mō still hopeful, on the ship which is making its way towards her dwelling-place, the Mediterranean. Tanizaki's insistence on strong endings makes it impossible to ignore the importance of the final sentence. Mō will surely continue to seek the beauty of Europe.

All three of the tales so far discussed share a marked predilection for artifice in conception and execution. Besides the themes on art and

artists, they show in common a descriptive elaboration of setting, a crafting of brilliant, if not always apt, figures of speech, a purposeful treatment of characters as types. The last aspect perhaps needs brief discussion at this point. As an anti-realist, Tanizaki is not concerned with the creation of well-rounded, balanced characters according to the ideal of the traditional Western novel, in whose framework he is largely -- if not completely -- operating. The question of character conception is an important one, but it will be more fully treated in Chapter II, in the discussion of Sasameyuki 細雪 (The Makioka Sisters, 1943-48), where it more properly belongs.

Besides the group of three art tales which clearly belong to each other, several other short stories and novellas from the early period support the contention that Tanizaki requires fantasy as an artistically liberating force for his fiction.

Most of these works draw on Japanese tradition for their material. Tanizaki's turning to tradition has often been discussed, but overwhelmingly in terms of the major works of his second period. The point at issue here is that the young author by choosing such material must stand outside his immediate worldly concerns, just as the exotic settings and themes of the art stories forced a certain detachment upon him.

The best-realized of the "traditional" works is "Otsuya goroshi" お艶殺し ("A Springtime Case," 1915, II, 501-70),<sup>18</sup> a violent novella crowded with incident, telling of the gradual degradation of Otsuya and her lover Shinnosuke. As a piece of high-quality popular fiction whose central interest is plot manipulation, it has the elemental virtue of causing the reader to wonder what is to happen next. The novella is executed in such a manner as to give the impression of a prosified late-Edo Kabuki drama. The comparison is inevitable for many reasons, the key being

stylization. The events are more powerful than the characters, as in the Kabuki, so that the demands of situations prevail over pedestrian verisimilitude. The reader on one level is aware that the five murders committed by Shinnosuke are excessive for the span of a single novella, but the immediate motivations for each murder when it takes place in the plot make these acts convincing. Secondly, the situations can often be visualized as on a stage, for example, the scenes of stabbing in the dark, the michiyuki-like elopement of Shinnosuke and Otsuya, in the course of which she remarks "This is like a play." Other elements recalling the Kabuki include the role played by a gambler character, one of Otsuya's patrons, the fact that the male protagonist is sensitive but capable of all, retaining a certain innocence despite all his crimes, and a vendetta, complete with plotting and disguises.

Through a sequence of a great number of incidents, the author never loses sight of the central thrust of the plot, the decline of Otsuya and Shinnosuke, beginning with her virtual seduction of him and her subsequent degradation to the lowliest of geisha, while she brings him down with her. Since the title announces the heroine's death, the outcome is not in question but the manner of its resolution is arresting. The conclusion of the novella is rapid and brutal. The impetus of the plot has carried the couple to a not untypical Tanizaki situation: she confesses that she is in love with one of her patrons, Ashizawa, and Shinnosuke appears to withdraw spinelessly. Otsuya tells him she will think over the situation, but eventually she takes fright and vanishes, with Shinnosuke in pursuit. The final paragraph runs:

At last, on a bank near the torii of Mimeguri Shrine, the woman was dragged from her palanquin. Otsuya, clutching at Shinnosuke's hand, begged: "Shin-san,

don't kill me before I meet Ashizawa!" As he cut her down, she ran to and fro screaming "Murder! Murder!" Till her breath stopped she screamed over and over the name of her lover Ashizawa (II, 570).

Thus the title is entirely accurate; the focus is on the act of murder and on the heroine, not on Shinnosuke's state of mind.

"Otsuya goroshi" indicates that Tanizaki, despite his youthful concern with questions of Art, perfectly realized the importance of popular fiction in the line of pure Japanese literature,<sup>19</sup> and shows no signs of snobbishness about writing for a wide public. The imperatives of popular taste, as a matter of fact, result in an attention to plot control which was surely beneficial to the author at this time, lost as he was in unstructured autobiographical writing.

Equally a potboiler, but of lower technical quality than "Otsuya goroshi" is a novella published in the same year, "Osai to Minosuke" おさいと巳之介 ("Osai and Minosuke," 1915, III, 111-228). It is clear that when Tanizaki indulges in psychological analysis he has great difficulty in deciding where to stop, to the detriment of the pace of the narrative. The plot is encumbered by over-analysis of rivalries, duplicity, and manipulation among the characters. But in the last sixth of the novella, the narration, with an increasing focus on action, rises to the level of "Otsuya goroshi." The final sentence is memorable, with Minosuke running desperately across the rice-fields after Osai, his desire unabated despite her betrayal. The theatricality of this last portion has an impact similar to that of the other novella.

This brings us to a paradox. Some of Tanizaki's best work calls for critical parallels with drama, for example "Shunkinshō," and many of his prose works have been made into dramas and films,<sup>20</sup> but when he actually writes plays, he almost invariably fails. Tanizaki composed

some thirty-one dramatic works, from Tanjō 誕生 (Birth, I, 1-16) and Zō 象 (The Elephant, I, 17-36) in 1910 to Kaomise 顔世 (First Performance, XIV, 19-95) in 1933. Some of the dramas were never performed, like the first two mentioned above, and others proved to be unactable.<sup>21</sup>

The best-realized work is Okuni to Gohei お国と五平 (Okuni and Gohei, 1922, VIII, 327-350), but it too suffers from certain defects of the others. In general, Tanizaki's plays bear the imprint of a prose writer unconcerned with the basic principles of dramaturgy. The titling of Jūgoya monogatari 十五夜物語 (Tale of the Harvest Moon, 1917, IV, 471-503), with its use of a term for prose fiction, reveals a conception of writing inimical to the stage. Much of Shinzei 信西 (Shinzei, 1911, I, 91-108) lacks dramatic structure, conflict and dynamism. At times the extremely detailed stage directions in some of the plays read as if the prose writer in Tanizaki were crying out to take over from the playwright. In Kyōfu jidai 恐怖時代 (Age of Terror, 1916, IV, 1-92), the stage directions contain brief character sketches. In those of Jūgoya monogatari we are told as readers, not spectators, how the rōnin hero makes his living. Even worse, Tanizaki fails to solve such elementary problems as the introduction of characters, expositions which sometimes occupy up to one-third of an entire work; as in Ai sureba koso 愛すればこそ (Because of Love, 1921, VIII, 1-110) and exchanges of dialogue. In Kyōfu jidai the characters constantly keep each other informed of onstage events, seeming to tell each other what the audience, or reader, has already heard.

Obviously, prose fiction, in this period with a remote setting, is Tanizaki's natural element, as the following pair of stories show. "Ningen ga saru ni natta hanashi" 人間が猿になった話 ("The Story of a Human Turned into a Monkey," 1918, V, 525-548) has a fantastic content

somewhat akin to that of the fairy tales like "Ningyo no nageki" but it is in a far more modest vein, that of the folk tale. The story itself is set in a frame, with an old man narrator presented as relating a tale to his three granddaughters, in a simple parallel of the author-reader relationship which has the result of bringing the reader into participation with the story. Within the frame itself the author is seen manipulating characters with skill. The three girls, who are of little importance to the framework and none at all to the tale, are tersely and clearly distinguished from each other from the initial page. The tale itself, though set only some thirty years previously, in the middle of the Meiji period, is decidedly remote, because of the nature of the events and the perspective of the young girls. It tells of young Osome, a geisha employed in the old man's establishment, pursued by a monkey whose influence on her reaches the point of spiritual possession. Eventually she consults a diviner who says the monkey is so powerful that Osome will be overwhelmed unless she accedes to his demand that she go away with him.

A page from the end of the story, the old man's narration breaks off for the first time, and his three listeners, with whom the reader now identifies, are transfixed and eager to learn the outcome. Osome disappears into the mountains to live with the monkey; the narrator learned later at third hand that a human-like figure was seen playing with a monkey. The story concludes: "If so, Osome must surely have become a monkey!" (V, 548). No commentary by narrator or author is needed.

It would be an error to overemphasize the significance of this slight and unpretentious tale in the context of the total works of Tanizaki, but some of its aspects make it a forerunner of his later monogatari manner. The use of folktale material is somewhat unusual for Tanizaki but if it is included in the concept of traditional material, this story is clearly a

predecessor of the works of the second period. Of equal importance is the telling of the tale from the point of view of the old man narrator. Again, the story is written in the masu form of the verb, and though Tanizaki does not often resort to it, the use is always appropriate to theme and character. Perhaps not coincidentally, the works in which it does appear tend to be of above-average to definitely superior quality. The best example is Mōmoku monogatari 盲目物語 (A Blind Man's Tale, 1931), a first-person narration by an old man character. In "Ningen ga saru ni natta hanashi," the stamp of the old man's speech habits, and therefore something of his personality, appears in the somewhat rambling reminiscences at the beginning of the tale, and in such transitions as, for example, "Let me see, at any rate..." (V, 531).

This story might be paired with "Futari no chigo" 二人の稚児 ("Two Acolytes," 1918, V, 307-335) which has affinities to the old setsuwa, though the forces impelling the characters are indisputably Tanizaki's. The central plot question is whether the acolyte Rurikōmaru will be seduced by the desires of the flesh, like his companion Senjūmaru. At one point the former's curiosity about a world he has never experienced is, significantly, like a longing for a "fairytale paradise" (otogi-banashi no rakuen, V, 315). After Senjūmaru leaves the monastery in search of women he writes to Rurikōmaru, praising the pleasures of the senses. Rurikōmaru after a struggle with himself decides to free himself from desire and to that end engages in ascetic practices. The incident motivating the outcome of the story shows Tanizaki drawing from setsuwa traditions: A messenger of Fugen-bosatsu appears to the hero in a dream, revealing that in a former life he had righteously refused the love of a woman, who is now about to die, on this very mountain, in

the form of a beast. About to be reborn into Paradise, she will probably save Rurikōmaru. Frantic with a desire to meet her, he finds the bird wounded and bleeding. Again the ending of a story is remarkable, this time for its delicacy. Fearing he will freeze to death first, he presses her (the personal pronoun kanojo is used) against his cheek. That he is losing consciousness is indicated in the final sentence: "something -- was it a bird's down or a fine snow? -- fluttered down on his acolyte's circle of hair" (V, 335). These lines suggest that the resolution of the central problem is nothing so clear-cut as a choice for renunciation of desire. The author makes no reference to Rurikōmaru's psychological state; what is conveyed is the sensation he experiences as he embraces the former woman, with the suggestion that they are to die together.

The longing for a never-never land does not find expression only in settings distant in time and in place. "Haha wo kouru ki" 母を恋ふる記 ("A Record of Longing for Mother," 1919, VI, 191-219) shows that exoticism in the conventional sense is only part of Tanizaki's generalized yearning for what is not. The ideal maternal image forever sought by this author lives in the unattainable realm of his own past. "Haha wo kouru ki" is an account of a dream in which a small boy finds himself alone on a dark road, approaching a light from a house, his own. The woman inside turns out to be not his mother, but a stranger. Back on the road, he hears a distant samisen, evocative of memories of his house in Nihonbashi, and at length a fox appears; she is his mother. Suddenly the author-narrator awakens to remember that he is not a child but a man of thirty-four, whose mother died two years earlier. Only in the last five lines does the reader learn that the entire quest has been a dream, though he could have guessed it much earlier, but it could as well have been taken until the end, as a fantasy of the conscious mind.



This story is unique in Tanizaki's first period because of its atmosphere and style. The rendering of another country, the landscape of the dream illuminated by interplays of light and dark, and the fluidity of the prose, show a Tanizaki capable of blurring the clear, brilliant lines of the earliest stories like "Shisei," and point the way towards the shadowy elegance of "Ashikari" 夢★] ("Ashikari, 1932).

The style of "Haha wo kouru ki" has often been called "poetic." This is true not only in the sense that the prose is evocative. Upon analysis, some passages prove to possess structures more usually associated with poetry than with prose. The dream has allowed the author to take liberties with the norms of prose style. It is impossible to demonstrate these statements without providing a long quotation, which can only be very imperfectly translated.

.....Sora wa don'yori to kumotte iru keredo, tsuki wa fukai kumo no oku ni nomarete iru keredo, sore demo doko kara ka morete kuru no de arō, to no mo wa shirojiro to akaruku natte iru no de aru. Sono akarusa wa, akarui to omoeba kanari akarui yō de, michibata no koishi made ga hakkiri to mieru hodo de arinagara, nandaka me no mae ga moyamoya to kasunde ite, tōku wo jitto mitsumeru to, me ga kuguttai yō ni kanzerareru, isshu fushigi na, maboroshi no yō na akarusa de aru. Nanika, ningen no yo wo hanareta, harukana, harukana mokyū na kuni wo omowaseru yō na akarusa de aru. Sono toki no kimochi shidai de, yamiyo to mo tsukiyo to mo dochira to mo kangaerareru yō na ban de aru. Shirojiro to shita naka ni mo kiwadatte shiroi hitosuji no kaidō ga, wata-kushi no iku te wo massugu ni hashitte ita (VI, 193).

.....Though the sky is clouded over, though the moon is swallowed up in the depths of the deep clouds, light must be seeping through from somewhere, for outdoors it has grown bright. There is brightness--to think of brightness would mean it is fairly bright--and while even the pebbles by the roadside can be clearly seen, before the eyes is a dimness, when they gaze far into the distance they tingle; that is a strange ghostly brightness. It is a brightness calling up a faraway, faraway eternal land apart from the human world. It is a night which could be a moonless or a moonlit night. The white road which stood out even in the whiteness ran straight in front of me.

If the varied techniques of this passage have a common denominator, it is repetition. Most of the statements are variations on the idea that "it is a night which could be moonless or moonlit..." and within the sentences, it is almost needless to point out, are the parallel syntactical constructions, the insistence on akarui, the use of near-synonyms, the epithets fushigi na and maboroshi no yō na, -- all for the creation of a mysterious density in the prose. Moreover, the repetitions of words, as echoes, aid as markers in the rhythmical progress of the sentences. In all, this is an outstanding if isolated example of Tanizaki's early prose, and it shows signs of the later stylistic manner which sets him apart from all other writers.

This particular style could be called "tautological," or if the word appears derogatory, "synthesizing" might be a better term. The notion will be clearer if we compare the above passage to the prose typical of Kawabata, which is fragile and disarticulated both in thought and syntax. As evident from this quotation, Tanizaki tends to provide far more syntactical and semantic connections than necessary, but they function to produce a sense of amplitude.

Another aspect of the passage to be noted is the absence of figurative language such as Tanizaki obviously labored over in "Shisei" and "Kirin." It must be admitted that after this passage, similes do occur, for example, fields are compared to a dark sea with a hoarse voice, but Tanizaki at his best in tonal and rhythmical control, as in his later works, does not need imagery.

Two stories of merit showing that this author does not absolutely require geographical or extreme temporal dislocations in order to attain an ideal country are "Shōnen" 少年 ("The Youths," 1911, I, 143-185) and "Chiisana ōkoku" 小さな王国 ("The Little Kingdom," 1918, VI,

1-37). In "Shōnen," although the first-person narrative viewpoint is that of a man relating the events of his childhood twenty years later, and although there is a certain psychological realism neither expected nor found by the reader in other early works of above-average calibre, the adult memory of the narrator projects such a glamorizing light over the events that it fits easily into the category of anti-realistic writing. For the child, fantasies often appear in terms of "other worlds," and the story is full of references to "strange lands," to Western fairy tales, and to game-playing.

The use of childhood games and fantasies makes "Shōnen" a precursor of Bushūkō hiwa 武州公秘話 (The Secret History of the Lord of Musashi, 1931) in which the ludic element is very strong, in accordance with the comic, anti-heroic tone. The characters of Bushūkō are the characters of "Shōnen" grown up. The playing with the head of Dōami, emerging from the tatami in the Lord of Musashi's quarters is a transmutation of the final scene of "Shōnen" in which Mitsuko places lighted candles on the two boys' foreheads. Moreover, both works express wish-fulfilments of extremely violent fantasies, in a defused, childlike manner.

"Shōnen" has a few of the defects of the earliest Tanizaki style, such as a tendency toward showy exquisiteness. To be sure, some varieties of literary artifice do function to considerable effect, as in "Shisei," but others, as in the style of this story, do not.

In "Chiisana ōkoku" a timid young teacher, Kaishima Shōkichi, finds himself gradually overwhelmed by the strange power of a pupil, Numakura. This child commands loyalty among his peers without abusing his power, and eventually the entire class does his bidding. Priding himself on a knowledge of children, Kaishima praises him. Numakura sets up an organization completely administering school activities; he goes so

far as to establish a Ministry of the Treasury which issues currency. At the end of the story Kaishima, sorely pressed for money, catches himself about to buy milk for his seventh child with a counterfeit bill, and congratulates himself for having eluded temptation.

This is the only work by Tanizaki which lends itself easily to interpretation from a socio-political viewpoint. Itō Sei states that in the guise of a children's world, this story treats of the domination of humans by a controlled economy. Currency produced by a society with a controlled economy changes the human consciousness of life, and distorts people's judgment on prices. It is possible to see this as a story criticizing modern society.<sup>22</sup> Itō goes on to comment that though Tanizaki undoubtedly had no such deliberate intent, and wrote it because of its own intrinsic interest, the result still has socio-political implications.<sup>23</sup>

The social commentary, however, is surely secondary to the common Tanizaki procedure of role inversion, with the apparently more powerful character being overwhelmed by his supposed inferior. The process is constantly taking place in male-female relationships, beginning with "Shisei," but this time the "strange power" is held by a young boy. The character of Numakura is not quite like that of other dominant characters in Tanizaki, as witness his refusal to torment the weak.

The life of the children is literally a world apart from the adult world. Therefore the story has more to do with Tanizaki's never-ending quest for an unknown country than with his alleged creation of a micro-cosm of society.

The nostalgic idealization with which Tanizaki views his own past, as in "Haha wo kouru ki" and "Shōnen," should make it clear that the terms "traditional" or "historical" setting as diametrically opposed to "contemporary," often used in Tanizaki criticism in order to distinguish his

varying approaches to literary material, must be employed with caution. Far more relevant for this writer is the perspective from which he gazes at his subject matter. The observation may be useful for a reading of Sasameyuki, and therefore justifies the discussion of lesser-known works like "Shōnen," which often equip the reader with intuitions which aid in interpreting the major writings.

It ensues from the above discussion that Tanizaki is successful in fiction when he stands outside his subjects, when he must objectify them in order to make literary sense. Most of these subjects are set in an indisputably distant region in time and place, in direct contrast to the overtly autobiographical writings.

B. The author as himself: the failure of the shi-shōsetsu

Mishima Yukio, with his talent for the apt image, once wrote of the peony-like beauty of "Shisei" against the grey background of Naturalism,<sup>24</sup> and similarly, "Shisei," "Kirin," and "Haha wo kouru ki" stand in bright contrast to the shi-shōsetsu ("I-novels") of Tanizaki's first period. It is essential to touch upon the latter works, because they lie on one side of a split in the author's self, and thereby present a problem which will be completely resolved near the end of his life, with Fūten rōjin nikki.

Though the term shi-shōsetsu eludes rigorous definition,<sup>25</sup> it refers in this thesis to fiction in which the author presents us with a thinly disguised self, either in first- or third-person narration, and attempts to reproduce the mundane facts of his daily existence as a young *littérateur* (the word is not too pretentious, considering the nature of his esthete poses at the time) in modern Tokyo. Two problems of terminology arise at this point. One is the temptation to use "objective" as opposed to

the "subjective" realm of the imagination in which the best works of the early period, as discussed in the previous section, were produced. It is clear, however, that the shi-shōsetsu stories under consideration here are quite as "subjective," so that the objective/subjective antithesis does not work. Other terms which come to mind are "realism" or "reality" but they must be qualified by adjectives or understood in context. The kind of reality, for example, which is so fruitful for Tanizaki artistically is the life of his imagination, far more compelling than the bare facts of outward circumstance.

The works in question range over the first eight years of Tanizaki's career and are as follows: "The Affair of Two Watches" (title in English, Romanized) (1910, I, 37-60), "Hōkō" 彷徨 ("Roaming," 1911, I, 109-142), "Hyōfū" 風吹 ("The Whirlwind," 1911, I, 209-246), "Akuma" 悪魔 ("The Devil," 1912, I, 271-298), Atsumono 羹 (Once Burnt, Twice Shy, 1912, I, 369-557), "Zoku-Akuma" 續悪魔 ("The Devil, Part 2," 1913, I, 559-609), "Kyōfu" 恐怖 ("Terror," 1913, II, 1-12), "Jōtarō" 饒太郎 ("Jōtarō," 1914, II, 353-461), "Shindō" 神童 ("The Child Prodigy," 1916, III, 275-367) and "Itansha no kanashimi" 異端者の悲しみ ("Sorrows of a Heretic," 1917, IV, 377-452).

Though Tanizaki states that "Itansha no kanashimi" is his only confessional work of fiction (kokuhaiku-shōsetsu),<sup>26</sup> in all of these works, the young protagonist is identifiable to some extent as an alter ego of the author.<sup>27</sup> The exception is Atsumono, whose hero is said to be modelled on a friend of Tanizaki's,<sup>28</sup> but the author uses his own experiences in the novel in such a way as to link it to the other works.

Except for "Itansha no kanashimi," these works fail to give an appropriate fictional form to the author's direct experience of everyday concerns. Tanizaki is already a master of structure in his maiden work, "Shisei," but when he approaches the different genre of the shi-shōsetsu,

he appears to be trying to reproduce reality, and cannot come to terms with the fact that life as it is does not have a structure. The fact is reflected in an extreme diffuseness of construction, an absence of focus in viewpoint that leaves the reader no clue as to how to grasp the material, as in Atsumono. Since this work is incomplete, it cannot perhaps be judged fairly from the point of view of form, but the reader notices such defects as shifts from dialogue to description with almost no attempt to relate the two aspects of prose narrative.

Is it odd that Tanizaki, to whom form was so important, should have composed such shapeless works? Perhaps not, in the context of the wider tradition of autobiographical literature in Japan, in which architectural unity has never been a primary consideration. On the other hand, the use of the shi-shōsetsu does not necessarily mean lack of attention to form; one has only to think of some of the short stories of Shiga Naoya to appreciate the fact. It is unfortunate, then, that Tanizaki chose a very different conception of the genre.

If the shi-shōsetsu is a projection of the self, it is to the detriment of the fiction that Tanizaki was most dissatisfied with himself as a young man. The protagonists of these works are typically listless, bored, forever fantasizing, and commonly afflicted with a fashionable nervous debility or neurasthenia (shinkei-suijaku). This means that the fiction has two major tendencies; either the stories are uneventful in the extreme, as rambles through an exceedingly ordinary life (e.g., Atsumono), or else the hero's emotions are hysterically exaggerated. "Kyōfu"<sup>29</sup> is a good example of the latter tendency. This brief story at least has the virtue of concentration, important in a period when the author has noticeable problems with longer forms. The "terror" of the title refers to a trait shared by many of the early autobiographical heroes of Tanizaki: they

suffer from Eisenbahnkrankheit (the word appears textually in Roman characters), or railroad phobia -- meaning simply that the neurotic heroes have a dire fear of riding on trains. It does not help reader-text relations that the hero of this story tells us his fear is ridiculous. On the contrary, the reader is all the less inclined to sympathize. The same malady afflicts the hero of "Akuma" and with the same result.

In the context of the works discussed in Section A, the over-dramatic expression suggests that in this period Tanizaki finds "reality," as in conventional fiction, unaccommodating to his passions, and depends on illusory worlds, or else on formal requirements such as the folktale, to shape his extremely unusual impulses into art.

It will suffice to examine the sole shi-shōsetsu work of any value: "Itansha no kanashimi." Its hero Shōzaburō is endowed with greater fictional substance than the protagonists of the other works. Tanizaki is able to dissociate himself from this character to the extent of saying that the aspiring author Shōzaburō, despite the squalor of his existence, has no wish to escape to a fairyland, for if he advances far enough socially he will be able to escape his environment. But as in the other stories he worries about being abnormal. In his relations with the members of his family, moreover, he is a shi-shōsetsu author/hero at his petty worst; he even scolds his dying sister O-Tomi. His anger at his uncouth father and resentment of his authority inevitably evokes comparison with the father image of Shiga Naoya 志賀直哉 in "Wakai" 和解 ("Reconciliation") but the struggle with him is not so fierce. In fact Shōzaburō is very ambivalent; he knows he loses patience with his relatives precisely because his ties with them are so strong. For the characterization, incidentally, it is remarkable that the portrayal of the mother does not fare much better than the father's. Complaining and rough in manners



and speech, as in "The Affair of Two Watches," she is the antithesis of the remote and beautiful maternal figure which readers consider typical of Tanizaki. It is the distancing brought by the memory and nostalgia which is the genesis of such works as "Haha wo kouru ki," so superior to this one.

The negative self-portrait constitutes the "heretic" element of the story. The hero is lacking in kindness, charity, filial piety and feelings of friendship. There is a movement in the story, however, from that portrayal toward the death of the sister at the end; Shōzaburō returns home after a drinking bout at a house of assignation, and this homecoming is symbolic of a return to the family and to feeling. At his sister's deathbed he apologizes, however briefly, for his former spells of anger toward her. The story, then, does have a structure, given by the temporal framework of O-Tomi's decline and death in the course of which psychological evolution of a sort occurs.

There is a variant ending, that of the original version. By omitting it later the author showed great concern for form as affecting substance. At first "Itansha" ended, after the death scene, with these lines:

About two months later, Shōzaburō revealed an original creation, a short story, to the literary world. His writing was totally unlike that of the Naturalist fiction fashionable at the time. His was a sweet, rich art, based on the strange nightmares fermenting in his mind (IV, 452).

This is of course an excellent self-description of Tanizaki's best early fiction, but that is not the issue here. The 1966-68 Chūō kōronsha edition of Tanizaki's complete works includes these lines, but to do so, as the editor and critic Hashimoto Yoshiichirō points out, is to violate the intent of the author according to the edition of 1955 which Tanizaki

personally oversaw.<sup>30</sup> Thematically and structurally the change is of the greatest importance. The original ending would make the novella into an art story, shifting the emphasis away from the inner drama of Shōzaburō's conflicts with his family. The art theme in this case is a trivializing influence.

If "Itansha" is the best of the autobiographical works, and it is the only one in which the author has tried to represent himself and his family, it may be necessary to modify to a slight degree the statement previously made about Tanizaki's inability to deal fictionally with experience. It succeeds to some extent because of its concern with formal elements, and greater care with characterization than in the other shi-shōsetsu writings.

Even this story is, however, a minor product. It may be paradoxical that an author with so strong a sense of himself as Tanizaki was unequal to the demands of the shi-shōsetsu. Or is it precisely because his own ego is so well-defined that he cannot submit to a mode of writing which, ultimately, forces the author to give himself up in a detailing of all the facts of his experience, and the revelation of the self in all its humbleness? To answer these questions would require a thorough examination of the shi-shōsetsu in general, which is far beyond the scope of the present study.

#### C. Tales of detection, mystery and crime: demands of genre

Both the few prominent successes and the fumbings of the shi-shōsetsu are located principally in the first half of Tanizaki's early period. In the latter half, Tanizaki appears to discard explicit autobiographical writing in favor of themes and forms more congenial to his storytelling genius. Among these are about a dozen works which could

be loosely grouped together as dealing with crime and mystery. All these works, like the exotic "escape" writings of Section A, represent a turning away from the world of outer experience in various ways. For one thing, some of them are detective stories, and the genre of the detective story calls for obedience to certain conventions, such as a firm plot and the timing of incidents to be revealed at just the right moment. Tanizaki, it is by now obvious, needed conventions at this point in his life to give shape to experience. Secondly, the element of the sensational and the sense of the hidden appeals to his temperament.

These writings are largely concentrated in the years 1918-1922 with the exception of a forerunner, "Himitsu" 秘密 ("Secrets," 1911, I, 247-270) and two later works, "Tomoda to Matsunaga no hanashi" 友田と松永の話 ("The story of Tomoda and Matsunaga," 1926, X, 409-493) and "Nihon ni okeru Kurippun-jiken" 日本におけるクリップン事件 ("A Crippen Case in Japan," 1927, XI, 29-44). "Himitsu" and "Tomoda" contain no crime elements at all, though the plots centre on mysteries to be solved. The mystery in "Tomoda" involves the identity of a Jekyll-and-Hyde character who symbolizes an East-West polarity much on the author's mind at that time. The rest of the stories in question are all primarily concerned with crime and some contain a predominant strain of detection.

Individually, most of these works do not merit detailed analysis but as a group they have many features of positive relevance to Tanizaki's work as a whole, in contrast to a discussion of his shi-shōsetsu which in the main have only a negative value.

We shall begin with an examination of the stories representing "detective fiction" in its narrowest sense.<sup>31</sup> In a definition by Edogawa Rampō, "detective fiction is literature which derives its chief interest

from the process whereby some baffling secret, usually related to crime, is solved logically and by gradual steps."<sup>32</sup> Therefore, even the simplest tale in this genre makes considerable technical demands on its teller. When Tanizaki follows the general requirements of the genre, it provides a framework which can help him to control his writing.

"Hakuchū kigo" 白晝鬼語 ("The Talk of Devils in Broad Daylight," 1918, V, 435-524) has an extremely strong element of detection, with the hero Sonomura going so far as to call himself a Sherlock Holmes and his friend a Dr. Watson. This amateur detective's tasks involve the cracking of a code based on Edgar Allan Poe's "Gold-Bug." The plot centers on the revelation of the identities of a supposedly murdered man and his murderers. Sonomura's excessively ingenious attempts at detection prove to be valid only in part, for at the end we learn that there has been no murder at all. A woman has staged the event in order to deceive and attract the rich and leisured Sonomura. The entire story consists of a series of red herrings for the protagonist and his friend as well as for the reader.

In the classic detective story, the plot moves relentlessly toward the unravelling of a mystery. This narrative procedure could not be more compatible with the author's already pronounced preference, as in "Shisei," for directing his plots toward a forceful conclusion. The best example is perhaps "Tojō" 途上 ("While Walking," 1920, VII, 1-26). The story consists almost entirely of a dialogue between a detective and a company executive. Through the former's questions as to the circumstances surrounding the death of his companion's first wife, it is gradually disclosed that he murdered her. The conduct of the narration is completely assured, with nothing in excess and with rigorous pacing.

Rampō commented that this story was unique in detective fiction but Tanizaki was made uncomfortable by the praise, remarking that it is indeed like a detective story, but that the use of the genre only constitutes the mask of the story. The real point, he says, is the indirect portrayal of the pitiful destiny of the wife.<sup>33</sup> Since Tanizaki makes these statements in 1930, when his phase of writing detective stories had been over for several years, one may legitimately wonder if this is an attempt at backtracking and reinterpreting his own work.

In the same essay, however, he expresses pride in his crime story "Watakushi" 我 ("The Thief," 1921, VII, 323-343)<sup>34</sup> as one of his best accomplishments to date. In his own words: "The criminal himself, playing the innocent, speaks in the first person and at the end reveals that he himself is guilty."<sup>35</sup> He expresses his preference for natural developments, rejecting forms that tantalize the reader with excessively strange incidents.<sup>36</sup> It is true that "Watakushi" is devoid of the imported detective-story fripperies of "Hakuchū kigo," with its allusions to Poe and its ostentatious use of Roman characters for one of the codes. Nevertheless, he does take extreme care in deceiving the reader. The "I" of the story, a student suspected of theft in a dormitory, draws in the reader as he expresses his awareness of suspicion falling on him. As the situation worsens an innocent friend warns him that the proctors are watching him. We know that he could indeed be the criminal but our doubts are somewhat allayed by the fact that we are inside the mind of the "I" narrator.

"Watakushi" is not a story of detection and thus belongs to the other works in this group, the majority; these are rather stories of crime. In "Nihon ni okeru Kurippun-jiken," after an essay-like

introduction dealing with the English wife-murderer Crippen, the author declares his intent to narrate the story not as a detective story, but to gather the facts of the case as it happened in Japan, and to arrange them. But narrative shares the centre of interest with a fascination with varieties of crime, and the states of mind that bring them about. These works, bearing the unmistakable imprint of Tanizaki's preoccupations, differ considerably from the work of other crime writers. In "Kurippun," for example, the author points out that none of the many contemporary newspaper accounts of the crime dwelt on the fact that it was the deed of a masochist, and the few essay-like pages at the beginning contain a lengthy explanation of the masochist. In "Yanagiyu no jiken" 柳湯の事件 ("The Incident at the Yanagi Bathhouse," 1918, VI, 111-138), a frame story, the teller of the tale is an author gathering material for his work; the author also appears in the same persona in stories of detection as well. In "Hakuchū kigo," though the principal interest lies in the revealing of a mystery, both Sonomura and his Watson share traits common to Tanizaki heroes. In both "Norowareta gikyoku" 呪われた戯曲 ("The Accursed Play," 1919, VI, 271-328) and "Yanagiyu," the criminal protagonists suffer from the familiar neurasthenia of the heroes of the shi-shōsetsu.

Despite the presence of the author as himself, most of the crime stories show how it is possible to counter the pull of the deadly autobiographical tendency, how the author's singular preoccupations are channelled into fiction.

Within the frame of "Yanagiyu no jiken" a wildly distraught young artist tells of his enthrallment to a powerful and hysterical woman. After a violent quarrel he wanders into the streets and ends by entering a bathhouse. In the tub he feels a rubbery substance under his feet,

then slithering movements like seaweed around his legs. In his frenzied state he imagines that he is treading on the corpse of his mistress. The passages dealing with the experience of the young man in the tub contain what is perhaps one of the clearest renderings of tactile sensation in the work of Tanizaki. As for the structure, the author indulges in no psychological digressions, so as not to dull the impact of the surprise ending.

By contrast, the weakest of the works in this category, "Kin to Gin" 金と銀 ("Gold and Silver," 1918, V, 337-433), which is basically an art story, reflecting the early concerns of the author, is inflated with explorations of states of mind and with solemn expoundings on Art.

Somewhat peripheral to the core of crime stories is their forerunner, "Himitsu" (1911), one of Tanizaki's earliest works. It offers significant hints as to the sources of the writer's artistic drives. "Himitsu" is not built along a strong linear plot, but neither is it a rambling shi-shōsetsu. It presents a series of variations on the motif of secrecy, which are graded in intensity. The same method is to be used effectively later, as in "Aoi hana" 青い花 ("Aguri," 1922). The "I" narrator has hidden himself away from the world near a Shingon temple. Longing for a strange mysterious world, he has fancies of ancient Babylonian and Assyrian legends, the stories of Conan Doyle, of tropical countries and the mischievous pranks of childhood. His second secret is an urge to walk in public, disguised as a woman, and when he carries out this wish, dull reality changes into a marvellous dream. A woman fulfils his taste for mystery by having him brought blindfolded in a carriage to her house, but once the mystery is solved -- she is just an ordinary widow -- the spell is broken, and the hero must move on, no longer satisfied with anything so insignificant as secrets.

It is notable that the hero of "Himitsu" does not actually desire to commit a crime, and none occurs in the story, but he has an urge to inhale its "fine and romantic perfume" (I, 257). This points to an issue much wider than the narrow generic category of detective stories. A study of this group of works affords the reader some clues to an important aspect of Tanizaki's sensibility. After 1927 no work is primarily a crime story, but the crime theme crops up constantly in his works. It is often a factor in characterization, in many works showing attempts to suppress the dark side of personality.

The novel which comes to mind at once is Kagi (1956); four people are simultaneously engaged in mutual deception, the stakes being the life of the hero. The fictional world of Tanizaki is full of subterfuge, manipulation and skulduggery. There is a corresponding technical intricacy: Kagi and its somewhat crude precursor Manji are the most salient examples of tangled character relationships, but innumerable other works bear the marks of the crime or mystery theme: "Yoshino kuzu" 吉野葛 ("Yoshino Arrowroot," 1931) is basically a mystery; Bushūkō hiwa (1931) consists of secrets; "Ashikari" 蘆刈 (1932) is a question of identity. "Shunkinshō" contains many question marks, and "Yume no ukihashi" 夢の浮橋 ("The Bridge of Dreams," 1959) even contains a death which may be the result of a murder. It is impossible, moreover, to enumerate the works built around the all-pervasive pattern of domination of one character by another; a domination that is willed by the supposed victim beginning with "Shisei" and re-appearing constantly until Fūten rōjin nikki; this manipulation of others amounts to psychic violence and crime.

This tendency even extends to the author-reader relationship, as the reader often finds himself almost involuntarily giving himself up



in the face of authorial coercion. The nature of this coercion is peculiar to Tanizaki; unlike the early Mishima, he does not leave the reader with the impression of having been duped by the author's cleverness. On the contrary, he draws the reader into complicity with the fictional process.

The essay "In'ei raisan" 陰翳禮讃 ("In Praise of Shadows," 1933, XX, 515-557),<sup>37</sup> expressive of Tanizaki's esthetic of light and shadow, might seem an odd candidate for this category of works, but the shadows are a concretization of the sense of mystery, in the widest sense, that underlies some of Tanizaki's best work. We have already noted the change in lighting effects from "Shisei" to "Haha wo kouru ki" and how, in the latter, the author's rendering of the dimness of a land of the imagination brings the reader into close communication with the narrator.

Hence a study of detective, crime and mystery fiction in Tanizaki touches on basic aspects on the writer. All of them reflect the anti-realistic view of the world which is at the base of his better fiction; some show a growing ability to withhold information that signifies a strong structural sense and, overall, an ability to make the authorial self into fiction.

#### D. Toward synthesis: Chijin no ai and Manji

The works just discussed represent a considerable narrative advance over the shi-shōsetsu, in the general trend in the fiction of the period 1918-1927. Tanizaki's first two full-length novels of respectable quality, Chijin no ai 痴人の愛 (A Fool's Love, 1924-25, X, 1-302) and 卍 Manji (The Whirlpool, 1928-30, XI, 393-569), situated near the end of the period, represent in different ways a movement toward reconciliation of the conflicting impulses in the artist: the necessity to escape and an equal need to represent the actual.

These two novels merit discussion in an entire section partly because of their calibre and also because they share a quality lacking in almost all the preceding works. A glance at a list of Tanizaki's fictional works, if set in chronological order and identified by genre, would reveal a predominance of the briefest short story forms in the early portion of his career, with a growing inclination to use longer forms like the novella and full-length novels in his two later phases. The young Tanizaki appears to have some difficulty in manipulating the longer forms; in this period, before Chijin, the shortest are generally the most successful. Tanizaki's early full-length prose works, like Atsumono and Kōjin 鯨人 (The Shark-Man, 1920, VII, 27-212) are excessively diffuse; in fact these two novels are unfinished, as though the author had abandoned all attempt to control his material, or even lost interest in it. In his second and third periods Tanizaki is found to be at his best in the long novella form, with the exception of Sasameyuki. Here, in Chijin no ai and Manji, he shows signs of an ability to pass the tests of narrative stamina.

A treatment of the former novel may legitimately be introduced by a glance at its precursor, the short story "Aoi hana" 青い花 ("Aguri," 1922, VIII, 223-243).<sup>38</sup> This work is an attempt to convey the mental and physical draining of one character by another, in a setting outwardly unpromising for such a process: a shopping expedition in the foreign commercial quarter of Yokohama. As the male protagonist Okada deteriorates, his demanding mistress Aguri flourishes. Basically, Okada's hysteria is only an extreme form of the familiar neurasthenia of the more explicitly shi-shōsetsu stories, but an interplay nerves/body is worked out in a satisfying form.

The story is plotless and impressionistic but far from chaotic, for it holds together through a sequence of motifs all relating to corporality. (1) Okada perceives his own body, formerly plump, now wasted; (2) Aguri's hands have a sculptural quality; (3) reference is made to clothing as something to hang on the body; (4) Okada thinks of Western clothes as binding around the human form; (5) Aguri is associated with a marble statue; (6) clothes are a second skin; (7) Aguri's body is perceived as a bulk through the tailor's flannel; (8) Okada sees her as a statue. The story ends with the "statue" smiling in a virtual apotheosis of the woman. This is not, however, an art story; it is sheer plasticity and corporality that count.

The narrative technique reflects the one-way relationship between the two characters in at least two sections. In one, the narrator imagines what his companion must be thinking and her thoughts are expressed through his mind. Then, in a fantasy the weakened Okada imagines he is dying on the street, and reproduces her supposed reactions on seeing him dead. The author makes this story a narrative improvement over the shi-shōsetsu by replacing sluggish interior monologue by the doubling of viewpoints, even though one of them is of course imagined by the main character.

One notable detail in the diction is the use of foreign words in Roman characters, an affectation that plagues the earliest autobiographical writing. This time their use has an appropriate function in the work, as they are employed to reproduce the signs on the Yokohama shops. Besides having an exotic visual value they convey, because they are seen through the eyes of Okada, the infatuation of the principal character with the West.

Chijin no ai deals with a similar theme but in the ample form of the novel: the gradual and inevitable destruction of a man's will through obsession for a woman. So far it is the best extended example of Tanizaki beginning to harmonize the mundane with his escapist drive.

In its most superficial aspects the novel reads as conventionally realistic. The setting is decidedly contemporary; the text locates it in the Taishō period. Jōji, the protagonist and first-person narrator is an engineer with an electrical company and Naomi is a young waitress whom he undertakes to educate in the ways of the West. The novel, moreover, abounds with topical allusions. Not coincidentally, Tanizaki focusses on the aspect of the period which is the most appealing to him: exoticism, meaning a fascination with all things Western. Naomi in name and in physique is far more Western than Japanese; there are constant references to foreign movies and their stars (Naomi is compared to Mary Pickford), to Western clothes, to dance halls. There is an almost manic insistence on modernity, equated with imported ways.

The real significance of this type of exoticism is the pull of idealism. The Tanizaki hero of this period and also of the later ones adores Western movie actresses literally; they are the objects of his need to worship women, which does not find a convenient outlet in traditional Japanese culture. Idealism as a flight from the actual is evident in the early chapters especially, when Jōji reflects on his first idyllic days with the young and innocent heroine, in a fairytale world, when their relationship was like the play of children. The other-world motif is continued as Jōji and Naomi move into their "fairytale house" (Otogibanashi no ie, a recurrent phrase as in X, 21), where he goes to the extent of getting down on all fours to give her a horseback ride.

Jōji's planned Westernization of Naomi results in success, with a gradual inversion of roles. The wilfulness of his creation reaches the point where she gains the upper hand, and from here it is a question of Jōji's enslavement to her. In the end he has become an acquiescent object.

The plot tracing this simple but dynamic parallel development is not remarkably constructed, but the course of Jōji's growing obsession is clearly signalled at intervals by several different methods. One is the use of the narrative viewpoint of Jōji, who looks back on the events of his life with Naomi. At various points in the novel the narrator appeals to the reader directly, as in the opening sentence of Chapter V, where he says that "the perceptive reader has no doubt already guessed from the content of the preceding episode that our relationship had gone beyond friendship" (X, 37). The statement, no doubt reflecting the original serialized form of the novel, shows the author striving to unify this work. The recurring appeals to the reader create a distancing effect which contrasts with the intensity of the emotional content of the story, and even helps to establish it. In Chapter VI another advantage of the retrospective viewpoint appears. In connection with his desire to make Naomi into a splendid treasure, Jōji comments, "Now that I think back to it, this was a folly, but..." (X, 48). For the narrator this is hindsight but for the reader who is ignorant of the outcome a sense of foreboding is created.

Unity is also aided by the reappearance of one significant situation: the horseback-riding game in different contexts to symbolize shifts in the relationship of the two. Early in the novel during the fairyland phase, Jōji urges Naomi, still childlike, to ride on his back. At midpoint in the novel, during a lull when Naomi is behaving with relative discretion,

a horseback ride recurs to point back to their earlier life, but near the end, Jōji's total acceptance of humiliation at Naomi's hands is marked when he pleads with her to ride on him. (It is important to observe here that when he makes his demand he sees a momentary fear in her eyes at the frenzy of his insistence, so that Jōji and other Tanizaki masochists are not totally spineless; they will their own fate.)

A third technique employed to give the work coherence is the use of graded figurative language, especially metaphors and similes. The content and expression of these figures have a strongly Western flavor. In his later writing Tanizaki tends to abandon their use, but in Chijin nō ai they play a prominent role. Nearly all of them deal with Naomi. First of all, their function in the text is decorative,, appropriately enough for a very materialistic heroine avid for all manner of adornments.

They are also graded in intensity to accompany the development of Jōji's obsession with her. If they were isolated from the narrative, the course of the protagonists' relationship with each other would still be evident. At first the author conveys her innocence in the images of life in their fairytale house, when Jōji compares her movements in their childish games to the scurrying motions of mice, or when he sees her training like the care of a small caged bird (X, 25). Very soon a development takes place; there is an accumulation of figures as Naomi is compared to a flower put into various vases (the reference is to clothing); she also becomes a marvellous doll and, eventually, an ornament (X, 47). The last image points out Tanizaki's conception of woman as an object of worship, with the emphasis on "object," which again supports the notion that the male characters in Tanizaki, forever in thrall to their women, are actually far less passive than they appear. Naomi's and

Jōji's respective attitudes to their relationship are conveyed with singular force in a pair of similes several chapters later. The first is on the surface absurdly pedestrian: Naomi's red lips pressing again and again on Jōji's face are likened to the red seals affixed in rapid succession to the mail by a busy postal worker. There proves to be a reason for the connotations of the simile, for it is at once followed by another figure of speech referring to its effect on Jōji. He receives the "stamping" (which has something in common with the delight felt by other heroes in being trampled by their women) as if countless camellia petals were raining on his face in a dream. Not until the end of the second comparison does the reader fully realize that the first implies Naomi's callous, impersonal view of Jōji, and that it therefore stands as an antithesis to the second, which is conventionally lyrical and expressive of the hero's rapture (X, 97).

The figures of speech for Naomi grow progressively more forceful. In sharp contrast to the innocuous bird and mouse of Chapter III, she becomes a wild animal (X, 117) and a powerful liquor which Jōji cannot help drinking (X, 221). These images are unremarkable in themselves, but more significant is a comparison which again reveals much about the hero's objectivization of woman. Jōji is looking through his diary in which he has pasted photographs he once took of various parts of Naomi's body. This was to treat her, he comments, exactly like a Greek statue or an image of a Buddha in Nara. "At this point Naomi's body became almost completely a work of art and to my eyes it seemed more perfect than a Buddha statue. As I gazed at it, I even felt a strong religious emotion welling up within me" (X, 225). It is significant that Jōji has not been gazing at the actual Naomi in order to receive this impression. He has first turned the woman into a set of photographs, and then he has exalted her as an art object. Esthetic imagery with religious overtones

are to reappear with the greatest force in Fūten rōjin nikki and will be discussed in the section devoted to this late novel.

Naomi thus objectivized now becomes a spirit with a certain ideal beauty (X, 266), then her new style is compared to the effect of pure music (X, 267), to a marble Venus (X, 290) and ultimately, before the final step in Jōji's capitulation, she is an evil spirit (X, 282). The permutations in the imagery for Naomi thus indicate the many stages in the perception of the heroine throughout the narrative.

Chijin no ai is not a fully realized work. The author is still in the process of struggling with the basic problems of rendering his own peculiar sensibility into fiction. How is he, for example, to express emotions far out of the ordinary without lapsing into melodramatic banality? He often succeeds in this novel, but there are lapses, such as the insipidly sensational turn of phrase: "For me, whose eyes were blinded with infatuation for her..." (X, 48) and, even worse, an extended comparison of himself to Mark Anthony (X, 61). The self-aggrandizing tendency frequently emerges in the early works, but Tanizaki is later to pare away this element.

A second technical problem which had before plagued Tanizaki's lengthier attempts at fiction is on the way to being solved. Chijin no ai is relatively free of the superfluities marring many of the earlier novels. The author aims the plot in a single direction without arresting its movement by redundant self-analyses, as in the shi-shōsetsu. For though the narrator is an "I" and many basic drives of the author are surely present, Chijin is indisputably a work of fiction.

The second successful novel of this period, Manji, is a pivotal work. It was composed and published at approximately the same time as Tade kuu mushi (1928-29), Tanizaki's first masterpiece in the longer



forms of fiction. Manji is more profitably categorized with the works of the writer's first period because it is conspicuously different from Tade kuu mushi, showing the narrative artist just before the stage of full maturity.

If Chijin no ai is an example of an author beginning to settle comfortably into the novel form, Manji is the outstanding example in the early period of the author's mastery of technique; it is a virtuoso display of plot and character control. The narrative line is so exceedingly complex that it appears to exist for its own sake. It cannot be summarized briefly in all its twists and turns. One can only begin by explaining the unusual title 卐, a character with multiple significance. In its primary sense this is the Buddhist swastika signifying "perfection of virtue." Buddhist motifs do occur in the novel, but they operate on a level more esthetic than spiritual. The initial impetus of the plot is in fact a portrait of Kannon executed by the narrator, Sonoko, and the principal action of the plot ends with Buddhist symbolism. But far more important is the graphic symbolism of the swastika. Each of its arms stands for one of the novel's four characters: Sonoko, Mitsuko with whom she falls in love, Sonoko's husband, and Watanuki, Mitsuko's lover. As the plot unfolds, each revelation of previously unsuspected relationships, each discovery of a deceit, causes the wheel to move into a spin that blurs the significance of the situation that preceded it.

If we can extract a central theme from this dizzying plot and arrangement of characters, it is that of artifice turning into reality. Sonoko, for example, falls in love with Mitsuko through a conspiracy carefully staged by Mitsuko herself. The first quarter of the novel, based on a triangle formed by the two women and Sonoko's husband, concerns a rumor coming

true: that of an affair between Mitsuko and Sonoko. From here the plot builds on a series of revelations. A new triangle comes into play: Watanuki-Sonoko-Mitsuko. The respective positions of deceivers and dupes shift so dramatically that at one point Sonoko declares the truth cannot be known. At the end, Mitsuko, Sonoko and the latter's husband, whose relationship with Mitsuko has recently come to light, make a suicide pact. In front of the Kannon portrait they lie down with Mitsuko in the centre, forming a Buddhist triad with a central image (honzon) and two attendant bodhisattvas (wakibotoke).

In the ordering of plot elements Tanizaki demonstrates a sense of narrative pace like that of an experienced detective story writer. He brings hidden motives and relationships into view at precisely the right moment. There is also a method of structuring which by now should be of no surprise to the student of his work. The Kannon triad at the end recalls the portrait of Kannon at the beginning. If Tanizaki had not used this technique repeatedly in the shortest of his stories, the reader might suspect that it was a crude device used by a writer of lengthy novels written and published in instalments, but this writer seems to take naturally to the method, in order to define the body of a given work.

Manji is also noteworthy for its experimental style. The author takes the persona of an Osaka woman, Sonoko, speaking in her own dialect. Tanizaki has used conversational forms before, but Manji is the only work written entirely in the speech of a woman until his last work of fiction, "Oshaberi" おしゃべり ("Chatter," 1964). The fact that all the works in the conversational mode range from the moderately to the very successful cannot be explained by their common use of the form, but it does suggest a degree of authorial detachment necessitated by

form which aids in the creation of fiction.

Tanizaki's handling of this conversational style makes the result an important precursor of the fully-developed prose manner of his second period commonly recognized as unique to this writer. This is a rich, flowing style already present in "Haha wo kouru ki" (1919) but exceptional in this first period. Later, with "Ashikari" and "Shunkinshō," the style becomes typical. The ample sentence structure permits the assimilation of divergent aspects of prose to each other: narration, description and even conversation. Here, in Manji, Tanizaki incorporates speech into narration. The novel falls into chapters, almost entirely lacking in paragraph divisions. The result is not a series of impenetrable chunks of prose, for the long and complex sentences are never unclear. Tanizaki in this novel proves he has learned a technique which he will use to perfection in "Ashikari" and "Shunkinshō." The effect in Manji is very different from that of the latter, for here the blurring is applied to turns of plot, revelations of motive which steal upon the reader almost imperceptibly; he is absorbed into the englobing rhythm of the Osaka woman's speech.

Here is what the author had to say about the use of this narrative technique in Manji:

I chose that form from the method of writing of George Moore after Heloise and Abelard and from classical Japanese novels from the Genji Monogatari onwards. In the famous discussion on women in the "Hahakigi" chapter of the Genji, it is difficult to distinguish conversation from narration and to tell where a speech begins, and whose it is, but that method brings out the essence of Japanese beauty. With that concern in mind I took pains with the relation between narration and conversation. Nevertheless I thought of the reader's convenience and left in the quotation marks, but in "Ashikari" I omitted them. <sup>39</sup>

If the text gives off a visual effect of density, it also has an auditory value, for the reader as in the best of Tanizaki's works, finds himself also a listener. Thus he participates with the sensei whom Sonoko is addressing directly. The sensei is not a completely passive listener. Identified in Sonoko's narration as a novelist, he appears as himself parenthetically in an "Author's Note" in order to present his impressions of Sonoko, whom he rapidly identifies as a widow and about whom he makes some guesses as to status and character (XI, 400).

The author's momentary entrances into the text is one of several methods of varying the narration to ward off monotony. Others include the use of letters (XI, 425-28) and a contract drawn up by Watanuki binding him to Sonoko as brother to sister which is introduced by another "Author's Note" (XI, 495-96). In particular, the brief authorial appearances constitute the germ of the technique of shifting perspectives which Tanizaki will bring to full realization in Shunkinshō.

Though the reader is inclined to give the benefit of the doubt to the author in the many cases of implausibility in Manji because of the skill in technique which englobes him, he is at the end somewhat dissatisfied with the total effect of the novel. It is perhaps inappropriate to compare it to Chijin no ai, a novel so different in conception and methods, but these are the first two of Tanizaki's better novels, and they afford the opportunity of defining what is lacking in one by the qualities of the other. Chijin, for all its obvious crudity, probably gives more pleasure to the reader than the formally more refined Manji. For the ultimate emotional impact of Manji does not equal its technical interest. The reader marvels at the novelist's skill in manipulating the characters rather than being drawn to the characters themselves and their fates. The reaction is almost the opposite of that which he experiences on reading the

far simpler Chijin no ai. In Manji the author has not arrived at harmony in evoking emotion by means of great technical subtlety, but the process is taking place simultaneously with Manji, as Tade kuu mushi is being written. Each of these works typifies its own period. If Manji shows Tanizaki as a storyteller of talent, Tade kuu mushi proves that he is a supreme narrative artist.

The works examined in this chapter are more than precursors of Tanizaki's best writing in the area of technique. They reflect Tanizaki's divided outlook on experience. Especially in the earliest years, the superior fiction is the product of an imagination insisting on refuge in realms distant in time and place, while the less successful shows the author's attempts at a more representational mode of writing. Dichotomy, already in the process of resolution in the later stages of the first period, as in Chijin no ai, will yield to harmony in the second. Study of the works of the early period shows how extreme the split was. The phenomenon suggests a basis for interpreting later works, especially those of the second period, such as Tade kuu mushi and Sasameyuki. The reader will perceive that these novels are less than models of representational fiction, for the idealizing tendency of the author always lurks below the surface.

## CHAPTER II

FULL MATURITY: FROM TADE KUU MUSHI TO  
SHŌSHŌ SHIGEMOTO NŌ HAHĀ, 1928-1950

Despite the thematic consistency which marks Tanizaki's writings from beginning to end of his career, his works show an astounding qualitative development starting with Tade kuu mushi 蓼喰ふ虫 (Some Prefer Nettles, 1928-29). From this point his fictional production consists primarily of successes. The second period, where most of his major achievements are located, offers such a contrast with the first phase that speculation on the possible reasons is inevitable. The causes usually adduced are extra-literary, such as the author's move from his native Tokyo to the Kansai area after the great earthquake of 1923, which would signify a return to Japanese tradition, and his marriage to Nezu Matsuko, whom he himself credits with influencing several of his best works.<sup>40</sup> Even if these factors have some connection with Tanizaki's choice of subject matter, they do nothing to explain the enormous advances he made in the art of fiction. Perhaps no critic will ever account for the change, for the answer lies in the realm of the inexplicable: the origins of artistic inspiration.

To place the major works of this period in the context of Tanizaki's other writings, fiction in the totality of his work begins to assume a minority position starting from the second period. Only some seventeen works between 1928 and 1950 are unquestionably fictional, and there is a corresponding upsurge in non-fiction. Before this period Tanizaki wrote little besides short stories, novellas, and dramas, the only notable work of non-fiction being an essay published in 1927, "Jōzetsuroku" 饒舌録 ("A Record of Loquacity," XX, 69-166). In the second

period, besides one drama and one meager collection of verse, Tanizaki published autobiographical reminiscences and journals, and two of his best-known non-fictional works, "In'ei raisan" ("In Praise of Shadows," 1933) and Bunshō dokuhon 文章読本 (A Style Reader, 1934, XXI, 87-246), each expressive of different facets of his esthetic.<sup>41</sup>

Fiction and non-fiction contrast sharply with each other in this period. The lack of works with an overt shi-shōsetsu quality points to a dissociation of the self from fiction. Correspondingly, many of the essays or prefaces to his own works, particularly Bunshō dokuhon, show an assertion of the author's individual values in literature, and the maturing of the conscious artist he has been since "Shisei." This process actually begins in the late twenties with Tanizaki's debate with Akutagawa Ryūnosuke, who disputed Tanizaki's emphasis on the value of plots in fiction.

The development of Tanizaki as a narrative artist emerges in this second period in many aspects of his work. Most importantly, when the author appears as a narrator, he fictionalizes himself in an entirely satisfactory manner, to resolve the problem of the author-narrator relationship which troubled him earlier, especially in the shi-shōsetsu. His grasp of fictional modes and styles is firm; gone are the pyrotechnics of plotting as in Manji, the extravagances of the first stories with their splendidly descriptive patches and their gilded Sino-Japanese terms; gone too are the hysterical declamatory passages as in Chijin no ai, the conspicuous imagery, and the foreign words in Roman type. Tanizaki also breaks out of his confinement within the limits of the short story to reach a high level of success in the novella and the novel. But if the early tightness has disappeared, the writing is no less controlled. The author forges a new style, unique in its suppleness and fluidity, as

heralded by "Haha wo kouru ki" (1919). For all these changes, one aspect of the relationship between the author and his material remains the same: Tanizaki is still infatuated with worlds not of this world, and the coexistence of the ideal with the circumstantially "real" is what gives life to some of the best writing of this phase.

The works belonging to this period will not be discussed in strict chronological order but in groups, by affinity of themes and authorial viewpoint, since it is not possible to trace a steady evolutionary pattern.

The arguments for the definition of the second period are as follows. A case could be made for Manji as belonging to it, since its dates of publication (March 1928–April 1930) overlap with those of Tade kuu mushi (December 1928–June 1929). It does precede Tade, however, if only by nine months, and its quality places it with the early works. No one would deny that Tade is Tanizaki's first major work; indeed, Tanizaki writing in 1948 says there has been no basic change in his works after Manji.<sup>42</sup> For the cut-off point, Shōshō Shigemoto no haha 少将滋幹の母 (The Mother of Captain Shigemoto, 1949–50) has been selected because it clearly belongs to the second period if only by the use of traditional literary and historical sources, and is thus distinguished from the works of the third and final phase, when Tanizaki abandons historical material. It is also related to the works of the early thirties in theme and treatment.

#### A. The triumph of anti-realism

As evident from the works discussed in Chapter I, Tanizaki is artistically liberated when he departs from the representation of his immediate environment. Most of the fictional works of this period, based on



material from the Japanese past, shows Tanizaki's narrative art at its highest point.

The first six of the seven works to be examined in this section were published in the years 1930-33, and divide themselves naturally in two groups: Rangiku monogatari 乱菊物語 (A Tale of Chrysanthemums in Disarray, 1930, XII, 215-557), Mōmoku monogatari 盲目物語 (A Blind Man's Tale, 1931, XIII, 55-158) and Bushūkō hiwa 武州公秘話 (The Secret History of the Lord of Musashi, 1931, XIII, 181-341); then the novellas "Yoshino kuzu" 吉野葛 ("Yoshino Arrowroot," 1931, XIII, 1-54), "Ashikari" 蘆刈 ("Ashikari," 1932, XIII, 441-491) and "Shunkinshō" 春琴抄 ("The Story of Shunkin," 1933, XIII, 493-555). The last work, Shōshō Shigemoto no haha (XVI, 153-282) will be discussed as in a class slightly apart from the others.

The first three novels, all set in the sixteenth century, differ considerably from each other in conception and narrative method. Bushūkō hiwa is particularly distinctive because of its mock-heroic, comico-grotesque aspects, but must be considered with the two others because it is a reflection -- though inverted -- of certain attitudes apparent in them.

Rangiku monogatari is a novel intended for popular consumption. Its sheer entertainment value is sufficient cause for regret that the author abandoned it after Part I. In the Preface, Tanizaki explains his reasons for choosing the background of the tenth, eleventh and twelfth Ashikaga shoguns (terminal date 1546) for his work. First of all, the era being of traditionally minor interest to most Japanese, it contains few major personalities or great incidents, thus affording scope for an author's imagination. He also expresses some reserve about treating well-known episodes from history or about changing it, and for these reasons, too, he has selected the Chūgoku region, avoiding concentration

on political centres like Kyoto or Kamakura.<sup>43</sup>

Tanizaki's reluctance to choose well-known subject matter is generally supported by an overview of the material of his subsequent works with traditional material, although he does portray Oda Nobunaga and Toyotomi Hideyoshi in Mōmoku monogatari and in Shōshō Shigemoto no haha he draws on accounts of actual Heian personalities including Sugawara no Michizane. The tendency to avoid reworking of old material also extends to Tanizaki's approach to literature. With the exception of "Ashikari" and portions of Shōshō Shigemoto no haha, Tanizaki does not often draw on literary tradition for his own purposes in the sense that Mishima often does, for example in Kindai nōgakushū 近代能樂集 (Modern Nō Plays). It might be objected that Tanizaki does bring the otogizōshi "Sannin hōshi" 三人法師 ("The Three Priests") up to date in a work of the same title published in 1929, but in reality this is a free translation and not a recasting with individual literary values. In a preface, Tanizaki states that he adhered as closely as possible to the original text, while improving on the clumsy tentative style (XII, 189).

In Rangiku monogatari the freshness of the subject matter is at least equalled by the treatment. Its inventiveness in the creation of incidents and situations fulfils a minimal requirement for the author of a long novel with popular appeal, but Tanizaki does far more than satisfy this primal need on the part of the reader; he informs the whole with a schema assuring clarity. It is possible to talk about the "whole," even though Rangiku is unfinished, for its components are arranged in a pattern.

The theme is that of quest, on several levels. The first chapter, "Hottan" 発端 ("Origins"), has a self-contained value. It tells of

a double quest; Kagerō, a famous courtesan, sends a Chinese merchant on a search for a precious mosquito netting, and the prize will be Kagerō herself. The rarity of the treasure and the difficulty of obtaining it at once recall the stories of the suitors in Taketori monogatari

竹取物語 (The Bamboo-cutter's Tale), but as a concession no doubt to the wide audience the ancient tale is mentioned in the text.

The chapter ends with the Chinese merchant vessel sunk by an encounter with a phantom vessel in the Inland Sea; the golden box holding the treasure sinks with it.

The next chapter suddenly shifts to an entirely different story with different plot and characters. Two country samurai are on another quest: each has been sent to the capital in search of a suitably elegant mistress for his lord. The third chapter also marks a distinct change, for we are now on a pirate island, but the various plot elements here begin to fall into place. The pirate chief is aiming at possession of the golden box, and we learn that a festival is to take place in the port town of Muro where Kagerō lives and where her suitors are to appear for the occasion. Another shift follows, this time to a rather unsavory magician-priest, Gennami, who demonstrates his arts in the capital. Next, we return to the older of the two samurai, Shōemon, and his adventures in his attempts to meet a lady who may meet his master's requirements, then to the festival in Muro at which fantastic events take place.

In his earlier attempts at handling more than a limited number of characters, incidents or actions (e.g., Kōjin), the author has many problems, especially with exposition, but here the narrative methods clearly facilitate understanding. A simple method of presenting situations, even with new characters, is to give the dialogue first and identify the speaker later. In a variation of the delaying technique, the author may start

from a distance in a description and then bring the focus closer, so that a visual and emotional impact is made, and the characters, at least as shapes, are impressed on the reader's mind before the situation is explained. For example, in the third chapter, a woman is standing on an island cliff, gazing out over the sea; then a hand comes into view. It signals; a man makes his way over the water to meet her. Not until later do we learn that these two characters belong to the pirate band and that the man has been looking for the treasure box.

By far the best example of delayed explanation is the episode of the lady of high birth whom the samurai Shōemon wishes to view so that he may be assured of her beauty before taking her back to his master in the provinces. Like a mysterious Heian lady, she lives in a lonely, decaying residence. After Shōemon gives presents of money to her greedy nurse, he is allowed to glimpse her in a dark room, but all he can see is a blurred face giving him an eerie sensation. The lady's attendants then show him a finely crafted lacquer box holding her excreta which give off the odor of perfume. At length he manages to view her, though dimly, through a steamy vapor, as she takes her bath. The scene is heavy with allusion; the steam evokes a spring mist through which Mount Fuji is perceptible. The situation is paralleled with that of the fisherman Hakuryō meeting a heavenly maiden on the beach at Miho, as in the Nō play Hagoromo 羽衣 (The Robe of Feathers). At last the samurai discovers that the lady has been hidden away or perceived in darkness for a good reason: her face is covered with pockmarks and her heavy hair is a wig covering a completely bald pate. She and her attendants turn out to be a band of confidence tricksters who have plotted every act in detail to deceive and rob her many unsuspecting

suitors. The reader, too, has been deceived, all the more as the author has conducted the narration from the viewpoint of the samurai who is enraptured by the aura surrounding the lady, and the revelation of the swindle at the end creates a surprise effect like that of the disclosures in the final pages of a detective story.

Perhaps this bathetic ending scarcely merits extensive discussion, but this episode and other comic elements in the plot and characterization, such as the clownish figure of Gennami, constitute a departure for Tanizaki. The works examined in the previous chapter are devoid of comedy, except the unintentional sort sometimes excited by the shi-shōsetsu heroes. The comic aspects of this novel may be associated with those of Bushūkō hiwa and "Neko to Shōzō to futari no onna" 猫と庄造と二人の女 (1936), both of this second period, and their existence accompanies a growing detachment of the author from his material.

Another development for Tanizaki is marked by a passage concerning the pirate island Iejima. The third section of Chapter III begins with two waka, one by Fujiwara no Ietaka and the other by Sugawara no Michizane, both alluding to the island. The prose passage following the poems is an essay on Iejima as an inspiration for poetry. There follows a return to the author's present, in comments on large modern ships unable to pass through the waters around the island (XII, 299-300). This passage represents one of Tanizaki's first uses of the essay or commentary manner in fiction, which is to assume considerable importance in "Ashikari." The result is to create a density in the text appropriate to the faraway atmosphere, all the more so as the author makes us aware that he is writing in the present.

The author of a popular novel, however, cannot make too extensive a use of the method. The attraction of Rangiku monogatari lies in the conduct of the plot, and the fact affirms certain theoretical statements made in the course of Tanizaki's literary debate with Akutagawa three years earlier, in 1927. In Jōzetsuroku he insists on the importance of the plot in fiction, and opposes the "rules" about literature implicit in the tendency of the critics to praise what he sees as cheap confessional literature. Tanizaki states that the novel (or short story or novella, since the term used is shōsetsu) is by nature an interesting story to tell to the general public, and complains about the Japanese literary world equating "popular" literature with "low" (XX, 107). Furthermore, in July, 1930, while Rangiku was being serialized, Tanizaki published a brief essay, "Taishū bungaku no ryūkō ni tsuite," 大衆文学の流行について ("On the Vogue for Popular Literature," XXII, 289-292), claiming that the novel with wide general appeal is in the line of pure Japanese literature, that of Chikamatsu, Saikaku and Bakin, and that the confessional and psychological novels are not (XXII, 290).

Thus the author is confirming tendencies already observable in the writings of his first period. It is clear that his literary temper did not incline him to the shi-shōsetsu and the psychological novel. And although the achievements of his first period, like "Kirin," may not in appearance be "popular," the care he took to form some of his stories leaps to the eye, even in the cases, as in "Aoi hana" where plot interest is nonexistent or secondary, so that in the sense that he is thereby considerate of the reader, he is accessible to a far wider audience than he would have been by following the principles of contemporary men of letters.

A work which would satisfy esthetic canons far stricter than for Rangiku is Mōmoku monogatari,<sup>44</sup> though its historical setting, the period of the civil wars of the sixteenth century, has long been material for popular treatment.

Despite Tanizaki's earlier expressed reluctance to use well-known aspects of history he places both Oda Nobunaga and Toyotomi Hideyoshi in the tale as important secondary characters. The center of interest is Lady Oichi, Nobunaga's younger sister, and her individual destiny in a period of violent civil disorder. The action of the novel is largely that of the times, pictured as a series of continually shifting military and familial alliances, of treacheries, brutalities, rises and declines in power -- all overlaid by a sense of the passing of time -- and culminating in the death of Lady Oichi. Unsurprisingly for an historical novel, private tragedy is identified with public turmoil.

Tanizaki shapes the considerable mass of material partly by the use of a limited viewpoint, that of the narrator who looks back on his period of service with Lady Oichi, in the position of a masseur and musician. The outlook on public events is simplified, for many of the facts are known to the man of higher status whom the old masseur is addressing some years after the death of Lady Oichi. A more important factor is the blind man's devotion to the lady, so that all events are seen in relation to their effect on her.

The narration is organized along chronological lines but with an emphasis on the cyclical nature of situations and events. The reader is ever aware of the passing of time. The principal events of the novel take place between 1559 and 1583; the old man identifies happenings not only by year and month, but sometimes by time of day. In the first crisis befalling Lady Oichi, her brother Nobunaga is besieging Odani

castle, held by her husband Nagamasa. Nagamasa in the face of defeat prepares to commit suicide and sends his wife and daughters to Nobunaga, despite her pleas to let her follow him into death. There follows a long period of seclusion of nine years for Lady Oichi, as exactly noted by the narrator, after which she remarries. Starting from the new conjugal situation the reader has a sense of a cycle repeating itself, for the second husband, Shibata Katsuie, is as benevolent and honourable as the first. Like Nagamasa, he finds himself besieged in his castle by an enemy he cannot trust; this time it is Hideyoshi, who has been strongly attracted to Lady Oichi. Again the husband plans to commit suicide and tries to dissuade his wife from doing the same. In the climactic scene of the novel the narrator plans to save her life, if only to hand her over to Hideyoshi, but his efforts end in failure, for Lady Oichi dies with her husband.

The cyclical movement of the novel does not end here. The ideal of Lady Oichi survives in the form of her daughters, particularly Ochacha, who goes to live with Hideyoshi. His attraction to her is explained by her resemblance to Lady Oichi. Hence the final pages in which the narrator explains the fate of the lady's children do not merely indicate that the author is tidying up loose plot threads. There is even an allusion to Ochacha herself brought to suicide after the death of Hideyoshi; thus cycle upon cycle has been established in the novel. The process may appear to be not so much the result of deliberate structuring as a perfectly natural one in the context of civil disturbances bringing about revolutions in human fortunes, but a pattern in the structure undeniably exists. This deceptively unstudied effect is one aspect of Tanizaki's manner in this period, distinguishing it from the self-consciously crafted works of the first phase.



Another apparently natural element in the novel is the use of song lyrics at various points in the narration. They increase in affective intensity along with their importance to the narrative. Yaichi, the blind masseur, also has the function of entertainer, as a singer and samisen player. At first song appears in the form of innocuous verses to popular tunes which Yaichi sings to Lady Oichi's small daughter (XIII, 62-63), or the lyrics to a song accompanying a comic dance he performs before his master and mistress (XIII, 69-70). At this point the reader sees only that the short verses have a double appeal, visual as well as auditory, for they provide breaks in the long and often complex paragraphs.

Gradually the song interludes take on a stronger affective value. Verse next appears in the form of love songs sung by Yaichi to the women of the castle, and in which Lady Oichi takes great interest (XIII, 96-98). It is now clear that by using Yaichi in the role of an artist the author is able to suggest the intensity of the blind man's love for Lady Oichi which as a lowly servant he can otherwise express only in terms of feudal devotion, and of which in fact he is only half conscious himself.

Maybe the words of these songs touched some hidden feelings of mine... . Anyway, whenever I sang them, pouring out my heart, I felt a mysterious strength within me and found myself elaborating on the melody, singing in a warmer, more passionate tone of voice (XIII, 98).<sup>45</sup>

Finally, in the banquet scene in the besieged castle just before the climax, the use of verse functions on various levels. It first appears in a spirited song heard by the party from a distant tower, implying gaiety in the face of imminent defeat (XIII, 133). Lord Katsue approves, but he sings a passage from the Nō play Atsumori 敦盛, which evokes a sense of the transience of life befitting the situation facing the defenders

of the castle (XIII, 134). Next, Yaichi feels that a song sung by Chōroken, a warrior-priest who is also a musician, on the legendary beauty of Yang Kuei-fei, Yaichi alludes to Lady Oichi, so that in his mind regret for the imminent destruction of her beauty is sharpened. At Chōroken's urging Yaichi begins to take part in the festivities, and the first phrase he sings is a recall of one of the songs expressing his relationship to her, as mentioned above (XIII, 135 and 97).

In their fullest form of development, music and verse blend into the action. Yaichi notices that as Chōroken plays the samisen he uses a code known to all blind performers on the instrument. Chōroken in effect is asking Yaichi to help save Oichi's life, presumably in order to hand her over to the enemy Hideyoshi. In a mixture of samisen code and song, they exchange messages, with Yaichi now determined to save his mistress. His attempt is to be made later, but now, most prophetically, Lord Katsue and Lady Ochi write their death poems.

Style, as well as structure, is impossible to discuss apart from the narrator-text relationship, which is singularly tight in this novel. The presence of the "I" narrator, always involved as participant and commentator, is furthermore defined by his mode of address to a listener who does not enter the text but is characterized, from the blind man's incidental comments, as a man of higher social rank, and of some degree of learning, whom he begs to record the story.

The tale is told in the masu form of the verb and in the honorific forms appropriate to the double relationship of Yaichi to his interlocutor and of Yaichi to his idol, Lady Oichi. The use of the conversational mode represents the culmination of all Tanizaki's previous uses of the form. The earliest appearances of the masu style are in the third

person, first as befitting a lowly jester ("Hōkan," 1911) and then as an aid to the narration of a fairy tale ("Ningyo no nageki," 1915). A step closer in identifying the teller with his tale lies in a frame story, both within and outside the body of the story itself, as an old man relates a tale in the first person ("Ningen ga saru ni natta hanshi," 1918). In a major development, Tanizaki then brings the narrator into the text, as an Osaka woman relates her story in her own dialect (Manji, 1928-30). In Manji, however, a trace of the frame story technique is still present, as the sensei whom Sonoko addresses inserts his own notes into the text. All traces of the frame are gone in "Kiinokuni no kitsune urushi kaki ni tsuku koto" 紀伊國狐憑漆掻語 ("A Lacquer-Gatherer of Kii Bewitched by Foxes," XIII, 159-172) published at the same time as Mōmoku monogatari (Sept., 1931), as the "I" narrator, a village man, is alone to tell a tale of fox possession.

In Mōmoku monogatari the identification of narrator with text extends much further than the use of conversational verbal forms. The text strikes the eye at once because of its extended use of hiragana where the reader would normally expect kanji. Tanizaki explains his use of kana as follows in Bunshō dokuhon:

...I aimed at a visual effect and also at slowing the tempo of the sentences, that is, at a musical effect. As the old man gropes his way through his dim memories, he tells his tale slowly in a hoarse, indistinct voice. In order to convey his faltering speech to the reader, I used many kana to make the text rather difficult to read (XXI, 211).

The phrase "rather difficult to read" does not indicate an author desirous of obfuscating the meaning of his work. Tanizaki, ever at pains to facilitate the reader's understanding, sometimes supplies characters beside the kana when they present particular difficulty, but not so often

that they impair the slowness of the tempo.

Tanizaki's intent as expressed in the quotation above is subtle; indeed it surpasses the effect most readers would find in the style. It is easy to hear the slow, tentative rhythms of the old man's speech, but who would characterize the voice as "hoarse"?

Since the novel in its totality is conveyed through the old man's narrative, dialogue and characterization assume a special value. First of all, the use of reported speech in the old man's story represents a development over that employed in Manji, already a technical success, where the incorporation of dialogue into the text makes for fluidity and density at the same time. In Momoku monogatari, the author normally assimilates speech into the text, with or without quotation marks, but at times dialogue appears in conventional form, set off from the body of the narration in individually paragraphed speeches. When dialogue is distinguished in this manner it immediately draws the reader's attention to its content, since, frequently, entire sequences of pages are unbroken by paragraphing. Dialogue occurs in only five passages of the novel, all at significant moments. It is used most extensively in the climactic scene near the ending, to dramatize the conflict between Lady Oichi and her second husband, Lord Katsue, who refuses to let her commit suicide with him despite all her pleas (XXIII, 141, 143). At this point the dramatic function of the dialogue, although it may have an immediate interest, does not emerge in its full significance until the work has been read in its entirety. The character of Lady Oichi, though the centre of interest in the novel, is not foregrounded, in accordance with the author's desire to keep her remote, through the standpoint of the blind masseur. The author does not analyze her except in Yaichi's conjectures on her motives, but the total effect of this characterization points out the fallacy of

assuming that characters analyzed from the inside are necessarily the most successful. Her reactions to the events bringing disaster upon her can only be seen from the outside, but they are rendered with considerable impact. The dialogue in the passage between Oichi and Yaichi early in the novel during the siege of Odani castle conveys her reactions in oblique but unmistakable fashion. It occurs as Yaichi massages her, when she suddenly asks him why he chooses to remain in the castle when so many warriors are defecting. Yaichi expresses his desire to stay with her, in necessarily humble and muted terms. The entire exchange is a triumph of understatement through dialogue; only the sad tones of her voice are noted, and after the dialogue Yaichi thinks he hears the rustle of paper, which he guesses -- he does not see -- is used to dry her tears (XIII, 74-75).

If the narrator's social situation obliges the author to render Lady Oichi in a hazy perspective, his physical affliction is of equally crucial importance. For if Yaichi is a servant who cannot even allow himself to think of aspiring to his lady, he is also allowed, as a masseur, to experience close bodily contact with her, to experience through the touch. In the massage scene just indicated, Yaichi senses Oichi's emotions not through speech but through the touch; his fingers can feel distress in the tightness of her neck muscles (XIII, 73). Tanizaki usually conceives his ideal women in visual terms of light and shadow, but through his use of the narrator in Momoku monogatari, he renders this type of heroine in terms of close physical contact without violating her remoteness.

The author never again identifies narrator with text with such intimacy. Several general conclusions emerge from a study of his techniques in Momoku. The first is the apparent naturalness of narrative method, far outdistancing Manji, which by comparison is merely an

example of virtuosity, and concomitantly, a far greater subtlety in the rendering of emotion. One has only to compare Yaichi to Jōji in Chijin no ai to appreciate the development. Lastly, the author has set himself at a considerable distance from the material in the telling of the story.

The more successful stories of Tanizaki's first period are often set in a distant past. The works discussed in this section, though showing a similar displacement in time and place, give proof of an extraordinary development: the fairy tale has grown into the romance. Obvious problems are raised by the application of this Western generic term, whose closest Japanese equivalent would be monogatari as distinguished from shōsetsu or novel<sup>46</sup> -- all these terms have been used to cover a wide spectrum of prose forms. Here, we shall take monogatari in a limited acceptance, as a mode of prose fictional writing that aims not at representation of experience but rather at stylization. The fairy tale, too, would fit into this definition but like the short story as distinguished from the novel, it tends to be far more circumscribed in implications of theme, character and incident. At any rate, though Momoku monogatari and Rangiku monogatari are in the same line as "Shisei," "Kirin," and "Ningyo no nageki" they are indisputable proof of growth in the narrative art of Tanizaki.

As Tanizaki uses the term monogatari in its simplest meaning of "tale," the reader grasps his attitude toward himself as a teller of tales. In his first period, the word appears twice for titles of dramatic works: Hōjōji monogatari 法成寺物語 (A Tale of Hōjōji, 1915, III, 41-110) and Jūgoya monogatari (1917), but not at all for prose fiction, though within his stories the word recurs frequently. Since this is the phase of short stories, Tanizaki's storytelling consciousness emerges in his

reference to a number of works as hanashi -- also "tale" but on a more modest level, for example, "Ningen ga saru ni natta hanashi" (1918) and "Tomoda to Matsunaga no hanashi" (1926). It is only in the second period with Rangiku and Mōmoku that hanashi is extended to monogatari in the expected sense as prose fiction. Tanizaki even uses the term for an autobiographical essay, "Seishun monogatari" 青春物語 ("A Tale of my Youth," 1932) and for a literary essay, "Watakushi no bimbō monogatari" 私の貧乏物語 ("A Tale of my Poverty," 1925, XXI, 247-260).

It is not inappropriate to assimilate Bushūkō hiwa to this monogatari group, for it joins Rangiku and Mōmoku through its historical setting and a similar imaginative projection far beyond the immediate concerns of the author.

This unfinished work presents greater critical difficulties than any other so far examined. Both problems and possible interpretations will become more evident through a commentary on the sequence of the narrative.

The body of the narration is preceded by a Preface and a Table of Contents to lend an aura of authenticity to the novel. The Preface is composed in Chinese as in the dignified official histories of the time, but formality collapses almost at once as the reader encounters the phrase stating that the great heroes like Uesugi Kenshin are famous for their "sex lives" (sei-seikatsu). The anachronism is underlined as the narrator-author repeats the rumor that the valorous Lord of Musashi was a "masochistic sex pervert" (higyakusei-hentaiseiyokusha). He then excites the reader's curiosity by promising to reveal the true facts about the hero's life gained from a reading of secret documents. We are now prepared

for a full mock-heroic treatment of this character, but this expectation is suspended at least temporarily by other factors.

As in "Shunkinshō" the narrator-researcher judges the purported documents for their reliability and settles on a record made by Dōami, a confidant of the Lord of Musashi from childhood. The biography of the hero begins with two crucial motivations. As a child, Hōshimaru -- to give him his name at the time -- is taken to Ojika Castle as a hostage of the Tsukuma family after the defeat of his father. Henceforth he will be impelled by a spirit of revenge against his captors. The second and far more important event is his witnessing of a most extraordinary scene during childhood: hostage women in the castle are grooming and labelling the heads of fallen enemies. Young Hōshimaru, enraptured at the sight, continues to return secretly to the scene. He is particularly drawn by a sixteen-year-old girl whose fresh beauty makes him envious of the heads before her. The third time he witnesses the scene, she is dressing the head of a fine-looking young warrior whose nose has been sliced off in battle. He perceives this head as more unsightly than that of the average ugly man, but also as comical. Hōshimaru, however, in the "land of dreams" of his imaginings, desires to be that head (XIII, 216-17).

The scene is one of the most memorable in Tanizaki's work. A cautionary note may be necessary; the biographer and critic Nomura Shōgo comments that head-preparing is not simply a gruesome product of the imagination but apparently based on historical fact.<sup>47</sup> Most critics take this scene as a serious example of Tanizaki's masochism, like Donald Keene, who remarks: "The scene, filled with a morbid, glowing quality, ranks with Tanizaki's finest achievements, and indeed with anything



written in this century."<sup>48</sup> Still, what of the tone of the Preface, which mocks "sexual perversion" as well as the official histories? And the fact that Hōshimaru sees the noseless head as comic? The term which comes to mind is "grotesque," not only as a generally descriptive adjective but as a literary mode, which has been defined as "a clash between incompatible reactions -- laughter on the one hand and horror and disgust on the other."<sup>49</sup> The concept of the grotesque, moreover, may exist with or without comic associations.

To answer the questions posed above, a consideration of the rest of the novel, though it must be remembered that it is an unfinished work, is in order. In the following episode, Hōshimaru, out of a desire to take a noseless head to the young girl, steals into the enemy camp and kills an aristocratic-looking man. Failing to decapitate him, he removes the nose and flees. Consternation results among the attackers because the dead man is their general. Since they conceal the disgraceful manner of his death, the defenders of the besieged castle are at a loss to explain why the powerful enemy fails to attack, and soon lifts the siege. Noselessness, then, continues as a motif with a function in the plot.

When Hōshimaru comes of age he takes the name of Kawachinosuke Terukatsu. In a physical description of the hero, the reader's attention is called especially to his conspicuously short stature, but just as we are to take this as a detail in an anti-heroic portrayal, the author withdraws by commenting that the disparity between his height and his formidable face must have been most impressive.

The new master of Ojika Castle is Norishige, married to Lady Kikyō, daughter of the general slain by Kawachinosuke. She and her brother, despite the new alliance formed by her marriage, secretly collaborate in

a vendetta against her in-laws, the Tsukuma family; they aim particularly at Norishige's nose. Two abortive attempts, with bullet and arrow, are made, but the latter only pierces Norishige's upper lip to render him a harelip; another attack removes an earlobe. Eventually Kawachinosuke succeeds in meeting Lady Kikyō, a phantomlike beauty seen in a dim light, and they make an unspoken pact against the Tsukuma family.

Lady Kikyō, despite secret feelings of love and pity for her husband, plans new assaults on his nose. The unsuspecting Norishige visits her every night, murmuring tender words through his harelip. One night a maid is lighting his way to the toilet when he feels someone seize him around the neck and flatten his body against the wall, "like a rice-cracker" (sembei no yō ni, XIII, 287). His nose is cut off as neatly as if with a surgeon's scalpel and after fainting he awakens as would a patient from anesthetic after an operation. Again an incident possesses a double aspect; comic anachronisms attenuate the horror of the act, instigated by Lady Kikyō and carried out by Kawachinosuke.

A poetry-writing party is held to cheer Norishige. The narrator gravely reports that the only poem recorded by Dōami is one by Lady Kikyō with an allusion to the "Hanachirusato" ("Village of Falling Flowers") chapter of the Genji monogatari. After a discussion of some length on the source the narrator provides an anticlimax by saying the intent was not to allude to the Genji but to play on the words hana and chiru. (XIII, 296).

Long before this point it has become impossible to accept a serious interpretation of the novel. The ubiquitous grotesco-comic aspects of the work cannot be dismissed as comic relief. Other questions arise: is Bushūkō hiwa a work of self-parody on the part of Tanizaki, a parody

of historical fiction in general, or does the intensity of the hero's secret obsession forbid the reading of the work as a pure burlesque?

A new cycle begins for Kawachinosuke as he is summoned back to his father's castle and marries the innocent Oetsu, later called Shōsetsuin, but the scene viewed years before at Ojika Castle still dominates his mind. Now, the hero proceeds to act out his fantasies. He first speaks to the women of the castle about preparing heads in the event of siége, and they listen transfixed by his impressive account of the procedure. Summoning the jester Dōami, he swears to have his head, for the sake of practice in head-grooming. After Oetsu pleads for the jester's life, Kawachinosuke has a hole cut in the floor so that Dōami may stand in it with his head emerging above the tatami.

This cycle, then, is a doubling of the first, with the hero replacing Norishige by Dōami as a butt of ridicule. The author continues the balance between the horrible and the comic. Dōami's plight is ludicrous; on the other hand, when he glimpses his master's face, it is wearing a fearsome expression. The balance tips to the side of horror when Kawachinosuke requests a razor to slice off Dōami's nose, but back to neutrality when his wife begs him again to spare the jester, and he consents. The episode on the following night shows a strong element of childish play, as Kawachinosuke has Dōami's nose painted red. He and Oetsu engage in teasing banter; will she be brave enough, he asks, to pierce a hole in the jester's ear as a place to hang the label? Oetsu, intoxicated and urged on by Kawachinosuke, finally does make a small hole in the ear. The narrator, straight-faced as he normally is in this work, asks how this merciful and virtuous woman could have committed such an act, but wonders if she might not have taken pleasure in the

game. It is important to underline the playful aspect of the scene.

The author refers to Kawachinosuke as a leader of a band of mischievous children (gakidaishō, XIII, 318), Oetsu as a tomboy (tembamusume, XIII, 322) and repeatedly associates their acts with play, sport, or practical jokes (e.g., warufuzake, XIII, 318).

The situation calls for a parallel with the short story "Shōnen" (1911), in which the children's games are an enactment of turbulent impulses similar to those in this novel. In both cases the playful imitation of fantasies may represent a catharsis for the characters and implicitly for the author himself. The notion of playacting is not merely metaphorical, for the scene of sporting with Dōami's head follows a long passage with a strongly mimetic quality. Dōami, clowning for the benefit of the master and the ladies of the castle, does imitations of insects, animals and human beings. Bushūkō differs from "Shōnen" insofar as the hero realizes the significance of his own proclivities, and the full force of his inner violence is met by the counterforce of comedy.

It is tempting to read Bushūkō hiwa as self-parodic, particularly in relation to Mōmoku monogatari. Several parallels occur to the reader: the setting in the period of the civil wars, the situation of the inhabitants of a besieged castle, the role of a resident entertainer of low status, and the device of repeated situations. The concept of self-parody, however, must be used with caution, as it would destroy or at least trivialize the impact of the hero's reaction to the all-important head-grooming scene. The underlying principle of Bushūkō hiwa is not satirical inversion, but equilibrium.

The success of the equilibrium depends to a considerable degree on the narrator-author whose presence in the text as a commentator

distinguishes this novel from the two previously discussed in this chapter. Three other works from the same period, the early thirties, give evidence of evolution in Tanizaki, in the far greater importance of a narrator who is also the author. These are the novellas "Yoshino kuzu," "Ashikari" and "Shunkinshō." They also have in common a peculiar relationship of the author-narrator to the past, which in the case of the first two works even contributes much to the overall design.

"Yoshino kuzu" is a novella of astonishing complexity. Since its fifty pages of text could easily be matched by an analysis of equal length, its full impact is difficult to convey in a brief discussion. Despite its intricacies, the reader does not marvel at the author's prowess as he does for Manji, completed only the year before, for Tanizaki by now has learned to submerge the more obvious signs of his art.

The work has been called "lyrical and discursive,"<sup>50</sup> "loosely organized [and] essentially plotless."<sup>51</sup> It does contain lyric elements, and it is lacking in a linear plot, but one can argue with some certainty that the novella is far more deliberately ordered than the above description would suggest. It might be said that there is no need to defend the author from charges of lack of unity, for tight internal coherence in a prose work has never been a primary concern for Japanese writers, critics, and readers alike, and that Tanizaki in this novella is merely returning to the native tradition of the essay. But Tanizaki's sense of structure, though less apparent than in some of his earlier works, is still visible in "Yoshino kuzu."

The work revolves around the theme of quest, on different planes. If the reader entertains a certain curiosity throughout the novella as to the outcome of the quest, and if there is fulfilment or not of the main

question, then a plot most certainly exists.

Each of the principal characters, the author-narrator and his friend, Tsumura, engages in his own quest. The former's search in Chapters I to III takes us nearly to the halfway point in the novella. Tsumura's story then takes over, occupying Chapters IV to VI. At the end the result is fulfilment for Tsumura and failure for the narrator. Each of these two sections has its own substructure, and each is linked to the other by a system of many correspondences.

In Chapter I, "Jitenno" 自天皇, the narrator gives his reasons for his trip into the mountainous region of Yoshino some twenty years before. His principal motive, stated in an essay-like section of crucial significance to the novella, is his desire to write an historical novel around the figure of Jitenno, a pretender to the throne of the Yoshino court in the fifteenth century, even after the supposed end of the Southern dynasty. He explains that in 1443 Southern loyalists seized the Three Imperial Regalia in the capital. Of these, the sword and mirror were recovered but the jewel remained in Southern hands, to be hidden eventually in a remote valley in Yoshino where Jitenno's palace was built. In 1457, adherents of the Kyoto emperor attacked the palace, killed the young pretender, and carried off his head, along with the jewel. In flight, they buried his head in the snow, where the pursuers discovered it the next morning. The author thus establishes a secondary quest motif in his account of the struggle for the imperial jewel.

The narrator has been enthusiastic about the possibilities of the material. By coincidence, a friend, Tsumura, who has relatives in the village of Kuzu in Yoshino, not far from Sannoko Valley where Jitenno lived, suggests that they travel there together, pointing out how useful

the trip will be for the projected novel. It is important to realize that the narrator, despite his interest in the story, has no need to go to Yoshino for further research. He does plan to gather material, but sets out as if on an excursion. If this does not sound like a very passionate motivation for a quest story, the reason will emerge later when we enter the very different, emotionally charged realm of Tsumura's quest. The<sup>2</sup> narrator's emotions are purposefully muted, for his part in the novella, though essential, cannot occupy more than a modest forty per cent or so of the total area of interest. Meanwhile the reader is entertained, as in this short preparatory chapter, by elements possessing intrinsic essay-like interest but which turn out to be vital to the novella: the account of the struggle over the Three Imperial Regalia, the story of Jitenno, the insistence on the lingering of old traditions in Yoshino, and the discussion of Kuzu and the locality.

The next two chapters record the journey of the two friends toward Kuzu along the Yoshino River. The opening of Chapter II, "Imoseyama," 妹背山, ("The Imose Mountains"), places the reader in the world of the travel journal, but soon the handling of a memory motif brings him into the world of fiction. The words of a guide, directing the travellers' attention to the Imose mountains, bring to the narrator's mind the words of his mother on a trip to the same region during his childhood. She asks him on that occasion if he remembers the scene from the Kabuki play using this locale. (the reference is to "Yoshinogawa" 吉野川 from the play Imoseyama onna teikin 妹背山 婦女庭訓 (Precepts for Women at the Imose Mountains)). The narrator's memories are not of the actual mountain but of the staging of the scene with its fairy tale colors; now as an adult he experiences nostalgia. The passage has a double value: one experience overlies another, and a link is

made to Chapter I in the sense that Yoshino assumes some emotional meaning in the narrator's own history; it is not only a question of exploring the past of the old chronicles. Furthermore, a second previous trip to the same place is now remembered, one made by the narrator as a young man, standing on the same bridge, thinking of his dead mother.

The travel diary mode returns as the travellers proceed along the river. At Kamiichi the old houses appeal to the narrator because of the attractive freshness of the shōji paper. The impression is continued by a rendering of the sensations of the bright autumn sun. But is this passage purely descriptive? The reader suspects the author of lingering over objects in shop windows, for they have a decided relief:

The persimmons arranged outside a greengrocer's store were especially attractive. Tree-ripened persimmons, Palace persimmons, Minō persimmons, in varied globe-like shapes, caught the outdoors light on their ripe, gleaming surfaces the color of coral, and shone like the pupil of an eye. Even the balls of noodles in a glass box outside the noodle-shop gave off brightness (XII, 12).

The jewel of the first chapter, one of the Imperial Treasures, is suggested, and with it the head of Jitenno, but until reading further we cannot be certain of the association because the passage has an autonomous descriptive value.

Another casual remark, this time made by Tsumura, about the Yoshitsune cherry trees (Yoshitsune sembonzakura) brings the narrator to reflect on the famous play of the same name, and specifically on the drum of Yoshitsune's mistress, Shizuka Gozen, which is said to be in the hands of the Otani family in Natsumi village. This relic, Tsumura says, is a treasure passed on from one generation to the next; thus the treasure motif is now well established. This is the drum that makes the fox Tadanobu appear when Shizuka beats it, because the covering is



made from the skin of his parents.

In Chapter III, "Hatsune no tsuzumi" 初音の鼓 ("Shizuka's Drum"), the friends go to the Otani mulberry farm, where the master of the house displays the family treasures, including written documents, which Otani appears to believe in every detail though the narrator finds some of the items suspect. Even the famous drum turns out to be a disappointment. It is an ordinary-looking object, the lacquer is relatively new, and above all, the skin is missing. Nevertheless the narrator who has started with the premises of a researcher accepts this view of history simply because Otani believes it, and this attitude marks a new step in his emotional voyage through Yoshino.

Again the jewel motif returns with utter naturalness. Otani offers his guests some ripe persimmons prepared by a special method in the house. As the narrator gazes at a persimmon on his palm, he marvels at the roundness and translucency of the object, as beautiful as a jewel of jadeite.

...I gazed for some time at this sphere of dew. Then I felt that the mystery and the sunlight of these mountains had taken solid form on the palm of my hand... . What impressed me most at the Otani house, more than the drum or the old documents, were the persimmons ... . I filled my mouth with the autumn of Yoshino (XII, 22).

The chapter, and the main portion of the novella devoted to the narrator's quest, here comes to an end. The narrator in search of the past for artistic purposes has instead found a treasure in the physical experience of the Yoshino present. There is no implication of the superiority of actual sensorial experience; on the contrary the ripe persimmon on his palm, and in his mouth, resumes the substance of Yoshino, and the depth of the impression indicates an unexpected culmination of a half-serious quest.

The next two chapters, the longest in the novella, deal with Tsumura's story. Tsumura explains his own interest in going to see the Otani drum because of the skin and the association of parent and child. As an orphan, deeply attached to the memory of his mother, he has always been powerfully moved by the idea of the drum. The highly colored emotional expression of his story makes for such a contrast in tone from the portion of the novella belonging to the rather subdued narrator that many readers might deny that the work has unity.

It is at once clear from the beginning of Chapter IV, "Konkai" 狐會 ("Konkai") that his experience is connected with the narrator's. The scene at the Otani house assumes retrospective meaning. Tsumura's desire to see the drum constitutes an addition to the quest theme. The associations with his mother also have parallels in the first portion of the novella. Tsumura as a child was profoundly affected by musical and theatrical experiences, so that a parallel is made with the narrator's memories of the Kabuki scene and his mother, touched off by the sight of Imoseyama, but in Tsumura's case emotions are expressed on a far more intense register. He is stirred by the song "Konkai" telling of separation of mother and child, and though he could not have known as a child that the kon of the title is written with the character for "fox," he has always associated it with the parting theme in the jōruri drama Kuzu no ha 葛の葉 (Arrowroot Leaves), in which a fox mother turned into a woman is forced to leave her child when her identity is disclosed. The "kuzu" of the title is of course another link to Part I and in fact of their final destination, the village of that name. Richness of association increases with the passage on the childhood song on the same theme, sung in his house. Tsumura's feeling for his mother, he clearly states,

is the yearning for a dimly perceived unknown woman (bakuzen-taru "michi no josei"). Hence his future wife, as yet unspecified, will be the same kind of woman.

Such is the dense tissue of motivations bringing Tsumura to Yoshino. The emotional high point of the novella lies in this chapter where Tsumura himself speaks, but in Chapter V, "Kuzu" (国栖), the narrator tells the rest of Tsumura's story to throw the preceding chapter into relief and also to restore some slight balance toward the tone of the first part of the novella. It is not true that the mere fact of first-person narration necessarily makes for greater intimacy between text and reader than would the use of the third person, but in this case that is precisely the effect.

Tsumura's longing for his mother has brought him to seek out her native village, Kuzu. Thus the quest, in his case for an ideal in the past, is expressed in terms of journey and locale, paralleling the narrator's. It is difficult to determine the mother's origins, but Tsumura's research, activated by deep private concerns is in nature both parallel and contrast to the narrator's more detached artistic motivation. In contrast to the evidence on the remote Jitenno story and to the dubious treasures of the Otani family, the letter found by Tsumura written from his grandmother to his mother is authentic. This letter, his only clue to his mother's past, leads him to Kuzu and the discovery of an aunt in her branch of the family. Tsumura remembers a phrase in the letter about her hands chapped by the toil of paper-making when he sees a young woman outside his aunt's house, engaged in the same occupation. The aged aunt, when asked about extant documents or objects belonging to this mother, produces first a photograph of the dead woman, then a

koto presumably played by her during her brief stay in the gay quarter of Osaka. The associations with the Otani drum are inescapable, since the drum evokes Shizuka Gozen and therefore beauty, the fox Tadanobu, and feelings of filial piety. Unlike the Otani drum, this koto is a splendid instrument with rich ornamentation. The finding of the koto is a reminder, too, that both characters have been looking for something distant and find a concrete and beautiful object.

The koto episode does not mark the end of the quest. In the sixth and final chapter, Tsumura makes another disclosure. The young woman seen outside the house, Owasa, is the granddaughter of another aunt. Though a crude-looking country girl, she attracts Tsumura because of the connection with the phrase about hands chapped by paper-making in his grandmother's letter, and because of a resemblance in her face to his mother's photographed image. The narrator comments that Owasa is in effect the drum Tsumura has been seeking, and his friend agrees, now revealing that he wishes to marry her. The koto as a symbol is now overlaid by the living Owasa.

Tsumura goes off to consult her family about his proposal and the narrator continues alone on his trip to the geographical source of the Jitennō story. The final pages thus point back to the beginning. The narrator's quest does not meet with success, for the trip to Sannoko Valley where Jitennō lived and the jewel was hidden proves to be most arduous of approach. His guide tells an old story from oral sources about the young pretender's death. No written sources are adduced in this section, in contrast to the opening pages concerning this Jitennō story. This would suggest that the narrator has come to terms with the present of Yoshino, where history consists of oral tradition, especially as he comes to reflect that Sannoko probably has a value more legendary

than factual. Even his incidental stop at a hot spring results in failure; the waters are not warm enough. The story of the trip to Yoshino ends in a few lines, as a voice calls out to him; he sees Tsumura with Owasa crossing a suspension bridge. In view of all the previous links made between the two parts of the novella, it is not idle to suggest a possible connection between the bridge at Imoseyama where the narrator stands, thinking of his mother. Here, at the end, the mere appearance of Owasa suffices to represent continuity, both in Tsumura's mind and in the history of Yoshino.

In the last two sentences of the novella the quest themes are concluded with the narrator saying he failed to write his projected novel and that the trip was far more successful for Tsumura. Despite the narrator's suppression of his own role it is clear that his journey has indeed resulted in discovery.

The above commentary on "Yoshino kuzu" contains an indication of a novelist working with some techniques resembling Kawabata's, as in Yama no oto 山の音 (The Sound of the Mountain), in particular the use of disparate motifs like the jewel and persimmons which have independent interest in their own contexts and yet are associated with each other. But Tanizaki differs entirely from Kawabata in his shaping of the novella into a complete whole. He does not conceive of a work of fiction like a series of links which could be continued or suspended at its supposed ending. Moreover, Tanizaki, in the interest of heightening unity draws more attention to his motifs than does Kawabata.

"Yoshino kuzu" represents a remarkable synthesis and refinement of certain aspects of Tanizaki's earlier works, such as the longing for other worlds, the search for the lost mother, the solving of mysteries,

and the art theme. The most significant development lies in the role of the author-narrator. The author, present both in the narrator and Tsumura, has come to fictionalize himself completely. It does not matter to the reader that Tanizaki actually visited Yoshino three times, that he had a friend from the region,<sup>52</sup> that he intended to write a novel about Jitenno,<sup>53</sup> that he went to see a drum in Natsumi, supposedly Shizuka's, and that he was much taken by the ripe persimmons offered to him,<sup>54</sup> for he is clearly working with the basic principles of selection and emphasis.

"Ashikari,"<sup>55</sup> the second novella in this group, shares several features with "Yoshino kuzu." It has a similar two-part structure, one belonging to the "I" narrator and the second to a character who tells the story of primary interest in the work. In addition, the first narrator's portion of the work contains many literary and historical allusions which might produce a misleading impression of discursiveness.

On the other hand, "Ashikari" differs from "Yoshino kuzu" because of the most individual recreation of the remote, mysterious atmosphere the author finds so attractive in Japanese tradition. The title, and the waka opening the work, are extremely allusive. First of all, they suggest a separation theme. The reference is primarily to a story in the Heian tale collections Yamato monogatari 大和物語 and Konjaku monogatari 今昔物語.<sup>56</sup> A woman, forced to leave her husband because of poverty, goes to the capital and marries a rich man, but concerned for the fate of her former husband, seeks him out. Now a lowly reed-cutter, he fears to meet her but sends her a poem, the one cited at the beginning of the novella, expressing grief at their separation. The woman, saddened, sends him her outer robe and returns

to the city.

Tanizaki's use of the story results in so different a product that his "Ashikari" cannot even be called a reworking of the sources. He selects only three elements: the separation theme, the situation of the woman as higher than the man's, and the robe motif. There is also a Nō play of the same name, but this is actually a work in praise of poetry, as the couple happily reunites. Nevertheless the association with the Nō in general suggests a basis for interpretation of the novella because of its aura of shadowy elegance and its total design.

To reduce "Ashikari" to its bare narrative framework, a narrator, like a waki, appears in a locality famous in history and literature. He meets a stranger, the shite, who tells him a story of his father's adoration for the beautiful Oyū, from whom he is separated. At the end, the stranger vanishes like the ghost of a mugen-Nō.

Tanizaki states that he started to write this novella without knowing how it was to develop, and for a time was at a loss for a proper conclusion.<sup>57</sup> The fact that he started without a plan, as he often did<sup>58</sup> does not contradict our previous observations about the architecture of his works. On the contrary, it underlines the care for form which the reader can sense in all of his finished products of higher quality.

Tanizaki executes this work in a stylized manner, as in the Nō. Some readers may find the first third of the novella, the first narrator's section, overladen with references to Japanese traditional material, but it must be remembered that the narrator is a waki and that in Nō texts the waki's journey has highly allusive and often very complex references to the locale.

This section is even less fictional in appearance than the corresponding portion of "Yoshino kuzu." There is only one element with plot interest, but it is essential. The narrator starts out to walk in the environs of the former palace of the Emperor Gotoba (1180-1239) on the day of the moon-viewing festival, wishing to see the full autumn moon from the banks of the Yodo River. His reactions to the landscape are evident but restrained, as in an essay, like those of the narrator of "Yoshino kuzu." Although he has a deep interest in the surroundings their effect on him is not thrown into relief except in a few sections, such as the explanation that even ordinary scenery calls up sweet visions of other worlds, and the warmth of a mother's bosom (XIII, 448-49).

A distinct element of stylization is visible toward the end of this waki section. There is an extended passage on the melancholy of autumn, the evanescence of worldly things, and the narrator expresses compassion for courtesans who took Buddhist names as a mark of their profession, apparently conceived as a sacrifice (XIII, 454). The first two themes in particular are among the most common in Japanese literature. The reader coming to "Ashikari" with a knowledge of Tanizaki's other writings may wonder at their presence here, since the vital impulse of this author runs counter to notions of melancholy and evanescence. The answer, no doubt, is that he is establishing an atmosphere proper to Nō texts, with their profoundly Buddhist basis.

The shite, whose name we later deduce to be Seribashi, is introduced with a rustling of grass behind the narrator, who turns and imagines at first that he is seeing his own shadow. At the end of the novella, Seribashi vanishes like the spirit in a mugen-Nō. A Nō influence on structure is possible, such as a jo-ha-kyū division in which the



jo would correspond to the narrator's section, the ha to most of Seribashi's story, and the kyū to the last part beginning from the mention of Oyū's robe and the narrator's query as to the identity of Seribashi's mother,<sup>59</sup> but it is just as possible to argue that the kyū should be much closer to the ending, with the conclusion of Seribashi's story, his brief dialogue with the waki, and his disappearance. As in most other questions of influences on Tanizaki's work, the relationship with literary precedents is very difficult to pinpoint, for Tanizaki is making his own use of the Nō.

Seribashi's story gives off an aura which may be described as Tanizaki's version of the Nō ideal of yūgen, a mysterious elegance. The narrative perspective greatly influences the creation of this quality. Instead of having the Seribashi father tell his own story, the author causes the son to recount events and situations told to him second-hand, and occurring some forty years earlier, so that the effect is remoteness.

The plot elements of this second section are manipulated to create a sense of ambiguity. We are not certain that the father has an affair with Oyū though it is suggested, and like the author-narrator we wonder if the younger Seribashi is the son of Oyū or her sister Oshizu.

To a great extent the novella's yūgen coloration depends on our perception of the heroine as an elusive figure inspiring idealization in Seribashi's father, and then in the son. The author does not only push the setting back to the early Meiji period; he represents Oyū as the most elegant of aristocratic ladies. As a child Seribashi goes with his father to peer through the hedge of her villa, every night of the moon-viewing festival, at a scene out of the past, as the inhabitants of the house celebrate the occasion with music, dance, and elaborate etiquette.

The father finds in Oyū the embodiment of his ideal of "some noble type of court lady, one who would sit behind her silken screens of state, wearing a long ceremonial robe and reading such classics as the Tale of Genji" (XIII, 466).<sup>60</sup> The moon-viewing scene has an archaic flavor; it is explained that rich merchants of the time even had their maids dress like ladies-in-waiting of ancient times, and instructed in etiquette.

The presentation of Oyū as a court lady is aided by certain links to Part I, notably through the use of the robe motif. When Seribashi's father sees Oyū at a dance recital she is wearing the same type of robe he has dreamed of on his ideal, and the motif returns near the end of the novella, when the father shows his son a long-cherished memento, a set of Oyū's winter robes whose very touch brings her to life for him. In the waki's narration, an anecdote from the medieval chronicle Masukagami 増鏡 (The Clear Mirror) tells of an emperor rewarding a court official by the gift of his own cloak (XIII, 447). The narrator recalls the same story when he draws a parallel between the Emperor's gesture and the elegant activities of the rich of Edo whose villas he saw as a child (XIII, 450).

We also see Oyū as a court lady in the details of her daily activities and her clothing; even her furniture evokes the court. Nevertheless, the characterization of this idealized figure shows she is not purely ethereal, as shown by the references to her capriciousness and especially by the scene of Oshizu suckling at her breast.

Lastly, an impression of mysterious elegance is created by the style of Seribashi's narration, written as far as possible in one continuous wave of prose with minimal paragraphing and use of quotation marks. A preview of the style appears in Manji, but with the very different

function of blurring facts and falsehood. In "Ashikari" the effect is to induce a dreamlike state of consciousness in the reader, as in many passages of *Nō* texts. Furthermore, in *Manji*, quotation marks are necessary because of the abundant use of dialogue, but in this novella they are very sparingly used. In addition, many words appear in *hiragana* instead of the expected *kanji*. The technique does not reach the extreme of *Mōmoku monogatari*, so that the tempo slows, but not excessively.

It is difficult to extract a suitably brief passage from the Seribashi section to provide a representative example of this drifting style. The works of Tanizaki's first period often contain quotable passages, ornate patches of prose which almost demand to be noticed, but the Seribashi section and the whole of "Shunkinshō," which has a similar style, cannot be represented accurately except by the quotation of entire pages. One example may serve to convey an idea of Tanizaki's controlled impressionistic style which is at its highest point in this period. Here are the last two sentences of "Ashikari":

The man fell silent as if weary of talking, and drew a tobacco pouch from his belt; thank you for your story, now I understand why your father took you with him to the villa at Lake Ogura, but you said that since then you have gone there every year to view the moon, and now I remember you were on the way to the villa tonight as well; that is true, I am going tonight, even now on the night of the Moon Festival I go behind the villa at Lake Ogura and peer through the hedge to see Oyū playing the koto and the maids dancing. I found this strange and said Oyū must be nearly eighty years old now but there was only the wind rustling through the grasses and the reeds growing to the water's edge were lost to view the man as if dissolved in the moonlight had vanished (XIII, 491).

The subdued autumnal shadings of "Ashikari," as in this passage, relate the novella to "Yoshino kuzu." They are also similar through the

use of a withdrawn first narrator and a second character whose intense emotions are foregrounded, but who have affinities with each other. The authorial psyche has distributed itself between the two characters.

"Shunkinshō," the last novella in this group, shows a different use of the author as narrator, which brings the reader as close to the text as in the Seribashi section of "Ashikari."

Many of Tanizaki's enthusiasts would claim a special place for "Shunkinshō"<sup>61</sup> because of the special quality of the reader involvement it commands. Not only has Tanizaki created a heroine extraordinary even in his array of vivid women characters, perhaps the most compelling of them all; he deals simultaneously with close involvement on various levels, such as the interrelationship of Sasuke and Shunkin, the absorption of the narrator in their story, and the dependence of the reader on the narrator.

The interlocking portrayals of the two principal characters, Shunkin and Sasuke, may first be approached through a symbolic reading. Shunkin is far more than a superb musician; she is art herself. Her blindness stands for isolation and the existence of an inner reality more actual than anything in the visible world. She also possesses such qualities as beauty, egotism, pride, cruelty to her devotees, jealousy, insatiability and detachment from social conventions.

The characterization of Sasuke meshes closely with that of Shunkin. At first they stand in a feudal relationship to each other as mistress to servant and teacher to disciple. Later they become virtually wife and husband but they are also as goddess to worshipper and art to the artist. This novella represents the last prominent use of the art theme in Tanizaki's work and it is perhaps the most powerful one.

Sasuke is the embodiment of the artist, for he gives himself completely to his ideal. He practices intently and in solitude on the samisen with no other thought than to emulate Shunkin, and his loyalty remains unshaken by the ferocious demands of the discipline as dictated by her. The proof of his sense of esthetic propriety and the ultimate sign of his identification with her lies in his act of self-immolation. By blinding himself, he is rendered unable to view Shunkin's beauty destroyed, and therefore preserves the image of perfection in his memory.

That Shunkin is a figuration of art is evident from the two sections of the novella entirely devoted to her songbirds. These music-making birds are obviously parallels with Shunkin, especially those that "teach" other birds how to sing; what is more, the author lingers over the fact that nightingales must be blinded, so to speak, in order to make music. Since they will not sing in front of human beings they are placed in cages with screens admitting only a dim light (XIII, 530). Shunkin herself identifies with her larks and nightingales. In a passage of high lyricism, she tells her pupils that the song of a trained bird is superior to that of a wild one, therefore reminding them of the difficulty of art and of the sacrifices it exacts. There is a significant shift in style to mark her speech, the words being couched in the formal literary language of the purported biography of Shunkin used by the narrator, and hence her stature is elevated. If not art, she is surely its priestess in this passage. Finally and most poignantly, the flight of the lark which fails to return to its cage marks the beginning of the illness which takes Shunkin's life.

The figure of Shunkin gains in pathos at the same time that her dependency on Sasuke grows ever more apparent. The reader's

sympathies come to be engaged for Shunkin as for no other heroine invented by Tanizaki. The process is prepared in the earlier stages of the novella, as, in the exploration of her childhood, the author endows her with a depth of motivation he rarely troubles with for his characterizations. Although Shunkin, for Tanizaki's purposes, cannot possibly be a "real person," the narrator does examine her early life and the possible influences on her in order to account for her intemperate conduct and her solitude. Later, Shunkin becomes more and more the image of egotism, cruelty and avarice as well as of beauty. But in the final stages a change takes place. Without losing any of her representative or symbolic quality she gains in humanity, beginning with the episode of Ritarō's attempted seduction, which suddenly reveals the full extent of her vulnerability, and culminating in the scalding scene, where the reader's distress at the calamity parallels that of Sasuke.

The keynote of the Shunkin-Sasuke relationship is interdependence. Sasuke clearly draws his reason for living from his goddess, but we also perceive that Shunkin's reliance on him proves to be as emotional as it is practical. Though it is exceptional for a Tanizaki heroine to express any feeling toward her lover which approaches tenderness, Shunkin inquires, after Sasuke has blinded himself, whether the experience was painful, and actually expresses admiration and gratitude (XIII, 549). It is true that she requires Sasuke to be a mirror of her own beauty, and this he will continue to be.

If the reader sympathizes with Shunkin and Sasuke, it is in part because of the third major character, the narrator, who serves as guide and interpreter. What would the novella be without him? The story of Shunkin and Sasuke is only part of "Shunkinshō," and it is the narrator

who makes the difference. The work could have started with the second section, beginning with an account of the heroine's biography, the "Shunkin-den." The introductory section, unnecessary to the bare facts of the Shunkin-Sasuke story, establishes the importance of the narrator as a character. His consuming interest in the two lovers reveals itself especially at the end of this section when he kneels respectfully before Shunkin's grave and strokes the tombstone of Sasuke with affection (XIII, 497). If the reader is curious as to the narrator's own identity, this is another deliberate mystery in a novella full of question marks.

The narrator functions as textual critic, biographer or historian, as in Bushūkō hiwa. He evaluates evidence from the "Shunkin-den" and from other sources, notably Shigisawa Teru, the old lady who once served the blind couple. In its initial phases the novella has the air of a critical commentary on an old text. Later, the importance of the "Shunkin-den" tends to wane as the narrator places greater reliance on the testimony of Shigisawa Teru. This shift from a written source to a living informant accompanies the growing inclination of the narrator to make the story his own.

The use of a narrator to weigh information might predispose us to believe that greater accuracy would be achieved, but almost the opposite effect comes about.<sup>62</sup> Since a multitude of questions arises as to the accuracy of his data, particularly those derived from the "Shunkin-den," the outlines of the story are obscured. The narrator continually tantalizes the reader by offering plausible interpretations only to withdraw them. To give only one instance, he discusses at some length Sasuke's implied accusation that a nurse in the Mozuya household has been responsible for Shunkin's loss of sight in childhood, but concludes by dismissing

the idea (XIII, 500). Without the narrator and his doubts, "Shunkinshō" might be left with the harsh contours of a story like "Shisei." It would surely lack the haziness which is one of its most memorable features, and which contributes to our perception of the heroine. The impression of dimness and translucence corresponds to the world of half-light in which the blind woman lives. Shunkin is elusive and distant despite her solidly corporeal existence; the effect is brought about in part because Sasuke sees her as a goddess, but even more so because of this special quality in the narrative, which deliberately raises questions never to be answered.

The significance of the reader-narrator relationship in this novella cannot be exaggerated. One aspect of its singularity lies in the way the reader finds himself being taken in and drawn out of participation with the story of the musician couple. At one moment we may be far removed from their realm, sharing the narrator's concern with the veracity of his information, and at another, we are swept unexpectedly back into their lives.

The simplest example of alternating narrative perspective lies in the use of the "Shunkin-den." Quotations from this work -- which is of course the invention of the author -- occur periodically throughout the<sup>2</sup> novella, and immediately signal abrupt breaks. For one thing, the formal literary style of the old "Shunkin-den" creates a sharp contrast with that of the body of the novella. Whenever the narrator turns to the biography for a quotation, the reader who has been caught up in the story of Shunkin through its presentation by the narrator again becomes aware that a tale of long ago is being related at a considerable remove from himself.



The points of view represented in the novella are far more numerous and complex than this rough distinction between the biography and the body of the novella suggest. Even more significant is the extreme fluidity of the viewpoints, rendered by techniques already employed in Manji, Mōmoku monogatari and "Ashikari." With each of these works the reader may have thought the flux of viewpoints could be brought no further.

In "Shunkinshō" the effects are slightly different from those of its predecessors. The style is similar in some respects, the text being divided into short sections without paragraphing and with exceedingly sparse punctuation (except in the "Shunkin-den," which is meant to present a contrasting texture), and what are considered sentences in modern grammatical and typographical convention are strung together to form groups of sentences often extending to a dozen lines or more. It follows that narrative breaks often occur within a single sentence group, and so the author may turn from one situation, idea or standpoint to another without interrupting the flow of the prose. The method though used before assumes particular importance in "Shunkinshō" and so does the use of reported speech without quotation marks so that, as relation melts into speech, the consciousness of the speaker suddenly looms up before the reader. These remarks could apply to "Ashikari," but only in the Seribashi portion, for the total effect of "Ashikari" derives partly from the contrast between the traditional style and the modern essay style. "Shunkinshō" on the other hand is composed entirely in this drifting manner. As for Mōmoku monogatari, the use of the method differs somewhat, for the shift in viewpoints is not nearly of the importance that it possesses in "Shunkinshō." In this novella, the reader is

caught up from the outset in the steady continuous flow of the prose, and at the end, the only word for its effect is "incantation."

So far we have discussed the narrator as distinct from the author. In reality Tanizaki is at pains to make the reader conscious that "Shunkinshō" is a work of fiction being related. The narrator not infrequently appears as the author, to bring the reader up with a shock. In the initial section, referring to Shigisawa Teru, he writes: "As the old lady from Haginochaya will enter the story later, there will be no need to discuss her here. . ." (XIII, 533), and in a section on the harshness of the training of jōruri performers we suddenly remember that this is the present for the author, when he refers to an article in the Osaka Asahi which appeared on "February twelfth of this year, 1933" (XIII, 515). On at least two occasions the author goes so far as to address the reader directly, as in the last words of the novella. Direct appeals to the reader appear frequently in Tanizaki's fiction long before "Shunkinshō," but here, because of the shifting perspectives in the story, and because of their sudden occurrence within the flow of the prose, they possess a particular relief.

The reader, fully aware of the story now receding, now approaching, may be reminded of a similar experience he undergoes in following performances of certain forms of the traditional Japanese drama. If "Ashikari" calls for parallels with the Nō, for "Shunkinshō" an analogy to the jōruri has special pertinence, since it provides material for an entire section, and the samisen is of prime importance in the work. The jōruri chanter, like our narrator, offers description, commentary and dialogue and in the telling shows himself to be deeply affected by the events taking place on the stage. The attention of the audience

moves from one element of the performance to another with varying degrees of involvement; the puppets, their manipulators, the chanter and the samisen player, far from dividing the attention, contribute to the richness of the experience. So it is for "Shunkinshō." It is never a question of persuading the reader that he is not in the presence of a fabrication, for he accepts it completely and indeed the artificial has become real.

The final work under study in this section of Tanizaki's development of narrative in the line of works employing traditional material is Shōshō Shigemoto no haha.<sup>63</sup> The six works previously discussed, from Rangiku monogatari to "Shunkinshō," are concentrated in the years 1930-33, an amazingly brief period for so many works of high calibre. Shigemoto (1949-50) appears at the other end of Tanizaki's second period. In the interval his major endeavors were a translation of the Genji monogatari, and Sasameyuki (1943-48).

Shigemoto is somewhat reminiscent of Rangiku monogatari in its mixture of pathos, lyricism, and comedy, though it far surpasses the early popular novel in the depth of interest in character and situation it often induces in the reader. Much of the material is drawn from a wide range of Heian sources, frequently identified in the text. These include the Konjaku monogatari, Heichū nikki 平中日記 and Yamato monogatari. In the last quarter of the novel, as the tone deepens in intensity, Tanizaki's own imagination takes over; for example, Shigemoto's diary is the author's invention, as are the scenes of Kunitsune with the rotting corpse of the young girl, and the climactic meeting of Shigemoto with his mother.<sup>64</sup> The mere fact of original inspiration, of course,

does nothing to explain the value of the text, as Tanizaki's skilful handling of the well-known episode of Heichū and Jijū would suggest.

Shigemoto is almost invariably discussed as an expression of the theme of love for the mother in Tanizaki's writings, but to do so exclusively distorts the value of the work as a whole. It is true that the central plot interest lies in the figure of Shigemoto's mother, but the work consists of an arrangement of four male characters revolving around her. There is also a secondary plot in the relationship of Heichū and Jijū. Each of these male characters represents a different aspect of love. First there is Heichū, a would-be Don Juan in a series of amatory misadventures, then the rapacious Tokihira who maneuvers old Kunitsune into handing over his young wife, Shigemoto's mother. Kunitsune, the most fully developed male character in the novel, is a figure of pathos, lamenting the loss of his wife ever afterward. Finally, Shigemoto is the focus of attention; though barely remembering his mother he cherishes her as an ideal. Following this progression of attitudes, there is a gradation in intensity of the meaning of Shigemoto's mother. For Heichū, she is a possible conquest, for Tokihira an actual trophy, for Kunitsune a lost wife, and for Shigemoto she is a remote memory which he finds actualized at the end of the novel.

Therefore Shigemoto for all its variety of scenes, moods and incidents possesses a certain thematic unity. Though the method of development tends to be episodic, the author manipulates the relationships among these characters to produce shifts faintly echoing those of Manji. One could cite, for example, the triangle involving Tokihira, Kunitsune and his wife Kita no kata, and later the Tokihira-Heichū-Kita no kata triangle. Unlike Manji, this novel is conceived so that each

situation has its individual interest, though connected to the others. Thus, although Heichū is likened to Tokihira, the two characters are distinguished from each other. Both are enthusiastic about amatory adventures, but Heichū is a comical blunderer while Tokihira is a near-villainous figure whose misdeeds, private and political, are punished by a curse visited even on his descendents. Though the frivolous episodes involving Heichū would appear to be antithetical by nature to the story of Kunitsune, parallels are implicit in their situations. Heichū tries vainly to cure himself of love for Jijū by stealing a glance at her excrement, and Kunitsune in an attempt to rid himself of his wife's memory attempts to cultivate a sense of impurity (fujōkan) by contemplating the maggot-infested corpse of a young woman, but in the end he gives up this ascetic practice. Besides parallels of this nature there is also a method of linking story to story by motivations arising directly from the necessity of advancing the plot, as when Heichū uses the child Shigemoto to deliver a love poem to his mother.

Various facets of Tanizaki's narrative genius emerge in the treatment of these situations. First the comic mode is brought into play with the anecdotes of the first chapter and later in the episode of Jijū deceiving Heichū. There is also a dramatic treatment of situation with elements of conflict and tension in the scene in which Kunitsune yields Tokihira his wife. Tanizaki also takes care to work out character relationships and individual destinies fully, and in the case of Tokihira does so by the use of a ghost, that of Sugawara no Michizane seeking revenge; thus he adds an element of supernatural terror to the novel. Two scenes near the end of the novel show the full force of Tanizaki's evocative powers through description. One is the moonlit fujōkan scene, where the child Shigemoto watches his father kneeling in meditation

before the decomposing body of a young girl. The effect on Shigemoto is revulsion, even after he learns the purpose of the ascetic exercise; he resents his father for not trying to preserve the image of his mother and for defiling her by association with a putrefying corpse.

The climactic scene at the end of the novel contains the realization of Shigemoto's ideal. Some forty years after his mother's departure from the family, Shigemoto makes his way to the environs of the convent where she is now living. The landscape is again moonlit, but in contrast to the brightness of the fujōkan scene, the lighting is dim and almost eerie. Shigemoto's attention is drawn by a cherry tree in full bloom and a moving object in the shadows beneath it. The increasing brightness of the moon shows the object to be the figure of a nun -- it is Shigemoto's mother. In the final lines, as he kneels to embrace her, he at last sees her face, but even now it is partially shaded by the cherry blossoms. A surge of memory sends Shigemoto back to childhood, with the incense on her nun's sleeves evoking the perfume worn long ago as she held him in her arms.

Thematically and visually, the scene recalls the opening of "Haha wo kouru ki" (1919), in which a child in a dream makes a similar moonlit voyage to meet his mother. In Shigemoto, however, the character proceeds from the actuality of the waking world into a dreamlike atmosphere, and his advance toward the cherry tree and his mother is developed in pictorial detail which, though based on observable reality, takes the reader into the realm of fantasy. That the novel should end with its most emotionally resonant scene is entirely in keeping with our observations on Tanizaki's structures from the very beginning of his career.

It is also fitting that this scene should conclude the author's second period, and indeed that of his historical fiction. After Shigemoto, Tanizaki never returns to the remote past for material for his fiction, as we shall see in Chapter III.

It is worth noting that the reader would never have been brought as far as this conclusion were it not for the storytelling art informing the whole. The point is of importance for Tanizaki criticism in general, for commentary on this author's writing almost always draws on the most salient thematic features of the works, to the detriment of the whole. Thus Bushūkō hiwa is seen as representative of Tanizaki's masochistic tendencies because of the head-grooming scene, so that the tension between the terrifying and the comic in the whole is virtually ignored. For "Yoshino kuzu" and "Ashikari" the critics deal almost exclusively with the themes and character types of the second portions, to the detriment of the works as narrative entities. It is precisely because of Tanizaki's narrative genius that individual themes and episodes are deeply impressed on the mind of the reader.

#### B. Fantasy in everyday experience

Many of the works of Tanizaki's earliest phase give proof of a dichotomy between the demands of the author's imagination and the presence of external realities. The process toward reconciliation, already perceptible in Chijin no ai reaches significant heights in Tade kuu mushi (XII, 1-185), the first work of this second period, "Neko to Shōzō to futari no onna" 猫と庄造と二人の女 ("The Cat, Shōzō and the Two Women," 1936, XIV, 263-368), and Sasameyuki 細雪 (The Makioka Sisters, 1943-48, XV, 1-882). All these works are evidence of a

synthesis, for they convey everyday experience through the filter of fantasy. They are not, therefore, antithetical to the works just examined in Section A, with their other-worldly atmosphere, and it is the pull of fantasy in them which accounts in large measure for their hold on the reader.

Tade kuu mushi<sup>65</sup> shares with "Yoshino kuzu," the work immediately following it, a certain muted quality, and its surface plot has even less action. A couple, Kaname and Misako, are to separate so that Misako may go to her lover. Their situation is presented in a scene at an Osaka theatre with the couple in the company of Misako's father and his young mistress Ohisa, then in Kaname's dialogue with his cousin Takanatsu, and in several domestic scenes. The problems of the impending separation recede during two subsequent episodes, another theatre scene and Kaname's visit to a prostitute, Louise, but they return in the final chapter in which Kaname waits as his father-in-law discusses the situation with Misako. At the end we are not told exactly what is to happen to the characters, though the movement toward separation seems overwhelming.

The real plot interest lies in an underlying psychological action taking place in Kaname. Throughout the novel runs the theme implied by the title (an abbreviation of a proverb meaning "each to his own tastes"), about choices in modes of life; these are observed by Kaname and the novel basically concerns his progression toward a way of living represented by his father-in-law.

The complexity of the novel makes the spontaneity of its impact all the more remarkable. The work may be most conveniently approached by an examination of its development by sections. Structurally, Tade



kuu mushi gives the impression of having been composed in chunks, with marked changes of time, locale and viewpoint from one section to the next. Nonetheless the total effect is not disjointed, for the novel proceeds through a slow and subdued progression of parallels and contrasts in characters and situations.

The novel opens on a domestic scene whose surface is of the utmost ordinariness; Kaname and Misako are dressing to go to the theatre. Told, like most of the novel, from Kaname's viewpoint, the scene shows them carefully performing the gestures of a married couple although they are no longer, in effect, a couple, for Kaname now has no interest in his wife, and she is preoccupied with her lover. The nuances of the relationships as perceived by Kaname cause an ordinary scene to give off emotional reverberations of a sort never before achieved by Tanizaki.

The next chapter introduces the couple's child, Hiroshi, whose behaviour shows nothing of the distress he evidently feels over the impending separation. Hence all three characters are play-acting. The notion may be taken as a key to the novel; so far, as a metaphor for the behaviour of Kaname, Misako and Hiroshi, it contributes to the subdued tonality of the novel. The play-acting metaphor is concretized in the next scene at a jōruri performance attended by Kaname and Misako, still in their guise as a united couple, and by Misako's father and Ohisa. The father is the character in the novel most overtly performing a role, as an old gentleman with extremely refined tastes in the old Japanese style, and he has forced his mistress, Ohisa, into the role of the traditional Japanese doll-woman. So far this presentation of the characters might seem unexceptional, given the prevalence of role-playing in every aspect of Japanese social relations, were it not for three factors. First

is the extended use of a mask of some sort by virtually all the characters later introduced; secondly, as we have seen, the sense of dissimulation which is a constant in Tanizaki, often creating a sense of the shadowed, unexplainable areas of life; lastly, the special insistence on theatrical performance in this novel. The connection between the characters and their masks is not heavily underlined, except in the case of the old man.

The theatre episode of Chapters II and III is of major significance in characterization, theme and structure. It establishes the first sets of the many character patternings which in their totality constitute a structure, in the words of one critic, "a carefully controlled architectonics of characterization."<sup>66</sup> The modern Tokyo woman, Misako, contrasts with Ohisa, a figure from Kyoto tradition, and Kaname begins to identify with Misako's father. A second aspect of interest in this scene is the implied parallel of the situation on the stage with that of Kaname and Misako. The comparison is not a direct one -- in Tade kuu mushi we often observe the author drawing back from explicitness -- but the relationship of Jihei and Osan in Shinjū ten no Amijima 心中天網島 (The Love Suicides at Amijima) brings pained smiles of recognition to the faces of these two spectators (XII, 30).

The third aspect of prime importance in the theatre scene lies in the expression of the anti-realistic impulse. In Kaname's eyes, the jōruri puppet, Koharu, represents the eternal woman of Japanese tradition, and Ohisa's classic face is likened to hers. This is a new development in Kaname's worshipful attitude toward women, for hitherto he has not found any counterpart in Japan to the adoration of women he has found in Western literature and even in Hollywood movies. It is in this

scene that Kaname's movement toward a new ideal begins, and the reader may already guess from the account of Kaname's attraction to the dolls and to Osaka tradition in general, that the new ideal is likely to prevail.

Related to this point is a regressive tendency in Kaname's imagination. On entering the theatre he remembers being taken to a play by his mother in early childhood, and the pleasant sensations evoked on that occasion. Another association with childhood is made later in the chapter, when Kaname sees Koharu as a fairy from a production of Peter Pan. The world of childhood joins the world of art, and both are worlds of the imagination through which woman is seen. The basis of this novel is fantasy and not pedestrian realism.

After the theatre episode, Chapters IV and V constitute a distinct narrative break. They consist largely of dialogue between Kaname and his cousin Takanatsu on the question of separation or divorce. Takanatsu functions as Kaname's interlocutor so that the resulting dialogue may inform the reader of Misako's and Hiroshi's presumed reactions to the situation. The extent of the dialogue method shows Tanizaki avoiding extremes of psychological delvings; although he explores Kaname's states of mind in the novel, and to some extent Misako's, Tade kuu mushi is not really a psychological novel. The author handles characterization primarily through parallels and contrasts, not through analysis. At any rate, Takanatsu in these chapters acts as a sounding-board for Kaname's preoccupations. There is a faint recall in these passages, where third-person narration is clearly secondary to direct speech, of the dialogue plays (taiwa-geki) written by Tanizaki in his first period. It may be too far-fetched to suggest that the dialogue technique carries on the

theatre motif, but at one point Kaname experiences distaste for a view of himself as a wailing chanter in a performance of a play in the Osaka manner (XII, 49).

The scene shifts to Misako in Chapters VI and VII. The setting is again domestic, opening with Misako still in bed listening to Hiroshi and Takanatsu discussing the family dogs. She thinks of her festival dolls -- the doll motif thus reappears, but through Misako's viewpoint. To her the tradition of setting them out is of no importance, and thus she is contrasted with Kaname whose idealized reveries associated the Koharu puppet with Ohisa, Osaka tradition, and childhood.

Misako eventually joins Takanatsu and her son in conversation about the dogs, one of them a greyhound, an exotic marvel just brought by Takanatsu from Shanghai. The dialogue between Takanatsu and Misako, interspersed by comments made by Hiroshi, consists of casual banter at times containing faint overtones of the erotic, especially when Misako's throat is compared to the dog's, so that the reader senses their physical awareness of each other. The dialogue thus differs from that of the two preceding chapters in which Takanatsu and Kaname engaged in intimate conversation; here Takanatsu and Misako wear their social masks. This is the only point in the novel where Takanatsu may be observed to be play-acting; otherwise he is the sole character who refrains from assuming a role.

The dialogue centering on the dogs, it should be noted, unfolds with such ease that we may not see at once that these pets, as virtual toys, belong to the theatre-doll-childhood set of associations already established and to assume particular relief in the Awaji puppet theatre episode.

Throughout Chapters VI and VII Kaname is in the background but his function is not passive. The author occasionally reminds us that Kaname is reading the Arabian Nights, so that escapism, exoticism and eroticism -- in a word, fantasy -- never leave the scene.

Chapter VII consists almost wholly of dialogue between Takanatsu and Misako on her reactions to her conjugal difficulties. The dialogue is very much like that of the Takanatsu-Kaname chapters and both are unlike that of Chapter VI. Here it functions to present a double viewpoint, and it is clear that when each of the two principals is alone with Takanatsu no pretense is necessary, so that the reader sees the main characters from a perspective very different from that of situations when they are together, or with others.

Kaname returns as the protagonist in Chapter VIII, which sets the background of his indifference to Misako as a woman. In a significant phrase, "for Kaname a woman had to be either a goddess or a toy" (XII, 97), and Misako is neither. As he reflects on her affair, the narration brings the reader close enough to the text to indicate that it may as well be related in the first person, and therefore that the use of the first person is no guarantee in itself of closer contact with the reader. The rest of the novel, told from Kaname's viewpoint, also bears out this observation.

Chapters IX, X, XI and the beginning of XII make up another narrative block very different from the preceding. This time the setting is Awaji, where Kaname has come to meet Misako's father and Ohisa on the first leg of the old man's trip. First, Kaname's interest concentrates on the figure of Ohisa. Our view of this character changes somewhat because of his conjectures that she must be chafing under the old man's insistence on her living out the role he has assigned to her (XII, 109-110).

As Kaname listens to her play the samisen he has a moment of recall, a memory from childhood of a girl's face, faintly white in a window one summer evening. The sight affects the child so deeply that it becomes the germ of his idealization of women in later life (XII, 109). The ending of the novel, with its dim perception of the puppet's face mistaken for Ohisa's is here prepared.

The Awaji puppet theatre episode in Chapters X and XI, the second of the theatrical performances in the novel, marks an important stage in progression. To begin with, Misako's absence from the Awaji scene suggests Kaname's growing withdrawal from his marriage and at the same time his increasing attachment to the old man's way of life, which includes Ohisa. This time the accent is not on Kaname's attraction to Japanese tradition, or his view of woman, but on another ideal region, that of childhood. At the performance Kaname is lulled by the mood of the scene around him, and drifts into childhood memories of seeing Kagura dances; the sensation of being in a Shangri-la overcomes him (XII, 125). The Awaji puppets are the products of a crude, child-like folk art and the audience feels close to them. Not accidentally, a large number of children are present:

On the other side of that kindergarten noise in the pit, Kaname's eye caught hints of something different from the scene in the Osaka puppet theatre. This was a land of fantasy with the simplicity and brightness of children's stories, of fairylands...It was unlike the realism of Bungorō's handling of puppets in Osaka; the puppets here seemed to be playing innocently with the children in the audience (XII, 127).

The reversion to childhood is underlined by the allusions to open buckets in the pit as public toilets and the incident of a small boy using one of them in the aisle beside Kaname and his companions.

The doll motif comes to the fore at the beginning of Chapter XII as Kaname takes his leave of the old man and Ohisa, who are off on a pilgrimage to the temples of Awaji. A passing reference is made to the puppet which the old man is planning to buy, but more importantly here, Kaname perceives a deep contentment in the other man's way of living, as represented by the fact that "in the garb of the doll theatre and accompanied by a doll-like woman he is in search of an old doll to buy" (XII, 140).

The rest of the chapter offers a complete contrast. With no expressed motivation, Kaname returns to the Kobe area where, after a Western meal, he proceeds to a house of prostitution run by an Englishwoman, Mrs. Brent. Even this incidental character is a player of roles, much given to exaggerating her emotions. That she is also in a process of physical and mental deterioration might suggest that she symbolizes the decline of the West in Kaname's view and a stage in his progression toward a way of life like his father-in-law's, but there is no over-simplification in this novel. Kaname finds himself touched by her sorrow at the same time as he recognizes her sentimentality. The character of chief interest in this chapter, the Eurasian prostitute Louise, is also engaged in playacting, for she lives under false pretenses as to her background. On one hand, Kaname is ambivalent toward Louise, seeing her both as a beast and a Lamaist statue of the Goddess of Joy, but on the other he is much amused by her melodramatic complaints. Louise is set in contrast to both Ohisa and Misako with whom she forms a triad, but even on this point a slight qualification must be made, since Misako is not a paragon of conjugal virtue.

This episode, furthermore, has certain affinities to the scenes of fantasy through one aspect: Kaname's attraction to Louise because of her foreignness may be likened to the nature of his longings for worlds outside his own; the scenes with her are a realization of the Arabian Nights reading scenes.

Kaname's visit to Louise also turns out to have a function in the plot, since it influences Kaname's resolution to part from Misako. He realizes the incongruity of remaining married to Misako, to whom he is far less attracted than the relatively insignificant Louise.

In Chapter XIII, the advance in the surface plot becomes marked, for the decision to separate is now in the minds of Misako's father, Takanatsu, and Misako. A crisis is reached; Hiroshi is told of his parents' situation, but the author ignores the potential for exploitation of his attitudes. It is Takanatsu who takes the step of informing the child, but Kaname learns of the fact at second hand, through Misako, and only after reading Takanatsu's letter of Misako telling her what he has done, and also urging her to begin a new life, does Kaname briefly show the first, and indeed the only signs of deep grief over the whole affair.

The final chapter, after an exchange between Kaname and his father-in-law resolved to argue Misako out of her decision to leave her marriage, belongs to Kaname and Ohisa. The ending of the novel is slightly ambivalent, but from what has already happened in the minds of the principal characters, there can be little doubt of the outcome. Kaname, we sense, will surely follow the course Misako's father has taken. In the bath he is taken with the fantasy that the old man's house, where he is now, is his; he has divorced Misako. His dream of his new state



also involves an Ohisa, not necessarily the actual one; he thinks the ideal Ohisa may even be a doll. But the idealization of this character is shaded. In a subsequent dialogue Ohisa expresses a certain discontent with her way of life as imposed by the old man. Kaname through the mosquito netting, thinks he sees Ohisa's shadowy face in a corner, but it is the puppet brought from Awaji. Soon after, Ohisa herself slides the door open, and "it was not a doll's face that appeared dimly white in the darkness beyond the netting" (XII, 185).

The assimilation of Ohisa to an art object is appropriate, since she is herself a creation of the old man's, but the implications of the image do not end here, if we remember the goddess-toy dichotomy in Kaname's view of women. In this case, suggestions of both aspects are present. Ohisa is surely the embodiment of an ideal Kaname can worship, and she is not a plaything in the sense that Louise is, but in the first place she is often referred to as a doll and in the Osaka theatre scene she is linked to the Koharu puppet. The associations ramify from the idea of puppet to Misako's festival dolls, from the elegant Osaka puppets to the crude Awaji puppets, which Kaname sees as children at play, and even extend to the scene of Hiroshi with the dogs. If Ohisa is a plaything on this level of associations, the split in Kaname is healed at the ending; it is evident, moreover, that absolute antitheses are alien to the spirit of this novel. In any case, Ohisa stands at the centre of the web of fantasies which constitute the essence of the work.

Tade kuu mushi marks an important stage of development for Tanizaki. A point of contact exists with the early shi-shōsetsu, in which the author is trapped by identification with his male protagonists. Tade kuu mushi does contain autobiographical elements; in fact the basic

situation of a couple about to separate corresponds to a phase of the author's own marital difficulties, but now the attitude of author to text is entirely different. Tanizaki has reached a level of detachment from the identity of his hero enabling him to make this character into a fictional creation. Signs of detachment are perceptible in the text, as in Kaname's earlier ironic appraisal of his father-in-law as a humbug, his wry self-recognition during the scene representing Jihei and Osan's conjugal relationship, and his awareness of the self-dramatizing tendencies in Mrs. Brent and Louise.

It follows that the author is able to create independent characterizations of people other than the protagonist. The existence of no fewer than eight different characters in this novel, each with distinctive traits, demonstrates progress in the area of character presentation over the far more limited worlds of Chijin no ai and Manji.

Lastly, Tade kuu mushi, even more than "Yoshino kuzu," calls for certain parallels with the works of Kawabata, in such areas as tonal restraint and the use of associated motifs. Tanizaki, however, must be sharply distinguished from Kawabata in his conception of structure. He appears to require a conclusion to his works, as Kawabata frequently did not, and Tade kuu mushi, in the light of the above discussion, is surely not open-ended, despite the author's reluctance to tell the reader precisely what is to happen to the characters.

If a certain authorial detachment is visible in Tade kuu mushi and indeed in all the works of this second period, it is absolutely essential to the conception of "Neko to Shōzō to futari no onna" (1936), for this novella is a pure comic creation. The author must be sufficiently distanced from his material to be able to present a male protagonist Shōzō

in love with a cat, who provokes jealousy in two successive wives. Excessive attachment to a cat, and resulting jealousy, do not necessarily constitute material for comedy<sup>67</sup> but in this case it surely does, because Shōzō as a woman-worshipping Tanizaki hero sees the cat, Lily, as an ideal female, and because the author takes care especially in the introduction of the latter to underline the lowly nature of the love object.

It has already been indicated that the comic elements in Tanizaki's writing starting from the second period are signs of a detachment rarely occurring in the works set in the author's present. Various levels of the comic mode are evident in the second period; Rangiku monogatari and Shōshō Shigemoto no haha contain farcical episodes, Bushūkō hiwa has a conspicuous mock-heroic and grotesque aspect, but "Neko" is the only work of pure comedy. Comedy in this work is moreover of a higher order than that of the other works.

Comedy is the result of Tanizaki's powers of narrative persuasion. The situation at the outset is unusual: Shōzō's first wife, Shinako, asks her successor for his cat, Lily, who stands higher in his affections than either woman. The author must convince us of the plausibility of these relationships, since the incongruity making for comedy must possess a strain of truth in order to be effective. In this case he sets out to work on the reader by having one character trying to persuade another. The novella opens with the text of a letter written by Shinako to Fukuko, a most manipulative letter full of self-deprecation and subtle cajolery, aimed at giving the second wife the illusion that she has been the winner in the matter of the divorce, and above all playing on her possible jealousy of the cat. Fukuko's manner is so convincing that the reader accepts the premise of a mere animal as an object of jealousy and as a tool.

The use of the letter is an indirect means of persuasion. Immediately after presenting the letter, the author hastens to maintain the level of credibility he has just established by employing a direct method: he shows Shōzō and the cat together to demonstrate their closeness to each other. Fukuko, every detail of the letter in her mind, sits at dinner with her husband, watching him feed Lily from his own chopsticks. The scene is an astonishing tour de force; the author communicates a sense of Shōzō's intimacy with the cat by precise sense impressions, through the rendering of gestures, shapes and postures, and even oral sensations. Shōzō lifts a fish in the air for Lily to catch, and this central character first comes into view poised with her paws on the table like a customer in a bar, her back rounded like the hunchback of Notre-Dame (XIV, 268). In a phase when Tanizaki uses figurative language very sparingly these comic similes assume particular relief. They emphasize the fact that Lily is, after all, only a cat, for they are in the realm of conventional anthropomorphic views of animals.

Shōzō then places the fish in his mouth to remove the vinegar sauce and break up the bones for Lily, who then takes it from his mouth. One can imagine a piece of psychoanalytical criticism commenting on this incident as evidence of Tanizaki's "oral compulsions," related to a "mother complex," but the issue here is the appeal to a sensation rarely exploited with success in literature.

These two passages at the opening of the novella, the letter and the feeding scene, represent persuasive argument on the part of the author. From this point the narrative advances in a mixture of dialogue, psychological analyses, and flashbacks, from the viewpoints of Fukuko, Shōzō and Shinako. In Neko, Tanizaki explores states of mind to an extent rare in his work; he develops character psychology much further

than in Tade kuu mushi or Sasameyuki, which, though not psychological novels, contain an essential ingredient of character interplay. In fact, even with the potentially comic premise of a cat arousing love and jealousy, this might be called one of the few works of psychological realism in Tanizaki. For example, Fukuko is examined in a complex mental state after receiving the letter. She wonders about Shinako's motives, and we learn her reasons for not telling Shōzō about it, and for asking him to give Lily to his ex-wife. Later, Shinako, who takes the cat for mixed motives, comes to identify with her as another lonely being forced to leave her home.

As for Shōzō's motivations, the most basic causes for his attachment for Lily are presented in a late stage of the novella. Shōzō is sitting in an empty lot near Shinako's house, hoping to meet Lily by chance. The reader learns that he has never experienced such feelings toward a human being, having always been treated like a child by his mother and wives, and having even lacked friends. However, Tanizaki brings nuances to the characterization of this simple-minded hero. Despite his apparent weakness he is able to manipulate others, and the text makes us suspect that he, not his mother or Fukuko, played the principal role in Shinako's expulsion from the household.

The impression of veracity in the rendering of the characters is also aided by the use of dialect in direct speeches, and by the representation of the activities of the characters in an urban lower-middle class context. This novel shows Tanizaki in a very rare resort to material from this social category. The unusually high degree of domestic realism in "Neko" is an important aspect of Tanizaki's persuasiveness; such is not the case in the works of his first period. In "Shisei," for example, the reader accepts the extraordinary because of Tanizaki's handling of

of stylization and artifice; in "Neko," acceptance of the unusual depends on his skill in the representational mode.

Throughout the novella, however, the author never loses control of an equilibrium between the actuality of the characters' mental processes and their outward lives, and the sense of the incongruous in Shōzō's fantasy image of the cat. While Lily is thoroughly credible as a "real" cat, Shōzō sees her (often referred to as kanojo in the text) as a human female, first a small girl full of mischievous charm, with a lively, expressive face (XIV, 299-300), then as an ideal woman. When Lily gives birth for the first time she is a shadowy Tanizaki heroine, combining the types of the eternal woman and the femme fatale; her eyes shine from the depths of a dark closet and in them Shōzō sees "coquetry, voluptuousness and sorrow" (kobi to, iroke to, aishū) (XIV, 301). A precedent exists in an earlier Tanizaki story for Shōzō's view of the cat as a distillation of the feminine essence; this is the unfinished short story "Dorisu" ドリス ("Doris," 1927) in which the narrator's white Persian cat is seen as a foreign woman.

The use of the cat symbol comes to a climax at the end of the novella, when Shōzō, unable to bear his separation from Lily, finally gains entrance to Shinako's room where she is sleeping in the absence of her new mistress. Shōzō is full of concern for her, but Lily, by now accustomed to Shinako's care, reacts with a properly catlike indifference. In effect, she jilts Shōzō who reacts with self-pity. The novella ends as he departs hastily at the sound of Shinako approaching the house.

The cat is a perfect symbol for the object of unilateral love. The accuracy of the symbolism and the portrayal of Shōzō and the two women leads the reader to the halfway point between empathy for the characters

and laughter over the nature of their situation. The poise thus achieved is a mark of a high level of comedy of character, a mode which appears to be exceptional in Japanese literature.

The final work under discussion in this chapter is Sasameyuki,<sup>68</sup> Tanizaki's longest novel, and in the view of many readers, his masterpiece. It belongs to the same category as Tade kuu mushi and "Neko to Shōzō to futari no onna" because of the strong idealizing tendency behind the presentation of everyday experience. Though on one level it is a bourgeois novel of manners, its total effect depends on the author's attachment to the three principal Makioka sisters and their mode of life. The accomplishment is all the more extraordinary as there is no central male character like Kaname reflecting on his own tendency to idolize women.

As a finely detailed chronicle of the life of the Makioka sisters, this novel reaffirms Tanizaki's resolution of his previous difficulties with longer forms, for he manipulates and shapes a great wealth of material.

The wide scope of the novel and its complexity makes a variety of approaches to structure possible. So is the lack of critical agreement as to theme. To give an idea of the problems encountered by critics attempting to grasp this novel in its totality, we may indicate an extreme in inclusive interpretations: Silvino V. Epistola, stating that the theme of Sasameyuki is "life," sees the development of the work as an orchestration of this theme, "repeated in every one of the various keys until the possibilities have been exhausted."<sup>69</sup> Some Japanese critics, less concerned with the form of the whole, simply refer to the development of the novel as that of an unfolding picture scroll.<sup>70</sup> Noguchi Takehiko, conceiving of the work in terms of the internal time of human beings,

specifically the cycles of time in the physiology of women,<sup>71</sup> offers suggestions as to secondary structures within the novel, but still does not englobe its entirety.

Bearing in mind the dangers of oversimplification, we may suggest that the novel consists not of a single structural pattern but of several patterns superimposed on each other, or intertwined.

The most important aspect of the ordering of plot elements is the arrangement of Yukiko's five marriage negotiations which span the novel. These proposals constitute a series of failures until the final one, with Viscount Mimaki, but the author avoids steady progression. Each episode in the sequence of suitors is distinctive. Yukiko appears willing to marry the first suitor, Segoshi, but the Makiokas end the negotiations on learning that his mother suffers from mental illness. Yukiko then declines a second prospect, Nomura, because of his insensitivity. Both of these proposals come in Book I; in the second book Yukiko's marriage plans recede, but return early in the last portion of the novel, Book III, with a humiliating setback for the family, when Sawazaki refuses Yukiko. The fourth candidate, Hashidera, looks promising, but Yukiko's stubbornness combined with shyness destroys all hope of marriage with him. At last the negotiations end in success with Viscount Mimaki, but the author qualifies this triumph, for Mimaki has certain defects, such as the lack of a stable profession. Throughout this sequence of marriage offers the author plays on the reader's anticipation, especially as hopes and disappointments are seen to a great extent through the eyes of Sachiko, the sister who plays a major role in the negotiations.

The second structuring element also spanning the novel is the arrangement of the story of Taeko, the youngest sister. Though the most modern and the most spirited of all the sisters, she is constantly



thwarted in her attempts to succeed in life. The line of plot interest paralleling Yukiko's series of marriage proposals consists of Taeko's difficulties with men. In Book I, Chapter 3, her relationship with the leisured and indolent Okubata is bound to the story of Yukiko, who has had problems in marriage negotiations because Taeko once caused a scandal by eloping with Okubata. In Book I, Taeko's concerns are secondary to Yukiko's, while in Book II, Yukiko fades temporarily from the scene as her younger sister comes to the fore. A second possibility for Taeko, the photographer Itakura, appears. Taeko proposes marriage to him, and despite the difference in social status between the two, Sachiko discusses the matter seriously with her husband, Teinosuke. Itakura's agonizing death at the end of Book II represents a disaster for Taeko.

Book III treats the stories of both sisters, though Yukiko's commands more attention. At length Taeko induces a bartender, Miyoshi, to marry her and her situation now counterpoints Yukiko's betrothal to Mimaki, the son of an aristocrat. Taeko's story ends in apparent defeat as she has a child by Miyoshi only to lose it at birth, but she survives after many trials, while Yukiko's future is in some doubt.

Under the interplay of the plots involving these two sisters is a downward movement. Decline is the thematic essence of this novel. The fortunes of the Makioka family, an old Osaka merchant house, have been on the wane even as the novel opens, and the fact is always in the background of the characters' acts and thoughts. In Book I the main house, the branch headed by Tsuruko, the oldest Makioka sister, and Tatsuo, her husband, moves to Tokyo. The displacement signifies an uprooting of the sisters' past.

The chronological framework of the novel provides another structuring element, which also gives off a sense of change and instability. The events of the novel take place between late autumn of 1938 and April of 1941. The author often keeps the reader informed of time, by dating the sisters' activities and by alluding to international events, so that the reader is ever aware of the impending war.

A network of recurring allusions to seasonal ritual also mirrors the downward movement of the novel. The cherry-blossom viewings and the moon-viewing of Book I are relatively bright in atmosphere; they correspond to the dark, subdued mood of the firefly hunt in Book III, Chapter 4. The series of annual cherry-blossom viewings is itself graded in mood; in Book I, Chapter 19, Sachiko is saddened at the thought of seeing the cherry blossoms without Yukiko, when she is married, but still, the account of the excursion to Kyoto is developed as an elegant occasion. At the novel's end, in Book III, Chapter 37, the last cherry-blossom viewing is a subdued and somewhat perfunctory activity.

The complexity of these structures is not immediately visible to the reader; what he notices above all in this novel is characterization. On one level the characters are presented as social beings; their individual development is not the only issue, and neither is examination of their motives. Far more important is the implication of their acts for the family as a whole, and hence of what they do in the eyes of outsiders. Social relationships are of the utmost significance for the surface of the work.

And yet, it would be erroneous to interpret Sasameyuki as a novel of contemporary realities. The way of life of the Makioka sisters is an ideal world for the author,<sup>72</sup> though not in the way that the Edo of

"Shisei" and the civil war period of Momoku monogatari are.

First of all, the sisters make up a self-contained introverted unit. Attachments within the family are all-powerful; the sisters are isolated from outsiders by pride in family tradition and also by a reluctance to leave each other. The first candidate for Yukiko's hand, Segoshi, is thoroughly discussed beginning from the first chapter, but he is not even named until the fourth; the second suitor, Nomura, is introduced as a set of statistics.

Another factor supporting the idea that the Makioka world is somewhat apart from this world is the presentation of Taeko as an artist figure in the areas of creation (doll-making) and performance (the traditional dance). Some signs of overt idealization enter the novel in the author's view of the three sisters together. His desire to keep them always beautiful and young is reflected first in a passage where they are admired during their outings by a stranger who constantly takes them for younger than they actually are (XV, 42), but most prominently in the references to the sisters on cherry-blossom viewing excursions. In Book I, Chapter 7, reference is made to a photograph which Teinosuke, Sachiko's husband, has taken of the three together and to the poem he composed for the occasion, containing an allusion to their beauty (XV, 43). In a fully developed chapter on another cherry-blossom viewing, Book I, Chapter 19, Sachiko has regrets for the passing of time and the separation that her sisters' marriages will bring about, and again they are photographed. The photographs are an expression of a wish to preserve and perpetuate the image of the sisters, and their life as it is.

The cherry-blossom viewings have a correspondence in the third and last book in the firefly hunt attended by Sachiko and Yukiko.

A firefly hunt, we are told in the course of Sachiko's memory of the event, is lacking in the pictorial values of cherry-blossom scenes but are possessed of a dreamy quality, like that of the world of fairy tales (XV, 568).

Sachiko herself, as the most traditional Osakan of the three, represents the pull of old values which for the author is another ideal area. But in one later passage, in the course of a holiday, she returns to Teinosuke's view as youthful and even childlike in her delight in the distorted reflection of the room in the bright surface of a thermos bottle. Her own reflection is that of a spirit in a crystal ball, the princess of the dragon palace under the sea, or a queen (XV, 772).

The limited world of the Makioka women frequently contrasts with others, for example, that of the White Russian family, the Kyrilenkos, and the fashionable Tokyo women who once call on Sachiko. In Tokyo itself the Makiokas are foreigners; on Sachiko's trip to the east country, the exoticism of Mount Fuji for an Osakan is indicated (XV, 770).

The sisters' many illnesses suggest that their ideal world is also a fragile one. The extreme fastidiousness of Yukiko and Sachiko in matters of hygiene suggest an outright avoidance of physical experience (XV, 189-190). For Taeko the observation does not hold, but it must be pointed out that she too is vulnerable; in fact this character who appears to be the best equipped of the sisters to deal with the actual is the one most seriously affected by disaster, such as the Sumiyoshi flood, the death of a lover, the dysentery attack which nearly kills her, and a painful childbirth with the resulting death of the infant.

If illness signifies a world being eaten away from the inside, it is also being menaced by circumstances external to the sisters' limited,

ordered lives. There are natural disasters like the great flood and the typhoon in Tokyo, and above all the imminence of world war. Poignancy results from the placing of the events of the novel just before the war, all the more as the foreshadowings of the cataclysm to come are not overstated. On the whole the references to world events are made as casual as they must have been in the minds of sheltered upper-middle-class women caught up in the concerns of daily life. The foreign families, the Kyrilenkos and the Stolzes, are set in contrast with the sisters, particularly the former, as people who live by political events, but they are also parallels, for their uprooting, whether from their own lands or from Japan, echoes the displacement of the main branch of the Makioka family. Foreboding arises in the mind of the reader through the mere dating of letters, like those from Mrs. Stolz in Hamburg, dated May, 1939 and February, 1941.

Partly because the sense that the Makiokas' world is to vanish depends on the reader's knowledge of what is to happen after April of 1941, when the novel ends, and because Tanizaki was writing this work during the war,<sup>73</sup> Sasameyuki may be considered an historical novel in some respects. What greater historical distance could there be, than for a novelist writing in wartime about a period he knew would not return?<sup>74</sup> The rupture between the world that was, and contemporary reality for the author, produces the impression that Sasameyuki was written with a strong sense of nostalgia.

One of the most conspicuous aspects of Sasameyuki leading to an interpretation of the world of the Makioka sisters as an idealized realm lies in the characterization of Yukiko as typifying the traditional Japanese beauty or even the eternal woman;<sup>75</sup> in her reserve and remoteness

she has affinities with such characters as Ohisa in Tade kuu mushi and Lady Oichi in Momoku monogatari. Her influence on the title even affects our reading of the novel, for the word "sasameyuki," ("fine, powdery snow"), is said by the author to have occurred to him through association with the name of the main character, Yukiko.<sup>76</sup> The word refers not to a specific image or theme in the novel but is generally evocative of elegance and grace, and therefore conveys the overall impression of the content far more accurately than the title San: shimai (Three Sisters) which occurred to the author first.<sup>77</sup>

Yukiko, like other characters in the novel, is basically a type. It is true that the author shades off her presentation; her outward pliancy is countered by inner stubbornness, and even physically, her frail exterior is belied by her resistance to illness. A certain evolution also takes place in the reader's view of this character. In a late phase of the novel Yukiko proves to be far more forceful than her extroverted sister Sachiko, in venturing to scold Taeko for her misdeeds. And despite her decidedly traditional aspect she has Western tastes in many areas of life, like her sister.

These qualifying traits may lead us to conclude that after a long succession of types among Tanizaki characters (perhaps excepting some in Tade kuu mushi), a balanced character has at last appeared. But Tanizaki's conception of this character is not fundamentally representational. Yukiko is a figure with universal resonances. Her classic, fragile quality is repeatedly stressed, and the mystery of the spot over her eye lends her an other-worldly air. In addition, the author is at pains to keep her remote in the narration. In a novel abounding with reported thoughts and speeches, Yukiko's reactions to events and

situations are very rarely expressed, so that the reader, along with Sachiko, Teinosuke and Taeko are forced to conjecture what she may be thinking; and naturally, as a timid, silent individual, she rarely appears in the dialogue which elsewhere in the novel is an effective vehicle for character portrayal.

In one of the very few passages presented from her viewpoint, Yukiko looks out onto the garden of the Ashiya house, and the author comments that she comes to life again whenever she returns to this house (XV, 135). For Yukiko this is an extremely strong attribution of feeling, one of the very few appearing in the novel; otherwise the author does not convey her direct reaction to the scene. The effect is the opposite to that of the scenes in which he places the emotionally expressive Sachiko in natural surroundings, for example, the cherry-blossom viewing of Book I, Chapter 19, which causes her to grieve over the thought that Yukiko may not attend the excursion next year (XV, 142).

Though at the novel's end Yukiko's marriage negotiations meet with success there is more than a faint suggestion that marriage is not for her. The prospective bridegroom has no fixed profession, and she regrets leaving her sisters. The final sentence of this long novel hints at an uncertain future:

Sachiko remembered that she, too, had showed no gladness on her own marriage; questioned by her sisters, she spoke of her unhappiness and wrote a poem: "Another day spent on choosing clothes; how sad weddings are!"; Yukiko's diarrhea did not stop that day, and continued even on the train (XV, 881-882).

Since the endings of Tanizaki's works often carry a special emphasis, the allusion to one of the very few illnesses befalling Yukiko in the novel is thematically significant. The work, we may judge, concludes on a note

of unsoundness and instability which will no doubt continue.

The method of characterization of Taeko has much in common with that of Yukiko. Taeko is also essentially a type, that of the assured, competent modern woman, and as the novel progresses her sisters discover that she is not merely assertive but profoundly calculating and domineering in her relations with men; in Sachiko's eyes she is even corrupt. Thus Taeko is a distant relative of the woman of "Shisei," of Nanshi in "Kirin," and Naomi in Chijin no ai. On the other hand, just as Yukiko's traditional doll aspect is modified by allusions to her tastes for Western things, Taeko's modernity is qualified by her attraction to doll-making and the traditional dance.

The reader has the distinct impression of an author carefully modifying his character types, as in Tade kuu mushi, in order to establish a pattern of correspondences between the two characters.

The notion of bringing qualifications to our expectations of a character holds true even for Sachiko, the sister who least obviously belongs to a representative class of character. Sachiko has a quasi-maternal role in relation to her younger sisters, but her protectiveness of Yukiko and concern for her future is also tinged with a hint of rivalry, for she tends to outshine Yukiko at miai (XV, 52-53).

Oharu, the maid, perhaps the most successfully executed minor character in the work, conforms to a type universal in literature, that of the slovenly, gluttonous comic servant, with a few distinguishing quirks, like the habit of talking to herself which surfaces during a moment of crisis in the great flood (XV, 281). She is also presented, however, as writing a haiku with unexpected facility (XV, 184). Our attention is so frequently called to the fact that the characters are not what we would



expect that the author, we are tempted to conclude, is working on a principle of deliberate modification of types.

The conception of characters as types, especially Yukiko, suggests that the author is functioning in the realm of the romance, despite the framework of domestic realism in the novel.<sup>78</sup> Tanizaki though creating apparently "round" figures, is still continuing his vision of characters as universals. In his first period the types of the artist, the masochistic adorer, the ferocious woman, as in "Shisei," "Kirin," "Ningyo no nageki," and Chijin no ai, do not have to be "real people" in order to produce an impact on the reader; neither do the demands of the detective story genre extend to ample characterizations. The same principle holds true of the works of the second period based on traditional Japanese material; for example, Mōmoku monogatari is surely a romance.

The question is more complex for Sasameyuki. Tanizaki does give evidence of realism in characterization, in details, but the fact that the characters are particularized to some degree is less important than their basic representative value. Moreover, they are not so much individuals as creatures of society.

Normally, the social element in fiction can be conceived as "background"; it is not usually difficult to distinguish between society and individual psychology, because these conceptions are more or less separate in the mind of the author. What is extraordinary in Sasameyuki is the fusion of the two. On page after page, we find the characters absorbed in endless arrangements for miai, visits and excursions, in explanations and apologies. The accounts of the complex ramifications of these events do not constitute realistic detail to color the background for the characters and the major incidents of the novel. Social concerns are perceived as

one with the characters' thoughts and emotions, with their very identity. In Book III, Chapter 8, the feelings of Tatsuo arranging memorial services for his parents-in-law are identical with his concern for the proprieties, and for the implications of his acts for the other members of the family. Sachiko is even more deeply concerned about the services, as a sign of filial piety. No reader could fail to be impressed, moreover, by the profound effect on the characters, particularly Sachiko, of outward social imperatives such as the necessity of conducting miai in an appropriate manner. Social structures and personal concerns have everything to do with each other.

In passages such as the one just cited involving Tatsuo and Sachiko the reader enters the introverted world of the characters. Our contact with them would not be so close were it not for Tanizaki's constant use of a technique to draw the reader in, that of indirect reported speech. As in Mōmoku monogatari or "Ashikari," the words of a speaker are often embedded in the narration with infrequent recourse to quotation marks, so that the barriers between narrative and speech are broken down. However, in Mōmoku and the relevant section of "Ashikari," the basic narration proceeds in the first person, so that when speech occurs the narrator seems to be relating it quite naturally, but in Sasameyuki, told in the third person, the effect is slightly different. A variety of divergent viewpoints occur in the novel without the controlling judgments of a single narrator. The technique, reminiscent of the style of premodern Japanese fiction, is a useful one, for it abolishes the necessity of extensive third-person psychological analysis, and the total result is one of continuity in thought, speech and narration, and of a suggestive density aiding in the creation of a world not quite of this world.

Ultimately, the prime value of Sasameyuki lies in its characterizations, and the above discussion may lead to a few general conclusions. In this novel Tanizaki characters are seen in their most complex form; by contrast it is all the clearer that his characters in other works, at their purest, are not "real people" but psychic forces, like the tattooer Seikichi and Ikuko in Kagi. If it is admitted that these and other characters like them are effective creations, the appearance of types is not necessarily a defect, for a reader can be powerfully moved by universals in literature. Thus he is moved by Sasameyuki, for while on the one hand its verisimilitude of detail causes him to share in the life of the Makiokas, on the other, the underlying tendency to generalize his characters, to conceive of them as ideals, is always at work; the novel gives off a sense of something far beyond direct psychological or sociological observation. The synthesis of realism and fantasy is one of Tanizaki's major achievements.

This chapter has dealt with many of Tanizaki's major fictional achievements, showing the narrative artist at his peak. In this second period Tanizaki is completely successful in projecting himself into fiction; he excels in the rendering of imaginary worlds in the works employing traditional Japanese material, and the same tendency carries over to works with more conventionally realistic settings and characters. It is difficult to imagine what more Tanizaki could accomplish, but this remarkably fertile author is still to take new directions, in the writings of his old age.

## CHAPTER III

## RENEWAL AND PURIFICATION: 1951-1965

The writings of the last years of Tanizaki's life, from his sixty-fifth to his seventy-ninth years, constitute another distinct category. The change in the works after Shōshō Shigemoto no haha has been noted by Nomura Shōgo, who observes that in content and technique the special qualities of Tanizaki's early period return distinctly, though it is not a question of simple regression. With old age giving the author a new freedom to reappraise the human essence, he returns to the concerns of his early writings and examines them in depth.<sup>79</sup>

Reversion is observable in the development of themes, character relationships and techniques earlier appearing in his works. For example, the mother theme in the fiction of the first and second periods undergoes full treatment in "Yume no ukihashi" 夢の浮橋 ("The Bridge of Dreams," 1959, XVIII, 145-212), and the relationship of dominant to dominated characters begun in "Shisei" comes to an extraordinary conclusion in Fūten rōjin nikki 瘋癲老人日記 (Diary of a Mad Old Man, 1961-62, XIX, 1-174). Sexuality as a driving motivation is equated with life itself in a particularly lucid and ferocious manner in Kagi 鍵 (The Key, XVII, 273-404),<sup>80</sup> and with freshness and energy in Fūten rōjin. These last two novels in particular show that in this period, Tanizaki has lost none of his skill in narration; Fūten rōjin is a work of apparent naturalness and profound sophistication.

Even more, the reader notices a singular sense of distillation and purification in this period, in the area of author-text relationships, owing

to a new clarity of self-perception. There is a distinct return to the presentation of the author's self in fiction. The shi-shōsetsu of the first period were failures because the author was unable to represent himself in fiction, and was far more successful in his imagined worlds. In the third period, with the exception of "Yume no ukihashi" the writing shows a new attitude of the author to himself. Illusion is a powerful force, as we have already indicated, behind the creation of the major works of Tanizaki until this point. But now, as if the limiting conditions of advanced age were forcing a new urgency on the author, he sees himself fictionally in a different manner. The works of this period, in the main, lack the expressions of longing for other worlds, the escapism so conspicuous in the earlier works. The author does not resort to the screen of history or romance. The case of "Yume no ukihashi," with its flights into a dreamland, is obviously different, but this novella belongs to the third period for reasons which will become evident. In the other fictional works of this phase, Tanizaki's imaginative vigor now moves in the realm of contemporary life. Kagi and Fūten rōjin in particular have an impact which makes the more realistic of the works of the second period look all the more like fantasies.

Surprisingly, the reader observes Tanizaki in these last years striking out in new or renewed directions, as in the representational mode in most portions of Zangyaku-ki 殘虐記 (A Record of Cruelty, 1958, XIII, 1-84). Even the relatively trivial story "Oshaberi" おしゃべり ("Chatter," 1964, XIX, 475-490), his last work of fiction, shows the artist still exploring new modes of expression.

This period is also distinguished from the others by a diminished total production and by a continuing tendency to write less and less

fiction. The lessening ratio of fiction to nonfiction observable in the shift from the first to the second phase thus continues. Work on the Genji monogatari occupies much of the author's time, with the second translation published in 1951, and the first volume of a third version appearing in 1961. He produces a lengthy autobiographical work, Yōshō jidai 幼少時代 (Childhood Years, 1955, XVII, 41-253) and essays such as "Setsugoan yawa" 雪後庵夜話 ("Evening at Setsugoan," 1963, XIX, 375-459), in which he discusses himself and certain aspects of his work. Examples of diaristic writing are "Rōgo no haru" 老後の春 ("A Spring of my Old Age," 1957, XVII, 405-431) and "Shichijūkyū no haru" 七十九の春 ("The Spring of my Seventy-ninth Year," 1965, XIX, 491-508). The increasing preoccupation with observing and reporting is reflected in the fiction. In some cases the writing hovers on the borderline between fiction and essay, most notably "Chino monogatari" 乳野物語 ("A Tale of Chino," 1951, XVI, 393-439), "Ono no Takamura imōto ni koisuru koto" 小野篁妹に戀する事 ("Ono no Takamura Falls in Love with his Sister," 1951, XVI, 441-459) and "Kasanka mangan-sui no yume" 過酸化マンガンの水の夢 ("A Dream of Manganese Dioxide Water," 1955, XVII, 255-272), though ultimately these works must be classified as nonfiction. The hesitation between genres is more pronounced than in the two preceding phases of Tanizaki's writing career.

Only the following works are indisputably fictional: Kagi, Zangyaku-ki, "Yume no ukihashi," Fūten rōjin nikki, Daidokoro taiheiki 台所太平記 (Chronicle of the Kitchen, 1962-63, XIX, 201-374) and "Oshaberi."<sup>81</sup> Most of these works, furthermore, partake in some measure of non-fiction. The framework of Kagi and Fūten rōjin is that of the diary; Zangyaku-ki is in a sense, as the title suggests, a recording of an obsession, and

Daidokoro taiheiki is a comic chronicle.

The assimilation of non-fiction to fiction means an increasing sobriety in style, but does not necessarily involve any loosening of Tanizaki's narrative control. Kagi is in fact one of the most tightly structured of his works. Fūten rōjin and "Yume no ukihashi," which join Kagi as the best works of this period, are far more carefully arranged than a first glance might suggest.

An introduction to the character of the writing of this period is afforded by the three essays with fictional elements. "Chino monogatari," "Ono no Takamura imōto ni koisuru koto" and "Kasanka mangan-sui no yume" actually appear in a bibliography by Hashimoto Yoshiichirō as shōsetsu,<sup>82</sup> evidently in the least rigorous sense of this extensive term. The first two of these works provide a transition after Shōshō Shigemoto no haha.

The original title of "Chino monogatari" was "Gansan daishi no haha" 元三大師の母 ("The Mother of Gansan Daishi"). The work begins with an account of the author's visits to a Tendai priest and scholar named Kōen, in the course of his research preparatory to the writing of Shigemoto. He asks Kōen questions on such matters as fujōkan, the sense of impurity cultivated by old Kunitsune in the resulting novel. Kōen offers Tanizaki material for a possible story, about a mother who, after her son became a renowned holy man, Gansan Daishi, went to live as a nun in Chino, at the foot of Mount Hiei where his temple was located. The author finds himself unable to treat this material. Since Gansan Daishi is an historical figure who left many vestiges in the records, the material is not appropriate for a monogatari, and the author thinks instead of a freer, essay-like approach. It might be argued that this

work is indeed fiction, that of an author unable to write a story, and therefore reminiscent of "Yoshino kuzu," but "Chino monogatari" is not shaped like it. The reader's attention does not focus on Gansan Daishi or his mother, or on the author's absorption in their story, or on the priest Kōen. The work consists in great part of the presentation of historical and biographical fact. This is an essay, a record of Tanizaki as a researcher in the preliminary stages of fiction writing; one can imagine him in a similar situation before the writing of such works as "Yoshino kuzu," Bushūkō hiwa and "Ashikari," in which judgment and discernment of the evidence presented by historical records are important, and it is therefore interesting that he should have written such a work as "Chino monogatari." The fiction writer has turned to facts.

The companion to "Chino" is "Ono no Takamura imōto ni koisuru koto," whose original title, "Ono no Takamura nikki wo yomu" 小野篁日記を読む ("On reading the Diary of Ono no Takamura") more accurately reflects the non-fictional cast of the work. Nevertheless the essay contains material of far more interest to the author than does "Chino." Like Gansan Daishi, Takamura is an actual historical figure of the early Heian period, in whom the author became interested during his research for Shigemoto. Tanizaki relates how he came across the Takamura nikki in an edition of three Heian journals, one of them the Heichū nikki which he had to read, how he was attracted by the Takamura journal because of its unusual content and its resemblance to the contemporary short story. Unlike the other journals of the period, records of ordinary events, this one has a single plot. Tanizaki goes so far as to compare it to the shi-shōsetsu, though it is narrated in the third person and bears the signs of a later writer amending the text. Fascinated by the content, the author



wanted to write a piece of fiction based on it but hesitated to embark on another story at once after Shigemoto with the same Heian background, and also because the urge to write it vanished.

The rough outline of the story is embedded in the essay frame. The plot is indeed of a nature to attract Tanizaki, dealing as it does with Ono no Takamura's love for his stepsister, who becomes pregnant by him and who dies soon after. After her death he is still visited by her spirit; it is then related that he takes the unusual step of writing to a Minister of the Right for one of his daughters in marriage -- and succeeds. We also are told that Ono no Takamura continues to remember the dead sister, but succeeds both in his marriage and his career. The<sup>2</sup> outline of the story is related by Tanizaki in such a way as to convey the character of many an old tale; motivations and connections between events are virtually non-existent. The essay ends with the author's regret that he did not write a piece of fiction with such material.

"Ono no Takamura" is no more a fiction than "Chino monogatari," for it documents the process of investigation during which the artistic impulse is born -- or dies.

Both of these works are satellites of Shigemoto but as records, their nature makes them a fitting introduction to the fiction of his third period. After these essays Tanizaki makes very few appeals to the distant past for material for his fiction, since his attention is concentrated on contemporary fact.

A more pertinent example of a work on the boundaries of fiction is "Kasanka mangan-sui no yume." This short work is an essay in three parts. It consists first of notations on the author's brief visit to Tokyo. There are details of the inn, the meals, attendance at a strip show at

the Nichigeki, instigated by his wife and her niece, but no event is particularly well defined. This semi-travel journal moves on to a record of the author's viewing of a film during his stay in Tokyo: Les Diaboliques. In the detailed recounting of the plot, he explains his attraction to Simone Signoret in the leading female role as a murderess. The fatal-woman type is therefore present, but it is not exploited fictionally in this work. In the last section, consisting of a reproduction of the author's thoughts in a state of semi-consciousness before sleep, back at his house in Atami, the essay takes on a quasi-fictional character; that is, there is some shaping of the events recounted in the essay into a whole, for a few details from the first and second sections of the work enter the train of thought. The line of associations begins with a memory of the "peony eel" (botan-hamo) just eaten at dinner. Its color and translucency lead to thoughts of the skin of an actress seen in a bathtub on the Nichigeki stage, then to the hero of Les Diaboliques in a bathtub, his head pushed under water by Signoret. His thoughts then turn to the Western toilet in his home. The water sometimes reddened with beet liquid in the excreta looks like pale manganese dioxide water whose color enraptures him; moreover the feces are sometimes in the form of human faces. Tonight, for example, they are Signoret's. Association proceeds to the story of a Chinese emperor's concubine, Lady Ch'i, who was tortured and mutilated by the jealous empress, who then placed her rival's body in a toilet.

This essay is fundamentally a record, although the associations made in the dream help to unify the whole. These are unlike the use of the dream and dream associations in a fiction proper. Like the first two essays just examined, this work hovers in a state of pre-fiction, a report on a writer's imagination at work.

The full fictional treatment of another sort of dream, in the sense of revery, appears in "Yume no ukihashi,"<sup>83</sup> and dreams are in fact of its essence. As previously indicated, this work, because of the presence of the dream world, escapes the general conception of purification and stripping down of this third phase of Tanizaki's writing. However, it does join the other major works, Kagi and Fūten rōjin, through two factors. First, it has a single concentrated focus, unlike most of the works of the second period, and concentration is on an early concern of Tanizaki, the mother and childhood theme. The first use of the material lies in "Haha wo kouru ki" which prophetically enough, in view of the "record" aspect of this period, is a record of a dream of longing. The theme is more fully developed in the Tsumura section of "Yoshino kuzu." In this novella it is not simply a matter of recording the dream, but of perpetuation of the absolute, the lost ideal, as concretized in the person of Owasa. In Shigemoto, the memory of the mother is an undercurrent in the work until the very end, when the hero recovers the mother in actuality. "Yume no ukihashi" is the work in which Tanizaki fully exploits the longing-for-mother theme. The entire story is devoted to the theme, and furthermore, since the idea of perpetuation is stressed, the novella decidedly has an area in common with the otherwise very different worlds of Kagi and Fūten rōjin; all of these share a powerful impulse to prolong the ideals of life beyond the grave.

Although the title offers evocations of one of the most widespread themes in Japanese literature, that of the transience of all things earthly, everything in the novella challenges the notion of disappearance. To say so indicates that the novella is an integral whole and that Tanizaki's skill in composition is still alive.

The following discussion of the novella involves three aspects: character relationships, the nature of the hero's dreamland, and the linking of spatial and temporal elements.

A sense of perpetuation, not transience, emerges from the manipulation of the characters. Again the characterization is non-realistic, and again the characters give off resonances with universal appeal. The author sets himself in the narrative perspective of a young man Tadasu reviewing the past; The "I" of Tadasu is the "I" of the author's present. The characters are arranged in overlays, and not only in the sense that the author has done so. Within the plot, the male protagonists, Tadasu and his father, are overlays of each other; they attempt to make their own arrangements of other characters. The relationship of Tadasu to his father bears certain similarities to that of Seribashi and his father in "Ashikari." In the latter, the father had taken his son each year to view the moon festival activities held by Oyū in order to eternalize her in his son's memory. In "Yume no ukihashi," Tadasu realizes that his father, out of a desire to perpetuate the memory of his deceased wife by making the second wife into her double, has deliberately tried to blot out his son's perceptions of the stepmother's individuality. He goes so far as to give his new wife the name of her predecessor, Chinu, and to insist that his son use it. There are two prominent cases of superimposed maternal images, the scene by the garden pond, with Tadasu's mother/stepmother dipping her feet into the water, and the koto-playing episode on the veranda. Both, Tadasu suspects, are the creations of the father, although he remains uncertain.

The creation of areas of uncertainty is indeed one of Tanizaki's major accomplishments throughout his career. One of the most prominent features of this novella is the sense of mystery which arises from the

blurring of images, as in the above examples. The technique differs from that of deliberate mystification, as in "Shunkinshō," where the reader is forever conscious of the author-narrator taking him in and out of involvement with the story and its characters. "Yume" is also wrapped in haze deriving from a similar effort by the narrator to sift evidence in order to arrive at truth, but here the narrator is the protagonist, and the function of the blurring differs. It conveys the powerful drive toward idealization on the part of both Tadasu and his father. Longing for their own illusory worlds to continue, they exert all their efforts to that end. Therefore, in a sense, it is less a matter of authorial mystification than of doubt in the mind of Tadasu as he attempts to discern identities and facts. It is actually questionable whether he really wishes to learn the truth as to the identity of the remembered woman images.

Tadasu's father gives full expression to his urge for continuity on his deathbed by telling his son to be to the second Chinu what he himself has been. Hence he creates a second character doubling; Tadasu becomes an extension of his father. Although he notices that his stepmother does not actually resemble his mother in every detail, he has already transferred his original attachment to her, thereby preserving the first maternal image. Tadasu undertakes marriage, as counselled by his father, in a spirit of obligation. Moreover, he is careful to avoid having children, and his wife Sawako is easily disposed of after the stepmother's death. Tadasu suspects Sawako of having had a part in her death; the mother dies, bitten by a centipede, in the course of a massage given by Sawako. The incident is reminiscent of the earlier crime stories, the effect being that of mystery which contributes to the hazy atmosphere

of the novella. His suspicions, moreover, have implications important to the plot; they may be an unconscious pretext to rid himself of an element extraneous to his prime concern in life.

The final layering of characters results from the hero's adoption of his half-brother Takeshi, motivated by the fact that the child closely resembles Tadasu's stepmother. Thus Takeshi corresponds to Owasa in "Yoshino kuzu."

Tadasu and his father, then, cling fast to their dreams, embodied by the second Chinu and later by Takeshi, in an effort to perpetuate their idealized relationships past the grave.

It is now possible to view one of the apparent defects of the novella in a more favorable light. The story may seem contrived to some readers because of the systematic elaboration of the character doubling method. It is true that one of Tanizaki's early weaknesses as his craft developed was a tendency to over-arrange characters, as in Manji. The result in "Yume" is very different; the author employs this technique to heighten the effect of the male characters' obsession with recapturing their dreams.

For Tadasu, the dream world is not an ethereal one. It is the pleasurable experience of infantile sensory perception, highly particularized and fixed forever in the memory. The key phrase of the novella is yume no sekai, the "world of dreams"; it appears repeatedly in the work but with the greatest impact in the following passage. The small child, Tadasu, in bed next to his nurse, is yearning for his mother.

That sweet-tasting, dimly white world of dreams in her warm bosom, with the scent of hair mingled with the scent of milk -- why could that world not return? What did my mother's death mean? Had that world vanished? Where could she have taken that world (XVIII, 160)?

Tadasu's world of dreams is a refuge from everyday realities, such as we have frequently observed in the works of the first and second periods. But the expression of the desire in this passage is specific to Tanizaki's sensibility. The phrase "sweet-tasting, dimly white world of dreams" (amai honojiroi yume no sekai) is singularly expressive, with the term for "dreamland" qualified by adjectives for the concrete sense-impressions of a mother's milk. The escape from adult life is in reality a return to the source of the physical and emotional self, and therefore makes this work a fitting representative of the third period, with its general impulse toward renewal.

The passage has been prepared, a few pages earlier, by an account of two childhood memories, both associated with the mother and possessing strong sensory and affective values. In the first, the grown-up narrator Tadasu, recalling how his mother used to sit beside the pond, dipping her feet into the water, states that even as a child he wished the carp would come swimming around her feet. This remark is at once followed by a seeming irrelevancy:

I can remember another incident from those days. Once I saw some junsai leaves floating in my soup bowl and asked my mother:

"What are these slippery things?"

"They're called nenunawa," she said (XVIII, 155).

The shift from one memory to another takes place through the transference of sensory associations. The gliding of the fish around the mother's feet calls up the memory of the leaves of the junsai, a plant resembling a water lily, waving in the soup. The combined image has a value far more than visual; it is virtually tactile, and an appeal to the sense of taste is also implied. To reinforce the sensuousness of the effect, the imitative word "nenunawa" occurs repeatedly in the brief passage

following the lines just quoted. The reader becomes so naturally involved in the procedure that its complexities are not at once apparent. It may take more than one or two readings to realize that the author is presenting us with a memory of an imagined movement, that of the carp in the pond, to which he then gives a different form in a memory of another event, and yet the whole set of experiences is conveyed on the level of near-infantile perceptions. Tanizaki's skill in conveying tactile impressions developed at an early stage, most notably in the passage in "Yanagiyu no jiken" (1918), in which the protagonist thinks he feels the slitherings of a woman's long hair around his legs in the bathtub water, but in "Yume" the technique of relating sensations of tactility to others and their affective value in the context of a child's perceptions show the fully mature author at the height of sophistication in technique.

The phrase "land of dreams" returns when the narrator tells of himself in late adolescence reflecting on an extraordinary incident which has just taken place in the garden pavilion. Urged on by his stepmother, he has suckled at her breast like an infant:

The moment I saw my mother's breasts before me, the world of dreams I had yearned for returned at once, and a host of memories came surging back to hold me in their grasp (XVIII, 186).

The destructive power of time can therefore be countered by memory. In "Yume," the spatial element also functions to resist evanescence. One of the most salient features of the novella is its setting. Tadasu's house and its surroundings are visualized so sharply and in such detail that the reader can trace an actual map of the premises. The opposite is true for an earlier work like "Yoshino kuzu," in which locale is also of essential significance to the work, but which keeps sending the reader to consult a map -- that is, to a frame of reference



external to the text -- in order to follow the characters' physical and metaphorical journey.

The descriptions of the house and garden do not exist for the sake of heightened realism. They show how Tadasu's mind lingers over every detail of the scenes of his cherished past. The past for him is inseparable from places: the pond where his mother used to dip her feet, the pavilion, scene of rapturous encounters at his stepmother's breast (Gōkantei, the name of the pavilion, means "pavilion of joys brought together"), the veranda room where she dies. The locale, the scenes of Tadasu's dream world, have a solid existence. Childhood is summoned up for him by the clacking of the bamboo water-pipe by the pond, and the "bridge of dreams" of the title is an actual bridge over the pond as well as an allusion to the notion of evanescence. His stepmother, significantly enough, stands on this bridge to summon Tadasu to his first meeting with her in the pavilion. The house and grounds represent not only the stability of early childhood experience, but absolute stability. After Tadasu's real mother dies and he begins to associate her memory with the place, his father and stepmother die in turn; Takeshi is sent away, and Sawako comes only to depart not long after, and yet the locale survives.

The near past, Tadasu's childhood, is made to overlies a more remote past through the allusions to places in the Kyoto area. The hero is merged with the locale by his very name, Tadasu being the name of the forest where the house is situated, and his surname, Okotuni, being that of a district in the Kyoto region. That the narrator is keenly aware of the locale is evident from his musings about the identity of the stream flowing in front of the gates of the family property. His quotations from

Yoshida Tōgo's gazetteer and from Kamo no Chōmei do not constitute erudite digressions, for they reveal how firmly Tadasu is anchored to the place. His dreamland therefore projects far beyond the immediate spatial limits of his childhood home.

Neither is the long passage on Shizuichino, where Tadasu journeys in search of his infant half-brother, a digression. The hero's observations on his itinerary are marked by a profound interest in the region for what it tells him of the past. Again, the references to locale operate on two levels. In the first place, Shizuichino is the habitat of the Nosé family, who have for generations had a close relationship to Tadasu's family. Secondly, close attention is paid to the historical associations of the area. Shizuichino is therefore a parallel to the Kyoto locale, but at a further remove.

For both Kyoto and Shizuichino, the allusions to locale are completely relevant to the novella as a whole, since they confer a sense of timelessness on it. The excursions into local history are integral to the structure and theme, because the central concern of the novella is the movement towards the past in the imagination of the hero.

Thus the urge toward continuity has two faces: the care taken by Tadasu and his father to project their illusions into the future, and the adherence to the past, where the dreamland is situated. In either case their struggles resist temporality. If earthly existence is a dream, they deal paradoxically with the fact by embracing and cherishing it.

Chronologically, "Yume no ukihashi" intervenes in the group of three works most truly representing the tendency toward renewal, distillation and purification in Tanizaki's narrative art in this period.

These are Kagi, Zangyaku-ki, and Fūten rōjin nikki. These works,

representing varied narrative approaches, are related to each other first through their record-keeping orientation -- two are in diary form and one consists principally of relatively detached observation -- and secondly through the treatment of a common situation, that of a male protagonist who equates sexual power with life itself.

Kagi<sup>84</sup> is an extremely stylized novel. Its stark treatment of the aging hero and his wife in a process of mutual victimization makes it the most hard-boiled study of obsession in the work of Tanizaki. The story is related in two diaries, principally through alternating entries written by the husband and his wife, Ikuko. Maintaining the pretense that their diaries are being kept for private purposes, they secretly read each other's writings, so that a manner of communication thereby takes place. The husband's journal is both a record of his obsession with stimulating his flagging sexual powers, and a continual incitation to Ikuko, to help him in doing so. Ikuko's is a record of her growth into a sexual devourer. At the end of the novel the entries from her diary contain a comparison of the two novels, and judgments or conjectures as to their truth or falsity.

To locate Kagi on the scale of the totality of Tanizaki's major works from the point of view of content and theme, we find a variation on a familiar situation and its reversal. The male protagonist brings about his own destruction through the cultivation of his sexual desires. His physical deterioration, already present as the novel begins, is accompanied by an increase in his wife's sexual boldness, which he himself has inspired, and she comes to persecute him through her own desires, far more powerful than his. The reversal of positions of dominator and dominated is a constant in Tanizaki, beginning with "Shisei," but the process for the

hero of Kagi differs considerably from that of other obsessed male characters in Tanizaki. In "Shisei" the element of sexuality is only part of the art theme, and moreover what we see in this short story is the beginning of the process of inversion of roles. The young woman is brought to self-awareness by Seikichi, and she is seen at the end at the point where her supposed domination begins. In Chijin no ai a further step is taken; Jōji is sexually bound to Naomi, who develops to the point where she becomes the subjugator, and Jōji turns into a submissive cuckold. However, he has willed this state. In the works of the second period, the phase of illusions perfectly realized through art, the theme of enthrallment to a fierce female principle goes underground, to appear only in "Shunkinshō," and even in this novella the physical bond between Shunkin and Sasuke, though surely present, constitutes only a part of Sasuke's adoring attitude to the heroine.

In Kagi the captivation of the hero by his desires is magnified to the highest degree, for the husband uses his wife and Kimura, their prospective son-in-law, to urge himself on, and dies as the logical result of his acts. Dissatisfied by Ikuko's modesty, he encourages her to urge him and employs external stimuli, including visual incitation and jealousy. As Ikuko accedes to his request, at first with the excuse that she is doing what is expected, she turns into a force that tries to destroy him through sex. Despite his weakened condition he insists on relations with her which culminate in a stroke from which he never recovers.

Kagi further differs from earlier studies of obsession because the hero's very life is at stake. The novel is bleak; its world is a most constricted one. Though love is mentioned by both principals as a motive, they live purely by sexuality; there is no consoling veil of joy, of

anguish, or of glamorization of the other character. The husband's diary contains these two significant entries, the first from March 10 running: "At last I have lost all self-restraint. By nature I am a coward about illness, not the sort of person to take risks. Yet now at fifty-five I feel that I have at last found something to live for" (XVII, 323).<sup>85</sup> Hence sexual passion is identified with the life force. In his last entry, from April 15, "Now at last I have been bewitched into an animal that lives by night, an animal good only for mating" (XVII, 355).<sup>86</sup>

The latter quotation is taken by one critic as "the essential image of The Key. On a deliberately private and miniature scale, it is an allegory of the major tragedy of our age, the bestialization of the soul."<sup>87</sup> The perspective is that of Western criteria of absolutes of tragedy and of "bestialization" in the context of a universe in which the concept of a divine soul exists, but there is no question of tragedy or of soul in the context of Kagi, of Tanizaki's world in general, nor indeed in the Japanese tradition. What does exist is the essence of obsession pure and simple, emerging with particular force because of the conflict of the wills of the two principals.

All four of the characters, the husband, the wife, their daughter Toshiko, and her prospective husband Kimura, are motivated by sex, jealousy, and to some degree by the desire to undo the others. Kimura and Toshiko plot in the background with the secret motive of preying on Ikuko. Toshiko is an especially sinister creation, partly because she does not appear too prominently, but is presented as a figuration of jealousy and hatred. In the last sentences of the novel, Ikuko writes that Toshiko and Kimura are to marry for the sake of appearances and that Toshiko is thus to become a sacrifice to her mother, but the implication is very

strong that these two will participate in a continuing process of destroying Ikuko. The last phrase is: "That is what he tells me . . ." (XVII, 404).<sup>88</sup>

Kagi differs from earlier works dealing with obsession by its stripped-down quality. There is no art theme, as in "Shisei" and "Shunkinshō"; the melodrama of Chijin no ai and Manji is missing; so is the elaborate, sometimes conventional language of the former novel, which interposes itself between the reader and the character. Here the characters appear in a reduced form. The hero is the embodiment of sexual frenzy. The author refrains from surrounding him with the trappings of reality which usually individualize a fictional character. The husband is not given a name, and is thus comparable to the woman of "Shisei." All we know of the husband is his age, important to the plot, theme and character development, and his occupation as a professor, but we never learn of what specialty. The lack of specification is all the more striking as elsewhere in the novel the author provides the reader with brief notations of the titles of movies, the name of the American actor whom Ikuko admires, and the brand of the cognac she drinks. He is in short an elemental force. The diary entries show his furtiveness, and the workings of his will to live. Even when paralyzed he keeps mouthing the words "beefsteak" and "diary," the first being a reference to his consumption of meat in an effort to keep up with Ikuko physically, and the second indicating his continuing desire to be stimulated by reading her diary. Thus on the verge of death his desire for life continues.

Ikuko is the most nearly particularized character in the novel. We learn of her upbringing which explains her reticence, details of her clothing and her body. In the last two cases she is clearly an object. Though

the greater part of the novel consists of two diaries, and though two points of view develop continually, the standpoint is essentially that of the narrator-husband himself. In "Shisei," the woman as a creation of Seikichi is unnamed and therefore depersonalized, but this time the unspecified husband is the creator force.

Kimura and Toshiko exist both as tools and aggressive impulses, like Ikuko. Tanizaki's conception of characters as types reaches a peak in Kagi. The novel stands as one of the best illustrations of the author refraining from giving characters too much relief in detail, so that they will stand out as forces, free of distracting conventional realistic traits, whether in inner life, their conduct, or outward appearance.

Thus the thematic and character elements are distilled to a harsh essence. In absolute contrast, the narrative method employed by Tanizaki is extremely intricate, showing the author at his most complex, technically, in this period. The basic four-cornered situation calls for comparison with Manji, which also has a similar basic element of mutual deception. In Manji, Tanizaki deploys his narrative virtuosity, but compared to Kagi, its complexities are gratuitous; furthermore, the intricacy lies in the events more than in the means of narration. Kagi is the novel of the third period for which nobody would dispute a high level of technical skill, though Itō Sei comments that Tanizaki's writings, in his seventies, while giving proof of conservation of the author's rational, emotional and descriptive powers, suffer from a certain instability of structure (kōzō no fuanteisa) and arbitrariness in relation to the effects (kōka ni taisuru dokudan).<sup>89</sup> Arbitrariness is perhaps present, in the sense of schematism and stylization in Kagi, but it exists for an appropriate novelistic effect. It is difficult to see, however, why Kagi should be criticized for structural instability.

Tanizaki has plotted and arranged the novel tightly; nothing is in excess, just as the characterizations are lacking in extraneous elements. The work revolves around diary entries made by the husband and Ikuko; the first two-thirds of the novel consists of alternating entries. The time lapse in this section is between January 1 and April 15, the last entry made by the husband before the stroke which leaves him helpless; this is the last entry from his diary. The final third of the novella is made up of Ikuko's continuation of her diary; this in turn may be divided, from the chronology of events, into two parts, the first from April 17 to May 1, the day before the husband dies, and the second made up of the entries for June 9, 10 and 11, written as a retrospective attempt to compare the two diaries. In these last pages the disclosures as to Ikuko's journal and her duplicity become apparent; we learn of the lies she has told as she comments on the journals and interprets them. Tanizaki makes multiple use of the diary form. In the first place he plays with it, upsetting the reader's trust in the form. The diary by definition is a genre of ultimate veracity. In this case two kinds of diary emerge: the husband's confession, we take it, turns out to have been substantially true, but Ikuko's turns out to have been false in many respects. The final disclosures indicate a detective story ending brought to a higher level of refinement by Tanizaki.

The structure compels the reader to reinterpret the events of the novel in the new light of the motivations exposed in the last pages. Two plots exist in the work, based on falsity and truth. One is the work we read for the first time, up to the June 9 entry, unaware that the statements previously made are not all true; thus the statements made have been taken at face value, and the work is valid from this standpoint until



June 9, but the true plot is the one we must reconstruct on reading the novel. Because of Ikuko's revelations it becomes almost imperative to re-read the entire work. Hence this novel is not like a conventional detective story with a twist at the end.

The structure of the work is a triumph of authorial deception, like the subterfuges of the characters within the plot. Here the reader witnesses the culmination of the author's tendency to conceal motives until he is ready for disclosure. The technique is at its most obvious in the detective stories, but we have also observed in this study that Tanizaki from the beginning of his career gives proof of skill in a technique of recall whereby plot or motif elements assume considerable retrospective value. In "Shisei," to take only one example among the short stories of the first phase, the ending is tied to the beginning. In "Yoshino kuzu," from the second period, the recall technique occurs in the establishment of a network of motifs. And as trifling as the example may be, the episode of the supposedly highborn lady in Rangiku monogatari, who dupes a gullible country samurai and is then exposed at the end, is a closer example of deception of the reader at the same time as a character in the novel. Mystification, as already noted, takes place in "Shunkinshō" as well, but in that case the reader shares in the narrator's doubts. Here it is a case of deceit on the part of the author. Manipulation of the reader succeeds partly because of the close, compact manner of writing of Kagi.

The plot runs in a sequence of steadily intensifying events. From the husband's initiating of a new diary on the subject of his relations with his wife, to Ikuko's discovery of the key to the drawer where it is hidden, the first fainting spell of Ikuko, with Kimura brought by the

husband into his scheme, the plot is swiftly conducted. The husband then gloats over Ikuko's unconscious body under the light of a fluorescent lamp; in subsequent repetitions of the scene, the lamp is replaced by a Polaroid camera, then by a Zeiss Ikon. The last incident has plot significance, as the husband urges Kimura to have the film developed so that the young man's desire for Ikuko, and therefore the husband's jealousy, will increase. At this point he declares he has found a reason for living. Spatial distances then increase gradually between the couple. Ikuko starts her drunken fainting spells not at home but at Toshiko's house, and it is here that the affair with Kimura begins. Her growing audacity is reflected in the increasing distances, since she starts going to a hotel in Osaka to meet him, and also, incidentally, in her outward appearance: she is wearing Western clothes when she does so. Her comportment with her husband becomes bolder to the point where she no longer needs the protection of shadows during the sex act. Finally she declares she is ill and is recklessly risking her life. This last statement is found to be untrue, but the husband, believing it, reaches a state of frenzy during her encounters with him.

After this entry everything is seen from Ikuko's viewpoint. On April 17 she tells of the day of his stroke in the course of sex performed with him just as she had shortly before with Kimura. The entries until May 1 record, along with the reports on his decline, his will to live, as registered by his desire for meat and for a look at her diary, then the visits of Kimura late at night are briefly noted. Finally, there is a concern that Toshiko is taking Ikuko's diary to read to her father. This phase of the novel is a relative plateau, a levelling off from the intensity of the events, just before the final disclosures which send a shock back

through the novel.

For a closer look at the shaping of the plot, the husband begins a new diary on New Year's Day. The exposition is economically written, the first pages packed with allusions to crucial factors, such as Ikuko's profound furtiveness and also her modesty, the situation of the flagging hero and the wife with greater sexual appetites, and above all the suggestion that she will read the diary. Addressing Ikuko, the hero says: "...if you should [read this], please believe...that every word of it is sincere" (p. 6). This is the only case in the work of a character apostrophizing another, and it is an important one, for it tells us that the diary is being kept as a means of communication with this woman whose reticence forbids direct dialogue with her husband. The entry is a direct plea for her to listen and enter into collusion with him.

The plot develops swiftly. In Ikuko's first entry on January 4, she notes she has found the key to the drawer holding his diary, and swears she would never read it, but we do not wait long to realize she is indeed doing so. Though on February 27 the husband says he found her diary sealed with tape, which he removed carefully, he claims not to have read it. On March 7 Ikuko notes for the second time that the key has been left by the bookshelf, and sees he intends her to read his diary while maintaining the pretense that she is not. This time she opens his diary, also sealed with tape, and sees the photographs he has taken of her.

A pattern of repetition thus develops with the sealing of the diaries by both characters, and the second appearance of the key. There are other repeated acts in the novel, the most prominent being the sequence of events in which Ikuko drinks too much brandy, sinks into a

bathtub, and faints. The reiteration of these binges may strain credulity, but when associated with other repetitions in the novel, they take on the look of near-ritual, thus in keeping with the stylized aspect of the novel and its characters.

Other examples of repetition make it clear that Tanizaki is employing the diary form to make notations peripheral to the affair between Ikuko and Kimura which convey in a very reduced manner the relationship between them. First of all, the entries in her journal for April 2, 3, 4 and 5 consist solely of the comments that she went out and returned by evening. A second series of abbreviated references to the affair begins as Kimura visits the house after the husband's stroke. From April 20 the visits are resumed as footsteps in the garden at eleven o'clock. They continue to the April 29th entry.

Perhaps the most important aspect of the uses of the diary form is their epistolary significance, for the journals are a sort of communication. The effect is not of dialogue with reciprocal understanding except in the limited sense that the husband lets Ikuko know what he wants. The final disclosures reveal them as the ultimate in communication perverted, for Ikuko deliberately plants falsehoods, such as the dialogue invented between herself and Kimura for the day she surrendered to him.

The characters are not really in collusion except at first; they are essentially isolated from each other. Isolation is effected in the contrasting use of different type faces distinguishing his diary from hers, the husband's diary employing katakana and Ikuko's, hiragana. Not only are the two types of kana the visual equivalent of the male-female interplay basic to the novel; the visual effect permitted by the diary form shows an approach very different from that of previous works in which typographical devices were used for special effects. In Mōmoku monogatari,

hiragana were predominantly used in order to convey the speech rhythms of an old man narrator. In "Shunkinshō" the prose appeared to be in a state of elegant suspension, approximating the monogatari style. Here the effect is that of bleakness, lying in the relationship of one diary to the other.

It is notable that Ikuko's revelations at the end do not have to be in diary form, since in this section she is interpreting past events and motivations. However, in this section, we must assume that she is telling the truth, in antithesis to the false diary of the main part of the work.

Tanizaki takes the use of the diary to the extreme. The work is not only a presentation of diaries written by two people; it is also a novel about diary writing, as witness the scrupulous care taken by each of the two main characters in writing, in concealing. The diaries are weapons, letters, substitutes for dialogue, and most concretely, they are physical objects. Ikuko specifies the thickness of her diary and the texture of the paper contrasts with the hard surface of her husband's. We also see her buying paper and rebinding the diary to make two different diaries, one true and one false. The diaries become expressions of stealth; the extraordinary furtiveness of husband and wife and the length to which they go in concealing and searching make their acts take on the look of a sinister child's game, an adult hide-and-seek game of a most menacing kind; this is the length to which the ludic aspect of Tanizaki's writing has been taken.

The treatment of the diaries as objects gives rise to another aspect of the novel related to the principle of distillation. In this work so free of extraneous elements, so austere and concentrated, objects stand out

as objects. Concerning the key, one of the principal objects, one critic, Jaime Fernandez, states: "Clearly a phallic symbol: the key (penis) opens the lock (vagina)," in connection with his treatment of sex as a basic theme in this novel.<sup>90</sup> The suggestion cannot be dismissed, and neither can another suggestion: one could think of "key" in the sense of the crux of a problem, or the means to its solution, but it must be remembered that the physical key is important as one of a number of objects. The tonality of this novel does not permit objects to give off resonances as in "Yoshino kuzu"; the world of Kagi is a closed one. It is true that the diaries in material form correspond to their respective owners -- the soft paper of Ikuko's diary and the hard black cover on the husband's diary, and therefore are another expression of the male-female polarity, but the reader remembers in particular their existence as objects, particularly the Scotch tape placed over their covers, and the magnifying glass used to see whether it has been removed. Precision in physicality is probably more important than the connotation of the objects.

Two other objects, the fluorescent lamp and the Polaroid camera, also point to a new austerity in Tanizaki. His liking for light and shadow effects is evident from the beginning of his writing career. In "Shisei," brilliance is predominant, but in the second period shadows convey much of the mysterious atmosphere, as in "Shunkinshō" and the final scene of Shigemoto. In Kagi the lighting is transformed into the harsh artificial glare of the fluorescent lamp and the Polaroid flashbulb.

The photographing scenes recall an episode of Chijin no ai, already discussed in Chapter I, Section D. Jōji, like the husband of Kagi, has placed photographs of Naomi's body in his diary. In his eyes she becomes

a work of art, like a Greek statue or a Buddha image. Thus, both Naomi and Ikuko undergo objectivization -- but especially Naomi, for Jōji is not looking at her as a living woman, but as a set of photographs, in order to receive this impression. Furthermore, Ikuko in these photographs is an object inspiring sexual passion; the effect only lurks in the background of the passage in question from Chijin no ai. Kagi thus assumes a singular purity making the woman-idolizing tendencies in earlier works look like euphemisms.

We have now touched on the crux of the discussion of objects in this novel. Tanizaki makes the characters themselves join the overall pattern of objects. Not only is Ikuko an object for her husband; in her April 17 entry, she writes of her ability to maintain a cool detachment at the same time as she and her husband are driven into spasms of desire. It is this objectivization of character in the context of the sexual theme which would mislead some observers into calling the novel pornographic.

The unfinished novel Zangyaku-ki also has a hero who identifies potency with life. It shares with Kagi the use of an early genre, that of a crime story. Mystery and crime lurk as undercurrents in much of Tanizaki's work and occasionally appear in the use of the detective story genre of the first period. In his second phase, the tendency is transformed into mystery in the most general sense, with "Yoshino kuzu" dealing in part with the solving of a question about the identity of Tsumura's mother, Bushūkō hiwa purporting to be a revelation of secrets, and "Ashikari" and "Shunkinshō" raising questions as to identity and motivations. In period three the crime theme returns with the greatest force in Kagi.

The opening of Zangyaku-ki reads more specifically than Kagi like a return to the early genre, with its report on a police investigation. The narrator is a lawyer appointed by the state to defend a woman charged with abetting her husband in his suicide. The lawyer is writing to his friend "T," an author, giving an account of the incident which will provide good material for a novel. As in the early short story "Nihon ni okeru Kurippun-jiken" (1927) the narrator comments that the incident was not widely reported in the newspapers at the time, being considered simply as a suicide arising from the problems of a triangle relationship. Also as in "Kurippun," the author's interest bears on the impulses motivating the hero, Zōkichi. The central interest in "Kurippun" is the masochism of the hero, even more than the crime he commits; in Zangyaku-ki there is no crime on the part of the protagonist. The novel, or what we have of it, develops very differently from the police-case manner of the opening.

Despite the violence of the hero's act and his motivations, his story comes to the reader through a filter. We are kept much further away from the characters than in Kagi. Since the narrator is the lawyer whose first concern is with the presentation of the facts, we see the events principally through his eyes. In the opening sections, the detachment of author from text is particularly pronounced. The narrator labels the incident by precise date and hour, and the report on the phone call to the police by a Dr. Kawabe about a suspicious death in the restaurant owned by Zōkichi. Within the lawyer's narration emerges the viewpoint of Dr. Kawabe. He specifies in detail the circumstances of the death by poisoning, types of poison used by the victim in two previous attempts on his own life. Kawabe even conjectures the death may be due to murder, and



senses that the wife Murako may be in league with the cook, Tsuruji. The lawyer's perspective returns with reports on the police questioning Murako and the letter she produces, written by her husband who explains how he desires to die, sacrificing himself to his wife's future happiness with her lover, and how he will take a slow-acting poison to make him suffer for several hours before death. He sets an extraordinary condition: his wife must sit beside him until he dies, for his greatest happiness will be to have her watching him while he dies in agony.

All the while, the distancing effect of the narration suppresses the emotional significance of the incident for Murako. She appears only as a suspect in the opening section; and furthermore, it is not Murako but the lawyer who interprets the letter. The narrator gives the reader one of the most important factors in Zōkichi's motivation. The letter, he says, omits the crucial fact that its author was suffering from the effects of atomic radiation, and the lawyer conjectures that he did so deliberately so that the fact would not detract from sacrifice as the motive for suicide.

The police-case aspect of the novel begins to recede as the narrator turns to Murako's story. Here something of a departure for Tanizaki becomes evident. It is exceptional to read in his work of a conventional account of a character's background, but here we are told how Murako came to work for Zōkichi's father, how she married him, what the couple did during the war, and how he came to be in Hiroshima on August 6, 1945. The telling of the incidents is deliberately flattened. At this point the bombing is conveyed to Murako indirectly and she understands the implications of the event only dimly. Later, when the couple is reunited and he refuses her sexual advances, it becomes clear that the narration of incidents up to this point has been factual and explanatory.

because the subsequent explanation of Zōkichi's refusal has a contrasting emotional content.

A significant change of narrative perspective occurs. Zōkichi's confession to Murako is a first-person account which stands out from the surrounding narration. After the bombing he crawls out from the rubble to perceive the mushroom cloud, the remains of buildings, and piles of victims wounded or dying -- these elements of the scene are mentioned very briefly -- but at the same time, images of Murako's body rise up in his mind. All her physical attributes appear to him distinctly in the air, like the mushroom cloud (XVIII, 36-37).

The reader is at first astounded. Can the portrayal of obsession be taken any further? Here is the Tanizaki hero amid the ruins of Hiroshima, minutes after the bombing, in thrall to sexual desire. But the perspective of the hero is at issue. It is impossible to analyze an unfinished story with any certainty, but the mushroom cloud as a symbol of atrocious death is perhaps associated with Murako and therefore the beginning of his own violent death. At no point in the completed portion of the novel, after the suicide letter, does the author refer to the hero's masochism; it is obviously a point to develop later. Soon after the bombing, at any rate, Zōkichi notes that Murako has metaphorically left him; he has become impotent; this is no doubt at the root of the hero's motivations.

After the confession the narrative returns to a mode of reporting very rare in Tanizaki's fiction. Of special interest is the extensive account of the black-market shops in Kobe, where the couple establish themselves in their former occupation. Tanizaki's detachment as an author seldom extends to the description of social realities as here; it was done before only in the case of "Neko to Shōzō," also dealing with urban

lower-middle-class characters. With objective reporting now dominant, the emotional responses of the characters are driven underground.

Zangyaku-ki breaks off not long after the introduction of Tsuruji, who is to become Murako's lover, and before the development of Zōkichi's acts which would bring about the tragedy as reported at the opening of the novel. Even though unfinished, this work is an example or renewal, for its narrative approach is very distinct from that of all previous works. The author seems to be forever seeking new directions in writing; this is a tendency even more marked than for the second period. We are reminded of his reluctance, expressed in "Ono no Takamura," to embark on a second novel with a Heian background immediately after Shigemoto. It is probably no accident that after abandoning Zangyaku-ki he next wrote "Yume no ukihashi," antithetical in theme, narrative perspective, and tone.

With Fūten rōjin nikki,<sup>91</sup> the last major work of Tanizaki, renewal and purification are intensified. This is the crowning work of his career, from the standpoint of one of the major questions of this study of his development: the fictionalization of the self. It is here that Tanizaki returns to the shi-shōsetsu viewpoint, which he had found so troublesome earlier, and finds the ultimate answer to the problems of the relationship between life and fiction. Here, we are firmly in the realm of the novelist's contemporary self. The expression of his experience no longer needs the filter of the fairy tale or the romance. The author places himself and his extraordinary vigor and resistance to death in the person of old Utsugi, the protagonist.

Fūten rōjin, like other works of the third period, is a record, this time a diary with no falsehoods, a record of the old man's will to live.

His basic urge to live, equated with the sexual impulse, is abetted by his daughter-in-law Satsuko, herself a remarkable creation. The diary kept by the old man breaks off soon after a climactic scene showing the frenzy of his will to live at its height, and the brief remaining portion of the novel consists of notations on his ensuing illness, made by the nurse attending him, a doctor, and one of his daughters.

Throughout his entries the reader sees Utsugi constantly in pain and ready for death. Though he specifies early in the diary that the only interests sustaining him are sex and food, it is clear that the theme of art is also in the background, and the development of motifs relating to these three aspects of life noted by him gives shape to the novel. Unlike Kagi, this journal is not constructed with obvious schematism, but with deceptive naturalness. The vigorous breath of the old man is communicated with a curiously youthful energy, and a mad lucidity sometimes extending to self-irony.

In contrast to the well-defined opening of Kagi, with its New Year's day announcement made by the husband concerning his decision to start a new kind of journal, the opening of Fūten rōjin appears to be casual, as does the work as a whole. However, Tanizaki has taken full advantage of the formlessness of the diary genre. The elements of the first entries appear in seemingly random notations but if they are closely examined in relation to the development of the novel, a certain arrangement is perceptible. The author has made sure to plant all the seeds of his plot early in the work.

The novel begins with the old man's notes in his diary about his visit to a Kabuki performance in the company of his wife, their son Jōkichi, and daughter-in-law Satsuko (Entry of June 16. For the sake

of convenience we use the dating of entries in the Hibbett translation, though the original text does not give reference to months, only the day of the month for each entry in the old man's diary, perhaps the better to convey his sense of surviving from day to day). His remarks on the performance deal in the main with the appearance of actors, and soon turn to memories of one homosexual experience in his youth with a skilled onnagata. The return of this impulse, he thinks, means that despite his impotence at the age of seventy-seven he still has some sort of erotic feeling.

Thus, acting, or generally speaking, art, is associated with eroticism. In contrast to the excessively self-conscious and abstract discussions of Art in many of the short stories of the first period, the use of art motifs associated with the central theme of the sexual urge keeping the hero alive in this novel is rendered without the author directing the reader's attention to his ideas or his techniques.

The theatre scene in the second entry may recall, if faintly, the first one in Tade kuu mushi. In Fūten rōjin the scene is not fully developed as in the earlier novel, and no explicit connections are made, such as that of the situation on stage linked with a situation in life, but similar undercurrents among the characters attending the play are noted. The two principals are clearly in collusion, with Satsuko quick to understand the old man's cantakerous temper and his perversity.

The restaurant episode noted in the June 18 entry is most significant. Food, and Satsuko's manner of consuming it, assume a singular importance for the old man, who senses she is giving him a message in offering him her leftover portion of eel, and also her plum sauce, which, he thinks, she has deliberately made untidy.

On the 19th, the old man notes almost incidentally that he is only kept alive by an interest in sex and food, and that this is sensed only by Satsuko. It is notable how this specification follows the eating scene, but is separated from it by another element: thoughts on his own death. The old man thinks of arranging his funeral rites, expressing interest in the esthetic arrangement of the ceremony, even giving a few lines of the song he wants sung.

The June 20 entry presents the foot motif which is to be an essential part of the climax of the work. Also present is the first of the three references in the novel to Satsuko's flower arrangement in his sickroom, with a quotation of the poem written on the scroll accompanying it. The notations of the flowers and the scroll are made with no indication of the old man's attitude to them. His lack of expressed reaction is even more extreme than his reference to the Kabuki actors' appearance and his thoughts on his own funeral arrangements, in which he expresses personal tastes. A new reticence has developed in Tanizaki's use of art motifs, a new simplification and purification.

Entries for July 3 and 10 concentrate on the hero's physical condition, with discussion of his blood pressure, his intense pains, and the mechanical devices used to help him. At times the clinical notations in this novel are extremely detailed, in order to produce a diametrical contrast between the old man's intense physical suffering and his energy of spirit. One connection between them is, significantly, a sexual pleasure deriving from pain.

A plot element, however subdued, enters the novel with the July 12 entry. The old man plans to go to Kyoto to choose a grave. The "plot" consists of the old man's movement toward death; the novel, or

his section of it is a literal movement to Kyoto, and a physical grave. At this juncture Satsuko is not associated with the trip, but their interaction develops with progressive intensity. The same entry, however, continues in typically random diary fashion a dialogue on the boxing matches whose violence gives Satsuko pleasure, and the resultant pleasure he derives from watching her cruel face. These two elements, the approach to the grave, and Utsugi's pleasure in imagining Satsuko's cruelty, later turn out to be intimately associated, but in this entry the two merely coexist. Of secondary importance is his wish to change his affiliation from the Nichiren sect because of the clay image on the shrine of the household. Here is another forecast of the ending with its linkings of eroticism, art and religious motifs.

The old man's relations with Satsuko develop casually, it would seem from the diary notes. In passing, it should be said that the diary is being written for the old man's own sake, because he enjoys writing it and does not intend to show it to anyone else. Thus a creation motif joins the sequence of art motifs, for diary-keeping, however minimally, is an act of creation giving him pleasure. His observations on diary-keeping occur in the July 23 entry which also contains an oral-satisfaction motif to be associated with the eating scene at the beginning of the novel. The old man asks Satsuko to give him his pills by placing them directly in his mouth; this she does, though he slyly suggests she pass him the pills from her own mouth.

The entry for the next day has Satsuko giving the old man an idea, when she says she never locks the door on taking a shower; this is the genesis of the comic shower scenes. In subsequent reports he repeatedly approaches her in the shower and is soon rewarded with him succeeding

in kissing her foot.

The rest of the family has been cleared away for the month of August so that attention concentrates on Satsuko and the old man. The shower scenes just begun are interrupted by Haruhisa, a young relative suspected by the protagonist of having an affair with Satsuko. The shower ritual resumes, and with greater force, on the August 11 entry; this time he jams three of Satsuko's toes into his mouth. The scene ends anticlimatically as Satsuko suddenly turns on the water and drenches the old man under the shower.

After this incident his blood pressure shoots up alarmingly, but out of cunning he remains silent to his nurse's questions as to the possible cause.

One of the most extraordinary aspects of this novel is the lack of grimness or even pathos in the self-portrait of a man on the verge of death. His attraction to Satsuko's foot is a most dangerous one -- he is actually braving death --as he himself realizes and yet he will not interrupt his intense, excited actions. The mood of the novel is devoid of darkness; the hero views himself with a detachment which, if not always humorous, is full of energy, and sometimes playfulness. He soon calls the shower rituals "semi-porno thrillers (pinki surirā)," as if he were up to mischief. The notion of playfulness has a different meaning for Satsuko, who has been urging him on gradually; once, after she allows him to indulge himself, she chooses the moment to ask for a jewel costing three million yen.

Subsequent diary entries are more withdrawn in tone. Early in September Utsugi notes that Satsuko has arranged autumn plants and changed the scroll in his room. Again, the record is factual, but Satsuko



is more closely associated with the scroll, for it is she who has changed it this time.

The September 4 entry provides more amusement. At dawn the old man hears a cricket chirping in his room. The sound evokes a series of thoughts about childhood and the sound of crickets in the garden, with his nurse telling him of the season. He remembers the smell of starch on his clothes, as well as the feel of the cotton night-garment against his skin. This is a familiar Tanizaki device of enlarging on the implications of one sensory experience. But anticlimax results as he discovers that the chirping sound comes from his own old, parched throat. He notes the discovery with the ingenuousness typical of his mode of writing.

Here the treatment of associations reflects self-irony on the part of the hero, and even some degree of self-parody on the part of the author. The balance between humor and the gravity of the basic situation returns soon after, for a memory, in the form of a dream of the old man's mother comes to him. In this dream she is clothed as if for visiting. His comments on his mother lead to an association with Satsuko, first by contrast. A logical, conscious contrast is made between these two images, the difference resting especially on the form of their feet. For the very first time in a Tanizaki work of any importance the diametrically opposed images of woman as represented throughout his writing are brought together. No judgment emerges as a result of the contrast between the two. It is significant, however, that the mother's feet are likened to those of the Kannon statue in the Sangatsudō in Nara, and this comparison prepares the Buddha footprinting scene near the end of the novel. For now, we may note that though Tanizaki uses religious imagery at times to help define the male characters' attitude toward women

characters, he does not do so with the mother figure in mind. The buddha or bodhisattva imagery is associated with figures like Naomi, Mitsuko, Louise, Shunkin and Ikuko. We recall that Mitsuko in Manji was the model for Sonoko's Kannon portrait and that her image was set before the three (like a Buddhist triad) lying down to die at the end of the novel. Louise in Tade kuu mushi was compared to Lamaist statues, and so forth. All of these have to some extent either sculptural or emotional resonances, not primarily spiritual values, but the association is inescapably present: woman is an idol. Here in Fūten rōjin is the only significant association of the mother as a religious object. The footprint-taking scene is to shed light on this assimilation of two antithetical poles of character conception.

The novel progresses with old Utsugi's devotion to life, meaning attachment to Satsuko, reflected in quarrels with his family, and resistance to every objection made by others. His perversity and sophistry in defending his purchase of a ring for Satsuko is doubled as he announces plans to build a pool for her. It is at this point in the novel -- approximately halfway through the old man's diary -- that he flabbergasts his family. In fact he anticipates them by calling himself a madman (September 5) to resume his extravagant behavior, thus revealing a decided self-awareness. An early madman, Jōji of Chijin no ai, shows signs of a certain consciousness of his own condition at the ending, but this old man "lunatic" revolts against it.

A mood of playful self-awareness is heightened in the entry of September 16 as the old man expresses his jealousy of Satsuko's dog because it rides beside her in the car. Here Utsugi joins Shōzō, not the hero of Kagi. His own comment:

I wouldn't mind being injured if that would bring Satsuko pleasure, and a mortal injury would be all the better. Yet to think of being trampled to death, not by her but by her dog . . . (XIX, 97-98).<sup>92</sup>

This passage, remembered by the reader in the final episode when the old man imagines Satsuko trampling on his grave, will take on a special value.

We note an ascending order of intensity in the movement of the work. After entries from September 28 to October 9, dealing with his suffering from illness which exacerbate his desire to see Satsuko, the old man begins slyly to consider a device to bring her to him. When his pain is at its peak, he will throw a childish tantrum and demand her in exclusive attendance upon him.

The regression to childhood is a significant expression of his state. On October 13 he writes that he does indeed scream and cry for Satsuko; he has turned into a child again. Reality, however, turns into acting. Since early in his writing career Tanizaki often uses the childhood theme; before this, it has represented escapism, a retreat to dreams of the past, an idealized state, but here in this novel which tends toward the shi-shōsetsu, the protagonist is represented as a real child without idealization. There is no beautiful dream; Utsugi is a screaming brat. The observation is to be linked to the game-playing aspect of the work ("semi-porno thrillers"). Reversion to childhood also means wilfulness, a life-giving resistance to his condition, a complete abandonment of the usual constraints of adulthood.

Satsuko is momentarily unnerved by the violence of the tantrum; her reaction is significant since it shows him overpowering her, if for but a short while, but she recovers with ironic comments about his becoming a real madman. His childishness turns specifically to an infantile

condition, as Satsuko lets a drop of saliva fall into his mouth. The incidents involving oral sensation have been placed at regular intervals in the novel, like the art motifs, and like the moments of comedy, so that the reader never has a sense of disproportion (he may not be aware that there is proportion in the sense of structural ordering, but that is a result of the insidious naturalness of the work).

The state of childhood in old age, however, is a special one, as the reader sees in the October 29 entry, when a real child, the old man's grandson Keisuke questions him about the state of his hand. The old man, caught off guard, succumbs temporarily to sentiment, which in him coexists with a normal indifference to other people's concerns. The episode is of interest because sentimentality is a potentially weakening factor, and indeed old Utsugi soon reacts with exasperation at his own tears.

There follows a sequence of recorded events which represent a plateau: a new treatment for the old man's illness which he is willing to undergo when he thinks of Satsuko (October 21). The procedure fails and on his return home he finds a new flower arrangement and the old scroll replaced by Satsuko by another with a Man'yōshū poem. This is the third of the flower arrangement and scroll scenes and the only one in which the old man expresses a reaction: he wonders if this is a sign of Satsuko's special concern for him. The Man'yōshū poem is also the only one of the three with a love theme.

The action now speeds to its climax. The last portion of the old man's diary consists of entries from November 9 to November 18, beginning with his expressed intent to go to Kyoto to make arrangements for his grave, and to take Satsuko with him. The visit to Kyoto as a burial place is a spatial return to the area of his more remote ancestors. The

emphasis lies on the fact that he has seen Tokyo's beauty destroyed and finds Kyoto more congenial. His remarks are a simplification and resolution of the Tokyo-Kansai polarity schematized in Tade kuu mushi.

His concern for the design of his own tombstone brings together the religious imagery, the art motifs, and the erotic attachment to Satsuko continually appearing in the novel. A book on temples with photographs of an Amida triad gives him the idea of having Satsuko's features carved on his tombstone like an image of Kannon or Seishi. The conversion of Satsuko into an art object signifies that she will be on his grave. ". . . My only conceivable divinity is Satsuko" (XIX, 145).<sup>93</sup>

The idolizing tendencies of Tanizaki heroes reach their highest level in the old man. On November 15 he writes of consulting a stone-cutter with the secret intention of having Satsuko appear on his tombstone. Without telling the reader his motives, he reports buying paper, a stick of vermilion, and silk for a dabber, in order to take rubbings. He then packs off his nurse to Nara, with his Kyoto daughter Itsuko, telling the latter to look at the Buddha footprint stone in the Yakushiji, a stone carved with the imprint of the feet of Sakamuni. Satsuko learns at the same time as the reader the reasons for these preparations -- but first, in a scene pointing back to another near the opening of the novel, Satsuko is represented as eating the eel sushi left over from the old man's breakfast. The roles of dominator and dominated are about to be reversed.<sup>94</sup> At the end of the November 16 entry we learn what he is about to do: he is to ink the soles of her feet with vermilion and make prints of them for a Buddha's footprint stone to be carved on their model.

The technique of delayed significance so often before employed by Tanizaki is appropriately used here in a novel whose pacing is far more

deliberately conducted than apparent. There is yet more: the old man has yet to explain the motives for his act; these are expressed in the entry for the next day. She would, he thinks, feel joy at treading on his remains in the grave.

At the very thought of those Buddha's footprints modelled after her own feet, she would hear my bones wailing under the stone. Between sobs I would scream: "It hurts! It hurts! ...Even though it hurts I'm happy ...much happier than when I was alive! Trample harder! Harder! (XIX, 156)<sup>95</sup>

The old man's brief objection previously made to being trampled by Satsuko's dog, instead of by her, may now be remembered in proper perspective. Self-irony coexists in this novel with a fierce desire to live even beyond the grave, in the sensations of this life.

The effect is entirely different from that of a parallel situation in one of the worst of Tanizaki's early stories, "Fumiko no ashi" 富美子の足 ("Fumiko's Feet," 1919, VI, 355-394). The naming of the heroine involves a word play on the verb fumu. The old man protagonist dies while his young mistress Fumiko places her foot on his forehead; it appears to him like a purple cloud descending from Heaven to receive his soul.

Fūten rōjin is not about the end of life but survival, even beyond the fact of death. It is the ferocity of the imagination, magnified to the point of "madness," not sexual experience pure and simple, which makes this result possible. The novel deals not with death and an old man's efforts to deal with it, but with a projection of life beyond the grave. The means to achieve this survival of the senses is art, and thus Utsugi is implicitly the supreme figuration of the artistic impulse in the work of Tanizaki.

The force of the old man's will to live is enough to defeat one of the most powerful of Tanizaki heroines. The morning after the full

day of footprinting, he discovers that she has returned in haste to Tokyo; when he too returns she tells him the situation was intolerable, and the old man's diary ends at this point.

It is fitting that little more should be heard directly from him after the climactic scene of footprinting. Three brief reports from outside viewpoints now take over, to conclude the novel. First, the record of Nurse Sasaki has the function of informing the reader briefly of Satsuko's reactions. Highly agitated, she has explained her father-in-law's behavior to a psychiatrist. Second is Dr. Katsumi's even more detached account of the old man's hospital stay. The reader is removed to the furthest point possible from the old man, who is in these notes shown in his purely physical condition. The last notations are by Itsuko; they reveal him still with his old impulses even after recovery from a grave illness, since she reports that Satsuko cannot stay too long near him because of the danger of over-exciting him. He has even requested the footprint impressions left behind in Kyoto, and asks that they be carved on his tombstone. At this point it is not only Satsuko's person which enraptures him but the footprints as well. At the very end of these notes, signs of renewal appear; the pool intended for Satsuko by Utsugi is under construction. The novel ends in Jōkichi's words as quoted by Ikuko: "The old man's head is full of daydreams, just watching them work on that pool. And the children are looking forward to it, too" (XIX, 174).<sup>96</sup> The ending thus indicates a continuing state of anticipation. Since this period is one of non-fiction and fiction approaching each other, it may not be pointless to compare this ending to that of "Shichijūkyū no haru." This essay, composed not long before the author's death on July 30, 1965, concludes with a looking into the future, also related to a

childhood motif; he has placed an order with a Kyoto shop for dolls for the hinamatsuri for his granddaughter, to be filled by the spring of next year.

Fūten rōjin nikki brings Tanizaki's line of shi-shōsetsu-like fiction to an end. Besides the early shi-shōsetsu one thinks of Chijin no ai and even Tade kuu mushi; the first narrator of "Yoshino kuzu" is also the author and thus the work partakes of the genre. But in this last novel Tanizaki has achieved the ultimate in the presentation of the self. It is also a prime example of sophistication in narrative art, the anti-thesis of Kagi, an obvious artifact. Fūten rōjin has the freshness of what is apparently unfabricated, but it is in truth a work which manipulates the reader even more surely than does Kagi. The reader might take the manner of its writing to be spontaneous and desultory; authorial deceit can go no further.

Tanizaki does not stop after this achievement; after Fūten rōjin he produces two more works of fiction which show him in a state of constant renewal. Daidokoro taiheiki (1962-63) presents something quite different from the concerns of the works previously discussed in this chapter. The narrative artist is still seeking other areas to explore.

This work is a chronicle consisting of a series of portraits of the best-remembered maids in the service of the Chikura family from 1936. The mock-heroic title is an accurate indication of the content, with its many humorous character portrayals and anecdotes. Particularly in the opening pages of the work, the author takes care to stress that this is a fiction, and as if to underline the fact, conducts the narration in the conversational form of the verb, with an occasional use of honorific language, perhaps recalling the tradition of comic story-telling.



Though insisting on one hand on the fictional aspect of the work, the author places himself in it. The ages of the master of the house, Raikichi, and his wife, Sanko, correspond to those of Tanizaki and his wife. Raikichi is moreover a writer, and one of their houses, In Kyoto, is obviously one he lived in himself. The author is clearly playing with fact when he tells us that Yuri, one of the most colorful of the maids, is a reader of the Tanizaki translation of the Genji, and leaves the Chikuras to work for their actress friend "Takane Hidako."

The "chronicle" conception of the work is principally related to the structure. The maids are arranged in chronological order and traced in their individual histories from the time they enter the Chikura household until their departure. It is therefore comfortably loose in composition but the author does take care to conclude the novel in a clear-cut fashion. The final scene is that of a reunion of the maids remaining closest to the Chikuras, so that a ceremonial, congratulatory cast is given to the novel, appropriately for a chronicle.

The characterizations are highly individualized. The reader learns of the maids' origins, their personalities, their appearance, their problems, all conveyed in a mode of domestic realism infrequent for Tanizaki. The<sup>2</sup> only major examples previously are the characters of "Neko to Shōzō" and Zangyaku-ki.

The viewpoint is very decidedly that of the employers regarding their servants with amusement. Thus, despite the high degree of particularization the reader still senses a basic view of servants as comic types, like Oharu in Sasameyuki.

Tanizaki continues to surprise the reader by the variety of his narrative expression in his last work of fiction, "Oshaberi." Though an insignificant piece, perhaps, it shows, in its low-keyed manner, the novelist in a spirit of renewal.

The "chatter" of the title is that of a young matron, recounting her experiences with two foreign men to a friend, presumably another woman. For the first time since Manji the reader is constantly aware of a woman's speech being reproduced. A scattering of English words in Roman type indicates her modernity.

The story deals with male-female relationships but there is no thematic element of great import and no arresting incident. The most the narrator tells us is her refusal of the not very outrageous advances of the second Westerner who appears in her story, and her subsequent mortification. Clearly, this character is not a Naomi nor a Satsuko; she does not fulfil our expectations of a Tanizaki woman character. In the background, however, is a portrait of a modern marriage, as the chatterbox appears to have a husband she may discuss these experiences in detail. The story gives the impression of a brief, episodic glimpse into a situation with far greater fictional possibilities.

Trivial though it may be, this story joins the other fictional works of this period through its decidedly contemporary aspect. It should also be briefly noted for the total withdrawal of the author from his material, in a period of a developed "I" in fiction.

Just before the end of his life Tanizaki was embarking on another work of fiction.<sup>97</sup> He left only a few scattered notes, and there is no means of interpreting them, but one wonders what other kind of renewal was in store for his readers.

## CONCLUSION

This study has been based on the assumption that the making of Tanizaki as a major novelist can only be explained by close attention to the author's view of his subject matter and to his techniques. The consistency of theme throughout his career makes the shifts in narrative method all the more significant.

The fictionalization of the author is a major question in the first period of his work especially, for a dichotomy in his writing, more conspicuous than at any other stage of his life, shows his inability to produce high-quality fiction when he is too close to his material, that is, when he is representing himself in the shi-shōsetsu manner, and success when he escapes into an illusory world of his imagination.

In his second phase, the element of fantasy, still very active, is at the base of his best works. Almost all the fictional works of this period are in fact major accomplishments, from Tade kuu mushi to Shōshō Shigemoto no haha. In Sasameyuki he achieves a perfect balance between reality and illusion, but most of the works are basically appeals to history.

In old age, Tanizaki turns to the record, abandoning the history and romance of his second phase, and returns to himself, to the shi-shōsetsu tendency. Nevertheless we must not state that all illusion is gone; it is just that the author no longer uses fantasy as a crutch. The force of the imagination expresses itself in different ways and, in any case, appeals to the past, as in the second period, are still present in "Yume no ukihashi."

A progressive attitude of authorial detachment is observable through the career of Tanizaki as a fiction writer. The passage from "Shisei" to Fūten rōjin nikki might be summed up in the phrase "from self-consciousness to self-irony." His evolution is also marked by the tendency to move from the fictional to the less fictional genres; from the fairy tale, Tanizaki moves through the detective story and the shi-shōsetsu to the romance, and then to the record, or journal.

There are different kinds of technical development. Narrative perspective, relatively simple in the first period, the phase of the short story, evolves significantly in the second, with Tanizaki making a particularly effective use of the author as narrator in such works as "Yoshino kuzu" and "Ashikari," and with extremely complex changes in point of view in "Shunkinshō." In period three the novelist, though seeking a variety of areas to explore, is basically conveying his own experience through his narrator.

Structural concerns are of prime importance in the evolution of this novelist. The first period contains some works revealing a well-developed sense of form on the part of the novelist. In his maiden work, "Shisei," Tanizaki displays a very firm grasp of basic aspects such as transition, movement and pacing. Other stories, especially the shi-shōsetsu, show an author struggling unsuccessfully with form. Longer works tend to be diffuse because the author has problems with large canvasses.

In his second period Tanizaki moves on to build firm structures for his works though not in the clearcut, simple manner of "Shisei" and Chijin no ai. Now, he makes much more subtle techniques work for him in the composition of Tade kuu mushi and "Yoshino kuzu," in which

development relies on correspondences of themes and motifs which assume full significance only when the reader has completed the whole work.

The concept of a work of fiction as a rounded whole continues into the third period, with two notable tendencies. One is the rather loose structure of "Oshaberi" and Daidokoro taiheiki, where development proceeds through anecdote and episode. In contrast, the most important of these later works are tightly organized. Nothing in "Yume no ukihashi" is otiose; the form of Kagi is obviously a craftsman's triumph; and in contrast, Fūten rōjin with its appearance of utmost naturalness and its inner sophistication in structure is the most successful fictional treatment of the diary as a genre.

The most eye-catching techniques are those of the better works of the first period, particularly in the area of style. "Shisei" and "Kirin," among others, are far easier to analyze than those of the later phases. There is a flashy use of figurative language, which Tanizaki later abandons. Diction is also a prominent point of difference; the first period contains many signs of ostentation, like Romanized foreign words and difficult Sino-Japanese terms. The style of the second phase is of the less ornamental, monogatari type with long, ample sentences, at their best representing what one thinks of as the distinctive Tanizaki style. The style of the third period tends to be less highly-colored; indeed the journals are terse and direct, with no conscious evocative effect. Notation and description prevail. Tanizaki begins to use foreign words in Roman type again, but this time without the ostentation of his youth. In the third period, "style" has blended into the structure of the works.

Character creation is an important point of technique. Because of Tanizaki's perspectives and choice of genres, his early characters are

bound to be types. In the art stories, they are moved by the artist's passions, and even in the more realistic works like Chijin no ai, the characters are still abstract forces. In the second period they need hardly be any more, though they are far more clearly delineated, especially in Tade kuu mushi and Sasameyuki. The idealizing tendency in Tanizaki pervades even the works with realistic settings, so that we emerge from a reading of the latter novel with a curious impression of having been moved by a universal type who also possesses a social reality.

In the third period, the characters tend to be "I's," in prey to ferocious passions, as in Kagi, or preoccupied with the projection of the author's urges, like the mad old man. The characters in Kagi are the best instances in Tanizaki's work of creation of characters entirely persuasive as embodiments of abstractions; in short, they are convincing puppets. Old Utsugi is undoubtedly the most compelling creation of this phase, and indeed in all of Tanizaki's work. He too is a type; though quirks of personality set him apart from the others, at the end of the novel we are sure that he is vital energy personified.

It is not surprising that so much Tanizaki criticism bears on aspects of the man extraneous to considerations of his art, for Tanizaki and the reader are in a singularly close relationship. It is easy, for example, to ridicule psychoanalytical readings of his work, but they do tell us much, if indirectly, about reader response to Tanizaki. They suggest that he is working in areas of primal appeal to the reader, such as physicality, especially tactility, showing that he is never out of touch with the sensations of childhood, and even infancy. The connection with the mother is obvious. Expanded and generalized, the regressive impulse toward the ideal state lost after childhood is associated with the search for a perfect,

unattainable country, home of the perfect, unattainable woman, who may or may not be the mother figure.

But all of these factors would amount to nothing at all if Tanizaki did not appeal to another universal instinct, the thirst to hear a story, and without his extraordinary skill in satisfying it. Tanizaki's readers are bewitched not by the content but by the telling of the tale.

## NOTES



## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Japanese characters are provided in this thesis for names of authors and titles on first appearance, with one exception. Characters for titles reappear though they may have been given before, in the chapters where the works concerned are discussed at length. Thus, they are given twice for "Shisei," once in the Introduction and again in the body of Chapter I.

<sup>2</sup>Overviews of Tanizaki's writing career from the standpoint of literary history and themes include: Nomura Shōgo, Tanizaki Jun'ichirō no sakuhin (Tokyo: Rokkō shuppan, 1974) and Hashimoto Yoshiichirō, Tanizaki Jun'ichirō no bungaku (Tokyo: Ōfūsha, 1965). For a critical approach to the works, see Itō Sei, "Tanizaki Jun'ichirō" in Itō Sei zenshū, XX (Tokyo: Shinchōsa, 1973), pp. 8-150.

<sup>3</sup>For example, Sumie Jones, "How Tanizaki Disarms the Intellectual Reader," Literature East and West, 18 (1974), 321-29, and Keiko I. McDonald, "Rhetorical Stance in Tanizaki's The Key," The Japan Interpreter, 11 (1976) 203-212.

<sup>4</sup>English titles are those of the standard versions, if the works have been translated. If more than one translation exists, the title closer to the Japanese has been selected. "Shisei" has been translated by Howard Hibbett, "The Tattooer," in Seven Japanese Tales (New York: Knopf, 1963), pp. 160-169, and by Ivan Morris, "Tattoo," in Modern Japanese Stories (Rutland, Vermont and Tokyo: Tuttle, 1962), pp. 90-100.

<sup>5</sup>The figures are based on the Tanizaki Jun'ichirō zenshū, 28 vols. (Tokyo, Chūō kōronsha, 1966-68). See Appendix for a list of the works cited in this thesis.

<sup>6</sup>Edward G. Seidensticker, "Tanizaki Jun'ichirō, 1886-1965," Monumenta Nipponica, 21 (1966), 253-254.

<sup>7</sup>Donald Keene, "Tanizaki Jun'ichirō," in Landscapes and Portraits (Palo Alto: Kōdansha International, 1971), p. 171.

<sup>8</sup>Volume and page numbers after titles or quotations refer to the 1966-68 Chūō kōronsha edition of Tanizaki's collected works.

<sup>9</sup>It was actually his fourth published work (November, 1910), but was composed before Tanjō, the first to appear in print. See Hashimoto Yoshiichirō and Ōshima Maki, ed., Tanizaki Jun'ichirō shū, Nihon kindai bungaku taikai, Vol. XXX (Tokyo: Kadokawa shoten, 1971), p. 434, n. 1.

<sup>10</sup>Translations of quoted phrases or passages are mine, unless otherwise indicated.

<sup>11</sup>As emphasized by Tanizaki himself, in Bunshō dokuhon (A Style Reader, 1934), XXI, 170.

<sup>12</sup>Ōshima Maki has listed the sources for this story in "Tanizaki Jun'ichirō no debyū to Anatōru Furansu: 'Kirin' wo meguru shomondai," in Tanizaki Jun'ichirō, ed. Nihon Bungaku Kenkyū Shiryō Kankōkai (Tokyo: Yūseidō, 1972), p. 173, n.28.

<sup>13</sup>Bunshō dokuhon, XXI, 155.

<sup>14</sup>A free translation. It is possible to replace "...a beautiful woman" by "sensuality." James Legge translates: "I have not seen one who loves virtue as he loves beauty." "Confucian Analects," in The Chinese Classics (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1960), I, p. 298.

<sup>15</sup>Hashimoto and Ōshima, ed., Tanizaki Jun'ichirō shū, p. 437, n. 17.

<sup>16</sup>Okamura Kazue, "Tanizaki Jun'ichirō no buntai," in Bunshō to buntai, ed. Morioka Kenji et al, (Tokyo: Meiji shoin, 1963), p. 248. Hinatsu Kōnosukē comments on the novelty of the style of "Kirin," emphasizing the contrast with the subject matter drawn from ancient sources, "'Kirin' no buntai," in Tanizaki bungaku (Tokyo: Asahi Shimbunsha, 1950), p. 103.

<sup>17</sup>"Watakushi no bimbō monogatari" ("A Tale of my Poverty," 1935), XXI, 252.

<sup>18</sup>Trans. Zenchi Iwado, A Springtime Case (Tokyo: Japan Times, 1927).

<sup>19</sup>"Taishū bungaku no ryūkō ni tsuite" ("On the Vogue for Popular Literature," 1930), XXII, 290-91.

<sup>20</sup>Kanamaru Tomio, "Tanizaki Jun'ichirō no gikyoku," in Tanizaki Jun'ichirō kenkyū, ed. Ara Masahito (Tokyo: Yagi shoten, 1972), p. 410.

<sup>21</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 411-412.

<sup>22</sup>Itō Sei, "Tanizaki Jun'ichirō," p. 54.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid.

<sup>24</sup>Mishima Yukio, "Tanizaki Jun'ichirō ni tsuite," in Mishima Yukio zenshū, XXXII (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1975), p. 448.

<sup>25</sup>For discussions of the shi-shōsetsu, see Howard Hibbett, "The Portrait of the Artist in Japanese Fiction," Far Eastern Quarterly, 14 (1955), 347-54; Masao Miyoshi, "Till Death Do Us Part: Dazai Osamu: The Setting Sun," in Accomplices of Silence (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1974), pp. 122-40; and Kinya Tsuruta, "Akūtagawa Ryūnosuke and I-Novelists," Monumenta Nipponica, 25 (1970), 13-27.

<sup>26</sup>"Itansha no kanashimi hashigaki" ("Foreword to 'Itansha no kanashimi,'" 1917), XXIII, 23.

<sup>27</sup>We have relied on the standard biography of Tanizaki, Nomura Shōgo, Denki: Tanizaki Jun'ichirō (Tokyo: Rokkō shuppan, 1972).

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., pp. 91-95.

<sup>29</sup>Trans. Howard Hibbett, "Terror," in Seven Japanese Tales, pp. 85-94.

<sup>30</sup>Hashimoto Yoshiichirō and Ōshima Maki, ed. Tanizaki Jun'ichirō shū, pp. 454-55, n. 97.

<sup>31</sup>The stories of Edgar Allan Poe and Conan Doyle were available in translation in Japan since the Meiji period. Native detective fiction is recognized to have begun in 1923, when Edogawa Rampo published "Nisen dōka" ("The Two-Sen Copper Piece"). Rampo was impressed by Tanizaki's short story "Konjiki no shi," for he realized its affinities with Poe's "Domain of Arnheim" and "Landor's Cottage." See Nakajima Kawatarō, "Tanizaki to misūterī," in Tanizaki Jun'ichirō kenkyū, ed. Ara Masahito (Tokyo: Yagi shoten, 1972), p. 419.

"Kon'jiki no shi" is actually a turgid philosophical work about the need to identify life with art, but similarities do exist with the Poe stories. See Noriko Mizuta Lippit, "Tanizaki and Poe: the Grotesque and the Quest for Supernal Beauty," Comparative Literature, 29 (1977), 231-32.

Since Tanizaki published most of his detective and crime stories before 1923, the landmark date for the origin of Japanese detective fiction,

he is a precursor of Rampo and an influence on him; he is certainly one of the earliest practitioners of the genre.

<sup>32</sup>Nakajima Kawatarō, "Detective Fiction in Japan," Japan Quarterly, 9 (January/March, 1962), 52.

<sup>33</sup>"Shunkan" ("The Cold of Early Spring," 1930), XXII, 271.

<sup>34</sup>Trans. Howard Hibbett, "The Thief," in Seven Japanese Tales, pp. 170-185.

<sup>35</sup>"Shunkan," XXII,

<sup>36</sup>*Ibid.*, 273.

<sup>37</sup>Trans. Thomas J. Harper and Edward G. Seidensticker, In Praise of Shadows (New Haven, Conn.: Leete's Island Books, 1977). Contains excerpts previously translated by Seidensticker, "In Praise of Shadows," Japan Quarterly, 1 (October/December, 1954), 46-52; rpt. Atlantic Monthly, 195 (January 1955), 141-44.

<sup>38</sup>Trans. Howard Hibbett, "Aguri," in Seven Japanese Tales, pp. 186-204.

<sup>39</sup>"Shunkinshō gogo" ("Afterword to 'The Story of Shunkin,'" 1934), XXI, 80.

<sup>40</sup>"Setsugoan Yawa" ("Evening at Setsugoan," 1963), XIX, 397-98.

<sup>41</sup>For Tanizaki's ideas on literature, see Ueda Makoto, "Tanizaki Jun'ichirō," in Modern Japanese Writers and the Nature of Literature (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1976), pp. 54-84.

<sup>42</sup>"Sasameyuki kaiko" ("Looking Back on The Makioka Sisters," 1948), XXII, 365-66.

<sup>43</sup>"Taishū shōsetsu Rangiku monogatari hashigaki" ("Foreword to Rangiku monogatari, A Novel for Popular Entertainment," 1930), XXIII, 130.

<sup>44</sup>Trans. Howard Hibbett, "A Blind Man's Tale," in Seven Japanese Tales, pp. 205-98.

<sup>45</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 245.

<sup>46</sup>Suzuki Kazuo, for one, while admitting that the difference between the monogatari and the shōsetsu is similar to the romance-novel distinction

in the West, warns against applying the comparison too rigorously. "Kaisetsu: Monogatari bungaku no keisei," in Taketori monogatari, Ise monogatari, Ise monogatari, Yamato monogatari, Heichū monogatari, ed. Katagiri Yōichi et al., Nihon koten bungaku zenshū, Vol. VIII (Tokyo: Shōgakkan, 1972), p. 7.

<sup>47</sup>Nomura, Sakuhin, p. 168.

<sup>48</sup>Keene, "Tanizaki Jun'ichirō," p. 182.

<sup>49</sup>Philip Thomson, The Grotesque (London: Methuen, 1972), p. 2.

<sup>50</sup>Seidensticker, "Tanizaki Jun'ichirō," p. 257.

<sup>51</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 261.

<sup>52</sup>Nomura, Denki, p. 340.

<sup>53</sup>Tanizaki Matsuko, Ishōan no yume (Tokyo: Chūō kōronsha, 1967), p. 153.

<sup>54</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 155, 157.

<sup>55</sup>Trans. Roy Humpherson and Hajime Okita, in Ashikari and the Story of Shunkin (Tokyo: Hokuseidō, 1936), pp. 2-67.

<sup>56</sup>Tale 148 of Yamato monogatari, in Taketori monogatari, Ise monogatari, Yamato monogatari, ed. Abe Toshiko and Imai Gen'e, Nihon koten bungaku taikei, Vol. IX (1957), pp. 316-20, and Book 30, No. 5 of Konjaku monogatari, ed. Yamada Yoshio et al., Nihon koten bungaku taikei, Vol. XXVI (1963), 224-26.

<sup>57</sup>"Setsugoan yawa," XIX, 422.

<sup>58</sup>*Ibid.*, 421.

<sup>59</sup>Anthony Chambers, "Tradition and Innovation in Tanizaki's 'Ashikari,'" Studia Asiatica: Essays in Felicitation of the Seventy-fifth Anniversary of Professor Ch'en Shou-yi, CMRASC Occasional Series No. 29 (San Francisco: Chinese Materials Center, Inc., 1975), p. 392.

<sup>60</sup>Trans. Humpherson and Okita, p. 34.

<sup>61</sup>Trans. Howard Hibbett, "A Portrait of Shunkin," in Seven Japanese Tales, pp. 3-84, and Roy Humpherson and Hajime Okita, "The Story of Shunkin," in Ashikari and the Story of Shunkin (Tokyo: Hokuseidō, 1936), pp. 69-169.

<sup>62</sup>The function of the unreliable narrator has been pointed out by Sumie Jones, "How Tanizaki Disarms the Intellectual Reader," Literature East and West, 18 (1974), 322-23 and 325.

<sup>63</sup>Chapters IX and X have been partially translated by Edward G. Seidensticker, "The Mother of Captain Shigemoto," in Anthology of Japanese Literature, ed. Donald Keene (New York: Grove Press, 1955), II, pp. 387-97.

<sup>64</sup>Ikeda Tsutomu, "Shōshō Shigemoto no haha no tenkyō ni tsuite," Kokubungaku, 32 (February 1967), 43-44.

<sup>65</sup>Trans. Edward G. Seidensticker, Some Prefer Nettles (New York: Knopf, 1955).

<sup>66</sup>Keiko I. McDonald, "A Reassessment of Some Prefer Nettles," Journal of the Association of Teachers of Japanese, 12, No. 2 (1979), 196.

<sup>67</sup>For example, there is no comic treatment of a similar situation in La Chatte (1933), a novel by Colette, in which a wife jealous of her husband's cat attempts to kill it.

<sup>68</sup>Trans. Edward G. Seidensticker, The Makioka Sisters (Tokyo: Tuttle, 1957).

<sup>69</sup>Silvino V. Epistola, "One Who Preferred Nettles (A Note on Tanizaki as Novelist)," Asian Studies, 11, No. 1 (1973), 5.

<sup>70</sup>For example, Saigusa Yasutaka, Tanizaki Jun'ichirō ronkō (Tokyo: Meiji shoin, 1969), p. 207.

<sup>71</sup>Noguchi Takehiko, "Sasameyuki to sono sekai," in his Tanizaki Jun'ichirō ron (Tokyo: Chūō kōronsha, 1973), pp. 223 and 250. Trans. Teruko Craig, "Time in the World of Sasameyuki," Journal of Japanese Studies, 3, No. 1 (1977), 6 and 29.

<sup>72</sup>A view held by Nakamura Shin'ichirō, "Tanizaki to Sasameyuki," in Tanizaki Jun'ichirō, ed. Nihon Bungaku Kenkyū Shiryō Kankōkai (Tokyo: Yūseidō, 1972, p. 57, and by Wayne Falke, "Tanizaki: Opponent of Naturalism," Critique, 8, No. 3 (1966), 20.

<sup>73</sup>Tanizaki began writing Sasameyuki in 1942 (Nomura, Denki, p. 412). The first installment appeared in January, 1943, and the second in March, but publication was suspended by the military authorities. He continued to

work on the novel throughout the war; Book II, completed before the end of the war (Nomura, p. 424), was not published until 1947. Book III was serialized in 1947-48.

<sup>74</sup>The novel was written according to a plan ("Sasameyuki kaiko," XXII, 366). Thus, though part of the novel was written after the war, the relationship of author to text had long since been established.

<sup>75</sup>Itō Sei relates the figure of Yukiko to the archetype of Kaguya hime in Taketori monogatari. "Tanizaki Jun'ichirō," p. 117.

<sup>76</sup>"Sasameyuki sadan," ("Brief Notes on The Makioka Sisters," 1949), XXXIII, 237.

<sup>77</sup>Ibid.

<sup>78</sup>The distinction made by Northrop Frye is relevant here:

The essential difference between novel and romance lies in the conception of characterization. The romancer does not attempt to create 'real people' so much as stylized figures which expand into psychological archetypes... . The novelist deals with personality, with characters wearing their personae or social masks... . The romancer deals with individuality, with characters in vacuo idealized by revery... ." Anatomy of Criticism (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1957), pp. 304-5.

<sup>79</sup>Nomura, Sakuhin, pp. 256-47.

<sup>80</sup>It could be said that Kagi overlaps slightly with the very end of the second period, if we consider that one of Tanizaki's notebooks from 1949 shows the novel in outline. See Anthony Chambers, "Tradition in the Works of Tanizaki Jun'ichirō," Diss. University of Michigan 1974, p. 21. Its spirit, however, places it with the works of the third period.

<sup>81</sup>Another fictional work of this period, "Ōtō kidan" (A Tale from East of the Kamo River," 1956) does not appear in the 1966-68 edition of Tanizaki's complete works. Its publication was suspended after six installments in Shūkan shinchō (Feb. 19-March 25) because of claims of invasion of privacy by the individual who served as the model for the main character (Nomura, Denki, pp. 453-54).

<sup>82</sup>Tanizaki Jun'ichirō no bungaku (Tokyo: Ōfūsha, 1965), p. 272.

<sup>83</sup>Trans. by Howard Hibbett, "The Bridge of Dreams," in Seven Japanese Tales, pp. 95-159.

- <sup>84</sup>Trans. Howard Hibbett, The Key (New York: Knopf, 1961).
- <sup>85</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 72.
- <sup>86</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 122.
- <sup>87</sup>George Steiner, "Silk Jungle," The Reporter, April 13, 1961, p. 54.
- <sup>88</sup>Trans. Hibbett, p. 183.
- <sup>89</sup>Itō Sei, "Tanizaki Jun'ichirō," p. 137.
- <sup>90</sup>Jaime Fernandez, "A Study of Tanizaki's The Key," in Approaches to the Modern Japanese Novel, ed. Kinya Tsuruta and Thomas E. Swann (Tokyo: Sophia University, 1976), p. 229.
- <sup>91</sup>Trans. Howard Hibbett, Diary of a Mad Old Man (New York: Knopf, 1965).
- <sup>92</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 97.
- <sup>93</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 144.
- <sup>94</sup>Role reversal is discussed in my paper "The Figure of the Old Man in the Fiction of Tanizaki," in Life, Death and Age in Modern Japanese Fiction, ed. Reiko Tsukimura, University of Toronto-York University Joint Centre on Modern East Asia Publications Series, Vol. 1, No. 3 (Toronto: Joint Centre on Modern East Asia, 1978), p. 19.
- <sup>95</sup>Trans. Hibbett, p. 155.
- <sup>96</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 177.
- <sup>97</sup>Nomura, Denki, pp. 483-86.



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## APPENDIX

## APPENDIX

The following is a chronological list of the works of Tanizaki cited in the text. All are short stories or novellas, unless otherwise indicated.

- 1910 Shisei 刺青  
Tanjō 誕生 , play  
Zō 象 , play  
 The Affair of Two Watches  
 Kirin 麒麟
- 1911 Shinzei 信西 , play  
 Hōkō 彷徨  
 Shōnen 少年  
 Hōkan 幫間  
 Hyōfū 風俗  
 Himitsu 秘密
- 1912 Akuma 惡魔  
Atsumono 羹 , novel
- 1913 Kyōfu 恐怖  
 Zoku-Akuma 續惡魔
- 1914 Jōtarō 饒太郎  
 Kon'jiki no shi 金色の死
- 1915 Otsuya goroshi お艶殺し  
Hōjōji monogatari 法成寺物語 , play  
 Osai to Minosuke お才と巳之介
- 1916 Shindō 神童  
Kyōfu jidai 恐怖時代 , play
- 1917 Ningyo no nageki 人魚の嘆き



## APPENDIX - continued

- 1917 Itansha no kanashimi 異端者の悲しみ  
Jūgoya monogatari 十五夜物語 , play
- 1918 Futari no chigo 二人の稚児  
 Kin to Gin 金と銀  
 Hakuchū kigo 白晝鬼語  
 Ningen ga saru ni natta hanashi 人間が猿になった話  
 Chiisana ōoku 小さな王國  
 Yanagiyu no jiken 柳湯の事件
- 1919 Haha wo kouru ki 母を戀ふる記  
 Norowareta gikyoku 呪はれた戯曲  
 Fumiko no ashi 富美子の足
- 1920 Tojō 途上  
Kōjin 鯨人 , novel
- 1921 Watakushi 私  
Ai sureba koso 愛すればこそ , play
- 1922 Aoi hana 青い花  
Okuni to Gohei お圓と五平 , play
- 1924-25  
Chijin no ai 痴人の愛 , novel
- 1926 Tomoda to Matsunaga no hanashi 友田と松永の話
- 1927 Nihon ni okeru Kurippun-jiken 日本におけるクリップン 事件  
 Dorisu ドリス  
 Jōzetsuroku 饒舌録 , essay
- 1928-30  
Manji 卍 , novel
- 1928-29  
Tade kuu mushi 藁喰ふ虫 , novel

## APPENDIX - continued

- 1929 Sannin hōshi 三人法師
- 1930 Shunkan 春寒 , essay  
 Taishū bungaku no ryūkō ni tsuite 大衆文学の流行について , essay  
Rangiku monogatari 乱菊物語 , novel
- 1931 Yoshino kuzu 吉野島  
Mōmoku monogatari 盲目物語 , novel  
 Kii no kuni no kitsune urushikaki ni tsuku koto  
 紀伊國狐憑漆掻語  
Bushūkō hiwa 武州公秘話 , novel
- 1932 Seishun monogatari 青春物語 , essay  
 Ashikari 蘆刈
- 1933 Shūnkinshō 春琴抄  
Kaomise 顔世 , play
- 1933-34  
 In'ei raisan 陰翳禮讃 , essay
- 1934 Shūnkinshō gogo 春琴抄後語 , essay  
 Bunshō dokuhon 文章讀本 , essay
- 1935 Watakushi no bimbō monogatari 私の貧乏物語 , essay
- 1936 Neko to Shōzō to futari no onna 猫と庄造と二人の女
- 1943-48  
Sasameyuki 細雪 , novel
- 1949-50  
Shōshō Shigemoto no haha 少將滋幹の母 , novel
- 1951 Chino monogatari 乳野物語 , essay  
 Ono no Takamura imōto ni koi suru koto  
 小野篁妹に戀する事 , essay

## APPENDIX - continued

1955 Kasanka mangan-sui no yume 過酸化マンガン水の夢 , essay

1956 Kagi 鍵 , novel

1957 Rōgo no haru 老後の春 , essay

1958 Zangyaku-ki 残虐記 , novel

1959 Yume no ukihashi 夢の浮橋

1961-62

Fūten rōjin nikki 瘋癲老人日記 , novel

1962-63

Daidokoro taiheiki 台所太平記 , novel

1963 Setsugoan yawa 雪後庵夜話 , essay

1964 Oshaberi おしゃべり

1965 Shichijūkyū no haru 七十九の春 , essay