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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

What makes it possible to represent the initial difference as an already determined difference between one language unity and another is the work of translation itself. This is why we always have to remind ourselves that the untranslatable, or what can never be appropriated by the economy of translational communication cannot exist prior to the enunciation of translation.

-Naoki Sakai-

This is why feminist history is so crucial: not simply because it informs our present but more so because it enables other virtual futures to be conceived, other perspectives to be developed, than those that currently prevail. In this sense, the astute feminist historian stands on the cusp of the folding of the past into the future, beyond the control or limit of the present.

-Elizabeth Grosz-
What is at stake when one starts out by stating, I will not know? What will it mean to say, in reading an archive, in doing research, I cannot know the life that is represented? What will it mean to acknowledge, that though one can know and understand, perhaps, the life represented, it is only in the violent narrative in which the life is made visible to me, the reader, that I know, that I understand? What are the implications, in other words, if it is only in the story form, where the life is rendered coherent within the structure of a story, within the contained space of the story, that the life can be made visible? Hélène Cixous, in her discussion of *The Hour of the Star* by Clarice Lispector, writes of the violent nature of "story."

"A story is a very precise and frightening mode of enclosure of the living thing in a verbal form, in a membrane, which gives the subject of enunciation a special place. If one tells the story of something, one is no longer there." ^1

If we were to take Cixous seriously and consider a reading differently, what would this mean? What if one begins with the recognition that the life at the center of this story, that one is somehow trying to think with is a nomad, an ambulant worker that exceeds subjectification as contained by historicization, place, or genealogy? ^2 What if one realizes that it is only in the context of the

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^2 Deleuze and Guattari defines *nomad* as: "They do not resuscitate old myths or archaic figures, they are the new figure of a transhistorical assemblage (neither historical, not eternal, but untimely): the nomad warrior and the
situation given that one can come to think of the subject, even if it is only as a subject subjugated into the violence of this narrative? It is precisely this problem of encountering a minor story and thinking of reading practices and what work such narratives do that this project explores. That is the non-story of this project. This project, then, is decidedly a minor move, a small hesitant pause. In all of its fragmentation and incompleteness, it is a consideration of how we try to make sense of the past for our present and future. It is also an attempt to think of what it means to avoid making sense of the past.

In feminist arguments, the relation of what is possible in the future is frequently positioned in contrast to the present that is the past of the moment of the argument. That past is a reference of impossible weight is because the argument is made, always, in language. We argue historically, socially, ethically, with our selves in relationship to the discursively situated knowledge as reflected in the language we are able to use and conceptualization undertaken in language. This is obviously true of any argument. However, the place of language is particularly salient in feminist discourse since what is at stake is the very terms by which we will reformulate and or create social relations. I use the term arguments consciously in reference to that which would be considered "theory" in other discussions to

ambulant worker.” They also compare the nomos of Go to the State of chess, nomos against polis. Go pieces, they explain "are elements of a nonsubjectified machine assemblage with no intrinsic properties, but only situational ones… Go piece has only a milieu of exteriority, or extrinsic relations with nebulas or constellations, according to which it fulfills functions of insertion or situation, such as bordering, encircling, shattering.” Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, Nomadology: The War Machine trans. Brian Massumi (New York: Semiotext, 1986): 3-4, 89.
call attention to the status of "theory" in feminist practice. Arguments have been made at points of immense consequences or points imagined to be of immense consequences, such as by Olympe de Gouge as the constitution was being debated in 1791.³ Kusunose Kita made similar argument in 1872 when she contested the "links" that were made "between property, voting rights, and gender."⁴ Such arguments have been made in less "consequential" moments. In all cases, however, the language and the act are situated in ways that would be best not to neglect "the complex determination of language (the social/cultural means by which subjects come into being)."⁵

Feminist authors are often extremely conscious of this matter of the weight of history and the meanings that have been attributed, historically; to what is a "woman." The importance of writing women's history is a testimony to this in part. This is true, I would say, even of those works that are structured to read as the "incredible story of the woman who overcame the obstacles to do…" This is a structure that informs feminism in a manner as it signals the struggles of an individual or a collectivity that can be identified through gender. The word "overcame" grounds this move in interpreting and negotiating what it means to speak of women. To acknowledge, "overcoming" requires fixed limits -- even if these are temporarily fixed -- that our the "feminine" subject(s) may overcome. That is to say, “writing women into

⁵ Scott, _ibid._, 16.
history” is often a project of teleological narrative of emergent liberal developments. Writing subject “women” into teleological narrative is often a practice of women’s history as Bildungsroman. As Joan Scott pronounces, "feminism is produced, differently at different moments, at sites of historically specific, discursive contradiction."\(^6\)

This notion of the historical specificity of the event of producing feminism would seem quite obvious. Moreover, feminism is created in our understanding of our relation to past and present, history so-called. That is what is being called into question in Scott’s critique of the production of a "teleological story of cumulative progress towards an ever-elusive goal" that is dependant on "imaginative identification," making "disparate and discontinuous actions of women in the past" into an "orderly and continuous historical tradition."\(^7\) I think this is also what Morisaki Kazue notes as well, when writing to Tsurumi Yûsuke, "the succession of culture and thought and other such thing seems to be accompanied by singular revelation or creation; It may be that it is produced in a much more jiguzagu (ジグザグ) manner."\(^8\) Or, as Cherríe Moraga says, "We are women without a line. We are women who contradict each other."\(^9\) Like Scott, they both highlight the less orderly, less continuous production.

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\(^{6}\) Ibid., 174.
\(^{7}\) Ibid., 1.
The role of feminist thinking and the question of history, the writing and reading of history is not a new one as the above discussion makes clear. In recent years, however, it has come to occupy a particularly important site in thinking of colonialism, war crime, nation, and gender. Yet, as in any specific practice of thinking, this turn towards history and writing of history is situated.

This situatedness is predicated, in part, on the need to address the matter of "comfort women" that has come to occupy the position as both exemplary facts of an extremely violent subjugation of colonized subjects and the universal violence against women. It is an uneasy position to occupy since it is dependant on reading colonized subjects as gendered (i.e. feminized) -- at the expense of reciting the assumption that the feminine is always already in a colonized position -- and equating sexual violence as violence against feminine subjects universally. 10 In the first instance, "women" who are

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10 Where the practice of history has immediacy in contemporary feminist practice, as feminist act, is on the issue of how we situate ourselves on the question of war responsibility and national subjects. For a concise but trenchant critique of the discussion of this relationship as it addresses feminist practice and questions of "comfort women" see, Ōgoshi Aiko “Kannichi <Nikkan> Josei Kyōdō Rekishi Kyōzai Hensan no Tame no Sōritsu Seminā: Feminizumu to 'Ianfu' mondai’ in “Josei. Sensō. Jiken” Gakkai Gakkaishi Hensan Inkkai, ed., Josei. Sensō. Jiken, special issue Sengo-sekinin o toi naosu (Otsu-shi: Kōro-sha, 2002). It would be easy to read Ōgoshi’s critique feminists who mobilize “deconstruction of the sameness of women” as a reason for not engaging with women’s social movements that interrogate the responsibility of Japanese nation, that she labels as symptomatic of the problems of contemporary Japanese postmodern feminism as a move towards a more essentializing notion of “women” or what of women’s social movements, or one of identification with victims. However, I think that her critique can be read as a
embodied in “female” bodies are eclipsed by the fantasy of feminized men. That is to say, claiming and privileging as an interpretive arena of analysis, for instance, that Japanese "men" were feminized by the loss of war, the occupation by the Allied forces, so on and so forth, opens up questions about what work this gender as category of analysis does. It begs to take note of how quickly those in position of recent aggression by way of sexual violence are (re)positioned as feminine subjugated subjects. They are, in other words, easily recuperated as humiliated, violeted other. This demands a new configuration of how gender operates in order to think of what it means to speak of subjectivities, for instance those who are already established as gendered feminine prior to defeat, occupation, and so on. How might we think of "women" who are both gendered as "feminine" and sexed as “female,” thus were included already within the regime of "feminine" prior to the national feminization? Are they somehow rendered secondary to this "gendered" reading of the "post-war" years since the national feminized subject is imagined

call not to identification but rather to action, thus, call for movement away from theory of subjectivity towards theory of acts. For a challenging inquiry in to what is implicated in addressing responsibility, particularly for those who practice history, see: Naoki Sakai “‘Sengo rekishigaku o sôkatsu surutame ni’: Nihonshi to kokuminteki sekinin” in Rekishi to Hôhô Henshû Iinkai-hen, Rekishi to hôhô, Vol. 4 (Tokyo: Aoki shoten, 2000): 143-162. Sakai’s critique of the position of enunciation as kokumin must be registered when thinking of how Japanese feminists will act. Here, I am reading Ôgoshi’s critique as in affiliation with Sakai’s generous move towards the possibilities that “practice of critical history is deeply tied to becoming actually aware of questions such as: how shall we create new social relations with those people that we have been unable to exist in a symbiotical manner; what must change in us in order to encounter new friends.” Ibid, 161-162.
as male national subjects in relationship to US imperial power and not mediated by relationship to female national subjects? My interest here is not to argue for a biological essentialism in keeping our focus "properly" on the true "gendered" subject. However, to consider what the implications of "gendering the nation" is in relation to "defeat" or "occupation," for instance, while providing important insights into our understanding of national discourse, does produce new demands. In addition, in the reconfigured "gendered" relations, there are risks in making the everyday practices of embodied subjects as "female" less visible. The problem of less "visibility" here is not in the name of fuller representation, but rather that it is possible that this represents lost opportunities of thinking because it is difficult to always meet the demand of a more complex sociality, for instance, that may be a requirement for thinking beyond two genders. Thus, we need to demand of ourselves, critical consideration in relation to Japan’s colonial people. This is particularly true, for instance, when one considers the matter of who was considered kômin （皇民） in Japan prior to 1945, and the implications of being included and excluded under colonial rules. Then, the creation of resident aliens at the end of the Fifteen Years War, subjected the large number of colonial people, both men and women, who were brought to Japan as labor power begs close attention. This is made ever more salient as one considers Japanese women’s expanded political subjectivity and particularly as this expansion was central to defining the political imaginary of postwar democracy. On the other hand, the status of gender in this context becomes ever more complex if it is understood primarily as subjectivity associated with feminine. Thus, to claim military sexual slavery as part of universal violence against women can also occlude the enormous lived differences amongst
women and the critical work that must be done in terms of relations and non-relations amongst women.¹¹

The story at the center of this project is not about question of violence against women. It is, furthermore, not about the "comfort women" issue. However, I am writing in the present when it is necessary to consider what it will mean to write about feminist practice specifically in its engagement with historiography: what of meaning is constituted into a small piece of archive in our post-comfort women moment. That is, ours is a time when we are always already in the presence of the historical materialism of comfort women. It is also a time when question of contamination, for instance, cannot be addressed or read without the resonances of what it means to speak of contamination, questions of protection and demarcation of the imaginary national body, especially through sexual intercourse, in our time of AIDS.¹²


What can one say about a woman who leaves the opportunity accorded her for respectable life, for unimaginably degraded life. The story that I will open is such a story. There are many more stories like the one that I begin with that situate women outside into the unthinkable. Would a woman, (how could a woman), employed as a domestic thereby earning a wage on which she can survive willingly leave this domestic protection to earn a living on the streets? The stories are told and have currency because it is predicated on the assumption that it is unthinkable that a woman would leave protection. Is it not the case that there are only two possibilities for explanations of such a thing as a women leaving protection. The prevailing view would be that, it must have been that she desperately needed to earn more money or she was of questionable moral characteristic to begin with so that it was inevitable that she failed at being domesticated, civilized. The acceptable outside answer might be that she was innocent and did not know what she was going to be forced to do and thus she was 1) tricked, 2) kidnapped, or 3) sold by her unfeeling relatives.

Would it be possible to think that there is still yet another outside manner of thinking. What does such an outside manner of thinking produce? Might it be possible to consider the non-relationship of choosing to forego domestic protection and being of moral character? Would it be possible to consider the unthinkable -- it is always posited as the extreme case -- of someone choosing prostitution, for instance, over what in her mind are lesser options (though not simply in economic terms) without really understanding why? What would it cost us to say that for the most part, we simply cannot

know why? What would be our need to know why some women are prostitutes, if we do not need to know anything else about them? This is in no way to suggest that I do not value the often practical political acts on the part of many who do try to learn the push and pull factor involved in prostitution as well as the myriad ways to improve the working conditions of women workers in prostitutions and related labor.

It is precisely because I write at a time when the issue of "comfort women" is already part of us. It may seem that the line of questions that I am proposing, the suggestion or of not knowing (a recommendation, if you like), would seem to go against the grain of efforts to address the issue of "comfort women." I think not. In fact, it is because we read and write in a "state of emergency and public calamity" that we must think of what is at stake ever more urgently. What is at stake is precisely being able to have a future in the presence of this calamity. In the first instance, to not be able to imagine this question in its manifold ways that cannot be answered is to reinscribe, yet again, these women who were forced to serve as "comfort women" as "former" comfort women. What is at stake is also to lose the ability to consider the incalculable ways in which uncalculating decisions are made in lived lives.

**History and Feminizumu/Feminizumu and Women’s History**

Ueno Chizuko pronounced that the meeting of feminizumu and Japanese women’s history as unfortunate. Stating that Japanese women’s history writing had already been established by the time of feminizumu, which she situates as the "world wide development of second wave

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feminizumu in the late 60s on," Ueno situates Inoue-joseishi\textsuperscript{14} as part of "prehistory" of feminism, thus distinguishing “feminist” history and “women’s history".\textsuperscript{15} She underscores this\textit{ unfortunate} incident by citing the historian Yoneda who notes the very “minimal comments from historians of women during the unfolding of the great many feminist debates around conceptualization of liberation of women and such during the 1970s and 80s.”

\textsuperscript{14} Inoue-joseishi is an often-referenced point of departure in considering the practice of women’s history. Published in 1948 first, it attracted tremendous amount of attention. More important than the large number of readers, perhaps, was the practice of forming "study groups" to consider the implication of this book. It was republished with some corrections and minor stylistic revisions for clarity. Indeed, attesting to the importance of his book in generating discussions about history and women (and I would add, gender, though this is not the term by which the book argues), Inoue writes in the preface for the revised edition that "the revisions are limited to formalities" and as such "it should not produce any difficulties for people who own the earlier edition to read in a study group with those people purchasing this new edition.” Inoue Kiyoshi\textit{ Nihon joseishi} 2 Volumes (Tokyo: Sanichi shobô, 1955): I:7. For the “debates” on theory of women’s history, see Koshô Yukiko ed.,\textit{ Shiryô joseishi ronsô} Ronsô shirîzu (Tokyo: Domesu Shuppan, 1987) that collects in one volume debates covering the period 1970 to 1981. See also, Kojima Kyôko and Hayakawa Noriyo eds.,\textit{ Joseishi no shiza} Nihon Joseishi ronshû I (Yoshikawa

\textsuperscript{15} Ueno Chizuko, "Rekishigaku to feminizumu -- 'joseishi' o koete” in\textit{ Iwanami kôza: Nihon tsûshi bekkan 1 Rekishishiki no genzai} (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1995): 149-184. Fujime Yuki, in her book\textit{ Sei no rekishigaku} also refers to the first, second wave in developing her argument differentiating between them by pointing to the second wave feminism as overcoming the limits of the first wave, particularly around questions of sex and reproduction including questions of criticisms of sexual violence and the history of prostitution. Fujime,\textit{ Sei no rekishigaku}, 11-47.
Following up Yoneda, the historian’s, perspective, she cites Ogino Miho who addressed women’s history from the vantage point of women’s studies on this absence of interest amongst historians of women. It was, Ogino points out “unfortunate that historians of women kept distance from feminism and distrusted” it since “women’s history was one of the most theoretically active and productive are.”\textsuperscript{16} Ueno concludes that what was necessary was to introduce the concept of “gender” in to the practice of history as it:

1) allowed for the multitude of historically and culturally divergent concepts of “sexual difference” to be addressed with one term

2) it shifted the object of analysis from two, “male and female” to one object in other words, to the site of the difference

3) it made clear that this difference was an asymmetrical difference that is accompanied by class stratification, in other words, relationship of power.\textsuperscript{17}

It is not the intention of this project to insist upon a re-consideration of thinking about questions of feminism in relationship to a institutionalized chronology that makes it possible to speak of the first wave, the second wave, and (now) in the post-feminist era, of the third wave (existing uncomfortably with the post-feminist notion.) However, it is my intention to consider how women’s history informed and were informed by feminist debates.

What I do want to do, then, is to raise questions, as acts of opening up our reading practice, of how to consider the relationship between feminism

\textsuperscript{16} \textit{Ibid.}, 150.

\textsuperscript{17} \textit{Ibid.}, 176.
and archive, feminism and history, through the question of what it means to write women into history. This question will be approached by considering a "story," as a constitutive moment amongst many of feminist debates. This is a story of a maidservant who after working in a household in Tokyo, is lured by fashion and urban enticement away from her occupation. I will refrain, out of a desire not to state what are and are not feminist writings or theories, from identifying the story as feminist text. Of more immediate importance is the question of how such a writing that is centered on making visible a subject, as object of the narrative is part of feminist epistemologies and practice. This pedagogic tale was written with the assumption that it would be read within a contained range of interpretations. What I will argue moreover is that in fact, this figure is actually unintelligible without the assumed knowledge about who constitutes desirable national subject. In the process of this reading, I am leaving a small footnote to place a question mark next to the practice of institutionalizing feminist discourse and history, particularly in its "first wave," "second wave," so on and so forth manner. I do so in order that my reading of this particular text, produced in 1947, and not of either the "first wave" or the "second wave" may be placed in engagement with feminist discursive practice. As such, while it is not my intention to mark the late 1940s or the 1950s as "another" important moment in the history of feminist thinking in competition (but already from a subordinate position?) with the institutionalized highlights, it does implicitly call into question what is made possible and not possible by such institutionalization.

Though the text that I will examine in the next chapter suggests many possible engagements, my reading and writing at this time is framed by the recent and ongoing major efforts to preserve feminist debates and make these
debates readily accessible in published form. As such, this project is already compromised in a sense of being situated within institutionalized knowledge of feminism. It will also juxtapose different "types" of texts as if in their

18 The most ambitious resource is the three volume Shiryô ûman ribu shi bringing into print, staggering number of important unpublished materials, such as leaflets and posters, as well as, independently "published" newsletters. It goes without saying, of course, that it has inevitably an enormous power in authorizing and institutionalizing certain knowledge, articulation, and voices as part of this history. Mizoguchi Akiyo, Seki Yôko, and Miki Sôko editors, Shiryô ûman ribu shi 3 volumes (Kyôto: Shôkadô, 1972-75). Whereas Shiryô ûman ribu shi covers the period from 1968 through 1982, Feminizumu korekushon in three volumes as well focuses on published debates from the late 70s through the 80s. Sechiyama Kaku, Katô Shûichi, and Sakamoto Kazue, editors Feminizumu korekushon e volumes (Tokyo: Keisô shobô, 1993). In addition, there are thematically collected debates published as anthologies. See, for instance, the five-volume anthology Ronsô shirîju published by Domesu shuppan from 1984 through 1991 on topics such as Boseihogo ronsô (Debates on Maternal Welfare), Sei to ai o meguru ronsô (Debates on Sex and Love), and Joseishi ronsô. Yoshikawa Kôbunkan’s ten volume compendium, edited by the Sôgô Joseishi Kenkyûkai, that brings together “history debates” on topics such as Joseishi no shiza (Perspective of Women’s History), Seiji to josei (Politics and Women), Josei to undô (Women and Activism) though not explicitly feminist debates exposes multiple strands of trajectories of women’s history from the 1970s onward. This inquiry resonates with the question raised by Sakai “what kind of historical trajectory led to, for example, Japanese or Western subjectivities,” by asking similar questions of the construction of gendered subjectivities that are marked as Japanese. Sakai, ibid.
differences, they are equal.\textsuperscript{19} I use this term, equivalence, hesitantly. I am juxtaposing translation theory here onto nonaggregate groups of writings in order to tease out the ways in which various texts have come to occupy a more prominent position as theory, or as non-theory, in naming the subjects of history. Sakai writes:

In this sense, the representation of translation transforms difference in repetition into species difference (diaphora) between two specific identities, and help constitute the putative unities of national languages, and thereby reinscribes the initial difference and incommensurability as a specific, that is, commensurate and conceptual, difference between two particular languages within the continuity of the generality of Language.\textsuperscript{20}

\textsuperscript{19} While what she is writing about is not about differences in texts, I am translating Hélène Cixous’ argument. In her reading with Lispector of Genet, she posits that Genet's theme of equivalence is one that makes a calf no longer marketable by saying “every calf is worth another.” "Nonmarketability, the withdrawal of the exchange value, of the use value is operated through a look that produces equivalences." She calls this economy ‘‘feminine economy’ which does not refer to women, but perhaps to a trait that comes back to women more often, that of the possibility of accepting what is socially intolerable, for example, general equivalence.” Cixous, \textit{ibid.}, 156.

\textsuperscript{20} Naoki Sakai \textit{Translation and Subjectivity: On “Japan” and Cultural Nationalism} (Minneapolis, Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1997): 14. Here, then, I am stretching his argument not to claim that these texts that I bring together are part of equivalent groups, or assembled texts of resemblances. Rather, though, they are institutionalized or identified as of particular grouping, thus, different from other texts that are bundled in other groupings, I want to bring out some of differences in repetition amongst those texts that are grouped as different.
Finally, this project does not concern itself with the question of whence "Japanese feminizumu." That is to say, to speak of something called feminizumu is already to be within a circuit. It may be a question of importance in identifying State feminism, for instance, and I do not deny the possible productivity of such a line of inquiry. However, I write in the spirit of feminist contamination. Contamination as feminism: following in the footsteps of many far more eloquent.  

In the pages that follow, I offer an attempt to develop a reading of multiplicities of constitutive moments in the writing into history, the subject women. I begin with a reading of the short story of the young maidservant. While my intention is not to historicize the story as piece of a historical moment in totality, and thus not provide a comparative framework for the reading of this story, I consider other writings to highlight and maintain the

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21 Mori Ai "Dōtokuteki sekkusu to wa nanika? Yokubô ga kotoba o kakutoku surutoki" Gendai shisô 25.13 (December 1997): 124. This seems to have much in affinity with what Spivak argues. According to Silvestra Mariniello, Spivak writes, implying that deconstruction is the path to another way of being in the world, one that accepts contamination as a measure taken against the violent, reductive ways of representation. ‘This is the double bind of deconstruction, its peculiar humility, responsibility and strength; its acknowledgement of radical contamination.’” Silvestra Mariniello “Introduction” in Mariniello and Paul Bove editors, Gendered Agents: Women and Institutional Knowledge (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998): 14. While not using the language of contamination, Chela Sandoval’s Methodology of the Oppressed Sandoval brings together in her reading as coeval theories, the writings of Jacques Derrida, Gilles Deleuze, Michel Foucault, Aimé Césaire, Eldrige Cleaver, Gloria Anzaldúa and others. Chela Sandoval Methodology of the Oppressed (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000).
“fragmented and episodic” nature of the reading of the story. My concern, again, is to consider what it means to write about the writing of the subject women into history. Thus, though my archives are often the archives also frequented by "historians," my intention is not to write a history of the project of women's history. Neither is my intent, as noted earlier, to offer a better more effective (politically or culturally) protocol for producing historical knowledge. Most importantly, my reading and thinking is offered here not as a criticism or critical intervention into women's history. Rather, I want to think about what consulting these archives have raised for me as a way to offer a "reading interruption" to the archives. In the following chapter "Narrative Logic of Japanese Women's History: Locality of Language and Discourse" will discuss the conventional wisdom of how to locate nôson fujin or chihô fujin in "women's history" and then the political project of positioning "women" in feminist history practice. In "Iconographies: Taxonomy of 'modan' women" will focus on the three iconic "women" that are sited in kindai josei-shi. It was in the period from the 1910s to the 1940s that construction of particularly vivid modern women's identities occurred. It began with the

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22 Gramsci writes, “the history of the subaltern classes is necessarily fragmented and episodic; in the activity of these classes there is a tendency toward unification, albeit in provisional stages but this is the least conspicuous aspect, and it manifests itself only when victory is secured. Subaltern classes are subject to the initiatives of the dominant class, even when they rebel; they are in a state of anxious defense. Every trace of autonomous initiative is therefore of inestimable value.” “History of the dominant class and history of the subaltern classes,” in Antonio Gramsci, Prison Notebooks Volume II (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996): 21. In this instance, what I take from the above is the importance of reading Fumi-san’s story in fragment, not simply out of necessity, but to resist assimilation.
appearance of the *atarashii onna* (The New Women) followed by her younger sister *modan gâru* (modern girl) in the cities. Women of the countryside were not to be counted in the sisterhood of the new or the modern women but rather came to be identified as "those who were saved" from degraded life. At best, they could hope to be members of local organizations that mobilized for the war efforts. This chapter connects the emerging genealogy of categories of women in the prewar period with the development of the discursive logic adopted by historians now writing "Japanese women's history." What might fall out of a genealogy -- even as an excess subject -- is, then, not negotiable. Here, then, I consider the ways in which both "positive" and "negative" images are deployed positively in establishing the limits of the subject category "women." The chapter that follows in an example of the constitutive moments of "ruralness" "women" and "rural women" that co-existed in contradictory and incoherent matter. They are presented not as archival correctives to the "women written into history" but rather as an interruption in the knowledge of "women in history." In "Daughters Saved and Unsaved", I examine the multitude of positions that fueled the construction of "saved and unsaved" daughters that is situated centrally in reference to prewar countryside and women. The anti-brothel movement and the countryside, the discovery of "girl-less villages" by journalists, and the meaning of selling daughters during the farm crisis of 1934 in Tohoku region will be read in a "contact zone" of contested meanings and disparate interests negotiating the meanings of "urban places as unwelcome space." I close with a consideration of some more recent efforts to explain and categorize women identified with ruralness, non-metropolitan knowledge, and organic relation to survival and body as a way to ask how we might read this story.
In this way the epistemology that would
differentiate an object from the subject and,
consequently, reduce time to the function of
classifying objects will be modified... In other
words, the "past" is the object from which a
mode of production distinguishes itself in order
to transform it. Historical acts transform
contemporary document in to archives, or make
the countryside into a museum of memorable
and/or superstitious traditions.
- Michel de Certeau -

As I have repeatedly acknowledged, all my work
is a forcing of deconstruction(s) into "an impure,
contaminating, negotiated, bastard and violent ...
filiation..."
- Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak -

Deconstruction cannot found a political program
of any kind. Yet in its suggestion that
masterwords like "The Worker" or "The
Women” have no literal referents,  

deconstruction is a political safeguard.

- Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak -

**THE MAKING OF AN URBAN WOMAN/UNMAKING OF A RURAL WOMAN**

When she first met her, Fumi-san was strong, sturdy, and healthy, with cheeks like apples. She used to watch her and the other young women with envy as they worked in the fields, under the clear blue sky. In an area known for its “hard working young women,” Fumi-san had the reputation of being the hardest worker of all. Mochizuki Mieko, an actress, had moved to the coastal village of Nishizaki to escape the threats of air raids over Tokyo. That was how she met Fumi-san. Untouched by the urban infection that young women who sojourned to the cities were so susceptible to, Fumi and her friends chided those women who returned to their village with permed hair, calling out, “he! sarumaneda! kono kattaibo.... oyani moratta kami o chijirashiteyo!” (Copy Cat! Frizzling the hair, your parents gave you!)

Not too long after Fumi moved in with the Mochizuki’s in Tokyo as a domestic servant, she began to experiment with make-up and new hairstyles. Fumi spent her spare moments, when Mieko was out, trying on bright red lipsticks and face powder too light for her dark complexion. She even gave up her
monpe in favor of more "urban clothing." By the time Fumi-san left Mochizuki’s household, she too had frizzled hair.

One day under the gray-blue sky of Tokyo, Mochizuki came upon Fumi sporting red blouse and slacks. Knowing too well the changes that had taken place over Fumi’s body, Mochizuki lacked the courage to ask:

Are you never going back to the countryside?

or

What are you doing these days? 23

Fumi’s transformation, that started with a seemingly innocent experimentation with a lipstick -- a mistake, nonetheless -- ended after not only her simple, healthy, and natural beauty was ruined, but also when Fumi herself had been reduced to a coarse, artificial imitation of Tokyoites.

The demise of Fumi from Chiba appeared in the form of a letter titled "To the young women of the countryside that I hope to meet," in one of the many magazines devoted to the education of postwar rural residents. Along with many other publications -- pamphlets, posters, etc. -- these magazines dominated the discursive space in which the construction of a post-war Japanese rural citizen took shape in the early occupation years.

Written in a conversational, intimate, and familial voice, Mochizuki's depictions of a once healthy wholesome woman lost to the seduction of

23 The story of Fumi-san is derived from, Mochizuki Mieko "Oaishitai nôson no musumesan tachi ni" October, 1948 Nôson bunka 16-22. I have re-written the story and taken some liberty in reorganizing the material.
"feminine" accoutrement delineate the process of negotiating a gendered, rural position in the postwar "Americanized Japan." Blue sky, honest labor, strong able body, naiveneess, simplicity, lack of refinement, apple cheeks, weathered face were all signifiers of that which was rural and Japanese. Overcast sky, ambiguous labor, slim body, sophistication, pale skin, stylized appearance; all reflected the anxious landscape over which the sea change in postwar Japan refigured its identity. The denouement of the tale of Fumi -- her descent down in to the nether world of crime, poverty, and dishonor -- signified her failure to transform herself into a true urbanite.

In Mochizuki’s story telling, Fumi’s body begins its travel with apple cheeks.24 When Mieko comes upon her efforts at self-transformation, she suggests, "If I had cheeks like yours, I would not try to wear make-up.” Fumi, frustrated and embarrassed at being discovered grabs the newspaper on her lap and rubs her face, trying to wipe off the red lipstick and the face powder. Mochizuki described the effect as "With lipstick smeared all around, her mouth looked like that of a cannibal."25


25 Mochizuki, "Oaishitai nôson no musumesan tachi ni": 16-17. Pan pan is the derisive term by which women who were assumed to be prostitutes serving (exclusively) soldiers of the American occupying forces were called.
Fumi’s repeated effort to construct herself earned the disapprobation from Mochizuki:

A woman who paints her face with lipstick redder than red, rouge unsuitable for her cheeks, and powder that is too white has to be insulted by men with comments like "made up like a pan pan gâru."\(^26\)

She lamented that by the time Fumi prided herself in making-up her face like those pan pan gâru (as though it showed that she too had become a Tokyoite), "she no longer listened to my praises of the countryside."\(^27\) Finally, as the door to the protection offered by Mochizuki closed behind Fumi, or perhaps, and thereby opened the door to urban life, she disappeared, devoured by shadowed streets and dark corners.

**Writing into History**

*This is one of the paradoxes of historical research in general: histories, reconstructions of the past, are in fact illuminations of a present that would not be possible without this past.*

-Elizabeth Grosz-

The framework that I will briefly outline here will be one that can be broadly defined as that which created a new practice of history in Japan,

\(^{26}\) Ibid., 17.

\(^{27}\) Ibid., 18.
starting from about 1946 in response to creating a new nation. In part, the dating of 1946, rather than, say August of 1945 reflects the fact that many journals did not begin to reestablish publishing activities until January of 1946. Furthermore, it was not simply that new journals were published. The many publications represented establishments of sites to address work of creating the future of Japan. It is instructive to consider the content of various journals made available by the joint research project "Sengo Kaikaku" conducted by Tokyo University, Institute of Social Science. One is immediately rewarded with the nexus of proposed interconnections between history, democracy, women, participatory politics, and so on. Each article contained argument and could be read as a standalone essay. My point, however, is that in the discursive space created by the coexistence of discordant voices and interests in the space of a journal, and journals, it is possible to see the ways knowledge production was contested and negotiated. Moreover, interconnections between different publications influenced how particular subjects were covered in special issues focusing on topics. Furthermore, the full effect of the abundance of these "opportunities" created by various publications cannot be categorized as simply producing productive space, but resulted in unintended influences and traces.

28 For a summary of the tendencies towards the re-establishment of the ethnos at the center of this new historical practice, see: Sakai, “Nihonshi to kokuminteki sekinin,” op. cit.

29 Conversations with Tani Barlow and Kojima Kiyoshi have contributed to my understanding of journal space as affording a more clearly marked sense of fluidity. See, Tokyo Daigaku Shakai Kagaku Kenkyûjo Sengo Kaikaku Kenkyûkai, Sengo Zasshi Mokuji Sôran, jô ge, (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 1976).
historical practice, it contributed to reinscripting a metanarrative of modern Japanese history. The journals published articles that often articulated the connection between new ways of thinking and what constituted as history. At other times, this relationship was implied in the examination of various "historical" questions as a ways of thinking about the future. \(^{30}\) Here I am limiting myself to how women and gender are constitutive part of this history practice.\(^{31}\)

In January of 1948, a group of historians, sociologists, and political theorists gathered together to inaugurate the new journal aptly named *Shisô no kagaku* (*Science of Thought*). This project more then some others self-consciously set itself apart from the status quo or prewar and wartime

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\(^{30}\) See, J. Victor Koschmann’s *Revolution and Subjectivity in Postwar Japan* instructive in thinking about the multitude of interconnected concerns that bear upon the working out of the "past" through consideration of the future and "future" through the consideration of the past of Japan: J. Victor Koschmann, *Revolution and Subjectivity in Postwar Japan*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

\(^{31}\) I use the term "history practice" as a way to mark the polymorphous nature of this debate. That is, my attention is far from limited to "professional" or "academic" historians, though, they, too, are of interest to me. Included in the pages to follow are the "grassroots" historians, as well as "critics-at-large," "novelists," and "political theorists." What they hold in common in this instance of reading is their engagement with the process of positioning and interpreting of the "past."
academic world. Rather, it brought together many who either were silenced directly by the state authorities during the war years or had practiced some form of self-censorship. Moreover, after a long hiatus, this journal provided a stage for younger writers -- like so many other new initiatives in the immediate years following the end of the war -- including some who had studied in Canada, United Kingdom, and United States. This younger generation of writers, along with writers who may not have been necessarily biographically younger -- but shared this sense of possibilities of departure from the past, as in the case of Hani Gorô or Hani Setsuko -- were seen, in a manner, as the future of Japanese social thought and criticism. Particularly in to the early 1950s, many of these writers engaged in self-criticisms to address their Eurocentric perspectives. The co-current turn towards taishû 大衆 (masses) and taishû bunka 大衆文化 (mass culture) resulted in publication of many articles on mass literature, movies, popular music and comics. Though


33 Oguma, ibid., 268-271. An example of an early article “Taishû bungei no shisôsei” argued for the importance of leisure to attend to the tension and fatigue endured by the masses. As such, the author concluded that it needs to be necessarily dismissed lightly. The task was to produce literature that possessed mass appeal. Kaneko Hiroshi “Taishû bungei no shisôsei” Shisô no kagakuî 3.2 (1948): 467-474. However, though Shisô no kagaku cannot be
*taishū* was not marked gendered, early issues of the magazine in establishing an alternative framework for “culture” and “thought.” Other publications addressed contemporaneous concerns with direct attention to women; in the year 1946, for instance, the postwar journal *Sekai* published Hani Setsuko *"Josei to Jiyū"* 女性と自由 (women and freedom), Takakura Teru *"Chishiki to Ryōshin"* 知識と良心 (knowledge and conscience), as well as an article by Yamakawa Kikue *"Wakaki Josei"* わかいか女性 (young women) along with Maruyama Masao, Ouchi Hyōe, Ienaga Saburo, and others.34

Hani Setsuko challenges the criticism that “freedom” was granted, or distributed, rather than properly gained. Arguing that since Meiji many people had fought for this “freedom” she finds such claims to be nothing other than act of torturing those who had struggled. Moreover, she notes that thought there is a call to consider the atrocities committed against all freedom loving peoples of China, Indonesia, Philipinne, and elsewhee, she points to the importance of considering how much women’s “blood and tears” flowed because of the war. She states, “we must think carefully of this war as also an act of great atrocities against women of Japan, mothers of Japan.35

Whereas, Takakura Teru’s article is in the form of a letter to the daughter of Miki Kiyoshi who died immediately after the end of the war when Takakura was herself still imprisoned. By, 1948, she was writing as an individual but

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34 Hani Setsuko *“Josei to jiyū,”* *Sekai* 1.1 (1946): 129-137; Takakura Teru *“Chishiki to Ryōshin,”* *Sekai* 1.9 (1946): 77-82; Yamakawa Kikue *“Wakaki josei e”* 1.11(1946): 72-78.

35 Hani, *ibid.*, 129-130.
also as a member of the Parliament, from the Communist Party. Her letter is a pledge to Miki Yôko of her conviction to work towards liberating the masses, particularly those in the rural villages. Yamakawa Kikue’s essay is an address to the “young women” as the title indicates. Chronicling the historical events from Meiji to the end of the war she focuses on class struggle, and particularly on issues of labor. Concluding that with the new Constitution, the status of women of Japan was equivalent to those of civilized countries, she cautions that it is not enough to have legal equality. She argues that it is, in fact, necessarily to gain intellectual as well as economic equality in order to make full use of the legal equalities.

What brought together many of these people was their belief and commitment to a scientific approach to social theory, or -- more generally -- to what is assumed when one speak of social science, with the "science" underscored and accentuated. Thus, for those involved with such work, "scientific" knowledge underscored, whether in the naming of an intellectual project such as Shisô to kagaku 思想と科学, Shisô no kagaku 思想の科学, or Kokuminteki kagaku 国民的科学.

What indeed was it that this new scientific relation to history would bring to light? For the writers I have mentioned, this history would, through the highlighting of the local, marginalized, and women's history -- the true

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36 Takakura, *ibid.*

37 Yamakawa, *ibid.*

38 In the second issue of *Sekai*, the magazine published an review of then late 19th century debates on women’s suffrage. The article underscore the rational presented in arguing for and against granting suffrage by presents excerpts of
history of the people 民衆 (minshû) -- bring to the surface the sovereign subjects of the Japanese nation, thus Japanese history. Put it slightly differently, what was meant by true history, history in the first instance, was history that was not official history that had been promoted and then enforced by the ministry of education. As important, and particularly of concern here, is that this true history would be the history of the people. Here, one must question what is meant by the people. The people here referenced are the proper subjects that can be recognized as participating by becoming part of a civil society, albeit a sovereign subject, of the Japanese nation. What is noteworthy is that when people are referred to in the writing, it is hardly ever clearly delineated. This poses, of course, considerable problems that are not necessarily obvious. What constitutes "Japanese" peoples? This question is not meant to raise the popular line of questioning in regards to the "origins" of the ethnic Japanese. Rather, the question at one level would require us to consider who counts as Japanese in August of 1945 compared to, for instance, August of 1947. That is, when Japan had lost vast territories that it had occupied, it also became an event for the constitutive work of redrawing the perimeters by which who was and was not "Japanese" is defined. Furthermore, and of equal concern for my task here, I am required to consider the proper subject formations that are assumed under this "sovereign subject."

So, then, let me return for a moment to the collaboration and assumptions underscoring scientific history and its relations to sovereign subject. Into the late 1940s, when much of the foundational work calling for democratic history was instituted, Japan was, unlike its European allies of the

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axis during WWII, under direct American occupation and tutelage. The best and brightest stars, by definition, to emerge in this period were those scholars, intellectuals, and social scientists who were able to locate and narrativize the proper sources that could establish Japanese identity as a consort of sorts, to "America". (And it was "America", whatever it signified -- from the YMCA to the "Vital Center" thesis grounding the official American doctrine of Cold War liberalism – it was this term that held currency, rather than what we might think of as the "United States" and exceeded into a expansive imaginary.39) In what was, surely, a dramatic turn of events requiring major reapportionment of thoughts and sentiments, on the part of both policy makers and the "public," the most subversive and thus perverted of "our" enemies was to be rehabilitated as the most friendly and stabilizing ally in the Pacific/Asia. The doctrine of faith in democracy, freedom, and a militant liberalism that defined Schlesinger’s influential thesis played on fear of communism. In an extremely short period between the 1945 and 1953, with the 1949 defeat of the Nationalist Kuomintang by Mao’s People’s Army, marking China as lost to Communism and the "Korean War" as the background, the "alliance" between the United States and Japan forged. The economic recovery of Japan (which is usually portrayed as having benefited greatly from the needs of the U.S. military) was of course not simply a matter of stabilization of a wayward nation but essential part of the further articulation of United States hegemony in the Pacific basin. At the same time, Japan came to locate its historical narrative as a democratic pursuit, seeking its legitimate place in the history of potential democratic presence. Nevertheless, this writing of the history of the

pursuit of democracy would only be possible if one could do two things simultaneously: to forget its colonial history and find the proper subjects of such historical narrative. These subjects are what I consider to be the proper desiring subjects of modern Japan as so established. They are subjects desiring of a more democratic, liberatory subjectivity guaranteed by "equality" as citizens in a civil society. They are also proper in that they desire to be good citizens of a civil society occupying the public sphere in a responsible manner. It is with this in mind that I return to that particular example with which I began. I want to consider this story as an event in the formation of a discourse of proper feminist subjects, women's history, and in particular Japanese marginality.

Here, then, is the place in which the story of Fumi might be read. It is only one reading, albeit one that I find possible and of possibilities. That Fumi's transformation had been unsuccessful was no mere accident. Embodied in a "rural body," Fumi lacked the requisite "modern" characteristics that could facilitate her self-transformation even as she adorned herself with the accoutrements of modernity. Her masquerade, facilitated by make-up betrayed her "authentic" rural identity. When faced with the challenge of transformation, this identity, narrated by deploying her body as the site of ruralness -- skin tone, physique, and constitution -- revealed its essential primitive, cannibalistic characteristics. Fumi and other women of the countryside like her, according to the cultural logic of this narrative, could only craft a self that reflected this essential identity. Accordingly, she could only position herself into an "other" that was neither truly urban nor truly rural -- surviving by consuming foreign bodies and becoming one with alien substances: the occupying soldiers. At best, when they shed their "rural
darkness" as represented by their sun-darkened skin, their paleness was to be hidden in the darkness of the night.40

**LOOKING BACK**

So, dear readers, you know more than you imagine, however much you may deny it.

-Clarice Lispector

In the "Address Book" Sue Golding offers a possibility for a very different reading of Fumi’s story. What if we stand with Fumi -- as if the figuration is a temporal site -- and consider the story by Mochizuki as Fumi’s given history. As Golding writes:

...was precisely "history," now: her history -- now: exactly her memory, and as such, it set the boundary over which she could not possibly lead. As she swirls backward to re-live the impossible, as she tries in vain to hold onto a reality tangible only as memory-past, she condemns herself to an endless immobility, a static hell infinitely attempting to retrieve that which no longer exists.41

40 Mochizuki, *op cit.*

41 Golding does not actually read Fumi’s story, but rather, I am reading Golding into the re-reading of Fumi’s story. Sue Golding "The Address Book" in Paul Hallom *Sodom Anthology* (London: Verso, 1993): 168-73. My earlier reading of Fumisan’s story lead me to Donna Haraway’s "Cyborg Manifest" as a means to avoid a closure. However, in re-reading works by, for instance, Cherríe Moraga and in conversation over Chris Marker's film "Level Five" with Ken Kawashima, I have come to consider a different possible reading.
That is, if one looks back to history as that which grounds as, anchors as in the present that resembles the past, we can no longer make that movement towards futurity. That is, this moment of choosing not to look backwards, not as a disavowal of past, but as a turning away from nostalgia, Mochizuki’s exits out of the story, and enters into history, even though Mochizuki means to ensure an afterlife of Fumi as a failure, by assuming for the reader retrieval effort that is doomed to failure.

As Golding proffers:

There was only one reason, and it was a practical one; she could not -- nor could anyone else for that matter -- attempt to sustain a present or future life endlessly rooted in the land of the dead. That would condemn any "survivor" to a tearful emptiness so profound as to become no life at all. For to re-live forever the very instant of that memory -- the very instant of life gone by -- would manage only to squeeze interminably the very juice from one's limbs. It would always -- already dry us right up -- embodying the pristine absence of the future in the un-deadness of our gaze. And it would monumentalize us precisely (as the global fairy tale so eloquently named it) as a pillar of salt.

Paralised.

It is no wonder that the rawness of possibility and change in the face of -- rather in spite of -- all the mad pleasure and damnation and decay, begins with taking the memories of them: ALIVE; by carrying those memory figments forward and as close to the body parts as possible, playing with them, reinventing them, and, in the most profane and moist sense of the phrase, of "never looking back."42

Is this not, then, exactly what Fumi might have been able to do. That is, surviving the violence of Mochizuki's objectification of her and walking out of the door, "never looking back."43 Fumi would carry with her all of the pleasures of the coastal village where she worked under the sun, knowing the corporeal immediacy of such pleasure. She would also take with her the humiliation of being caught experimenting with Mochizuki and her condescending praise of her wholesomeness. Fumi will continue to layer the experiences, some certain to be challenging. Whereas Mochizuki makes clear that there is no place for Fumi in her conceptualization of the future once Fumi has lived that moment of no return, Golding reminds us that Fumi lives

42 Ibid.

43 William Haver discusses the possibilities of reading this particular piece by Golding within a constellation of other writings by her, William Haver The Body of this Death: Historicity and Sociality in the Time of AIDS (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1996): 181-199. See also, Joanna Zylinska "A Bit(e) of the Other: An Interview with Sue Golding" originally in the first edition of Culture Machine at: http://culturemachine.tees.ac.uk. In a printed form, it is included in, Sue Golding (johnny de philo) editor, "honour" Parallax 13 (October-December 1999):145-155.
on, invisible to Mochizuki other than as figuration to be sure, and not only, as some would have it, as failed subjectivity. 44

This assumes, then, that Fumi lives for and only with Mochizuki’s approbation. What we must call into question is the assumption held by Mochizuki, who stands in as culture, then, knows Fumi’s history and future. Perhaps this might be the case and indeed, Fumi did come to Tokyo aspiring to be molded into a more modern, cultivated, citizen-subject. However, it would be worth paying our What we might think of here, instead, is to consider what might Fumi become, what are the different ways we might create new forms of being, without creating new myths or a new integration. There is nothing in the story by Mochizuki to suggest Fumi’s depth. One could assume, then, that, indeed, Fumi is nothing other than a young country girl taken with the glitter of city lights, sweet smells of make-up and such. On the other hand, there is nothing to suggest that this is the case. However, why should these be the question? In this instance, it does not matter that we do not know because the membrane of the story that confines Fumi to the words of Mochizuki tells us nothing about what she wants, what she envisions. What potentiality she carries within her for making relations. In a similar

way, Elspeth Probyn’s demand for "getting real about the social" is appropriate to consider here:

If we need to think in terms of making politics subjectively relevant, it is equally crucial that we also think about making the sexual socially relevant. This entails asking after and locating "the gap now between the actual and potential political subject" (Brunt, 1989: 159). This is importantly different from the gist of the critiques leveled at queer studies and cultural studies, i.e., that these forms of theorizing are exclusively invested in formulating a disembodied subject created in resistance to, or in pleasure with, forms of cultural consumption. In the stead of such claims, rendering politics, the social, and the sexual subject relevant requires that we encourage interconnections, not further compartmentalization.45

This is not to suggest a fixed social, but rather to keep in mind the contingent forms of being – the becomings and unbecomings – and embodiments, and the aleatory events and interconnections that we name, our everyday.

This story of Fumi and others like hers are tales of inclusion and exclusion in modern Japan: they are tales that function to define that which is marginal and outside of the "culture." Such tales constitute the writing of sex and gender as a means of historical nomination of the subject appropriate to "women's history," "modern national narrative," and the general desire to honor the telos of liberatory modernity. The devastating effect is not hard to

imagine. That said, I hasten to add that my interest is not in the recuperation or the restoration of the "true" or even the "truer" figure of "women" into history. Indeed, my quibbles are not with the past tense. Neither can I position myself at the point of entering into a simple future tense. Rather, my efforts are to consider some of the grounds necessary to navigate in thinking about the practice of writing in the future anterior. Like Elizabeth Grosz, who names “an open future... that is, a future yet to be made... the very lifeblood of political struggle, the goal of feminist challenge” Diane Elam, writes of a practice as:

The writing that exposes itself to the political question of what women will have been and thus destabilize any claim to positive knowledge or restrictions on the non-category of "women."

That is, she suggests that distinct from the "three historical tenses of past, present, and future, history written in the future anterior doesn't claim to know in advance what it is women can do and be."

Then, the larger framework for my reading of Fumi-san’s story is the paradoxical impulse that work in bringing into position this subject "women": the subject, increasingly, of history, subject of literary imaginary, and subject of political theory. This is a category we seem to know already quite well, "women" that always exceeds at the same time grossly fall short of any resemblance to people we recognize as "women". Perhaps more importantly, it is something that cannot be occupied ever quite successfully as "woman" by

a "woman," any woman. This is not to say that the subject "women" is a figment of imagination. We cannot open ourselves into a future without historical consciousness, either. This requirement of historical consciousness is one of attending in contradiction.48

The implications here for our story is to know that our reading of Fumisan’s story leaves us with what we do not know that we do not know. That is, we cannot “fill in” as it were to say, these things we do not know about her life. Knowing this, however, the demand for acting is met by thinking of “its own historicity” and resisting “making sense,” and “domesticating the event.”49 This practice of historical consciousness is also what Sakai demands

48 According to Haver:

Historical consciousness is at once the consciousness of history, the capacity to posit that “there is history rather than nothing,” and a consciousness that is itself specifically historical, an effect of, and subject to, the vicissitudes of history... In this case, historical consciousness is that which takes history to be an object for consciousness and thereby claims to know its object...

But if “historical consciousness” is to be that which enables political acting in the present, it cannot abstract itself from the “present field of contradictions.” Therefore, “historical consciousness” must also be the acknowledgment of its own nontranscendence... In this sense, historical consciousness is the guarantee of the encounter of the philosopher of praxis (or historian) with the radical difference that “is” futurity...The contradiction of the historical consciousness of any philosophy or praxis is that it must think history to be both transcendence and the guarantee of nontranscendence, continuity and discontinuity, ideality and materiality, knowing and its other. And it must do so precisely in order to situate itself as a political (which is to say, nonneutral) practice in the current situation, in order, that is to say to think its own historicity. Haver, The Body of this Death, 47-48.

49 Haver, ibid.
for historical practice, the demand for critical historical awareness that moves us towards becoming, other than what we are without erasing our past.  

**National Margins**

Tales like Fumi’s also function to identify the textual sites from which power is circulated, since they make explicit the way shared meanings of what is marginal and not marginal are produced. These “sites” can be fleeting, more permanent, or intermittent – such as a pamphlet or a group that may come together to hammer out political ideas, produce cultural events, so on and so forth; they may be more permanent as those journals with decades of publishing records; and intermittent as situation demand the contingent coming together of people to address issues. The web of multiple loci from which narratives are circulated, however, should not lead us to see this tale or the others with similar narrative structures as successfully claiming an ontological authority. In this tale alone, for instance, the loci of power can be identified in urban-rural cultural positioning, discourses on national identity, politics of gendered subjectivities, and the construction of meanings of labor, to begin a list. In fact, stories like Fumi’s are instructive in that they enable us

50 Sakai, “Nihonshi to kokuinteki sekinin”: 161-162.

51 This story is also instructive in highlighting the interpellated subject, “women of the countryside” as a category of great potential. In the preface to Nōson fujin mondai bunkei mokuroku edited by Ide Fusae and Nagahara Kazuko, Higashibatake Seichi writes: “with over 6,000,000 farm families with ‘housewife and daughters’ women in farm families constitutes a population of over 10 million. As they serve in one industry and share a similarity not only in their work pattern but also in the conducts of everyday life, this sociological group of more than ten million women should be paid more attention. This
to interrogate the concepts of inside and outside as always implicated and centrally dependent on each other. These stories are testimony to the unstable nature of narratives as they establish ontological claims on a symbolic terrain of complex network of competing forces. It would not be enough, to borrow from Sacvan Bercovitch, to reduce the issue of their objectified subjectivity into "co-optation or dissent. It was varieties of co-optation, varieties of dissent, and above all varieties of cooptation/dissent" that was necessary for a Fumi-san to mediate in order to position herself in a national discursive field.\textsuperscript{52} Mochizuki, likewise, positioned and repositioned herself in relations to the many loci of power as she addressed the "young women of the countryside." In the years after 1945, tales of girls like Fumi who had disappeared into the dark streets of war-torn Tokyo abounded.

To many readers, her story would have had familiar resonances to stories they read and heard multiple times.\textsuperscript{53} After the Russo-Japanese War,

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large social group has been a big blind spot until now as the object of social observation, of social service research. This category has been left as a blank slate; not a single spot of light has been shone on this group." Ide Fusae and Nagahara Kazuko, editors Nôson fujin mondai bunken mokuroku, Nôgyô sôgô kenkyûsho bunken gyôsho dai san gô (Tokyo: Nôrinshô nôgyô sôgô kenkyûjo, 1952): i-ii, emphasis mine. This seems a rather puzzling statement given that this annotated bibliography consists of over nine hundred journal article and book titles. This is, obviously not a matter of oversight but rather a forceful fantasy to assign and reassign historical identity to this "sociological group."
\end{flushright}


but particularly after World War I, the decades when consumer discourse reigned, rural reformers and urban ideologues constructed a dominant image of the plight of young women who left the safety of the countryside.\footnote{Carol Gluck discusses this phenomenon during the Meiji period in \textit{Japan's Modern Myths: Ideology in the Late Meiji Period} (Princeton University Press, 1985). See particularly chapter 6.} This alarming trend was prominently documented in publications such as \textit{le no hikari}, journals of prefectural agricultural cooperatives, and the emerging body of social science journals. There were also counter-narratives of young women (and men) who stayed in their native places. \textit{Shônen to shojo no sakebi} 少年と処女の叫び (The Voices of Young Men and Women), edited by Amano Fujio of the Home Ministry, and his wife, was published in 1919 and was an exemplary text that formed a part of a corpus of texts establishing conventions of writing about the authentic, reified rural life in the prewar period.\footnote{Amano Fujio, \textit{Shônen to shojo no sakebi} 北野夫 (Tokyo: Shinaisha, 1919).} As is the case with the logic of counter-narratives, such narratives are obsessively conscious of the narrative they endeavor to counter. Thus, many of these texts -- like the story of Fumi-san -- relied on the deployment of corporeal topos to narrate the tension between the city and the countryside.

Women who shunned the strong sun under which they worked were chided and encouraged to embrace the sun so that their "skin may turn as dark as the earth they toiled." As part of the debates concerning the plight of young women who left the safety of their native places, the iconography of "rural women in urban spaces" relied on two seemingly opposing practices: one that assumed native or local knowledge represented in cultural
productions of Yanagita Kunio and others -- the natural, authentic life of the *chihô* or *kyôdo* in Yanagida's terms -- and the other that assumed the scientific language and knowledge represented in North Atlantic discourses of social welfare and public policy, social hygiene and social purity, and anthropometry and eugenics. Mirroring the dominant discourse on consumerism, the metaphors deployed to construct "rural women in urban spaces" obsessively described the consuming nature of their experiences, both as those who consumed urbanity and as those who were consumed by urbanity. On the other hand, the construction of "rural women in rural space" was dependent on the mobilization of the notion of organic, original essence to describe the joys and travails of rural life. The women of Japanese local places -- in most of these narratives they were identified by a hierarchy of local identifiers: villages, counties, and prefectures -- became part of this discourse specifically in their utter failure to transcend their local identity. Their failure was central to the narratives locating rural space in the discourse on modernity in prewar Japan.\(^{56}\)

Taking as a point of reference that the construction of the countryside -- and its peopling with gendered bodies -- as a discursive space in the period 1910 to 1950 always already assumed its binary other -- the metropolis -- I will,

\(^{56}\) Though "failure" may be read as non-action, non-performance, it is indeed performance that does not-perform in the intended manner. In this context, obviously, it was anything but non-performance, or an impairment but the very opposite. It was in fact, the abundance of performative Japanese-ness, as well as the closeness to the land and soil itself, and a link to a unassimilable, thus uncontainable organic connection to the past. It was this excess nature of this imaginary national subjectivity that enabled them to "fail" in negotiating urban geography.
in this study, discuss the ways in which conventions of narrative trope that inform our readings of the countryside depended and continue to depend on the "rural women in urban space" (always an impossibility) and "rural women in rural space" (that which was not only possible but natural.)

In many of the texts that are available -- social science research articles, journalistic accounts, confessional/personal narratives -- the sight of rural residents (and former rural residents) were often contested sites of public and official anxiety of the health of the nation. They were the bodies that literally and figuratively crossed the borders of highly contested boundaries of Japanese modernity. These texts located rural peoples -- who were identified as much by their occupation and their sex as by their place of location -- by mapping them in mechanisms of symbolic order limits of modernity. The necessity of the manufactured other -- whether urban denizens or non-Japanese -- for the construction of an authentic Japanese identity was a given. That such authenticity was embodied by "local Japanese" who consumed local products and possessed local knowledge and who peopled idealized local places that were loci of many national narratives was not.

57 The "outside" of this internal discourse may refer to, for instance, social purity and hygiene movement, feminist theorizing of the political subject. See, for instance, Reginz Kunzel, *Fallen Women, Problem Girls: Unmarried Mothers and the Professionalization of Social Work, 1980-1945*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993). My phrasing is not to suggest that these are somehow "really" not "Japanese" but rather to argue quite the opposite. Indeed, what is significant here is the translation work that situated Japan in the project of modernity. Here again, then, my phrasing is intentional in leading the reader away from the "alternative modernity" language and to consider the modernity in capitalist deterritorialization.
During the 1910s and particularly around World War I, there emerged a discourse that one may characterize as the discourse on "Japanese local women." Informed by the gathering, categorizing, and interpreting of information about women in North America and Europe, Japanese bureaucrats in the Home Ministry and elsewhere encouraged rural reformers and urban ideologues to construct newly regionalized images of women. Some of these new local women, especially on the farm, were distinct from their older sisters and mothers in their enthusiastic approach to learning new techniques and information while still retaining their role in the reproduction of local knowledge. They were women trained not at home but in workshops and through pamphlets in the scientific methods sponsored by increasing numbers of institutions. The dissemination of the images of such scientific agrarian women depended on counter images: that of the young women who were lured to the cities or that which signified the city -- light skin, bright kimonos, and theatres. These stories were played out in narratives similar to the one about Fumi-san. Those who strayed away from their native places risked serious threat not only to their physical health but also to their integrity. Those who stayed in their native places could enjoy a life unencumbered by all the ills of the cities and blossom with their newly acquired skills, producing and reproducing as cultivators and mothers the everyday practices which were tied intimately and organically to the land.

Co-current to the production of such accounts of rural bodies were the studies and surveys sponsored, conducted, and published in the many social science journals of the time. Women's bodies and activities were measured, enumerated, and analyzed in the studies that appeared in various journals, such as: Rôdô kagaku kenkyû, Shakai seisaku jihô, and Kôshû eisei. Yet, as Pierre
Bourdieu has so eloquently described, the presumption built into such studies of social science was the very notion of categories of examinations:

The social sciences deal with pre-named, pre-classified realities that bear proper nouns and common nouns, titles, signs and acronyms. At the risk of unwittingly assuming responsibility for the acts of social constitution of whose logic and necessity they are unaware, the social sciences must take as their object of study the social operations of naming and the rites of institution through which they are accomplished. But on a deeper level, they must examine the part played by words in the construction of social reality and the contribution which the struggle over classifications, a dimension of all class struggles, makes to the constitution of classes -- classes defined in terms of age, sex, or social position, but also clans, tribes, ethnic groups, or nations.58

Thus, while the often melodramatic "unscientific" accounts both marginalized, exoticised, and exulted in the rural body -- as for instance, it was possible for the same body to be read as that which possessed great potential for happiness and contentment as a working body and that which, if seduced by urban enticement, signified moral depravity -- the "scientific" accounts could colonize the same subjects with the new language of "science."

Here the reading strategy suggested by Mary Louis Pratt, reading texts as an

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"intercultural text" written in "contact zones," is instructive. These "scientific" texts, then, were a tool or a form of internal colonization that constantly needed to be mediated and negotiated with and through the language of the "personal" narratives on which many of the "unscientific" (personal/confessional) accounts were grounded. The inflection of "scientific" language was always already metropolitan, while the "personal" voice signified local -- thus experienced -- reality. This was true even when the "personal" voice was rendered in a highly normative speech pattern that reflected absolutely no local inflection or dialect. Of course, it is important to consider, as Inderpal Grewal argues, "(t) o focus merely on what happens to the colony is ... to leave out a major factor in the discourse of colonization."

"Contact zones," according to Pratt are "social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination." Mary Louis Pratt Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation (New York: Routledge, 1992): 6. See also in this context, Naoki Sakai’s comments on “contact zone”: Naoki Sakai “Subject and Inscription of Cultural Difference”

My intention is not to mark too strongly with the internal colonization model, as I am not so much concerned with such moduality and conceptualization of problems but rather in thinking through some of these constitutive events. However, amongst too many to mention, this particular inflection of science and metropolis is addressed by Londa Schiebinger as "the explosion of knowledge associated with the rise of modern (western) science" through "cultural extinctions" by ways of colonialisms, imperialisms, and nationalisms. Londa Schiebinger Nature’s Body: Gender in the Making of Modern Science (Boston: Beacon Press, 1993): 209.

That is, as such, here what happens to scientific narrative is as important to consider as that which happens to the objects of such narratives.

Yet, the countryside was also the site of colonial imaginations and realities. The building of a Japanese empire depended on the reproduction of local places in North China and Korea during the 1930s and the relocation of men and women from rural communities in Japan. It was a contradiction that rural women embodied as they enthusiastically responded to the call for *Manshû no hanayome* 满州の花嫁 (brides of Manshû). These were, then, the rural women on whose bodies the national narrative could be and often were deeply etched.

**Who Are the Women of Women’s History?**

Who is nominated and who have come to occupy a place in women's history? Any particular logic that I may identify will immediately fall short of any desirable effect. Having said that, however, I will propose for the time being a logic clumsily phrased as the "project of difference as sameness." The notion of "difference as sameness" points to two interdependent aspects. One is the foundational lack that is invoked in this nomination of the subject "women." This lack is the "lack" of public political subjectivity as women in the prewar nation state, separating "us" from Japanese men (and male colonial subjects living in Japan in possession of *kômin-ken*.) That is, it is this very lack that comes to stand in as the difference of gendered national subjectivity. The other aspect of this project of difference as sameness is the perhaps inadvertent, yet quite noticeable eradication of the complex gendered and sexualized socialities lived. Surely, the social relations of people are extremely complex and cannot be readily or neatly "thought through" fixed
positionalities. Certainly social relations are not some static frameworks on which one might hang subjects of history. One need not think too hard to realize that it is less than marginally satisfying to position our thinking through "men" and "women" or by scanning our thoughts through the filters of class, race, sexuality, and so on. But the "difference as sameness", the foundation for a certain kind of subjectivity of women -- i.e. not men -- also produces differences from other women who then are not considered proper subjects. In other words, women who are not fit or desirable subjects because of geopolitical territorial markers embedded on the body, or unacceptable behavior or desires -- thinking in the proximity of Fumi-san is helpful here -- in excess of the telos of history. Such as it is, reading Fumi-san's tale affords us with a troubling moment of reflection that discourses of universality and particularity are in some important sense all too complicit.

My concern over this constitution of a proper subject is in part, because of what it allows to be considered. In this project of reading writing of history of women in terms of constitutive events, rather than as something that is sufficiently, insufficiently, correctly, erroneously, etc. represents what happened to women or what women had done in the past, what I propose in the reading of history as event, is in fact, reading the archive and the written history as acts or practice of gender discourse. I situate my address in proximity to but not in the debates around empiricism, agency, materialism, and the incoherently grouped together "post-" histories. For in the logic of the "difference as sameness" and the operation within this logic, I encounter almost immediately the very fact of the problem I have just described. Namely, the logic of difference as sameness cannot withstand the demands of the complexities of socialities and enacted acts. While no doubt there are
political effects and ethical implications to this logic, it is a problem that many negotiate with rather elegant ingenuity. Thus, the flattening out of the complexities may not necessarily be absolutely restricting since people do have a sense of political myth. It nevertheless seems worthwhile to note the historicity of the inaugural moments of the specific meanings. That is to say, figurations are always historical and historically contingent. Figuration reads of the time, place, and events surrounding the readings into the subject. It is laden with the traces of the subjective and positionalities of the enunciating voice. It is situated. It is political.62

62 In the contested terrain of historical practice of writing subject women into history, the exchanges between Linda Gordon and Joan Scott are perhaps an example of what seems to be at stake. I am decidedly positioned in proximity to Scott in this exchange. See, for instance, Joan Scott "Book Review: Heroes of Their Own Lives: the politics and history of family violence by Linda Gordon" in Signs 15.5 (Summer, 1990): 848-852; Gordon's "Response", 852-853; Gordon's "Book Review: Gender and the Politics of History by Joan Scott" in the same issue, 853-858; Scott's "Response", 859-860. Moreover, my concerns are in part similar to those outlined by Scott in, Joan Scott Only Paradoxes to Offer: French Feminists and the Rights of Man (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996) though my efforts are decidedly not to try to write the "history" of the debates. Finally, on the "political" issue, I do not see as politically irresponsible, as charged by Martha Nussbaum most recently but by others as well, this notion of the contingent nature of the subject in whose name the subject speaks. As Judith Butler writes, quite simply, "Within feminism, it seems as if there is some political necessity to speak as and for women, and I would not contest that necessity. .... But this necessity needs to be reconciled with another. The minute that the category of women is invoked as describing the constituency for which feminism speaks, an internal debate invariably begins over what the descriptive content of that term will be...[E]very time that specificity is articulated, there is resistance and factionalization within the very constitutency that is supposed to be unified by the articulation of its
So that, for instance, over the past decade or so the lives of women who migrate from peripheral zones to the metropolis have been read and written as objects of social narratives. We are so familiar with these figures that in fact we think nothing of the frequency with which they may appear in various representations. The peripheral zones from where these women migrate are, as in the decades leading up to the Fifteen Years War, often the less industrialized sectors. One would need to remain alert of the ways in which the uneven development produces and reproduces new relationships in the city where they come into contact in both structured and unintended ways: the multitude of quotidian events of everyday living. In geopolitical terms, it includes South and Southeast Asia as well as the Philippines and elsewhere. Some of these women come as brides, some as women in corporate Japan (particularly in the financial institutions), some as domestic laborers, and some as workers in the commercialized entertainment industries (often monolithically referred to as the sex industry.)

The point I want to make is not, most definitely not, the sense of the "problem" that these women represent, but rather the ways these women become fine-tuned figurations of appropriate and not so appropriate symbols and symptoms of various ills -- global capitalism, late capital, patriarchy, the overdeveloped Japanese sex industry, so on and so forth. The point is, in thinking of the logic and the technology behind such figurations in the constitutive discourse, we must see this discourse as the means by which the sameness of difference is maintained and positionalities established amongst

women. Put in another way, I want to consider the mechanisms by which
certain subjectivities are assumed to be more appropriate to feminism and
other less desirable (perhaps because it only confuses what we speak of when
we speak in the name of "women")? Again, then, reading the women as
symptoms of various ills occludes the mechanisms by which certain subjects
are assumed to be more appropriate as subject of feminism than not. Yet
again, those whose difference cannot be reduced to some category of
recognition -- into some concept that we can then claim to be our knowledge --
are unspeakable, in a sense, as they are irreducible to what is familiar to us in
language.

In this context, it is worth noting that, as Liza Go describes the “logic of
Filipina women as victim in Japan,” within which it is assumed that women
from Philippines who come to Japan as brides, as workers in the
commercialized entertainment industries, come from the "extreme poverty of
The Third World." Moreover, by extension, so this logic tells us, that these
women come only to sacrifice themselves for the sake of the family back home
or to escape the unspeakable hardship and misery of life "there." That is, they
are innocent, innocent of the harm that awaits them in Japan, and innocent of
any knowledge of what is expected of them. The question that immediately
rises to the surface for me is "why" is this innocence important? On the other
hand, perhaps, one might ask, what of the women who are not innocent of
such knowledge, of situations to be encountered, and of the "reality" of what
going to Japan means. What then? If we can not say we know how they are in
this situation, we understand, it could be us, that is, if we are to admit to the

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63 Liza Go, in conversation with Jung Yeong-hae "Watashi to iū tabi" Gendai shisō
multiplicity and scatteredness of the acts and events and the discourse that constitutes our sense of what it is that we speak of in claiming a name, can we claim justice in that name? Without containment, one cannot represent. That is not, perhaps, the problem. My intentions here are not to make an argument about the impossibility of proper representation. Rather, what I want to keep sight of -- albeit with the assumption that it will not be possible to see what this is -- is that which we would forsake in the name of representation, in the name of justice, in the name of restoration and proper placement -- in history.

Women and the Democratic Promise

At the end of World War II, and the beginning of the long postwar, the health of the national life was forefronted in numerous public debates in the face of defeat, devastation of many large cities, and the chaos of dislocated peoples. It was with great enthusiasm and utter seriousness, as though life itself depended on it, that many writers responded to what was considered both a political and historical exigency to situate subject “women” into the debates centering on the establishment of a democratic postwar society. It was an important moment in defining who is and is not Japanese -- as ex-colonial, subjects were erased from the body of the nation. Why women? Quite simply, though obviously not at all simply, women were the segment of the population less tainted by murder and rape, witnessed or committed, by blood, torn, and burned flesh, and by the cruelty and meanness of war. They were not absolutely inoculated, but they had been less exposed. They were, then, less damaged.

Indeed, while we know the story of the new and better constitution granting women political subjectivity, we must also note how centrally the
figuration of certain women as subjects figured into the discourse of democracy, a new social order, a new Japan, indeed. One is the figure of Fumi-san that I begin as a manner of opening this discussion. From the perspective of no less than Maruyama Masao, perhaps one of the exemplary voices of postwar political theory, one may reconsider Fumi-san's positioning. In remarking on the passivity of Japanese, their very lack of patriotism, in the aftermath of the war and defeat, Maruyama grounded the failure of the Japanese to grasp democracy as symptomatic of what he named *pan pan konjō*. *Pan pan* is the shortened form of *pan pan gâru* that Mochizuki used derisively to describe Fumi-san. *Konjō* -- meaning "character," "temperament," "spirit," "disposition," or the very mind of a person -- is, in other words, a rather central characteristic guiding a person's comportment. These women were not simply prostitutes, in the sense that they were paid for sexual services. Rather these women as *pan pan* signified the sites of national contamination; symptomatic of the defeated national body politic penetrated by a foreign other. Here, Maruyama's use of *pan pan*, though not in any way unusual to drop the *gâru* (girl) half of the phrase, allows for a de-sexed, but nevertheless engendered use of the term. It is in this reading of *pan pan*, that Mochizuki sentenced Fumi to habituate that the significance of the letter-story becomes quite obvious. In other words, Fumi-san’s demise does not signal the status of one woman as “fallen” but rather the significance lies precisely in not caring about Fumi-san but rather about the health of the ethnos.

It is not an accident that another exemplary Japanese conscience propels the figuration in a negotiation of a wounded national psyche. In "Ningen no

64 Maruyama Masao "Nihon ni okeru nashonarizumu - sono shisôteki haikei" in *Nihon no Nashonarizumu* Maruyama Masao, et.al. (Tokyo: Kawade shobô, 1953), 17.
Ôe Kenzaburo tells a story centered on two men, one a somewhat passive aggressive "school-teacher type" who insist that the "victim" of the story who is humiliated by the occupying GI's on a public bus pursue justice. The humiliation suffered by the victim is thus: he is forced to get on his hands and knees and has his trousers lowered and is spanked as the soldiers sing nursery rhymes about sheep. Some of the other unlucky passengers on the bus are ordered to follow suit, getting down on their hands and knees, lowering their trousers.... and, since abjection is like an infection on this bus, the bus driver voluntarily join this line of human sheep, exposing his large hairy buttocks. There are no female sheep in this line up. No possibility of such public humiliation and abjection for Japanese "women." What precipitated this event, however, was the presence of a woman, quite clearly identified as "women of ill repute" who stumbles as she lurches towards the victim. The victim's crime was in trying to avoid her, causing the woman (quite clearly, drunk) to stumble. Not only does she contaminate the impossible relationality of the Japanese masculine subject "victim" to the GI's, but more strikingly, the woman brings to surface a pre-existing tension between the two Japanese masculine subjects: the passive aggressive teacher type and the victim, both victims of American soldiers. The prostitute not only causes the humiliation of the victim by the GI's, but also produces an unbearable tension that occludes what should have been fraternal recognition between the two men.

While Maruyama may be positing a female subject with pan pan, by applying it to national body, he erases the specificity of the contamination that Ôe Kenzaburo "Ningen no Hitsuji" in Ôe Kenzaburo shôsetsu vol. 1 "Memushiri kouchi" to shoki tanpen (Tokyo: Shinchô-sha, 1996): 99-112.
is endangered. What he highlights is the disposition, the morale of the defeated nation. Indeed, this is in fact, what characterizes the victim on the bus in Ōe’s story. It is then the victim, who along with the other men on the bus, who experiences the humiliation of pan pan gâru. Yet, the one female, who shares the space of the bus, who is in all likelihood a woman who would be identified as pan pan gâru, walks off the bus seemingly oblivious to what had befallen the Japanese men on the bus. She does not share in the humiliation. She is not simply a woman, then, who has been contaminated by her “fraternalization” with the American occupiers, but she has disavowed, indeed, her position as Japanese subject, in her refusal of a community. Thus, at the end of the story, the victim is pursued relentlessly by the teacher type. At the insistence of the teacher, the victim goes to a police station to report the incident. The victim unable and unwilling to speak, it is the teacher who reports the humiliating incident as violent abuse suffered by the victim and the other "sheep" at the police box. Without the victim’s statement -- who refuses to speak or is unable to speak -- the police reminds the two that the incident report can not be filed, and suggest that, first the two of them negotiate an understanding of how this matter shall be reported. After walking past his home, in the fear that the teacher will take down his name and contact him, the victim frees himself from the hold of the teacher, pushes him away, and runs away screaming. Yet, again, the teacher catches up to him and blocking the path of the victim he says:

You are going to try to hide your name at all cost, aren't you?

I’ll find out your name... I’ll expose to the light of day your name and the humiliation you experienced. I’ll make sure that you
and those soldiers are embarrassed to death. And until I find out your name, I will never leave your side.\textsuperscript{66}

The insistence of the impossible pursuit of justice is made necessary by the presence of the prostitute. However, the abject defeatism of the \textit{victim} is not shared by the prostitute. Unlike the other passengers who are humiliated by being treated like sheep, she does not require being robbed of her \textit{humanity} as it were. Indeed, she is not the desiring subject of proper postwar gender discourse. That proper subject would a subject in pursuit of freedom and democracy.\textsuperscript{67}

While it is imagined that there are those who are not contaminated, untainted such status guarantees its dependence on contaminated, tainted subjects like the prostitute or Fumi-san. What work does Fumi-san's story perform situated in the project of writing "women" into postwar discourses of democracy? As in Fumi-san's story, as in Ōe's story, as in Maruyama's naming, the constitutive event of writing into the subject women is "repeated

\textsuperscript{66} Ibid., 112.

\textsuperscript{67} See Michael Molasky \textit{The American Occupation of Japan and Okinawa: Literature and Memory} (London and New York: Routledge, 2001), especially Chapter 6, “The Occupier Within”, 157-177. His reading allows us to appreciate Ōe’s use of the triangulation of the \textit{victim} (and the other Japanese passengers), the American soldiers, and the \textit{woman} to illustrate the dynamic tensions created amongst \textit{men}. Molasky points out: “This depiction of the Japanese passengers’ humiliation relies heavily on animal metaphors, likening the passengers to ‘tiny animals,’ ‘a dog,’ and finally, ‘sheep’. \textit{Ibid}, 162. My purpose here is to remind us, then, of a reading strategy that points to excessive position of the \textit{pan pan} or the woman on the bus. While without her presence, what enfolds can not have been, she is, in a sense outside and the production and reproduction of this power dynamic.
inscription without simple origin." The problem is not that the lack of Fumi-san's side of the story that leaves us without an originary address. That is, it is not the lack of full-representation, a proper representation that eludes us. Rather, it is, in this case as in many such cases, the radical poverty of the imagination based on the assumption that in this moment of constitutive act, there are the programmatic, conceptualized women who can be known. It assumes that we can know, if only "women" would come into realization and act accordingly. Only those who lack moral judgment, self-esteem, only those who are already damaged -- (thus not wholly able to occupy the subject position "women") could choose, according to such a voluntarist notion of subjects coming into self, to become prostitutes -- assuming that Fumi-san did end up being a prostitute, or had sex in exchange for something other than love and marriage and domestic respectability.

Writing into history the subject women, as women, without imagining the bodies in motion unfamiliar to and unrecognizable in national narrative would recognize that moment when Fumi-san continues to walk, never looking back. It is a body in motion, in excess of the instrumentality of serving the nation in the name of family, citizen, and "women." The point, then, is not that motion serving the nation is not valuable, but rather what is at stake in asking about that which is not in service of, that which is not delimited, that which is unrecognizable as serving the family or the nation. The problem is not the inadequacy of representation or the "unrepresentability" of the body, but rather more fundamentally, it is the need to err on the side of attempting to see more than any one can see, to hear more than one can hear. To think more than one can think. As William Haver writes:
What is irreducible in any visual image, what of visuality escapes every translation and all intertextuality is beyond the purview of the gaze.... To reduce seeing to perception is to evacuate seeing of its singular specificity.\(^6\)

\(^6\) Commentary at AAS annual meeting on my presentation of the paper "We are Women without a Line: Not a Proper Subject of Feminist Inquiry.", March 1999, Boston.
At any given moment of its historical existence, language is heteroglot from top to bottom: it represents the co-existence of socio-ideological contradictions between the present and the past, between differing epochs of the past, between different socio-ideological groups in the present, between tendencies, schools, circles and so forth, all given a bodily form. These “languages” of heteroglossia intersect each other in a variety of ways, forming new socially typifying “languages.”

- Mikhail M. Bakhtin –

Language of Modernity

In Inoue Hisashi's Kokugo gannen, the thief, Wakabayashi Torasaburô, emerges from the large cabinet in the kitchen and threatens, “if you value your lives, be quiet, and still.” While some of the women are frightened by him,
Torasaburô’s heavy dialect confuses all those present in the Nango family. After a short exchange with one of the servants Torasaburô, exasperated, brandishes a butcher knife and yells, "I'm not carrying this to be fashionable!"

One by one, all utter "thief": nusubido, tôzoku, nusutto, nusuto, nusuttosan, odorikome, nhuhto, nusuzô, gôtô, and gyangu. Torasaburô, though unable to comprehend "gyangu," expresses satisfaction with being named, as the naming signals the acknowledgment of his identity, and demands money. Yet, he is immediately reduced to frustration when his demands are not comprehended by the man servant who keeps on asking for clarity, suggesting that Torasaburô speak slowly, open his mouth widely, and enunciate clearly. Torasaburô has ventured into Inoue’s approximation of Japan as a household of polyglot people. The site of this comical drama is a household consisting of a bureaucrat at the newly established Ministry of Education, his wife, and a number of servants gathered from different regions of Japan, all speaking distinct dialects. Kiyono, the bureaucrat (who speaks

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Kokugo, even as it has evolved over the past century to reflect the changes in linguistic practice is usually equated with the language of Japan in contemporary general usage. Here, in the context of discussing Inoue’s play, and more generally with the concerns of this project, I infer it to be rather closer to the concept of hyôjungo; thus, a word that can be translated as "normative Japanese". More importantly, its work is the work of disciplining the body speaking into speaking normative Japanese with the heavy emphasis on eradicating polyphony of intonations and registers of expressions. Kokugo maybe translated more literally as national language, and indeed, in much literature this is precisely the translation given. Shi Gang writes, “Scholars in Edo period hardly ever used the term kokugo according to Tokieda Motoki. Kamei Takashi also points out that if one were to think at all in terms of 'nation-state' to trace kokugo prior to Meiji period would be meaningless.” Shi Gang "Posuto shokuminchi-shugi to Nihon no gengogaku-teki jokyô" in Special
mainly Chôshu-ben) is responsible for working on government policy on kokugo (normative Japanese). Others in the kitchen, starting with his wife who speaks Kagoshima-ben, are all identified not only by their position in the household but by their native place and the dialect they speak: Oshu-Yonezawa-ben, Nagoya-ben, Nambu-Tôno-ben, Osaka-ben, Kyô-ben, Edo-Shitamachi and Edo-Yamanote kotoba.\(^{70}\)

Like other works by Inoue, in *Kokugo gannen* Inoue is critical of the notion of a unitary monocultural Japan and the violence visited upon people who are educated into identifying with such monoculturalism. By highlighting, so as to remind contemporary readers of, the recent origin of national identity and national language, he marks the very conscious act that it took to make a "single" spoken language the common language.\(^{71}\) Inoue seems to be arguing, that throughout this process, just as the subject gains recognition when he can be named, subjects were stripped of their true identity when incorrectly identified. Thus, for instance, when

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\(^{70}\) As such, it is no surprise that the person speaking the Yamanote-Edo dialect speaks with much authority -- though she is a female servant.

\(^{71}\) That there is this single, common spoken language, itself could well be challenged, but the point here, that I want to trouble myself with is to consider Inoue's critique of such an effort -- and not whether in fact such a common language exists or was ever thought to exists.
Torasaburô is mistaken for someone from the Owari area on the basis of his enunciation, he makes a point of establishing his "true" identity -- no common thief; he is not interested simply in getting away with some money. As he leaves the Nango household with his loot, he stops, returns to the kitchen and declares that he is no "Owari man" but rather an "Aizu man," scolding them for being so imprecise.  

The project of kokugo as national language and the critique of such a project, presented even more clearly in his popular work Kirikiri-jin (the people of Kirikiri), where Kirikiri-go or the language of Kirikiri is the "national language", hence kokugo, and what we associate as kokugo is a mere dialect. Even more significantly, Kirikiri-go is what is commonly referred to as zûzû-ben. Rather than a dialect in the sense a linguist might define, zûzû-ben is an almost unintelligible language that marks the lack of clear difference in articulation of the sounds su and zu common in various dialects of the several of the Northeastern prefectures. It is,

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72 Inoue Hisashi, Kokugo gannen (Shinchô-sha, 1986): 75-79. As if to indicate the preciseness with which he has rendered the dialects, Inoue provides a list of references he consulted in writing the play. These include dictionaries of Yamagata, Yonezawa, Fukushima, Nagoya, and Kagoshima dialects amongst others, ibid., 213-214.

73 Inoue Hisashi, Kirikiri-jin (Tokyo: Shinchô-sha, 1981). Even though zûzû-ben, according to Kokugodaijiten is a common name for the dialects of the three southern Tôhoku prefectures -- thus, Yamagata, Miyagi, and Fukushima -- it has comes to stand in as the ways people of Tôhoku speaks. Kokugodaijiten (Tokyo: Shôgakkan, 1981): 1355.
in the first instance, a grouping that is used derisively, and with confidence by those who believe that "they" possesses proper pronunciation. In this sense, it is also significant that, like kokugo or hyōjungo, it is a "language" that is conscious of a national standard as, it is only when the proper pronunciation is understood to be something other then that which is enunciated by the speakers of zûzû-ben that the designation of zûzû-ben makes any meaningful gesture -- namely the grouping together of different dialects that has as its common shared characteristic unclear pronunciation -- the subordinate status it occupies in hierarchies of language competence and prestige in contemporary Japan. More to the point, in the performative quality of language, speakers of zûzû-ben seemed to signal always the lack of modernity of the individual. Clearly marked as not Tokyoite, but also identified as generally non-urban --whether one was or wasn't an urban dweller -- and, a person of Tohoku, the speaker is, then, assumed to be, thus, in possession of certain characteristics -- such as backwardness, slowness, and a gloomy melancholic temper.74

Inoue's play locates language, regionalism, and national identity (and the tensions amongst the three) at the center of articulation of modern Japan. Set in the early years of Meiji, Kiyono pronounces Edo Yamanote kotoba to be

74 While the "origin" of such assumed shared characteristics or usage of Tôhoku as a marker to designate such characteristics is beyond the scope of this project, it is worth noting that by early part of this century, and still today, the derisive inference was well established and continue to hold some meaning amongst those who identify with Tokyo, for instance.
the standard, by which all should communicate, gesturing at the future eradication or efforts at eradication of regional dialects.\(^7\) This involves, not only learning the appropriate words and proper grammar, but also enunciation practices, or *kuchibiru geiko* -- lip exercises.\(^7\) Yet, Torasaburo, who reappears in the play, expresses his skepticism about precisely such a project. While a uniform spoken language would seem to signify a more efficient mode of communication, the thief questions the very possibility of successful seduction and robbery conducted in *kokugo*. Thus, while *kokugo* may be anointed with the prestige of the dominant language, dialogue (whether seduction or threat) is, according to Torasaburo, dependent on the possibility of meanings established (or not) through multiple voices, a polyphony produced through dialogic process. Polyphony, here, is, as Bakhtin explains the term, the praxis signifying the interpenetrating nature of voices. That is to

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\(^7\) This is not to suggest that dialects have been eradicated. Rather, it is to gesture towards the very positioning of dialects as an "other" in the hegemonic logic of *kokugo*. Within linguistics, a subdiscipline has been firmly established in mapping dialects in what is usually referred to as linguistic atlas: see, *Hōgen no shosō: "Nihon gengo chizu" kenshō chōsa hōkoku*, Kokuritsu Kokugo Kenkyūjo Hōkokusho No. 84 (Tokyo: Sanseidō, 1985) & *Kokuritsu Kokugo Kenkyūjo Hōgen bunpō zenkoku chizu* (Tokyo: Ókurashō Insatsukyoku, 1989). Yet, such allocation of sub-discipline and the project of mapping should not confuse us to the nature of the relationship to the discipline. As Suzuki Hiromitsu makes clear, the project of the establishment of *kokugo* was the importation of linguistic theories from Euro-American studies, the regulation of *hyojungo*, and *genbun icchi* in order to confirm the identity of the Japanese ethos. Sub disciplines are that, sub (ordinate) disciplines. Suzuki Hiromitsu "Nihongo keitoron -- shukenron -- orientarizumu" in *Gendai shisō* 21, 7 (1993) : 209-217.

\(^7\) Inoue, *Kokugo gannen* 89
say, speech act is essentially one in which the other’s discourse gradually, but certainly, penetrates the speech of the speaker. It is this, that is, that which makes speech acts dialogue. Furthermore, in this context, this sense of something other than a language of single origin, but rather as, Naoki Sakai explains, the "site of hybridity" would allow us to think further of the necessity of thinking about decentering and language. Moreover, Inoue and his critique of language -- national hegemonic or not by deployment of a more authentic identificatory sites -- of Tôhoku, Owari, so on and so forth -- through citational projections resonates with the problem of constitution of these units as sites of identification.

In this allegorical tale about the construction of a modern national culture/character, Kiyono looses his ability to distinguish between reality and fantasy as he practices and masters kokugo: a practice of totalizing and unitary language that erases ambivalence, that erases the historical struggles and conflicts. Here, kokugo signifies both "a national language" that promises unity and community, and "a standard language" by which one might be judged to belong or not belong to this newly established community, even at the risk of self alienation. The denouement of Inoue's Kokugo gannen -- that is the demise of Kiyono -- signifies the

77 Mikhail M. Bakhtin, The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays by M. M. Bakhtin, trans. Caryl Emerson & Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981): 314. On language as the site of hybridity, Sakai writes: "any notion of a pure language is some fabricated and dogmatic deviation from the correct view of language. And hybridity is also the fundamental relationship between the body as the agent of action and language: no-body can be exhaustively at home in language." Sakai, Voices of the Past, 19.
process of dislocation experienced in the Japanese modern trajectory as the body politic was increasingly identified as national subjects through the loss of local identity.

Ironically, in part, this tale exemplifies the successfulness of such a process: regional identity within a national body politic. Though the play assumes the prior knowledge of regional identity as a locus of resistance to an unitary national identity, the strong regionalism that is articulated throughout is one that reflect categories that were themselves produced fairly recently as sites of grounding one's identity. In other words, these were the identities that became increasingly important precisely because of intensified state efforts at centralization. That is to say, the consciousness enunciated (the way individuals saw the nature of language practice or customary habits as that which distinguished them from others) mirrored growing awareness of economic interests, for example, tied to spatially contiguous areas, while there was a decline in awareness of, those things (such as wealth, family occupation, or relationships of patronage and others) that identified one as different from another within a "region." As a result, the different dialects in use during Tokugawa period, that had not only marked differences of geography, but also those based on occupation, class, and gender, actually become occluded in this "regionalism," despite its status as counter hegemonic narrative.78

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78 I owe my understanding of reading space into social practice to the recent works in geography, particularly the works of: Edward W. Soja Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Theory (London: Verso, 1989), Gillian Rose, Feminism and Geography: The Limits of Geographical Knowledge (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1993); James Duncan "Sites of representation: Place, Time and the Discourse of the Other" in James Duncan and David Levy eds., Place/Culture/Representation (New York: Routledge, 1993): 39-56; and Neil
Accordingly, to claim an identity of a region was, in many instances, to tell to a larger world that those things that resulted in conflicts (those things that identified one as different from another within a "region") within an area were of less importance than those things that brought them together, if only temporarily. The claim to regional identity assumes a pronounced awareness that that which distinguished one from others was spatial -- i.e., geographic -- and that spatial markers represented cultural knowledge. Moreover, at another level, the spatialized identification of belongingness is also one of the operative logic that sustains national identity within a larger "universalized" membership to humanity. As Elspeth Probyn has argued, "the impossible dehors (outside) is also dedans (inside)," as not two separate spatial domains meeting, but rather of a snag or a pleats, that are "the intricacy of the one stitched into the other." Furthermore, as Peggy Kamuf notes in her commentary on Jacques Derrida's "Speech and Phenomena" the "isolation of interior conscious phenomena... the practice of phenomenological reduction" is one that is dependant on stripping away, systematically, "worldly support of conscious processes." She notes:

... It is a logic that labors of presence both in the temporal sense, in that it supposes and undifferentiated present moment, and in a more spatial sense, in that it supposes a meaning altogether immanent or interior to itself, one that need never be proffered

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Elspeth Probyn, "This body which is not one: speaking an embodied self," Hypatia, 6 (1991): 119-120.
outside. Derrida demonstrates repeatedly that such a description of the sign is always finally an attempted effacement of the sign and of its essential and necessary exteriority to any living intention -- an effacement of the sign, that is, of whatever can come along to interrupt the living present.  

That is, in rendering language as dormant and transhistorically accessible site of belonging, what Inoue accomplishes on the one hand is to make a safe haven of such geographic identification, while at the same time occluding the possibility of belonging that is situated in the being-in-the-place (as historicized). It is an act that is dependent on an act whereby "presence" is situated outside of any traces. Thus,

Indication is the process of death at work in signs. As soon as the other appears, indicative language -- another name for the relation to death -- can no longer be effaced. The relation to the other as nonpresence is thus impure expression. To reduce indication in language and reach pure expression at last, the relation to the other must perforce be suspended.

In calling forward the practice of trace, Derrida overturns this logic by the logic of "repeated inscription without simple origin." Such that, Derrida writes, "This trace is unthinkable on the basis of a simple present whose life would be interior to itself; the self of the living present is primordially a trace."  

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82 Kamuf, ibid.
Inoue, with strong ties to Yamagata prefecture in particular, and to the Tohoku region more generally, has obsessively pursued the linguistic markers of modernity in his work. The play, like others of his works, is positioned as oppositional to the central/metropolitan, thus Tokyo, dominated Japanese identifications. Yet, if we are to look closely, this very oppositional positioning establishes a logic that, as noted above, occlude a more complicated locale that allows for the articulation of differences within the locale/regional. Insofar as it is positioned consciously as an opposition to the center, such an identity necessarily negotiates the construction of the regional within the terms mediated through the hegemonic metropolitan discourse.

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83 Inoue was born in Yamagata Prefecture in 1934. He has established a library of his manuscript in Yamagata with which he has identified. A strong critic of the cultural centralization of the metropolitan dominated modernity, he has promoted regionalism through his plays and dramas, and examined the role of language as a force of such centralization. In *Kirikirijin*, that I mentioned earlier where *Kirikirigo* is the "national language", it is the "Tokyoite" dialect that seems to betray the backwardness, the less sophisticated marked speech pattern usually associated with people of Tôhoku. The problem with this is, of course, as I have noted, that there is no singular, unitary Tôhoku-ben other than in the imaginary of the metropolitan residents. I do want to add, here, that Inoue’s criticisms of the Japanese culture so-called, though often returning to the metropolitan-dominance of this cultural unity, for instance in his parodic and biting critique of the imagined other produced by "folk" ethnologist Yanagida Kunio, *Shinyaku Tôno monogatari* (Tokyo: Shinchôsha, 1981), does not always or only rely on such framework. See, for instance, his interpretation of Tale of Genji according to a more "popular" understanding of matters sexual and amorous, *Edo murasaki emaki Genji* (Tokyo : Bungei shunju, 1990). Of course another well know critic of the metropolitan centered trope...
**THE RECLAMATION PROJECT**

The play is reflective of the contradictory national project of eradicating distinguishing markers (by inaugurating a common linguistic practice) while reinforcing spatial markers (regionalism) through re-inscription.\(^4\) That this contradictory consciousness not only exists in Inoue's work without explicit articulation, thus a claim to counter narrative, but that it is not questioned for the most part by the readers and audience suggests, what I have already alluded to as, the success of such a centralizing national project. It is such a cultural logic -- based on amnesia that we might take as a point of reference -- that sustains national project when local or regional is invoked in contemporary Japan in nostalgic terms such as *ofukuro no aji* (mother's cooking) or *furusato no aji* (the flavor of native places), marking the particular in the name of returning to a Japanese root. That is, a thousand points of particulars are recapitulated into a single Japan that is remembered.

My point is not to highlight a particularly, and certainly not uniquely, Japanese movement towards nostalgia. Rather, I want to

\(^4\) Though my reading of Inoue would be to suggest that if one were to attempt a gesture to guess at the intent of the author -- always a risky business -- this is not Inoue's intention.
mark the potency of such nostalgic appeal, based on the assumption of something lost, something that has disappeared from our midst. Indeed, it is a longing for something that has been robbed from the people. In fact, it seems hardly particularly new or peculiarly Japanese phenomenon. Significantly, a rather large body of text is available to assist in the analysis at this process. One of the most engaged writing on this sense of loss as articulated in "English" writing is Raymond Williams' classic, *The Country and the City*. Williams' project is, in Carol Gluck words, the elucidation of the "conflict between the experienced present and the remembered or imagined past." According to Williams, it was in the eighteenth century that Oliver Goldsmith and other poets writing on rural England attested to the "specialized fears of lost peace and virtue of country life." As if to prove the transhistorical accessibility of such sentiments as a universal trope of urban rural tension, Goldsmith, somewhat surprisingly -- but perhaps not -- was cited in an essay by Kodaira Kenichi writing for *Ie no hikari*²⁵ In an essay highlighting the

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transcendent nature of timelessness of the countryside, Kodaira tells us that Goldsmith returned to his native place to live truly (shinjitsu no seikatsu) after having drifted half his lifetime in the cities. Nevertheless, it was to a ruined or, in Goldsmith's words "Deserted Village" (1769), that he returned. Kodaira, writing in 1925 warns the readers that Goldsmith's rural England may have gone to ruins but that here in Japan:

We have rural villages that have not changed and remains, as they always have existed. This is the true light of our country; the light of home should be (re) discovered. The cities maybe like a revolving lantern (somato) but the unchanging center is the rural village.

These narratives of the past, which is the countryside, such as evoked by Kodaira, resemble the writings that Bahktin has identified as the "idyllic novel" in his development of the chronotope of narrative conventions: "Idyllic life and its events are inseparable from this concrete, spatial corner of the world where the fathers and grandfathers lived and where one's children will live."

As such, this place-time of social and cultural reproduction is outside time and change -- self evident and homogeneous.86

**THE GENDERING OF THE COUNTRYSIDE**

In contemporary social practice of rooting the national subject, if temporarily, in the countryside is also does the work of cultural reproduction. It is, then, no accident that contemporary furusato movement has been conflated, often, with not only corporeal experiences -- the air, the taste, the feel of standing on real earth (in contrast to the concrete artificial ground of the cities) - - but also with experiences that implicate women, or more specifically and more centrally, mothers. The tourism campaigns over the past two decades are both moral as well as economic. The socio-ideological language that takes us to the place and time where things were uncontaminated (as only mothers can provide) & the campaign by (the now) decentralized (but former) Kokutetsu to entice people to travel to furusato (anyone’s furusato) were dependent on the mutual reinforcing, complimentary ability to

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86 Kodaira Kenichi "Neson to Tokai" October, 1925 *Ie no hikari* 37-39. One of the other often cited voice is the exemplary Americanist, Emerson. In this ever transportable dialectic between the city and the countryside, crossing time and space, Christopher Noss's *Tôhoku: The Scotland of Japan* (Philadelphia: Board of Foreign Missions, Reformed Church in the United States, 1918) makes the grand move of locating the periphery of British Empire to the northeast of Japan. That is, Noss relocates Tôhoku as Scotland. Bahktin established the concept of chronotope -- in which both space and time are intrinsically connected. M. M. Bahktin, *Dialogic Imagination*, p. 225.
establish a common language of desire. At a time when increasing numbers of women are not only choosing to work but to "postpone" marriage (the assumption that they will marry is a priori) and processed food makes possible quick meals, the furusato logic makes undesirable such conveniences and the promotion of leisure trips to furusato possible that which is being/has been lost -- access to true taste -- unadulterated and authentic food of ofukuro.\footnote{One of the more ironic conflation of the corporal pleasure and experience of the idyllic rural is the popularity of the television program Oshin that was broadcast over a year from 1983-84. The hardship of Oshin as she grew up in the poor farming community in the northeast intrigued the desire of those who wanted to experience the past so that such narrative trope as daikon meshi came to be identified not only with poverty of the countryside in the prewar period but also with authentic, pure taste. See, "Suikyōmondo: Oshin - doromu-kō" Ushio (October, 1983): 360-363.}

If there is a genealogy to the metonymy of ofukuro and furusato it might be found in the emerging site of nōson fujin in early 20th century -- that cacophonous efforts of variant voices that made the discourse on nōson and women in the prewar period. The representation of nōson and fujin (or josei, which would be the preferred term for contemporary historians) is well established and stabilized in contemporary historical practice of Japanese women. The discursive site of nōson fujin as a spatial identity\footnote{This spatialization of subjectivity and identificaation de-emphasize the uneven development that marked Japanese modernity in particular for rural residents.} in modern Japan, however, can only be understood if we are to heed the
polyphonic nature of the discursive terrain that has resulted in what seem stable category, to take heed of Inoue's play.

The process by which large numbers of women could be addressed as and could respond as nôson fujin needs to be enunciated, if only because current practice in Japanese women's history readily identify nôson fujin as a unit of analysis. As identificatory category, it is made readily apparent, for instance, in such key text as Kinbara Samon's "Teikoku-shugi no nôson to josei" 帝国主義の農村と女性 (Rural Villages during Japanese Imperialism and Women) in the Josei-shi Sôgô Kenkyû-kai edited, Nihon joseishi-shi volume V.89 The essay begins with the section titled "Nôson fujin no

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89 The choice of Kinbara Samon's essay is significant for instance in that it is the one article specifically identifying women by location – nôson (farming villages) – amongst the nine articles in this anthology, the fifth and final volume. Whereas most of the articles for the modern and contemporary period are conceived through issues such as rights, social movements, or labor, women of the countryside are identified as historical category as women of countryside. Moreover, even though, majority of the population lived in non-urban area, the essays on women in cities are “unmarked” as women in urban environment. This is not to suggest that this is unusual. In fact the significance is specifically in the ubiquity of conceptualizing women in this manner, that is to say, as category of analysis. The “productiveness” of this analysis is evident in the four volume Nihon joseishi kenkyû bunken mokuroku. Kinbara Samon “Teikokushugiki no nôson to josei” in Joseishi sôgô kenkyûkai ed., Gendai Volume 5 Nihon joseishi (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku shuppankai, 1982): 265-294. See also, Joseishi sôgô kenkyûkai ed., Nihon joseishi kenkyû bunken mokuroku (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku shuppankai, 1983); Joseishi sôgô kenkyûkai ed., Nihon joseishi kenkyû bunken mokuroku Volume II, 1982-1986 (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku shuppankai, 1988); Joseishi sôgô kenkyûkai ed., Nihon joseishi kenkyû beunken mokuroku Volume III, 1987-1991 (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku
ikizama no shôgen.” 「農村婦人の生き様の証言」 (Testimony of the life condition of nôson fujin.) He begins the difficult task of positioning rural women in history by stating "there are not few women who were born in an obscure corner of a rural village (nôson no kata sumi 農村の片隅) and have lived through their lives in the community (kyôdôtai) of labor and everyday life of the village of family.” Many of these women, he suggests, have supported the society:

even as they were apt to be buried in the shadows of the currents of modern epoch (kindai to iu jidai no nagare no kage ni tomosureba maibotsu shinagramo 近代という時代の流れの陰にとまれば埋没しながらも). To verify the ways these women have lived, through their actions and consciousness, is extraordinary difficult.

He quickly reminds us, however, that to narrate women's history in modern Japan excluding such women would not be possible. Scholars are left, according to Kinbara, of necessity to "redraw the real image (jitsuzô 実像) of these women who lived in the villages simplemindedly into something like an archetype." He offers as a possible strategy, the use of oral testimonies of nameless (mumei 無


women who lived through Meiji, Taisho, and Showa collected by Nagata Kanako. Such work acts as witness to the project of "locating the ordinary women in history (minshû no naka no joseitachi o rekishi no naka ni ichizuke (ru) 民衆の中の女性達を歴史の中に位置づける)" since data related to women hardly ever appears in local bureaucratic documents. Finally, the records allow us to read the resoluteness with which they have lived their lives silently (hitamuki ni ikite kita takumashisa ひたむきに生きてきた逞しさ) and their everyday knowledge (seikatsu no chie 生活の知恵).

In his opening paragraph, Kinbara mobilizes many of our commonly held conventions about everyday life, ordinary women, silence, and rural villages. Rural women are not simply born in rural villages but born in obscure corners of villages. They are ordinary and the bureaucratic records of villages and towns -- reflective of the concerns of the State -- do not pertain to them (as women). They are resolute (naturally) and live their lives with single-minded purpose and silence. They are occluded by the ever changing landscape of modern life but possess everyday knowledge that is timeless, thus transcending the ever fluctuating "economic policies of the Imperial State within which the villages flutter as though leaves in the wind."\textsuperscript{91}

While I have given a close reading of Kinbara's opening paragraph, the tropes that are mobilized to render intelligible nōson and josei are hardly unique to his writings. Indeed, it is the very

\textsuperscript{91} Ibid., 265-266.
commonness or the familiarity of his terminologies underscoring the qualities of nôson and josei -- by underscoring hitamuki (earnest), takumashii (robust), katasumi (obscure corner) -- that makes such reading not only possible but useful for recognizing the ways in which the specific historicities of a subject's relation to a place are transformed into a history of space.⁹² What agencies we are able to locate in such histories become, then, the agency of universalized humanity, that in spite of the historical contingencies, upon it rises to the challenge.⁹³ In other words, these women are subjects

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⁹² My understanding of the relationship between place and space owes to the work of Michel de Certeau, particularly his essay "Spatial Stories" in The Practice of Everyday Life (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984): 115-130. See also, Sharon Zukin Landscapes of Power a study covering the seachange over the land in United States over the past century. Like Japanese modanizumu that has an associated meaning with those of North American and European modernism, according to Zukin "(T)he language of modernism expresses a universal experience of movement away from place, and aspires to submerge or incorporate it into a 'larger' whole." Landscapes of Power: From Detroit to Disney World (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991): 11.

⁹³ The demand to find "agency" in women's, particularly "common women's", history is well documented. For the US debates and its place in the epistemologies governing feminist discourse, refer to the exchanges between Linda Gordon and Joan Scott. For the case of Japanese women's history, the "agency" or "subjectivity" as is often referred to are particularly notable in the writings around the time of publication of Inoue Kiyoshi's Nihon josei shi (Tokyo: Sanichi shobô, 1948, 1955). See Joan Scott for an elegant exposition of the relationship between political agency and abstract individualism and notion of agency "as an expression of individual will" that is assumed to be a "description of human nature." Scott, Only Paradoxes to Offer, 15-16
without histories because they are represented as somehow "outside" of history. What this disciplinary practice signals is the way categories such as josei and nôson, which evolved over several decades of the first half of this century, came to be seen as obvious, organic ontological categories, which were naturally embodied in women referred to as nôson fujin. This may seem a bit like an exercise in establishing a problem where none existed. After all, isn't it the case that one could easily point to women who have farmed and lived in villages where agriculture was an important part of, not only, work activity but also their customs and expectations? Does not Kinbara's call towards oral history shows us that such lives are retrievable? And if so, would not it be most appropriate to refer to these women as nôson fujin or nôson josei?

My point is not to discourage, surely, the effort to consider the lives lived nor the meanings individual subjects came to associate with their positionalities within familial context, whether on the farm or in the cities. Rather, the intellectual project addressed here is the one that I alluded to above in the discussion of Inoue's play, which is the creation of meanings through a dialogic process. Rather than positioning nôson and fujin as outside of the kindai to iu jidai no nagare, as scholars like Kinbara do, I want to attempt to read them as if they were in, conversation with such discursive movement about subjectivity, nomination of gendered subject as categories of historical analysis, and most importantly the act of "writing women into history" as an event. That is to say, by considering the visibility rendered on some and not other aspects of
categories of women, in this instance *nôson fujin*, such writings are integral part of discourses of gendered subjects, premised as it is in women's history, on sexual difference. It is, then, an attempt, albeit a partial one to interpret or make sense of the discourse of modern in consideration with the discourse of *nôson fujin* and to try to come to some understandings of how women who were delimited as *nôson fujin* made sense through such discursive crossroads. Moreover, it is the activity of writing into subject such understanding of what "women" is, might be, have been, that I am concerned with, always. That is, the activity of writing into subject that is also a constitutive moment of what "women" is, might be, have been, as writers write on those "earlier" discursive moments of constituting the subject "women." It is, as Michel de Certeau reminds us, to see discursive activity as social activity.  

I use the term *nôson fujin* to mark what was, in fact not a singular label. Rather, it was part of group of related words that

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94 The work in which this is made most explicitly clear is, Michel de Certeau *Heterologies: Discourse on the Other* Brian Massumi trans., *Theories and History of Literature* vol 17 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1986).

95 Though in articles published in *Fujo shinbun, particularly in the years between 1900-1905, inaka-musume, nôka no tsuma or nôka no musume*, were used often. These terms seem to suggest more of the positioning of these women within a familial-spatial referent. They disappear from the pages of Fujo shinbun early and are replaced by the referent *denen*. Perhaps one of the first instance in which denen is used is in an article titled "Denen ni kaere" *Fujo shinbun* No. 268, 1905. Because the differences between what these nominals signify and as the usages were both idiosyncratic and dependant on various discourses of
included (and at times were used interchangeably with) such identifiers as denen no fujin (pastoral women), chihô fujin (regional women), chihô joshi (regional women and children), nôson shojo (young women of rural/agricultural village), mura no fujin (women of rural/agricultural village). While there is no single chronology to trace a nomenclature of situated subjects by gender (fujin, joshi, shojo, josei) 96 or spatial marker (chihô, nôson, mura, denen) 97 examination of the many writings produced during the first half of the twentieth century indicate several distinctive and overlapping fragments and the contingent nature of these differentiated markers. 98

"countryside" "region" "ruralness" so on and so forth, I am consciously avoiding assigning "translations".

96 Fujin (women), joshi (women and children), shojo (young women), and josei (female).
97 Chihô (regional), nôson (rural/agricultural village), mura (village), and denen (pastoral).
98 The differences in the referents will be discussed as they appear in the discourse of nôson fujin but here, I want to point out to the general wisdom that josei is a more neutral signifier than fujin. Therefore, it is often assumed that reference to fujin reflects a stronger instances of ideological discourse on womanhood. However, the linguistic practice in the prewar period -- as well as in some instances in to the postwar -- indicate a more complex relation to usage. Thus, in an article published in 1932 in the journal Teikoku nôkaihô, for instance the article uses josei where as in 1936, Nyônin bungei that is closely associated with the musan undô uses fujin. See, Sakizaki Naruyasu "Nôson josei no kikin" Teikoku nôkaihô vol. 22, no. 3 (1932) & Aoki Keiichi "Nôson fujin no chii to genj" Nyônin bungei vol 3, no. 4 (1936).
Voices from the Periphery

At ten o’clock on the morning of 13 September 1945, twenty-nine women gathered from all corners of Yamagata and met at the office of the former Aikoku Fujin Kai (Patriotic Women’s Association) across from the Prefectural Capital building. On that day, less than a month after the end of World War II, these women came to inaugurate the founding of the Yamagata-ken Fujin Renmei (Yamagata Women’s Federation). They traveled to the city in response to a letter of invitation urging them to join forces in organizing the women of Yamagata. The authors of the letter advised that in rebuilding Japan, the women faced an even more arduous task than the one they had confronted during the war years. Japan was faced with the double burden of growing more food to feed the people and to engage in intense production for reparation payments. As citizens of the state, as mothers of the next generation, and as the housewives of impoverished families, the letter stated, women would meet with hardship heretofore unimaginable.99

Aga Taiko, Miura Koto, Shino Sato, and Sato Tami, who composed the letter were all veterans of wartime women’s organizations and were not unfamiliar to the readers of the Yamagata Shinbun. Only a few weeks before, and four days after

Japan's surrender, Miura Koto representing the Kokumin Giyû-tai (citizen's patriotic voluntary corps), wrote that women were partially responsible for Japan's defeat. "Women's ignorance of science and outmoded custom contributed to such a destructive outcome," she said, "and I feel responsible towards the children." Miura noted that their first obligation was to make the home a bright hopeful place. Unity of people in the nation and women reclaiming the strength of their foremothers would, she suggested, be important in giving hope to the future. "Starting today" she wrote, "we will not say 'how miserable' (nasakenai), but rather will rise to build a new nation."\textsuperscript{100}

Indeed, true to her words, the women of Yamagata organized to feed, to clothe, and to minister to the needs of their members as well as non-members. These women in Yamagata organized at the village and town meeting to print family planning pamphlets For Your Happiness (Anata no kôfuku no tameni あなたの幸福のために) and rode trucks to campaign for women candidates once they gained suffrage.\textsuperscript{101} They collected cotton from their own futon, a

\textsuperscript{100} Yamagata shinbun 19 August 1945; the three other women were also represented in the press during the last few months of the war. Shino, 15 February 1945, 20 May 1945; Aga, 8 March 1945, 12 March 1945, 20 May 1945; Sato, 20 May 1945, 24 August 1945.

\textsuperscript{101} In 1952, at the workshop for women leaders sponsored by the Women's Federation, there was a lecture on contraception. The following year, the women choose to take up birth control as discussion topic. In 1954, they begin a prefecture wide informative lecture series. The pamphlet, written in the form of a intimate letter written by a wife to her husband, in order to facilitate the
handful from each, to make new ones for impoverished neighbors. They petitioned for leniency for war criminals and made the welfare of those returning from former Japanese territories their concern. Moreover, they even extended their "mother love" to American occupation forces, in the belief that the young soldiers needed wholesome recreations like listening to records or attending flower-arranging classes.¹⁰²

First in the nation to promote the networking of women's local community organizations in the postwar, Yamagata-ken Fujin Renmei was followed by prefectural organizations in Mie, Shizuoka, and Nagano in the spring of 1946. By the end of the American occupation in April of 1952, thirty-nine regional organizations existed.¹⁰³ In July of the same year, representatives of twenty-one

communication of "issues" women found difficult to verbalize was ultimately distributed to about 40,000 women. Yamagata-ken Fujin Renmei: 204-205; Yamagata-ken Fujin Renmei "Anatano kôfuku no tameni" (Yamagata, 1954); and Yamagata-ken Eiseibu, Kazoku keikaku (Yamagata, 1954) in Yamagata-ken Higashi Oitamagun Takahatamachi Kominkan Yamagata-ken Higashi Oitamagun Yashiromura shiryô.

¹⁰² Yamagata shinbun, 30 September 1945. The women acknowledged that most had only fear of the occupation forces. They were also aware of the existence of "special entertainers" designated for soldiers' leisure activities. However, it appeared to them that these American soldiers must have left behind wives, children, and parents for whom their longings were necessarily strong. Thus, these fujinkai members argued, women were to be encouraged to shore up their pure and superior sentiments like "mother love."

¹⁰³ Metropolitan areas of Tokyo, Kobe, and Sapporo were organized independently from the prefectures as well.
groups gathered in Tokyo for an initiatory meeting of the Zenkoku Chiiki Fujin Dantai Renraku Kyōgikai (National Federation of Regional Women's Organization hereafter referred to as Zenchifuren). Ten years after the war, there were forty-seven organizations promoting coordination and support of community groups. As a member organization of the Zenchifuren, women of Yamagata participated in the campaign for fair elections, and for purging of official corruption. They joined petition drives against prostitution, atomic bomb, and later, nuclear testing; all essential political issues identified with post-war Japanese women.

The vitality of local women's organizations has not gone unexamined. Writers, both activists turned chroniclers as well as historians, suggest the importance of the new freedom from an oppressive family system and the promise of new political rights as cornerstones of this new activism. Indeed the changes seemed

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104 Those regions represented at this meeting were Yamagata, Niigata, Ibaragi, Tochigi, Gunma, Saitama, Chiba, Tokyo, Kanagawa, Yamanashi, Nagano, Shizuoka, Mie, Saga, Kyoto, Osaka, Hyôgo, Nara, Shimane, Hiroshima, and Ehime. Osaka and Kanagawa postponed joining the federation in order to focus on the development of community organizations. In addition to the twenty-one regions represented, eight other prefectures had positive response to the inquiry sent out by the Kantô Chiiki Fujin Kyōgi-kai (Kanto Area Council of Regional Women's Organizations). They were, Aomori, Toyama, Ishikawa, Gifu, Yamaguchi, Kagawa, Saga, and Kumamoto. Zenkoku Chiiki Fujin Dantai Renraku Kyōgi-kai Zenchifuren: sanjûnen no ayumi (Zenkoku Chiiki Fujin Dantai Renraku Kyōgi-kai, 1986), 20-21, 314-318.
sweeping -- the constitution gave women the political and civil equity with men. However, women like Miura Koto and others in Yamagata responded before these changes were made. Moreover, what seems surprising here is that it was not women living in the metropolitan areas or in the nearby prefectures that rose to their feet to organize. After all, women of Yamagata or women living in Tohoku (the northeastern prefectures of Japan) lived in the periphery. How did these women come to define their roles as "mothers" who ministered to a "family" which was as small as one's nuclear family or as large as the nation?

An examination of some of the local groups gives a partial answer to this question. Rather than being a grassroots organization inspired by newly established "democratic" ideals, many of these women drew on resources already well established in their own villages and towns in the form of "women's organizations." While all the groups that existed at the time of the surrender were officially disbanded, in many instances they resurfaced soon after with new names, old faces, and familiar programs. For instance, the Yamazoe Women's Association (Yamazoe-chiku fujin-kai) started when Igarashi Nami -- one of the two women first elected to the prefectural legislature in Yamagata -- headed the local Patriotic Women's Association in 1926.105 With a desire to broaden the activities of the association for women, she began the Yamazoe Rural Women's Society (Yamazoe nôson fujin-

105 Kessei nijûnen p. 110, 240
kai). Writing in 1965, she recalled visiting each and every family in the community, nurturing support for a group where women could talk to each other freely in order to cultivate themselves as better partners in their marriage, and as confidant to their children. The group that did not differentiate itself from the Aikoku Fujin-kai claimed four hundred members. While there were many changes during the course of the war years, for Igarashi, "the ties that bound women and the spirit that brought them together" had not changed. In 1965, the group had over six hundred members. 106 Similarly, in the town of Onkai, when women's group began to appear in 1946, many members were former Kokubô Fujin-kai (National Women's Defense Association) members of the 1930s and 40s. 107 Elsewhere in Aterazawa, Tomiya Kuni who taught as a young woman oversaw the transition from Aikoku Fujin-kai to Aterazawa Fujin-kai during the immediate post-war period as the group found their calling in caring for people returning to their community from former territories. 108

In this amorphous category called "women's organizations" belong local women's groups that were started in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, as part of the early flourishing of


women's associations in cities and towns at the time. Also in this category would be the local branch of the Aikoku fujin-kai, which began to organize during the immediately after the Russo-Japanese War, to extend a ministering hand to the families of veterans. Throughout the 1910s there were programs sponsored by the prefectural Farmers' Association (Yamagata-ken nôgyo kyôkai) that included workshops and lectures for farmwomen. Women's groups also rose out of these "education" programs. They included the women's auxiliaries of local men's organizations and housewives groups. One may ask how it is possible to conflate all these groups into one category when clearly the ways in which they were organized were quite different and their goals and activities varied so greatly. However, in many ways, it is nearly impossible to separate out the groups completely, not only because their activities overlapped (since many groups collaborated with other) but because there memberships also overlapped. In many instances, different groups were either subsets of one group, or completely overlapping in terms of membership. As often as not, the same people participated in the different programs sponsored by one group or another. And lastly, many of the groups tended to change their names quite often, going from a "women's group" to "farm women's group" to "housewives group" to "Aikoku fujin-kai" to "Kokubô fujin-kai". In some instances they take names like "Aikoku fujin-kai/Kokubô fujin-kai" a particularly ironic combination since according to most accounts these two were in constant battle with each other -- fighting for official recognition and membership.
Their conflicts were at times so acrimonious that government bureaucracies and the military interfered in trying to bring about a truce between these two. Name changes, then, were not insignificant insofar as it often mirrored the sensitivities of local bureaucrats and/or women in positioning the organizations in the most favorable social and political position. All of the various groups were incorporated into Dai Nihon fujin-kai (The Greater Japanese Women's Association) during the war. Nevertheless, we need to look at all of these organizations in consort with each other, since, most fundamentally, these organizations (as well the workshops led by cooperatives, the gatherings organized by women, and national defense mobilization efforts) were all loci of the discursive negotiation of what was meant by nôson and fujin as well as "Japanese."

The pre-war and wartime connection that link amongst many of these organizations, as well as those women leaders who met in September of 1945, create a surprising and somewhat troubling legacy within the narratives of women's history. It is surprising, for most works on women's association at the local and regional level have focused on the limited attraction and meaning that these organizations held for women. Often used to illustrate the coercive and cooptative aspects of pre-war society, these groups have been identified as lacking in "individuality," "originality," and "independence." Indeed, in most historical treatment of this topic, one group can hardly be distinguished from another, so that
particular local political economies or customary behaviors are erased.\textsuperscript{109}

Thus in plotting the history of "women's" Showa, Nagahara Kazuko and Yoneda Sayoko positions these organizations in opposition to "women who started to move" (ugokidashita onnatachi). These women on the move are the suffrage activists and the women workers (this does not include farm women) of the proletarian movement.\textsuperscript{110} In this interpretive and narrative framework, the assumption of what was lost in the process of centralized bureaucratic interventions is what had existed in the countryside, prior to such State intervention, that was organically and naturally part of the community and its past. Yet, these same histories situate the women who often worked with government bureaucracies,

\textsuperscript{109} This may, in fact, seem like a contradictory statement from my earlier discussion of the ways in which the various naming of the groups -- that is fujin kai, noson shufu kai, aikoku fujin kai, et.al. -- merged into the discourse of noson fujin. My point, however, is that while names often did change -- thus it is difficult to make, for instance, a flow chart that analyzes the proximity to official (that is State) discourse -- the relationship between ideology and local needs fluctuated in such ways that positionalities shifted.

\textsuperscript{110} Nagahara Kazuko and Yoneda Sayoko \textit{Heiwa na ashita o motomete} (Tokyo: Yuhikaku, 1986): 4-8. It seems worthwhile to mention that though "working women" does not include farm women in their current project, Nagahara Kazuko, with Ide Fusae was responsible in producing the annotated bibliography for Nogyô Sôgô Kenkyûjo of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry in the early years of the postwar. See, Nagahara Kazuko and Ide Fusae ed., \textit{Nôson fujin mondai bunken mokuroku} Nôgyô sôgô kenkyûjo bunken gyôsho dai san gô (Tokyo: Nôrinsho Nôgyô Sôgô Kenkyûjo, 1952).
particularly after Russo-Japanese War in the abolition of licensed quarters and prostitution as unequivocally a force behind the movement towards freedom of women. What these histories do not state is the collusive nature of the discourse that allowed for the mobilization against prostitution and the enforcement of "purity" on rural women, and the very logic that led to instituting Military Sexual Slavery. This is, as an example, one site where the epistemology of sexual difference as the logic of women's history and the teleological project of liberatory narrative comes into conflict. In the balance, the problem is not necessarily that "rural women" without voice or with less recognizable names are sublimated for the sake of coherent narrative of evermore self-consciously active historical agents, the women "who started to move" but the rather disavowal of the conflict of various interest that are historically contingent. In the pages of women's magazines as well as magazines for rural women are the same activists arguing for the eradication of prostitution, the need to educate rural women to higher standards of sexual morality, and for an increase in institutionalized programs to educate the public. Even when women participated in the activities with varying degree of enthusiasm, the lack of initiatives from the women is often cited as a weakness of these organizations. Robert J. Smith writes that:

Women of Suye found the Women's Association somewhat burdensome, in no small part because its

111 See Fujime Yuki *Sei no rekishigaku: kōshōseido, dataizaitaisei kara baishunbōshi, yūseihogohō taisei e* (Tokyo: Fuji shuppan, 1996)
inspiration was from above and most of its programs were devised by male officials.\textsuperscript{112}

Others have noted the lack of autonomy of these women's groups particularly after 1931. In writing about the modern potential "family" had as a locus of women's autonomy in this period, one writer states that "family" was increasingly incorporated into "neighborhood groups, women's organizations, and other local mutual associations." In groups such as these where "traditional hierarchical values" dominated, women's consciousness had to wait until after World War II for it to develop freely.\textsuperscript{113}

The story of these women's associations is one of the few narratives in which women not living in the metropolitan areas are included in the larger narrative of "Japanese Women's History," and in this inclusion, local women's organizations are marked as both marginal and central. They are marginal in that they represent not what the women of Japan sought for themselves. Nevertheless, the very quality that makes them marginal, that is their lack of


autonomy, also makes them central. They are central to Japanese women's history, precisely because the history of women in Japan has been the history of challenging the state. These women's associations are, historians like Kinbara argue, a mirror reflection of the state agenda and the supplicant position enforced on ordinary women (kokka no shihai no ami no ukemi 国家の支配の網の受け身). As such, the story of these women is the story of the hegemony of an authoritarian state. Implicit in this narrative practice is the assumption that one can write "a Japanese women's history" or tsûshi based on the identity of a collectivity called "women." These "women" are also assumed to have certain shared experiences as women. That is, one of the ways in which the identification of "women" is made intelligible is by adopting the assumption that in fact there are ways in which women as women experience various matters as women. Much has been made of the meaning and limit of

114 Kinbara, ibid 266.

115 Koshô Yukiko Furusato no onnatachi (Domesu Shuppan, 1975); Nagahara Kazuko and Yoneda Sayoko Heiwa na ashita o motomete: onna no Shôwa-shi (Yuhikaku 1986); Suzuki Yuko Feminizumu to sensô (Maruju-sha, 1986); Tanaka Sumiko ed., Josei kaihô no shisô to kôdô: Senzen-hen (Fiji Tsushin-sha, 1975); Abe Tsunehisa "1920 nendai no fujin undo ni tsuite: Toyama-ken o rei toshite" in Joseishi Sôgô Kenkyûkai hen, vol. 5 75-113 (Tokyo Daigaku Shuppan-kai, 1982); Nakamura Masanori "Keizaikôsei undô to nôson tôgô" in Tokyo Daigaku Shakai Kagaku Kenkyûjo hen, Faschizumuki no kokka to shakai 197-249 (Tokyo Daigaku Shuppan kai, 1979).

116 Tsûshi suggests an all-inclusive narrative with a grand plot not limited to particular region or particular time period. Thus, some examples of tsûshi are on the history of "modern Japan" or the experiences of women in the Shôwa period.
"experience" in writing women's history. In “The Evidence of Experience,” Joan Scott raises challenging inquiry in and about “experience” as foundational concept of women’s history. My reading of Scott is to see it as a rather open ended reminder that what subjects come to experience as experience is also discursively constructed as events that can be experienced. That is to say, what I see in her argument is not to a move as dismissal what is accounted as the core constitutive category for variously identified peoples but rather to say, when subjects are understood to experience an event as "women" or "Asian" or "lesbian" they are in fact experiencing the event always already in relation to the discourse that constitutes "women" "Asian" "lesbian" or any other nominations. There is, then, no outside of the discourse, it seems, is the rather elegantly simple point she makes. It does not necessarily argue, then, that not being outside of the discourse in of itself diminish the claim to certain knowledge or insights unless one is invested in claiming that there are knowledge outside that which is discursively constructed. It is this, the possibility of a claim to being outside of discourse -- the position of a pure outside from which to speak -- and the significance of being able to make such a claim, that may be part of what the intensity of the debates over experience was contesting. Perhaps another way of talking about this matter is to ask what is at stake, then, in claiming the "outside" status to discourse and what political interventions are enabled or disabled by such claims. 117 In a way, the most peculiar manner in which this is inscribed and reinforced

117 See Joan Scott, "The Evidence of Experience" Critical Inquiry 17 (Summer, 1991): 773-97. Often, as noted in the previous chapter, what comes to be contested is the possibility of agency as historical actor if, in fact, one is merely experiencing, acting in, a discursively constructed event as a discursively constructed subject.
is in the anthologizing of "women's experiences" that clearly contradict any sense of "shared" experience as women -- since these particular stories point to different registers of social and political experiences, marking the difference of experience, then regardless of a “shared experience” as topical such as, the war, modernity, or economic depression. Nonetheless, to return to the point here, the foundational logic here is the assumed commonality -- always pointing to the variety of what is actually experienced -- of having experiences as women. So that, while differences in class, education and sometimes regions are acknowledged, it is as "women," for instance, that women experienced the war, defeat, and occupation. That is to say, the specificity of historical and material realities of a particular group of women is superseded by what is assumed to be the "gendered experience" of the moment.118 That this all-inclusive narrative can be produced suggest a focus that is necessary metropolitan (read urban) in the "modern" period. For example, Murakami Hidehiko comments that women's history for the Taisho period is urban history, thus marking the difficulty of writing nōson josei into history that Kinbara establishes. Murakami notes, that to write about Taisho rural women is to write a story that is not

118 There are now many writers who have made similar critique, both within and without Japan Studies. However, in general, it seems that the practice of "women's history" has been "spared" of such critical examination, thus far. For one of the classic critical discussion of what might be considered something like tsūshi, there is, of course, Hayden White's *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1973).
distinguishable from their earlier stories. Defined by the slow pace with which country life changed -- continued reliance on well water, wood stove, and oil lamps -- these women's lives were experienced much in the ways as their Meiji sisters. What changes did take place were those involving the large number of women laborers leaving the countryside for city jobs.¹¹⁹

This is not to suggest that the history of women living outside of the metropolitan area has gone completely ignored. Indeed, much of the production of Japanese women's history has been located in regional or chiiki history projects. However, unlike Murakami's urban women's story that is defined by their own identity as it defined a moment in history, women of the countryside when they are included are represented as the occasional non-urban contributors to the "modern" agenda.¹²⁰ More typically, however, rural women seem to be over represented in a type of writing that might be referred to as a history of "women's lives." Its preoccupation with "women's lives," at least in part, follows the other side of Murakami's argument on rural women's history. That is to say, if the changes or lack of changes in the physical conditions of rural life is a determinant for recording rural women's history, then their history is that which lies outside of

¹¹⁹ Murakami Hidehiko Taishō josei-shi (Riron-sha, 1982): 10-13, 102, 104.
¹²⁰ For a very helpful reading of chiiki josei-shi (local women's histories), a category within in which many of the histories of rural people appear, see: Kano Masanao Fujin josei onna (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1988), particularly 176-209. See also, Ito Yasuko Josei-shi nyūmon (Tokyo: Domesu Shuppan, 1992): 76-104.
history and operates under a different logic called women's lives. In these works, the primary focus is on daily practices, unconnected to the political economy of the nation or, to put it another way, the social practice as lived outside of negotiation with institutionalized meanings. For example, most studies of farm women tend to rely on oral histories or folk studies -- in the manner of Yanagida Kunio or Segawa Kiyoko -- that depend on a notion of shomin. I read this usage of shomin as a displaced reading of Yanagida Kunio's jōmin -- those people who were the last remnants of the Japanese ethn. Current practice in Japanese women's historiography seems to indicate an acceptance of such project -- that is the project of identifying, authorizing, and privileging a Japanese essence -- as innocent of the bureaucratic policing that is often assumed to be at odds with the interest of women's agencies. It is perhaps because the "reclamation" of Japanese ethn -- which is, the construction or invention of the Japanese ethn -- has depended on textual production of gendered ethn. As such, it has been the hallmark of the practice of women's history to include, for instance in various bibliographies, those texts produced to construct the ethn as description of real lives.

While many of these writings are quite informative and useful for learning the language of representation made available for everyday practices on the farm, the lesson one learns is quite anecdotal. Written in an evocative manner -- deploying smells, sounds, and textures (those similar to that deployed in the contemporary furusato movements) -- these narratives are infused with a timeless quality. One learns for instance that women were treated not much differently from horses or cows, and that young
wives could not expect to eat or sleep without worrying about criticisms from the husband's family. Their circumstances would change, as they had for generations before them, when the parents retired and a certain household authority was vested on the younger wives. While their economic activities may be covered in graphic detail, the analysis often fails to make connections with the political economy of the region or the nation. Moreover, this plotting depends necessarily on some crisis or change and in that process position such responses to crisis as outside of history, thus crisis as moments of engagement with history.  

It is noteworthy that the one point at which women's lives intersect with historical events is, it seems, the last few years of the Pacific War. Many testimonies have been collected on this particular experience. Here, much of the emphasis have been placed on depicting women of the countryside as victims of a state that lied about the war and exploited their trust and goodwill. Thus, the story of women who participated in the promotion of young women's relocation to Manchuria cannot be understood as anything but good intentions gone astray. Altogether, these stories produce narratives of women's lives outside of historical specificity and outside of sense the larger national experience. Rural women

were neither completely divorced from the national life of the 1920s and 30's -- despite a certain sense of timelessness in these accounts that are underscored by, for instance, the much slower pace by which electricity, tap water, and other requirements of city living came to be available -- nor when their stories came to intersect with a specific moment in national history, do they all turn out to be victims of an authoritarian state.\textsuperscript{122}

This historical project, that is, the writing of "Japanese women's history," has been one of locating women's experience in Japanese "modern history" or Japan's modern trajectory. "Japanese women's history" has often been equated with the rise in "awareness of self as an individual" and/or "female consciousness" on the one hand and the development of an articulated identity as mother on the other--in other words, the construction of "Japanese women's

\textsuperscript{122} See for discussion of the problems of discursive practices Joan W. Scott \textit{Gender and the Politics of History} (Columbia University Press : N.Y., 1988): Rey Chow, "It's You, and Not Me': Domination and 'Othering' in Theorizing the 'Third World'" in Elizabeth Weed ed., \textit{Coming to Terms} 152-161 (Routeledge: N.Y., 1989); and Denise Riley "Am I that Name?" \textit{Feminism and the Category of "Women" in History} (University of Minnesota: Minneapolis, 1988).
modern identity.” Yet, the articulation of an engendered "modern" identity occurred as other categories of identities also emerged. For instance, meaning of a "tenant farmer" in the 1920s and 1930s as a political being was a very different thing from what it had been only two decades before. Ann Waswo has documented the shift that took place in the identities of grievous tenants who, until 1917-18 had counted on the landlords' benevolence to rescue them, but in the mid 1920s acted upon an underlying ideology of collective action. Thus, they no longer appealed to the "humanity" of the landlords, but presented demands, which reflected a wide range of concerns about improving their lives and livelihood. Likewise, urban residents and rural residents seemed ever more clearly demarcated than at the turn of the century, not only by their occupations but also more precisely by the cultural space they

123 See for example, Abe Tsunehisa and Narita Ryuichi, "Fujin undo no tenkai" in Yui Masanori and Kano Masanao eds., Kindai no tôgo to teikô (Nihon Hyoron-sha, 1982): 217-263; Ochiai Emiko "Kindai to Feminizumu: Rekishi shakaigakuteki kosatsu" in Josei-gaku kenkyukai hen Onna no me de miru 233-258 (Keiso Shobo: 1987). Joan Scott Only Paradoxes to Offer and Wendy Brown States of Injury: Power and Freedom in Late Modernity (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995) are two of the, perhaps, most immediately applicable critique of the underlying impulses of these kinds of teleological cumulative history of liberatory feminine subjects. In the following chapter, I will discuss more the relationship between our readings of historical "narratives" and the theoretical foundation of historical subjects proper to feminist history as both assumed and practiced in Japan Studies.

occupied. The history of a woman who lived in a rural area who belonged to a tenant farm family is mediated by all of these histories of identification, subjectivity, and political agency.

In part, why this matters to readers of history today is the object-constitutive narratives, enacting a position from which to speak as women that is grounded in such practices of writing history. In a symposium on "Women's Presence, and their Future: Thinking about Home, Labor, and Peace" on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the journal Sekai that commemorated a special issue entitled "Women (will make) Changes" the participants who "represents" the spectrum within "women" (re)inscribed the notion of cultural logic of women's occupation in history.\textsuperscript{125} It is precisely the elision of what Brett de Bary insist upon, in "sitra (ing) ... in critical relationship with the discursive object of two lines of inquiry" studies of Japanese women (premised on the coherence of the entity "Japanese women") and of colonialism."\textsuperscript{126} As such, in clarifying the grounding of the particularities of Japanese women's history as dependant on "the intellectual divide between the implicitly male international and the implicitly feminine domestic" de Bary notes the work such division produced as,

\begin{quote}
reinforce(ing) the exclusion of women from public life and political processes, while at the same time obscuring the enormous contribution of the international to the domestic economy and culture. How the social advances and setbacks of
\end{quote}


\textsuperscript{126} Brett de Bary "Introduction" Gender and Imperialism, speical issue U.S.-Japan Women's Journal no. 12, 1996 : 3.
modern Japanese women might be implicated in the project of imperial expansion was a question rarely confronted.\textsuperscript{127}

As I have tried to consider here, the requirements of reading dialogically necessitate heeding the polyphonic voices in any cultural space-time. Such a claim to desire -- that is to hear and see so many all at once -- immediately endangers the practitioner, placing her into an untenable situation. There is a danger in trying to get at the whole, stabilizing, and unifying all contingencies into a set of factors that are firmly allocated into certain positions -- unifying elements around the topos of the countryside. A more useful strategy may be to positioning and repositioning nôson and fujin as specific sites of contested meanings. Such an approach will be followed in the following chapters: first, by considering some important paradigmatic crossroads we can see in the form of iconic figures emerging in the gendered discourse of the period, and then, in the following chapter, by reconsidering one iconic figure in relation to the others. Such identifications of the visible signs that punctuated public attention, not to argue for the hegemonic discourse responded to but rather to see what meanings were made of such identifications, allows for a moment of illuminating the practices that emerged from such negotiations with the icons of gendered modernity.

\textsuperscript{127} de Bary, \textit{ibid.}, 5.
CHAPTER 4

ICONOGRAPHIES: TAXONOMY OF “MODERN” WOMEN

What is needed in place of such a monumental history is the idea of a history of singularity and particularity, a history that defies repeatability or generalization and that welcomes the surprise of the future as it makes clear the specificities and particularities, the events, of history.

-Elizabeth Grosz-

Finding a Place Under the Sun

In the beginning, woman was the sun.

   An authentic person

Today, she is the moon.

   Living through others
   Reflecting the brilliance of others
   She is pale, blue like the moon.

-Hiratsuka Raichô -

Thus begins perhaps the best-known lines written by a Japanese woman in the twentieth-century, or for that matter at any time. These few opening lines were written by Hiratsuka Raichô as the inaugural statement for the new literary journal, Seitô (Bluestockings). By appropriating the powerful metaphor of woman as the sun, Hiratsuka reclaimed the Sun Goddess as
women's spiritual ancestor. For many students of modern Japanese history, the first glimpse of women in the modern period came often from introduction to Hiratsuka’s group and the journal and moreover to these opening lines. The work that Hiratsuka’s inaugural statement does is twofold. As it "reclaimed" an occluded past, it established a foundationalist discourse on the nature of "authentic" personhood for women by deploying a genealogical logic. If the Sun Goddess was a woman and women were in the beginning the Sun: who could claim a more authentic position?

The new scholarship on women the since the mid 1970's unanimously credited the Bluestockings with ushering in feminist thought. Shimada Tomiko defined Seitô as "the women’s liberation movement of Meiji and Taishô. “ It was," she continued "an indication that the flow of 'modernization' that begin with the restoration in 1868 resulted finally in.. both ideas and actions of liberation coming together in the last days of

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128 This was the case, even when the writer was commenting on the shortcomings of the vision or politciality of such movements as Seitô. See, for instance: "Josei kaihôshi: Meiji kara ūman ribu made” To ! onna metoroparichun kikanshi To! onna (斗! おんな メトロバリチュン 機関紙 「斗！ おんな」) no. 2 (March 1971), reprinted in, Mizoguchi Akiyo, et.al. Shiryo ūman ribushi, 1:152-155. The writer, unidentified as many of these writings were, states that "at this point, I wish to clarify that ribu undô isn’t simply stop at reform struggle but will position it as a struggle that will develop by foregrounding sex as a means. It is for that I want to consider the women's movements up to now.” (152) In this process, by rendering through "imaginative identification of feminists with the disparate and discontinuous actions of women in the past …an orderly and continuous historical tradition” upon which to improve on the "intractable contradictions.” Joan Scott, Only Paradoxes to Offer, 1.
Meiji." Citing Hiratsuka's bourgeois background, her anti-feudalism, individualism, and her will never to compromise or to be defeated, the historian Maruoka Hideko attributed the existence of dialogue between socialist consciousness and feminist consciousness during the 1910s 1920s to Hiratsuka's presence. Endô Motoo credits Seitô with establishing morality for middle class women. Kano Masanao has pointed out that the move to use josei rather than fujin in the opening line “In the beginning, woman was the sun” (Genshi josei wa taiyô de atta) a radical new departure (kakkisei). Indeed, today Seitô and Hiratsuka are celebrated most often as representing those women who established some of the fundamental issues of feminist discourses in Japan even as they are criticized for their limited bourgeois analytical perspective.

131 He points to the significance of Hiratsuka's linguistic maneuver to use josei rather than fujin in this proclamation. Kano further suggests that today fujin is generally assumed to embody a more conservative meaning -- thus large numbers of organizations and divisions of institutions use fujin to signify its respectability. This, however, needs to be thought of in the context of a genealogy for the early Meiji years when, for instance, Tokyo Fujin Kyôfûkai signified a demand for recognition of women's rights to respect. What Kano sees as useful in considering here is instructive: fujin is positioned without a binary opposite that signifies male unlike josei that can readily be seen as the equivalent of dansei. Kano Masanao Fujin, josei, onna (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1989): 11.

The metaphorical import of these first few lines "In the beginning, woman was the sun," can not be undermined, not necessarily for the analytical work they do in contributing to a feminist discourse in Japan, but rather for the iconic signs that women of Seitô occupies in the imagination of modern Japanese women's history. In many ways, the visibility of women after Seitô in the media depended on their ability to appropriate this vitality of the sun or to be appropriated by the discourse of vitality.

**SETTING THE TERMS OF SIGHTINGS**

Published from 1911-1916, Seitô’s members were all women, a first in any journal at the time. The founder, the editor, and in many ways the conscience of Seitô, Hiratsuka was a graduate of Japan Women’s College, a daughter of a middle ranking bureaucrat, and significantly, an urbanite. A devotee of Zen meditation, she had taken an interest in Nietzsche when she founded the journal as an outlet for women writers' art. The money to fund the journal came from savings that were meant to be used for her wedding. It was at her mother’s discretion that the money was appropriated for this very different purpose.\(^{133}\) It brought together established poets like Yosano Akiko and the author Tamura Toshiko, as well as introducing to the public aspiring women writers. As different as they were from any other literary group, by virtue of the exclusively female membership, these women were different also from those earlier women whom we associate with the "Woman Question" (*fujin mondai* 婦人問題) in modern Japan.\(^{134}\) If the earlier women like Kishida

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\(^{134}\) The term *fujin mondai* is used here, even though as noted above, Hiratsuka used the term *josei* in her *genshi josei wa taiyô de atta*. This term was already in
Toshiko, Fukuda Hideko, and Kanno Suga were marked by their commitment to political and economic reform, Hiratsuka’s group was equally distinguished for their self-conscious “apolitical” stance. Their concerns were of the kind not measured by a vote or a wage, but rather concerns of liberating the inner-self. Hiratsuka who wished to unleash the creative forces in women found in her mentor Ellen Key, the Swedish thinker, a spokesperson addressing issues of paramount importance to her, "art and spirituality" and a woman "whose views seemed to express a new version of the biological superiority of women," as potential mothers. Their argument, based on newly founded gendered discursive positions, quickly placed these women within the larger discourse on "women's question."135

circulation through, for instance, the journal Sekai fujin, published by Fukuda Hideko that listed amongst its contributors, Abe Isoo, Sakai Toshihiko, Tanaka Shôzô. Fukuda started Sekai fujin in 1907 after the special issue "Fujin-gô" of Chokugen (August 1905) stirred up a lot of interest. Chokugen, edited by Katô Tokijirô and others, was published in the aftermath of the folding of Shûkan heiminsha. Fukuda was most influenced, perhaps, by the German political thinker August Bebel and his writing on women and socialism.

Within months of initial publication, the Bluestockings were associated at least in the public eye as champions of women's cause. It was not without some irony that a group like Seitô with self-professed apolitical consciousness ended up with such an identification or that the women of Seitô became conscious of the need to address issues of concern to women particularly as they searched for means of expressing spiritual freedom.\(^{136}\) While still maintaining interest and commitment in publishing literary pieces, by January of 1913, the magazine also provided a serious forum on women's issues by focusing on the "New Woman." In the editorial comments of the December 1912 issue of Seitô, Hiratsuka refers to the popularity of the term New Woman as used by journalists in referring to her group. Hiratsuka explains the etymology of current usage as that which developed from Tsubouchi Shôyo's usage of the term in a lecture in July of 1909 titled "Atarashii onna." From September to November of that year, he gave series of lectures, "Kinsei geki ni mitaru atarashii onna" (The New Woman in Modern Plays), for the Waseda kōen where he discussed the female characters of works in Barnard Shaw and Henrik Ibsen amongst others.\(^{137}\)

\(^{136}\) Hiratsuka herself did not anticipate such a role for herself and the group. Writing half a century later, Hiratsuka said, "That our literary activities would put us in direct opposition to the ideology of `good wife; wise mother' was not totally unexpected. What we did not expect was to have to stand and fight immediately all of the traditions of feudalism in the society." Sievers, ibid. 165.

\(^{137}\) These lectures were published in 1911 in Iwayuru atarashii onna (Tokyo: Hakubunkan, 1912). Hiratsuka, 370-371, 422-423.
Indeed the negotiation over the meaning and usage of atarashii onna proliferated in the pages of the magazine. The New Year's issue of 1913 carried several essays on the New Woman by Ito Noe, Kato Midori, and Chosokabe Kiku. Hori Yasu identified herself as not a New Woman in "Watashi wa furui onna desu." Hiratsuka herself did not contribute an original piece for this issue on New Woman, choosing to publish a partial translation of Ellen Key's *Love and Marriage*. Instead, Hiratsuka chose to publish her a short essay on the New Woman in the New Year's issue of *Chuô kôron*. In it, she proclaimed that she had indeed reclaimed the sun:

The new woman; I am a new woman

I seek; I strive each day to be that truly new woman

I want to be.

In truth, that eternally new being is the sun.

I am the sun.

I seek; I strive each day to be the sun I want to be.\(^{138}\)

In emphasizing the "importance of developing individual strengths: and challenging the "reality of male oppression," Hiratsuka defined the New Woman as one who "seeks to destroy the old morality and laws created for male advantage." The New Woman would, then, create "new kingdom where

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\(^{138}\) Sievers, 176. Hiratsuka notes that it was one of fifteen essays solicited by the journal under the heading "talented women." A translation of her prose appeared in the 11 January issue of *Japan times*. Later, this piece was published in her collection *Ensô yori*. Hiratsuka, 426-430.
new religion, a new morality, and new laws" would reflect the "spiritual
values and the surpassing brilliance of the sun."\textsuperscript{139}

The women of \textit{Seitō} followed the publication of the essays on the New
Woman with an open lecture meeting on 9 February in Hongō. The lecture
was to be first of a series sponsored by the group, but was abandoned after
only the first one in February. A reporter commented that "it having caused
so much trouble, the women of \textit{Seitō} dug a deep moat around themselves and
withdraw within the locked castle gates..."\textsuperscript{140} That summer, Hiratsuka was
invited to write an article for the magazine \textit{Taiyo} for its planned special issue
on the "Women Question." \textit{Taiyo} was followed by \textit{Chuô kôron} in July of that
year, with an expanded summer issue on the same topic.\textsuperscript{141} The attention on
the part of the established media was at least in part a response to the interest
sparkled by the activities of the women of \textit{Seitō}. It generated vociferous

\textsuperscript{139} \textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{140} "\textit{Honne no fujinkai} \textit{Fujo shinbun} 26 December 1913. The reference to the "trouble"
seems to be about the shouting match that some members of the audience got into
with the speakers. A group of women that was led by Nishikawa Fumiko, that
disagreed with Hiratsuka’s group started the "True New Woman" in response to this
open lecture. They too held public lectures and published a journal. "\textit{Shin atarashiki
onna no kai}," ibid., 21 February 1913, and "\textit{Shin fujin-kai enzetsu-kai}" ibid., 21 March
1913.

\textsuperscript{141} Hiratsuka declined the Taiyo invitation claiming that she was still "researching"
the issue. Her collected essays \textit{Ensô yori} had been censored immediately upon
publication just a month before. Taiyo’s 15 June issue included forty-three
contributors, all male, except for the lone female, Shimoda Utako. In the \textit{Chuô kôron}
issue were essays "\textit{Hiratsuka Haruko ron}" by Baba Kochô and "\textit{Joshi shokugyô no kenkyû}" by Yoshioka Yayoi. \textit{Ibid.}, 27 June 1913, 1 August 1913; Hiratsuka, 457-467.
discussion on the meaning of "womanhood," as it drew together a constellation of factors that governed the relationship between the sexes. Before Seitô ceased publication in 1916, they had addressed many issues: abortion, cohabitation, socialism, women's economic independence, and motherhood, to name but a few. By the time their last issue came out of the press, there were several other forums devoted to women's concerns. Yomiuri shinbun began an advice column in the women's section in April of 1914, in January of 1916 Fujin kôron (women's review) began publication, and many of the established magazines and newspapers regularly covered women's issues.142

The centrality of the problems generated through this cross exchanges is unequivocal, according to Ochiai Emiko who write that "the central issue of the debate that took place between Hiratsuka and Yosano Akiko was nothing less than the question of 'modern individualism' vs. 'maternalism.'" That this was raised in a period when middle class ideals on womanhood, "woman in the home," had been solidly established in contradiction to the reality that over sixty percent of the labor force was composed of women can not be overlooked. Such contradictions between ideology and historical condition contributed, not to the denouncement of modern industry by women of Seito, but rather, to their advocacy of state protection for maternal welfare. Tachi Kaoru locates the questions raised by Seitô to be fundamental to understanding the development of Japanese feminist thoughts. She notes that the debate over "maternalism" reflected the binary conceptualization of "motherhood" as being both a restraining and liberating identity. It was a

natural development for Hiratsuka, after she "found women," that as she searched for locus to ground a gendered identity -- located in that characteristic that distinguished them from men -- the question of "motherhood" would become key.143

Yet, the Seitô that the public came to know in this period, was a group of women, whose members led their life as they pleased and wrote articles "disruptive of public morality" and family system. They came to be associated as women who drunk and went to places of ill repute. Two incidents attracted particularly notorious press coverage. An article in Kokumin shinbun appeared in the summer of 1912 suggesting that Hiratsuka was given to drinking and seducing young men. *In it was a reference to a "five-colored drink" (goshoku sake) that was popular in Tokyo Cafe's. Not long after that incident, another article appeared yet another titillating account of a visit to Yoshiwara by Raichô and other members of Seitô. A visit by women was not unheard of, but at least in the late 19th and early 20th century, the visitors were "respectable women" critical of prostitution -- such as those women organized to eradicate licensed quarters. The women of Seitô who visited that day had gone not to exercise moral authority, but to satisfy curiosity. It resulted in very vocal public criticisms, not only from the public at large, but also from those women reformers who considered themselves progressive. For instance, Yajima Kajiko of Kyôfûkai is cited in an article by Nagai Ryûtarô:

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Even when a movement is started by women like the Seitô group, they do not pursue equality of the sexes. Moreover, they frequent those places, such as drinking establishments, where men insult women and they themselves insult women. It is as though they were saying that women should be insulted (by men). They do not seek to be the equals of progressive men but rather equate themselves to inferior men so that they may pursue immoral activities.\footnote{Nagai Ryûtarō "Fujin wa danshi no seiji ni mōju su bekī ka?" Fujo shinbun 9 January 1914. And, Yasumochi Toshiko, a member of Seitô wrote to Hiratsuka complaining of their visit to Yoshiwara. She commented that while unaware as to the reason behind Hiratsuka’s visit, she felt personally insulted: Hiratsuka, ibid., 374-377; Sievers, 173-4.}

And a mother of a Seitô member, Araki Ikuko, was quoted as saying:

She is no longer my child. Lately, I hear that she is running around with the Seitô scoundrels drinking and chasing after men. I am so disgusted that I am left speechless. Even if she did come home, I would not let her in my house.\footnote{Fujo shinbun 30 January 1914.}

These episodes, much more widely publicized than the articles on literature and the women’s question both within and without their journal came to be the dominant image of the group, the symbol of Japan’s New Woman. They formed the iconographic image of the time that caught the
imagination of many. Moreover in keeping with an iconic capturing of the "essence" of these New Woman, portraits of these new images of women captured what popular imagination understood as performativeness -- that is to say, they could be most readily be recognized through their actions and

146 Here, the obvious reference is to Jacques Derrida's work by way of Judith Butler's work to Gender Trouble (New York & London: Routledge, 1990). More to the point, perhaps maybe her later work, "Critically Queer" in Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex" (New York: Routledge, 1993): 223-242. Butler notes "let us remember that reiterations are never simply replicas of the same. And the "act" by which a name authorizes or deauthorizes a set of social or sexual relations is, of necessity, a repetition. 'Could a performative succeed,' asks Derrida, 'if its formulation did not repeat a "coded" or iterable utterance...if it were not identifiable in some way as a "citation"?' If a performative provisionally succeeds (and I will suggest that "success" is always and only provisional), then it is not because an intention successfully governs the action of speech, but only because that action echoes prior actions, and accumulates the force of authority through the repetition or citation of a prior, authoritative set of practices. What this means, then, is that a performative 'works' to the extent that it draws on, and covers over the constitutive conventions by which it is mobilized. In this sense, no term or statement can function performatively without the accumulating and dissimulating historicity of force.' 226-227. José Esteban Muñoz, in Disidentifications points out that while Butler is concerned with the "performative charge of queerness, ... it is my contention that this theory is also applicable to the workings of various minority groups. The repetition of the quotidian is precisely what the cubana kitsch and Lower East Side lesbian style in Carmelita Tropicana is enacting.” Muñoz, Disidentifications: Queers of color and the Performance of Politics (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999): 128. While without making the often made claim of considering "women" as a class, as in minority class, I want to extend this reading for the sake of seeing the effect of performativity of both the women of Seitô and Seitô as a performative site that is appropriated by contemporaneous women.
their "thoughts" as repeatedly rendered and cited. In a cartoon titled "atarashigaru onna" (woman who claim to be New), a young woman sits alone at a table at a cafe' with a glass of liqueur in front of her. It is part of a four-piece set, in which the other cartoons depict women audiences at the Yûrakuza theatre, telephone operators, and (in a pose reminiscent of the British New Woman) a bespectacled woman reading a book. In another, with the English caption "The typical New Woman in Present Japan," a woman raising a glass of wine is surrounded by three men and two women. In reference after reference, the New Woman, often referred to as iwayuru atarashii onna (the so-called New Woman) were depicted as drowning themselves in wine and conducting themselves in a generally reckless manner. The New Woman according to these writers were sameta onna (cool woman), kinagure (fickle), kizumono (damaged goods), namaiki (cheeky), and wagamama (selfish). Tanahashi Ayako, the principal of Tokyo women's Higher School (Tokyo Koto Jogakkô) wrote: "If one were to state in a word the characteristics of the New Woman, wouldn't it be that she is someone who, without regard for others, pursue selfish ways?" When several of the women had professed
their preference to remaining unmarried, so as not to forsake their "freedom," no less than Okuma Shigenobu felt compelled to reply. Writing that it is only natural that women marry man and man marry woman, he attempted to put these women in their proper place noted how "cheeky they were to write about marriages."  

The overwhelming image of the New Woman’s concerns as trivial and self-centered was well represented in the following series of postcards published in the late 1910s, depicting the relationship between husbands and wives. In the series Saikun tenka 細君天下, literally wives having their ways, women are shown playing cards, drinking, smoking, and partying while the husbands serve them tea, wine, food, and look after the child. In another comic titled saishô fuwa 夫唱夫和, (husband agreeing with that set by the wife) a take on fushô fuzui 夫唱婦随 (meaning a way of life in which the wife follows the lead set by her husband) the wife plays a piano, a great extravagance then, while the husband fans her and minds the baby. In yet another, a precocious women student is shown pointing to a book: the caption reads "My poor mother and father, you simply don’t know the truth about marriage. You may be older than I am, but I have more education. Besides, can you

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149 Tanahashi Ayako "Mizukara shibaru hito to ta ni shibararuru hito" Fujo shinbun 23 May 1913, and Okuma Shigenobu "Kekkon to jinsei" ibid., 17 October 1913.

The public curiosity over the issue of "marriage" extended over to much more personal matters as well. So that when Hiratsuka established a household with Okumura Hiroshi, it was "news item" in Fujo shinbun to report their domestic arrangements. On 30 January, it was "reported" that the two took turns doing groceries—clearly a women’s chore. Ibid., 30 January 1914.

150 Artist unknown, reproduced in Sakai Taisho zenki no manga passim.

151 Kitazawa Rakuten, originally published as a supplement postcard with Jiji tsushin in 1912, reprinted in ibid., cover illustration
even read this English?"  The iconic signs of *atarashii onna* however challenging to the common sense of the people were still those that circulated through familial grounds. That is to say, though the theatres, cafes, and new occupations directed these women outwards into social space, what was most often at stake were the terms of familial relationships -- parents-daughters, or husband-wife dynamics -- as the images re-circulated in the newspapers and magazines.

**THE MODERN GIRL**

The dominant image of women in the teens were that of the New Woman, as exemplified by *Seitô*, still a privileged few. In the 1920’s, it was the figure of women moving forward and outward into the work places and play spaces of Ginza, Asakusa, and other urban neighborhoods of Tokyo. Telephone operator was the job of choice for many women in the teens, but was replaced only a few years later by new occupations promising modernity: elevator girl, nurse, department store clerk, waitress, and even model (called *manekin gâru*) for the new fashions. A young woman might even aspire to be one of the new women clerical workers in Western dress working in one of the office buildings of the financial district. While the women of *Seitô*

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152 Reprinted in *Manga Manga Manga*.

153 Sakata Minoru notes that modernism was a cultural phenomenon with vivid images of cafe, dance-halls, fashion and electricity. "*Seikatsu bunka*" in Minami Hiroshi ed., *Shôwa bunka* 1925-1945 53-86 (Tokyo: Keisô Shobô, 1987): 54. For the movement towards a mass cultural phenomenon that *modanizumu* represented, see: Yamano Haruo and Narita Ryuichi "*Minshu bunka to nashonarizumu*" in Rekishigaku Kenkyukai ed., *Koza Nihon rekishi: kindai* 3 vol
frequented theaters and cafes, it was still an unexplored territory for most urban women in the teens. By the mid 1920's, when the term moga (modern girl) became popular, many more women had come to think actively of leisure activities. Modern home was represented in magazines like *Shufu no tomo* or *Fujin kôron*. It presented rational planning as a way of life to promote individual convenience. Street life, on the other hand centered in and on sakariba (thriving places), which were the centers of entertainment and shopping. A subway had been constructed between Ueno and Asakusa advertising itself as comfortable transportation with a slogan "cool in the summer and warm in the winter" in the mid 1920s. In a promotional poster families composed of well dressed and youthful looking adults with children are presented, perhaps out for a shopping spree at one of the new department stores.

Advertising had come to play an important role in dictating the current modes. Urban life was the pursuit of "modern life" or more basically "life" (*seikatsu*) and could take many shapes. Modernity could be pursued, so it seemed, in many ways, consumerism, employment, leisure activity, adultery,

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155 The first subway, opened in 1926. Smith, 70.


and even bicycle riding. In addition, while both moga and mobo (modern boy) were portrayed with new hairstyles and clothes, with moga, the implication of the changes in young women were more than skin deep. 158 Women did not necessarily have to be dressed in new fashion, or even have short hair to be associated with their characteristics. 159 Like the New Woman, there was something of a daredevil in these women. A young woman sporting a cloche and a bobbed hair addresses a woman in a kimono sitting at a wicker garden table and chair displaying a casualness towards men that was associated with the moga.160

"Why don't you take up some kind of sports? Perhaps tennis...?"

"Thank you, but I think that tennis has come to be a little too common and not really very unusual. I was thinking of actually taking up row boats."

"Boating? That sounds wonderful, but are you sure? After all, one mistake and its bukubuku (making the sound as though she might drown)."

"Well, actually, its that bukubuku that I am hoping for. I would like to find out how many men would be willing to dive in to rescue me..."One observer of urban culture described moga as individualistic and an anarchist. "if socialist women believe in communism, then the modern girl embraces freedom as anarchist treasures it above all."

158 Kitazawa Rakuten "Danpatsu yoso no onna" October 1925, Jiji manga reprinted in Maeda, Taisho koki no manga 80.

159 Yagihara Katsuichi "Ginza jazu fukei" October 1929 Tokyo puck reprinted in ibid 67.

160 Haruhira, "Ninki to koi to" April 1924 Jiji manga reprinted in ibid 66.

161 Shinkyo, "Modern garu no rinkaku," Fujin koro, 1925 quoted in Maeda Ai "Moga to mobo" ibid 51. See also, Miriam Silverberg "The Modern Girls as Militant" in
While not all representation of women's reconfiguration of relationships were as anarchistic or trivializing as the above examples indicate, there was -- in the eyes of the public -- a sea change of attitude that was swaying particularly urban women. In a survey conducted by *Fujo sekai*, for instance, the women when asked the question, what an ideal married life would look like, responded that what they desired was just seikatsu with a husband who was understanding.\(^{162}\) If desire for unencumbered relationship was all that was in the public eyes, it would have been less significant. The reading, seeing public was, however, inundated with new relationships through their exposure to very public figures like Yoshiya Nobuko. One of the most prolific woman writer -- who almost single handedly created and popularized the genre of girl romance and wrote and published in great quantities -- Yoshiya was strongly associated with *modan gâru*.\(^{163}\) She was also well known to have established a living arrangement which led some to refer


\(^{162}\) Quoted in Maeda "*Mobo to moga*", 51. The difficulty of what modan was -- rather than what it was not -- for instance, was brought home in a series of essays in the June 1929 issue of *Kaizo*. In part a lexical guide to modan seikatsu the articles covered the distinct ways commerce was conducted in this modan moment that was different from modern economic behavior.

to her as "Monma fujin no danna san" (the husband of Mrs. Monma). Monma Chiyo was, the woman that Yoshiya lived with for over fifty years, but whom Yoshiya had adopted as a "daughter" (yôjo).  

Essentialized images of the modan gâru were reproduced, as were the images of the New Woman of the 1910s, in cartoons that crystallized their profiles. For instance, in the graphic "The things Miss Moga Carries" she carries: a) Japanese English dictionary, b) semori, a cigarette case, c) love letter, d) wears a brassiere, e) chocolate, f) calling card with a false name, g) stimulant, i) protection -- probably a condom --, and l) receipt from pawn shop. Modan gâru was, also the foremother of the "Material girl." In "Love scene of a modern girl and her lover," the modern girl, rather voluptuous, is holding up her lover composed of a radio antenna, speaker, and a bag of gold.

The spectral nature of these harbingers of modernity was captured as nameless women. While anonymity signaled lack of biography, they were identified as possessing consummate skills of self-transformations. These "women" came to define that which was modan in works by the photographer, Nojima Yasuzô. Leaving the images either untitled or with a cryptic title such as "Miss F" the photographs were of the bodies of urban

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164 Yoshiya was sometimes subject of articles in women's and other magazines but she was also a frequent guest in zadankai of various current topics. The Monma Chiyo reference was made in an article that, then, described her as forty four years old and still single and co-habiting with Monma Chiyo. "Yoshiya Nobuko to Hayashi Fumiko" Nihon hyoron (February, 1939): 238-245.

165 "'Kakare' modan gâru no rabu sheen" 192?, reprinted in Taishô kôki no manga 61.
women that powerfully laced together the "brilliance of the modern metropolis, a stormy eroticism," and the unrootedness of these subjects.\textsuperscript{166}

The most striking difference between the New Woman and her younger sister, \textit{moga}, as they were reproduced by journalists, was perhaps her class background. If the New Woman were educated and found Nietzsche and Ibsen to be their companions, the young women of the 20's flocked to a new genre of popular fiction--school girls romances (same sex romance) even as it was quite fashionable amongst some middle class girls to carry Marxist texts.\textsuperscript{167} Moreover, while Hiratsuka and her group were concerned with the relationship between economic independence of women and individual, spiritual independence -- a point of major contention amongst the members -- they were not working women in the sense that the terminology developed. Even those, like Yosano Akiko, who wrote for a living, were accorded membership in the literati and not grouped in with \textit{shokyugyô fujin} (working women), who like \textit{nôson fujin} were considered an object of study.

Like the earlier New Woman and the often-conflicting personae, \textit{modan gâru} was also a conflicting site of excesses. In the New Woman, much of the


\textsuperscript{167} "Engerusu gâru" (in contrast to "Marukusu bôî") was popular term in late Taishô through the early years of Shôwa. For instance, there were incidents of red-purges involving students some of whom were enrolled at Japan Women's University--Hiratsuka's alma mater. An article reporting the roundup in Asakusa of delinquent students, reports, for instance, that there were amongst them, "women students sporting lipstick and eyebrow pencil, carrying red economics texts." Reported in \textit{Jiji shinpô} 9 February 1930, cited in Maeda Ai, \textit{Taishô kôki no manga}, 82.
focus on the New Woman was as performative site -- wine glass in hand, women in male cityscapes, and so on. This seems to have been the case though, or perhaps because, at the center of their activities was their engagement with the civil discourses of their time. Whether in the pages of their own magazine or in those specially demarcated space within "masculine" discourses, many of the women of Seitô and those in proximity played an active role in defining and redefining the question of sexual difference. That much of this was subjugated in the popular iconography created an effect of disjuncture between the serious and the frivolous. The conflicting images of the New Woman, however, was very much part of the identificatory system of the New Woman. Unlike the anonymous figurations, such as Miss F of Nojima's photography, New Woman was identified in part by their clearly enunciated differentiation of their subjectivities. Whether over questions of monogamy or abortion or legalized prostitution, what were striking were precisely the spirited debates and discordant voices identifying the writer as an individual. This process of individuation -- the meditating Hiratsuka in the proximity of the anarchist Itô Noe in the proximity of the socialist Yamakawa Kikue so on and so forth -- depended on multiplicity of positionalities.

In contrast to the New Woman, modan gâru as a signifier had much wider possible application. In its multiplicity, New Woman was still a select group. Rather than an identification associated with women coming together ready to mark themselves through recognized acts such as theatre attendance, drinking exotics drinks, writing for journals, or other acts that came to be associated through real and imaginary repetitions as New Woman gestures, modan gâru was recognized through a larger pool of gestures available to women of wider socio-economic background. That is to say, in addition to
such spectacles repeated in public space -- window shopping in Ginza, frequenting cafes, sporting bobbed hair, and so on -- there was, in addition, the associations made through various types of employment.

The social space of this much more public spectacle, a spectacle sometimes literally in the streets at times, was populated by a much wider constituency. For while the New Woman might have come into contact with a woman working in the various public areas where their (mis)adventures took place, there seemed to have been confusion that these new woman shared the space with them. Indeed, whoever happened to have come into contact in those public space identified with the New Woman remained invisible.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁸ This is not to suggest that the discursive importance of the New Woman did not reach beyond the educated, urban, middle class. In fact, one of the undercurrents detectable in efforts to identify what a more self-conscious rural women might be is the lure and fear of the New Woman. For instance, the anxieties and excitement expressed by contributors for answered Kokumin shinbun’s call to send in short commentaries on the role of young men and women in social reformation often directly made references to some of the issues raised in the pages of Seitô and the debates that spilled over into other journal spaces. Without a doubt the overall tone is pedagogical and some of the more spirited comments are relegated to the "would that, if only" category by responses from Amano Fujio and his wife who acted as "editor", when the contributions were collected and published in a book form. Indeed, by often suggesting a more "realistic" goal after given a nod to call for social equality, for instance they often put the burden of making social equality a future reality on the young women’s comportment. To be sure, the balance of the contributors commented on the misguided sentiments of the call for new social order with skepticism, anxiety, and outright disdain, it is instructive to note that even in this semi-officially sanctioned space, there were more than a few voices that questioned the logic of placing blame on women for sexual double standards or the outmoded nature of many social conventions. For
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In contrast, the term *modan gâru* referred to middle class and working women -- particularly those in white collar work -- but also more generally those who were usually distinguished by the label *shokugyô fujin* that referenced a wider array of job categories than imagined only few years previously. This meant that, not only did the stylish garbed *modan gâru* come into contact with the less fashionable recent arrival from the countryside who entered the urban life as partners in *modan seikatsu*, they might both be identified as *modan gâru*. How to map all of the women into the lexicon of urban geography remained unclear. Were the cafe waitresses, domestic workers, and dance hall girls who came to the city to earn money for the family back in the countryside or to become financially independent, modan in the same way that a "Engerusu gâru" with her copy of the "red economics text" tucked snuggly in her arm might be *modan*? What makes her what she does? Perhaps, more importantly who is she? While, *modan gâru* and the New

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169 *Ibid., 103, 104, 119, and 131.*
Woman were decidedly urban there were those that represented a more ambiguous figure -- the non-urban woman living in urban space.  

The flickering image of the modern urban girl as in the early 1930s depression years reflects a world turned on its head. Though the bright city, moga, capitalist, military officers and the unemployed coexisted in the early 1930s, gone were the free spirited bicycle riders or the family out for an afternoon of shopping at the department store. Rather, pages of magazines are increasingly devoted to a moment of respite from the seriousness of the time by entering the make believe world of the all women revue, Takarazuka, a world ravishingly presented in glossy posters and magazines. For those lucky few who could afford the theatre tickets it provided for few hours of

\[170\] It is worth mentioning here that it was not necessarily the occupation itself that became the basis for identification as a shokugyō fujin, since an urbanite who had a job as a cafe waitress and a newly transplanted country girl even in the same occupation would not necessarily be named in similar fashion. Furthermore, adding to the complexity of who is a shokugyō fujin was the very different ways in which shokugyō fujin as a term circulated in various venues. For instance, in surveys conducted by the likes of Tokyo metropolitan government, it defined the term as "those women who provide labor under certain employment conditions/relationship by living away from the family for the purpose of earning a wage." This vague definition contrasts with the various "images" associated with the term shokugyō fujin. For fuller discussion, see, Tazaki Nobuyoshi "Josei rōdō no sho ruigata" in Josei-shi Sogo Kenkyu-kai ed., Nihon Josei-shi: Kindai vol 4 (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppan-kai, 1990): 163-197.

\[171\] Ozaki Saburo Nijusseiki no rekishi reprinted in Jugoshi noto no 4 1982, 10
escape where women were womanly and manlier then the men they knew in real life.\footnote{172}

**The Poverty of the Countryside**

We lose sight of the moga and her urban sisters in the 1930s as the serious implications of the depression and military aggressions in Asia take over the urban sceneries of the 1920s. It is this picture of the countryside in abject poverty, and of the passive obedience of citizens being mobilized for the war effort that we know so well. This image of abjection is also, perhaps, the only image we have of the women in the countryside. For instance, though it is well known that most female textile workers came to work in the mills from rural area, we usually know them only as those who have left the rural area. Readers of magazines and the like were provided with graphic portrayal of rural demise. Urban women’s country cousins according to this scenario were victims of poverty, ignorance, and patriarchy. They were inadequately housed, fed, and clothed. Readers were even treated to an intimate glimpse of the lives of the rural residents. In an article titled “The struggles of a female teacher in the areas hit by crop failure,” a crude sketch of a farmhouse is accompanies the text. The sleeping quarters of the family was separated from

\footnote{172 The importance of the revue such as Takarazuka Theatre as a site of discursive production as well as site of iconic identification is well documented in the pages of women’s magazines, the criticisms of women’s magazines (in journals like Ie no hikari). Jennifer Robertson is working on a project situating the Takarazuka phenomenon within the gender-sexual system of early twentieth century Japan and has given many presentation on this matter. See for instance, her essay “Politics of Androgyny in Japan: Sexuality and Subversion in the Theater and Beyond” American Ethnologist 9.3 (August, 1992): 419-441.}
the "stable" only by the kitchen. 173 Moreover, daughters might be sold just as farm animals were sold by desperate farmers.174 They were indeed object of pity; they were recipients of charity from the more fortunate city dwellers.

Of the many heart-wrenching stories publicized, it was the young girls who were sent away to work in private residences, commercial establishments, and licensed quarters that caught the imagination of the nation. During the severe crop failures of 1931-1935, newspapers and magazines depicted the countryside as peopled by those who sold their daughters. Many of these publications published reportages of villages without young women, articles on girls saved by reformists, and accounts of local campaigns to abolish the traffic in women. There were articles about girls being sold by destitute families; shifty brokers luring parents with cash and girls with bright synthetic kimonos; and the pitiful sight of children, only eleven or twelve years of age, separated from families to work in factories or in the homes of urban dwellers. It was a dramatic presentation of the countryside. The attention focused was unprecedented. In the next chapter I will look closely at this “crisis” but here, I want to introduce it as a way to

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173 In a special section of *Fujin kôron* focusing on “saving daughters” the author, a school teacher in one of the "primitive village in the northern part of Iwate Prefecture”, amended her report was a sketch of a farm house in the area. An editorial gesture warns the readers: "You must have the dreams of lunch time at school in your fields of memory. The expression on the teachers face who shared her lunch hour with the students were always filled with pleasure. Now, however, suffice to silently deliver the note of cries from one woman teacher, who writes from the area of the tragic crop failure. Oizumi Takako "Reigai gekijinchi no jokyoshi kumon" December 1934 *Fujin kôron* 140-146.

174 Shimokawa Hekoten, "Nômin no kanashimi" February 1929 *Hadaka no sesō to onna* reprinted in Maeda *Taisho kôki no manga*, 84.
indicate the differentiation that operates in the iconography of the rural women. This differentiation is made relative to urban women as spatialized difference that results in urban and rural women occupying different temporality.

It is clear from the articles that the audiences that the editors had in mind were the urban dwellers, many who were only a generation removed from the farm, or in some case migrants themselves. As familiar as these urbanites were with the countryside, they were not accustomed to seeing the dark, hopeless look on the faces of the rural people in their favorite newspapers and magazines, which had after all, promised them so much pleasure in the past. Instead of stories on cafe life, or the revues, readers saw young children eating raw daikon, or even worse, something quite unidentifiable. Whether sympathetic to the plight of the farmers or not, there was little danger in these articles to suggest that city residents shared anything in common with these people of the rural area.\(^{175}\)

**ICONOGRAPHIES SKewed**

That the taxonomy of possible modern female subjectivities were embedded on the body through specific markings is made more readily clear in the re-reading of the following three examples. The three occupy in one way or another a place in the post-urbanized-female-subject constitution. The

\(^{175}\) *Fujin kôron*, that played such a key role in bringing about representations of both *atarashii onna* and *modan garu* being, in 1930 started to publish articles, first in the "naigai jihyo" column written by Yamakawa Kikue, on the plight of farmlands. In 1932, the focus on the countryside became more specific to *Tôhoku* in articles such as "Minasan kono fuko na hitotachi o sukkutte kudasai, sono go no Tôhoku" February, 1932.
post- here signals not a "after" as in "having been" and "left", but rather a time when the discourse with all of the anxieties, uncertainties of what the "urban-life" in the time is was deeply part of the trace in language, vision, and expectations. Here, then, is a reading of three that in a different reading would be conceptualized to be more similar than not.

**The case of Masuda Fumiko**

Masuda Fumiko, a young woman from a well-known Osaka banking family, and Saijô Erika, an actress from the Kyôdô Film Studio, were apprehended by the police at Nagoya Station in the winter of 1934 in a celebrated case of attempted double suicide. Before there had been enough time for the public and journalists to react to their story, the two escaped from family surveillance and disappeared. Two days later, they were found again, this time in a hotel. Although in some reports it seems that they had both consumed Adalin (a sleeping table), only Masuda was found unconscious.176

The case of Masuda Fumiko and Saijô Erika caught the public imagination. It had all the right ingredients: a young woman from a respectable old family and, as her partner in crime, a public figure. Fumiko, who used the name Yasumara -- at best, a gender-ambivalent name -- sported Eton-style cropped hair, golfing trousers, and a tweed jacket. Erika, with softly waved, permed hair that touched her shoulders, was accustomed to

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176 This narrative is pieced together from articles in *Osaka jiji, Fujin kôron, Kaizô, Chûô kôron, Fujo shinbun,* and *Kakusei.* While my reading of the incident is somewhat different and for a different purpose, Robertson has also discussed it in the context of the etymology of *danson no reijin.* See Robertson, "Politics of Androgyny".
wearing beaded gowns and stage makeup. Fumiko had taken some family stock certificates to finance a trip that took them from Tokyo to Kyoto, Osaka, Kobe, down to Kyushu, back to Kyoto...

As Fumiko recovered from the "double suicide" attempt, a series of articles was published that reported their elopement. For several months, reports, follow-ups, exposés, confessionals, and even an essay contest appeared in newspapers and magazines. ¹⁷⁷ In response to a confessional by Masuda, an essay contest was organized and the three winning entrees reflected the narrow but deeply established lexicon of the discourses on "autonomy," "self," "development", "romance", "sexual-love", and "same-sex love." In addition, Purity, the magazine of an anti-prostitution organization, published a submission to the contest that had not been chosen for publication in Fujin kôron. Titled "The Facts are Old but the Problem is New: Make Masuda

¹⁷⁷ For instance, Osaka jiji carried an eleven-part series on the incident, and most major newspapers, both dailies and weeklies, covered the incident in varying degrees. Fujin kôron (Women's central review), perhaps one of the most important women's magazines, began its coverage in March 1935 with the article "Daughter's Romantic Love: Same-Sex Love and Mothers," followed by an article by a reporter who had interviewed Saijó Erika right after the suicide attempt. That issue also included two additional articles on the incident: one by Saijó titled "Until Masuda Fumiko, the Masculinely Dressed Beauty, Chose Death," and a short piece by a former classmate of Masuda encouraging her to "choose life." The April issue of Fujin kôron continued its coverage with a confessional by Masuda titled "The Day I return to Being a Woman." This was followed by "Critique and Guidance," by Kawasaki Natsu, an activist social critic known for her involvement in maternal welfare and the conditions of working women. Kawasaki’s pointed advice suggested that masuda should find employment and then get married. Her problem, according to Kawasaki, was the problem of a young woman of privilege.
Fumiko, the Masculine Dressed Beauty, into a Nursery School Worker." This essay positioned "women" as a site in opposition to "self" that suggests "autonomy," "selfishness," "immaturity," and so forth. The constellation of characteristics of modan bourgeois women was invoked in the interpretations of Fumiko and Erika’s liaison. In accepting this configuration -- and Fumiko by implication had supposedly acquiesced to this oppositional strategy by writing the "confessional" -- that other Fumiko was eradicated and relegated to that, which could be narrated in the past tense.

While what is strikingly peculiar about reading these essays is the complete absence of any discussion of the body as the site of either Fumiko’s or Erika’s story, the fact that articles in, for instance, Fujin kōron were accompanied of stunning photographs of Fumiko and Erika. These photographs were instrumental in the shaping of the knowledge and understanding: the cross-dressed woman and the non-cross dressed woman occupying and gliding over urban cityscape.

**THE STORY OF MIYATA SATO**

In July 1934, an article appeared in a regional newspaper in the northeastern part of Japan titled "Handsome Husband with Long Hair? An attractive Masculine Woman in Her Forties Living with the Wife of Another Man Turns into a Man with a Wife."178 The article was about Miyata Sato, who was thirty-five when her husband died. Thereafter, she supported herself by working as a day laborer and as a farmer. After a while, however, her voice became lower and she started to grow a beard. Not too long after that, she

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178 *Yamagata shinbun* 14 July 1934.
became involved in a relationship with one Yokoyama Mitsu, a married woman. The woman's husband protested, and there was some discussion of whether or not Mitsu could be charged with adultery. Nevertheless, since the two people involved were both "women" it was decided that no formal charges could be brought. A while later, Miyata Sato became involved with another woman, Setsuko, who was then thirty-four. Like Yokoyama Mitsu, Setsuko was married, but unlike her, she left her husband for Miyata. Her husband tried to convince her to come back to him, but she claimed that she could not leave Miyata. The article reports, "there was much talk about the two at night."

The press, so resourceful in describing Masuda or the conditions of rural life, seemed quite confused as to how to write about these affairs and to situate Miyata in the constellation of modern gendered subjectivities. While the newspaper used the term "same-sex love," the description was such that Miyata was no "beauty dressed masculinely" like Masuda Fumiko. Instead, as the headline stated, she had "become a man."179 The contradiction of the claim that she had become another sex at the same time the article labels this a same-sex story points, perhaps, to the ambivalence of the social linguistic geography occupied by various subjects and subjects to be in gender discourses. It may also point to a useful point to consider again the spatialized iconographies of modern women.

The bodies of Miyata Sato, Masuda Fumiko, and Saijô Erika need to be read within the discourse constructed in the urban/rural binary genealogy.

179 A contemporary account, also published in a newspaper, of two sisters in a farming village who both "turned into men" is cited in Tomioka Masakata. See, Tomioka "Dansei joô to josei dansô" Kaizô (October 1938): 105.
The material girl, the flippant tease, the consummate consumer of all that is new, are qualities that anyone reading these articles could recognize in the descriptions of Masuda and Saijô. Whereas, the body of Miyata -- much more primordial and perhaps sharing a certain resonance with Fumi-san -- is that of a laboring body. A reading of the two narratives that signals the different bodies of urban and rural women and the images that are produced through them within the urban/rural tensions is productive in illuminating a complex discourse network operating in the 1930s. It is worth underscoring this point, perhaps that as castigated as Masuda was -- in taking family money, in never having worked at real job, in being spoiled, etc. etc. -- it is Masuda, and not Miyata -- with her productive and self-reliant ways as a farmer and a day laborer after the death of her husband -- who is able to "return" to being a woman. Yet, Masuda had her work cut out. A worker at a nursery school was never recommended as a means for pleasurable self-realization. So, then, I turn to the story of Yoshiya Nobuko briefly introduced already as a moga, perhaps, the "exemplary" model to consider as the consummate modern, urban, and national subject.

**The Case of Yoshiya Nobuko**

Yoshiya Nobuko was a most prolific woman writer who, as I have mentioned earlier, almost single-handedly popularized the genre of girl romance and wrote for large number of magazines and newspapers, particularly through the 1920s and 1930s. The narrative of the girl romance, often situated in a single-sex boarding school, centered around strong attachments -- romantic and thus idealized -- between schoolgirls. With a strong popular base among young readers, she moved on to write novels for
the "adult audience," some of which were serialized in the major dailies such as the Osaka mainichi and Tokyo asahi. Nobuko lived with Monma Chiyo, the aforementioned "adopted daughter" that credited Yoshiya as Monma fujin no danna-san. Yoshiya's measure of popularity may best be understood from the frequency with which she appeared in journals, not only as a writer but also in interviews, dialogues, and as the subject of essays. She shared forums with the likes of Tsurumi Yūsuke and Kikuchi Kan. Moreover, and perhaps as importantly, these articles were not limited to either literary or "women's" journals but appeared in Gendai, Chûô kôron, Shinchô, and Nihon hyôron.

However, it is in the choice of Yoshiya as the woman writer recruited by the Navy to join the tour of the troops in Shanghai and elsewhere, led by Kikuchi Kan in 1938, that one is further instructed in the constitution of her person. Yoshiya claims in the zadankai she participated in after her return to Japan that "as a Japanese woman, I have advanced to the extreme frontline" in response to the moderator's question: "How far have Japanese women advanced?" Her response positioning herself both as "Japanese" and as "woman" seems to refer to the fact that she was one of the very few women who had been to the warfront. That is, to claim a rightful place as a "Japanese" she claims to have advanced to the extreme frontline of colonialism and imperialism. As a "woman," then, it would seem that one should desire to such extreme positions at the frontline. In this context, in the midst of a recitation of the accomplishments of the advancing frontline of the Japanese military, her participation as a Japanese woman and as a representative of Japanese women and the implications of that which this entails is irrefutable.

180 See, "Kikuchi Kan, Yoshikawa Eiji, Yoshiya Nobuko ni sensô no hanashi wo kiku kai," Hanashi (December, 1938): 58-78, for a "post-tour" report by Yoshiya.
Yoshiya, the exemplary icon of urban modern gâru, is one that is suggestive of the embeddedness of the narratives in the discursive constitutions and iconographies operating at any given moment. That is to say, Yoshiya’s ability to represent the "Japanese" literati is deeply implicated by the discourse on race and nationality as well as the discourses on sexed bodies, gender, and desire in Japan. Given the "differences" amongst these women, then, it is with some sense of bewilderment that one turns to an iconography of the war years that operate on the assumptions of sameness. If Yoshiya had prepared "us" for the icons of war effort, she had done so poorly. Though Yoshiya was herself, then, a productive agent of the war effort, militarization, and war demanded means by which identifications across these spatial-temporal distances could be achieved.

Jûgo: Mobilizing for the War Effort.

If the predominant iconographies from the 1910s through the 1930s were contracted, compared with, and associated with those self-realizing women of the sun, Seitô, we are also familiar with this the men, women and children mobilized for the war -- basking in, shadowed by, and perhaps shading oneself from the rising sun. We have embedded in our collective memory of the war years, the picture of women working, "doing a man's job."

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181 It is also worth noting here that Yoshiya contributed all throughout her adult life to the financial well-being of her family. Building houses of brothers and supporting them over many years and over various projects, she was also an exemplary son of a sort. This well known aspect of her life is not in contradiction with her self-representation as an unloved child by her mother who favored her "prettier" brother. It is also what makes it possible, perhaps, to claim and capture her as a national woman.
or the all female production teams on the farm with the absence of men marked by the lack."182 We are familiar with the sad and almost comical neighborhood housewives practicing defense techniques spearing straw effigies. "Spirit of the Million Spears" Such images of ordinary women, trained by soldiers, neighborhood women wielding bamboo staves take defense position against the American invasion of the homeland in summer 1945, dissolved the boundaries of city and country life as representation of citizen women became de rigueur. We know of the extraordinary measures women were asked to take by the resource poor Japanese in their war efforts or the young students mobilized to work in the war industries. And finally, we know too well of the exhortation by the state for women to bear and increase the population at the same time, they were asking the mothers and wives to fill in for their absentee husband on the production lines and in the fields.183 These, then, are the taxonomy of dominant iconic figures of women from 1910 to 1945, the New Woman, the Moga, the “girls who were sold,” and

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182 By November 1941, about three million men between the ages of fourteen and forty, and women between the ages of fourteen and twenty were "volunteered". And in 1943, student mobilization began that inducted from over two million secondary school students. About forty three percent of these students were female students. See, Hori Sachiko "ûugonen sensôka no joshi rôdo" March 1954 Rekishi hyôron 14-29. For a glimpse of the images of city and countryside in mobilization, see Muraki Kazuko "Jûgo nikki: shashin ni miru nôson to tokai" in Onna no Ima o Tou Kai ed., Jûgoshi nôto vol 5 (Tokyo: JCA Shuppan, 1981): 24-40, and Rekishih Kagaku Kyogikai Henshu, Rekishihyôron Special Issue "Jûgonen sensô to josei: genjitsu o toraeru sensô taiken o" March 1984. For an overview of women’s mobilization see: Suzuki Yuko Feminizumu to sensô: fujin unôoka no sensô kyôryoku (Tokyo: Maruju-sha, 1986).

the mobilized women. The urban women, much maligned at times, were portrayed nevertheless as setting their own agendas, their own definition of who they were, in the spirit of (if not the attainment of) but the pursuit of rational, progressive development of the spirit.\textsuperscript{184} On the other hand, the images of rural women, even those that celebrates (questionable) virtues, like Herculean strength speaks little of self-definition or self-determination, a requisite for recognition as a modern female subjectivity. In the logic of women’s history these differences within a single sex were mediated for the most part through teleological explanation of ever more self-conscious subjects, or at the least, the possibility of such self-consciousness. Rural women were only represented as those who occupied a different "temporality," and as those who could only "wait" to be brought into the modern era. This iconography of these women, as presented as “chapter headings” or as “visual” guides produce and reproduce a teleological narrative of women coming into being. In placing rural women as those women waiting to be brought into the temporal reference shaped by urban women and their experiences, rural women in their difference are historicized. Even their future is already a known, a continuity of the present.

\textsuperscript{184} While status of knowledge, and governance of the production of knowledge, has been highly scrutinized in the U.S. academic institutions -- in the works of those that may fall under various rubrics such as cultural studies, feminist studies, etc. etc. -- the foundationalism of such principle at the core of historical discipline, specifically the practice of women’s history, has not always been challenged even when commented upon.
CHAPTER 5

DAUGHTERS SAVED AND UNSAVED

She was slender but, very much the country girl, so solidly built, and had a large frame. Her cheeks were firm and had the healthy luster of youth; but Tsumura's heart was drawn to her fingers, immersed in the cloudy water. No wonder their hands were "chapped and cracked and the tips of our finger torn." But even her fingers, red, swollen, and raw in the cold air, had a youthful vigor that was not to be suppressed. There was a sort of pathetic beauty in them.

- Tanizaki Junichirō-

E'en now, me thinks,

as pondering here I stand

I see the rural virtues

leave the land

- Oliver Goldsmith-
On Monday January 14, 1935, Gotô Mitsuyo left her home, leaving behind her parents, her three younger brothers, and a sister in the village of Miizumi and joined eight other young women at the downtown Aikoku fujin kai (Patriotic Women's Association) office in Yamagata. Two weeks after her twentieth birthday, Mitsuyo applied at the village office for a position as a domestic worker in a "respectable home" in or near Tokyo. She indicated in her application that in her leisure hours, she hoped to practice sewing. It was only three weeks later that the summons arrived from Yamagata to the village instructing her to appear, ready for the trip to Tokyo, at the Patriotic Women's Association office by noon on the fourteenth. On arriving in Tokyo on Tuesday, Gotô and the other women were housed in the settlement house of the Association where they were to begin a course of instruction in domestic work.¹⁸⁵

She had begun, as thousands of other women would that winter and as countless others had for years before her, the process by which young farm women left their native villages to work in towns and cities to augment the family income, to defray a part of a family debt, or to simply reduce the number of mouths to feed. Having borrowed fifty yen from the Association, she hoped to pay back the amount over the next ten months from her salary. The contract in effect showed that the borrowed money could to be used only

¹⁸⁵ Yamagata-ken Nishi Murayama-gun Miizumi-mura Yakuba Bunsho, Aikoku Fujin-kai kenkei tsuzuri, Shôwa Kyûnen, Shôwa Jûnen. In general, residents of Miizumi-mura would have applied to the Sagae shokugyô shôkai-jo through the Miizumi-mura village officials.
to pay for the cost of travel to Tokyo and whatever preparations were necessary for the trip. She was expected to repay Aikoku fujin kai four yen per month. It also stipulated that Gotô could not change the place of employment or return home without the consent of the organization. Finally, if she broke any part of the agreements, she was expected to pay back all of the money at once. She was fortunate; the loan was without interest and she was now going to work for the respectable Suzuki family. The Suzuki family, landowners in the Togoshi area of Tokyo consisted of one child and three adults. Gotô’s traveling companions had all found positions with good families: those of an attorney, a physician, a banker, a women’s college faculty, and businessmen. One member of this group, Suzuki Yoshi of Okitama county, was destined to work in the home of the mayor of Tokyo.

The document informing the women of their positions includes a list of the eight other women with whom Gotô Mitsuyo went to Tokyo. One other woman had been recruited from Miizumi-mura. This list included: a) the address of the employer b) name of the employer c) occupation d) number of children in the household of the employer and e) the person who has been assigned to the work. On the face/faith of this information, the young women went to live in the privatized space of that unregulated market, domestic service. The question of respectability, the respectability of the women who were being assigned work -- a cornerstone of this program -- was ensured by another document indicating the responsible party from whom she was recruited and to whom she should be returned: in Gotô’s case, her father. The

respectability of the employer was assumed to be beyond question, at least by
the women or their family. In addition, Gotô Mitsuyo and her father had
signed an affidavit certifying that should she become injured, her family
would attend to her care.187

Few of the women who left the rural communities were
fortunate as those nine young women traveling in mid January of
1935. Most borrowed in advance of their pay on which high interest
accumulated and which had to be paid back from their earnings.
Some had contracted for work in licensed quarters or in other
commercial establishments such as cafes, bars, and geisha houses in
hope of borrowing large sums of money. Despite the seeming
difference in the circumstances of employment, both Mitsuyo's
group and other women who found employment away from their
villages were represented as similar. Fujo shinbun covered the
group’s arrival in Tokyo with the headline, "Nine more girls rescued
again: from Yamagata to domestic’s school." 188 Like their lesser

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187 "Aigata dai ichi-gō" 9 January 1935 and "Mimoto hikiuke-sho" 11 January 1935,
Yamagata-ken Nishi Murayama-gun Miizumi-mura Yakuba Bunsho, Aikoku
Fujin-kai tsuzuri, Shōwa Kyūnen, Shōwa Jūnen.

188 “Musume mata kyūmei shukuwareru, Yamagata kara jochū gakkô e” Fujo shinbun, 20
January 1935. Fujo shinbun had started reporting regularly in late August of
1934 on the serious crop failure and the threat to farm families and
particularly young women. See for instance, "Musume o utte nömairi" 26
August 1934, "Nôson musume no miuri sanbai" 9 September 1934, and "Urareru
musume o mamore! Shizuoka-ken de kan-min kyôdô no undô" 28 October 1934. All
together between August of 1934 and July of 1935, it published thirty three
articles on musume miuri. In addition, during the same period there were
over fifteen articles on the general conditions of the Tôhoku kyôsaku.
fortunate sisters, the premise was that they had been destined to a degraded life. The reporter for *Fujo shinbun* was not alone in making this assumption. This is, then, a problem of representation. Stuart Hall describes the problems of politics of representation as:

We all now use the word representation, but we know, it is an extremely slippery customer. It can be used, on the one hand, simply as another way of talking about how one imagines a reality that exists "outside" the means by which things are represented: a conception grounded in a mimetic theory of representation. On the other hand, the term can also stand for a very radical displacement of that unproblematic notion of the concept of representation. My own view is that events, relations, structures do have conditions of existence and real effects, outside the sphere of the discursive, but that it is only within the discursive, and subject to its specific conditions, limits and modalities, do they have or can they be contracted with meaning. Thus, while not wanting to expand the territorial claims of the discursive infinity, how things are represented and the "machineries" and regime of representation in a culture do play a constitutive and not merely a reflexive, after-the-event, role.\(^{189}\)

What makes it possible for this story and the many others that fall under the category of “girls sold and saved” to be recognized is the work of representation that functions as a means to assemble and assimilate into near sameness. They were all being “saved.” Yet the question of what Mitsuyo and the other women were being rescued from and whether or not they were indeed rescued remains unexamined in most treatments of the 1934 crisis. That question will remain unanswered in my address as well for my interest here is to consider how this "story" of rescued (or not) women, and the unquestioned eventhood of the crisis, is in part the constitutive event in of itself. Put it another way, what interests me here is how women who can be accounted as having been rescued and those who were beyond being rescued that I want to pay attention to in considering the particular problem of women and history as practice.

Indeed, the subject of women being sold and/or selling herself -- is of significance not the least because it is one of the moments where "women are written into history.” The phrase contains the multitude of commentaries on the crisis, thereby reductively eliminating the excess of historicized subjectivity. That is, though, the controversy exposed the fractures within concepts like “labor” “slavery” the iconographically powerful image of girls sold and saved circulates both in tsūshi style historical writing as well as focused articles as if there was a real referent. Here, then, my concern is with the overdetermined nature of the representational
practice underscoring "history" as written about rural women -- women who appear only as situated in famine, bondage, and lacking in authorial instatement in contrast to the presumed self-narrativity of subjects of teleological history.

**People Who Sell their Daughters**

For many farmers in Tohoku, the "hinterland" of Japan, the year 1934 was a year of poor harvest and a year when national attention focused on the area as peopled by those who sold their daughters. Numerous reportage of villages without young women, articles on girls saved by reformists, and accounts of local campaigns to abolish the traffic in women appeared during the fall and winter of 1934-35. In both regional and national newspapers as well as in variety of magazines, articles were published about girls being sold by destitute families; shifty brokers luring parents with cash and girls with bright synthetic kimonos; and the pitiful sight of children, only eleven or twelve years of age, separated from families to work in factories or in the homes of urban dwellers. The press also carried stories of girls saved just in the nick of time from a fallen life by the Kyûseigun (Salvation Army), Nihon kirisutokyô fujin kyôfû-kai (Japan Christian Women's Reform Society), Aikoku fujin-kai, police, and individuals. Readers of Tokyo newspapers saw no less than two dozen articles on young women being "sold" during the month of October and November. Kokumin shinbun, Tokyo nichinichi shinbun, Hôchi shinbun, Miyako shinbun, and Yomiuri shinbun all had
multiple articles on "women being sold" as well as related topics. These articles depicted young women contracted out by families for work in various occupations in manufacturing, in commercial establishments, and in private homes as "victims of traffic in women." At the same time, they lauded the works of activists who saved the girls by finding them work, often as domestic servants. What differentiated the ill fated and the fortunate girl servant was often only the process by which they found employment, rather than the place of work a woman may have finally settled in. Private transactions were regarded with suspicion and professional job brokers were seen as interested only in making profit, a sure sign that girls would fall into unscrupulous hands. The enduring image of the 1934 crop failure in history texts is closely knitted with the crisis of traffic in women. Invariably in writing about the farms in the 1930s, selling daughters is the icon of choice sometimes accompanied by photographs. For instance, a photograph of seven

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190 For instance, in *Asahi shinbun* (Tokyo edition) articles were published on: 12 October 1934; 13 October 1934; 17 October 1934; 19 October 1934; 23 October 1934; 1 November 1934 (2); 14 November 1934; 17 November 1934; 22 November 1934; 24 November 1934; 28 November 1934; and 39 November 1934. Residents of Yamagata were faced with thirty reports during the same period reading *Yamagata shinbun*: 4 October 1934; 5 October 1934; 9 October 1934; 11 October 1934; 12 October 1934 (2); 14 October 1934 (2); 15 October 1934; 24 October 1934; 25 October 1934 (2); 1 November 1934; 2 November 1934; 6 November 1934; 7 November 1934; 10 November 1934 (2); 13 November 1934 (2); 14 November 1934 (2); 16 November 1934 (2); 17 November 1934 (2); 18 November 1934 (2); 20 November 1934; 21 November 1934; 27 November 1934 (2); 29 November 1934.
young women -- two of them appearing to be in their early teens – at Ueno station after having been rescued by a member of the Salvation Army is reproduced in multiple texts as an iconic sign sighted upon texts on the 1930s. Photograph of a house purchased with money from the sale of a daughter accompanies another.  

The national recognition undoubtedly played a large role in bringing in much needed aid not only for young women who were potential victims of the trade in flesh, but to children and other adults in the form of clothing and subsidized food. It was, to be sure, not the first time that a sense of a crisis threatening the well-being of large numbers of children, women, and men motivated organizations of many political and social affiliations to mobilize to the rescue. In 1903 and 1906, for instance, efforts on the part of several Tokyo women's organization to provide relief for those hit by the crop failure in Aomori resulted in considerable material provisions. A variety of efforts, throughout the teens and the twenties, on the part of nongovernmental organizations to alleviate inadequate health care (particularly infant and maternal welfare) hunger, and poverty had resulted, by the 1930s, in a production of a firmly grounded logic of the naturalness of women's

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192 "Aomori-ken kyôsakuchi gienkin hôkoku" Fujo shinbun no.146-155, 1903 and "Kyôsakuchi kyûmin kyûzai fujin-kai" no. 300, "Kyôsakuchi no joshi" no. 302, "Kyûsai bukuro shimekiri" no. 309, and "Tôhoku kyôsakuchi no jikkyô" no. 305.
involvement in such work. Thus, when some eighteen hundred women poured out into city streets, in November of 1931, to collect donation for poor children, they dispersed to various collection sites after jointly exclaiming "haha no kokoro imazo ugoku! ike! ike! ike!" (Mother’s heart on the move! Go! Go! Go!) This development of crisis and rescue was complementary women in reform movements. Women’s Reform as established early on by Nihon kirisutokyô fujin kyôfûkai and others had a dual mode in which on the one hand, they gave assistance and on the other hand they ministered to them through tutelage. Being active in the “rural crisis” meant, however, having to negotiate multiple logic in operation simultaneously. As the women’s organizations responded to what was perceived as (or what was framed as) acute crisis, the occasion allowed for a much larger number of women -- as women -- of many different political and social affiliations to become involved. The article covering the 1931 Tokyo drive reports the participation of women from the German and Canadian embassies along with some fifty "foreign" women. It noted that most of those who gave donations were workers, clerks at small stores, and laborers. In contrast, the women observed that "in general, those women and men (fujin ya shinshi) who were dressed a bit nice, especially the so-called moga and mobo types (iwyuru moga/mobo gata no hitotachi) responded in a cold or even derisive manner. At he end of the day, they reported collecting over seventy two hundred yen.  

Yet the 1934 crisis and the response by -- in many instances -- urban organizers represented more than a case of generous outpouring of maternal

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193 “Shichigosan no iwaibi ni jidô kyûshoku bokin fukei” 22 November 1931 Fujo shinbun.
or other goodwill in a time of crisis. Beneath the response of urban reformers, rural residents, and local authorities were the uneasy tension between urban and rural culture and the very different socio-economic realities with which they lived. The response mirrored the disparate interests and investments placed in the negotiation of boundaries of respectable occupation for young rural women.

**Contested Geography of Women’s Work**

Urban reformers had concerned themselves with the problem of prostitution since 1886, when the Tokyo Christian Women's Reform Society organized around issues of prostitution, monogamy, and temperance. They established a rescue home for women, carried out petition drives for both local and national government, and held public lectures. They were joined in their efforts by the Salvation Army in 1900 and by the *Kakuseikai*, an anti-brothel organization in 1911. For the most part, they were engaged in rescuing prostitutes and "reforming" them, in public education, and in bringing about legal reforms.\(^\text{194}\) Thus, though it was general knowledge that many women in the licensed quarters came from rural areas, little attention was focused on *where* they came from. While the activists acknowledged the hardship faced

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by these women and their families. This focus betrayed as much about their concern for moral reform as it did their metropolitan perspective in understanding what caused women to become prostitutes.\footnote{This is not to say that making a general analysis of the cause(s) of prostitution is simple and that the reformers should have been able to do so. I take up this question, in the following chapter, as a "re-reading" of these texts in a post-contemporary initiative with reference guided by re-questioning the matter of what constitutes bodily harm, labour, and sex in contemporary feminist thinking. However, here, I want to point to my impulse to look at the ways in which specific contingencies of individuals -- that singularity that historicity of the eventhood allows for -- that the reformers were privy to as information, were often aggregated into large generalizations about prostitution or were considered "exceptional" or "anomalous" cases.}

In the discourse on moral reform, whence the "rescue" activities, much of the blame was placed on a lower standard of morality. In a study on the causes and conditions of prostitution, Kusama Hatô of Tokyo Metropolitan government that though most women ended up becoming geishôgishakufu (畳妻妓女mundane amalgam of geigi芸妓, shôgi 娼妓, shakufu 酒婦 that he uses in his study) due to economic hardship, others took on these positions by choice. It implied that this clearly indicated the different moral characteristics of the women and by extension different types of women and thus should result in different moral judgment of these women. That is, there should be different treatment accorded to these different types of women. Moreover, he argued that some women were particularly suited for such occupations and the proof was that many had previously been employed as shakufu or geigi before descending to the ranks of shôgi.\footnote{Kusama Hatao Jokyû to bataifu (1930) reprinted in Kindai fujin mondai meichô senshû zokuhen vol. 9 (Nihon Toshokan Sentâ, 1982): 50 and 60.} Still, at the heart of the problem was what
made it possible for some of these girls to submit to such "degradation," even those girls who were forced into it by economic circumstances. Then, there are at least now three strands to consider: the ministration of the rural poor (that may include girls who were about to be “sold”), the tutelage of those who had been subjected to degraded situation, and a move towards investigation of who these women were and how they differed from the women unmarked as at risk.

I want to consider what maybe an important cautionary reminder. That is, in the 1930s (when it seemed that all were in agreement, if one read postwar history texts), with decades of anti-abolition movement (haishô undô 废娼運動), debates over women’s subjectivity in family, society, and in relationship to labor, meaning of came to be challenged in the course of the crisis. For instance, the large number of people who responded to the crisis and became involved in different ways produced conflicting meanings. Jobs in factory, teach houses, and brothels were in some argued all the same – a form of slave labor. Others differentiated and fragmented single occupation such as factory work as both redemptive work and degrading work depending. What these positions and arguments seem to have in common was the questionable status of miuri 身売り as a concept. Though I will be introducing some of these multiple articulation of the “crisis” and the meaning of the term, I do so in order to keep the fragmentation without assimilating the debates into a single historical crisis. In other words, while the presentation here relies, yet again, on the archival, my intention is not to offer a better, more complete look at "what happened to these women."

\footnote{I am choosing not to translate this term at this point in part not to fix it to a concept.}
Rather, I am situating this debate as a constitutive moment of rendering yet another contradictory, conflicting mode of situating the question “how to write ‘rural women’ into women’s history.”

It was, some suggested, a misguided sense of filial piety that moved women to acquiesce to a degraded life. It was, others argued, lack of moral education, a lack of faith that allowed parents to consider even selling daughters during economic hardship. One of the earlier arguments along these lines appeared in the third issue of *Kakusei*. Authored by Hinata Kimuko, the wife of a politician, it noted that this kind of argument was often repeated in novels favored by people in commercial establishments. Hinata likened such argument about filial piety to those about "stealing for the poor and such," and saw those who were so engaged as prime targets for regulation by authorities. Tôhoku, well established in literatures as lacking in modern sensibilities was a prime target of such criticism and firmly mapped in the periphery of modern geography of moral construct. Such perspective might then be nurtured further by the journal’s publication of an article challenging anyone to contest “my selling my own daughter.”

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198 In that sense, this is, the place that I must reiterate the point I made in the beginning that women's history "should expose itself to the political question of what women will have been and thus destabilize any claim to positive knowledge or restriction on the non-category of "women." Elam, 41.

199 Hinata Kimuko “Fujin shakai to geishōgi mondai” *Kakusei* 1.3 (March 1911): 43.
Toyota Saku, "Nôson no kobuto daraku onna no kenkyû" *Kakusei* 5.4 (April 1915).
See also, Furui Masataka "Tôhoku no baitafu jôtai" *Kakusei* 12.10 (October 1922).
This went both ways, apparently, in that, for instance, there was some
The proponents of reform stressed the hierarchy of desirable occupations for young women if they must find occupation in the city. However, for women there was always the danger of not only poverty and physical hardship, but also a threat to her very integrity. At the bottom were those registered prostitutes of the licensed quarters. Slightly better, were those women working in the commercial establishments such as cafes, restaurants, and drinking houses. They were assumed to be engaging in sex work along with the jobs for which they were ostensibly hired since many

200 Though not all mentioned them, those women who were not licensed prostitutes, *shishōfu* (private prostitute, coded by the character for private - *shi* ㄕ- added to the word *shōfu*, prostitutes), seemed to occupy a particularly derisive position, since their slavery was more difficult to measure as it was not institutionalized in a readily obvious manner. That is to say, a private prostitute, who occupied the privileged position of self-naming, in this instance was in the first instance, unrecognizable as *prostitutes* who were worthy of being saved were women who fell into such position from ignorance, poverty, and unscrupulous influences of brokers and others.
earned their living by being tipped. Then there were many women considered to be at risk: Women who worked in factories; Women who lived away from their parents to work in clerical position or as sales clerks; Domestic workers, usually hired in middle and upper class homes were least at risk, except when they elicited liaisons with delivery persons and others not to be trusted. Many women had low priority for being placed as domestic worker since working conditions were often poor.  

In published zadankai, in which those experienced in such work as rescue homes, juvenile delinquency, and other matters gathered around to share true stories they encountered in their line of work, reports abound of young men and women who came to the large cities and ended up either as urban vagrants or prostitutes. Yet it was as often repeated, a woman could always sell that last thing that kept her from becoming a vagrant in a way that men could not escape such fate. Not unexpectedly, rather then suggesting that it was ever more treacherous for men to go to the cities, since they could end up with absolutely no means of support, it was suggested that the women were more at risk.

201 The question of work as elaborated from the 1910s had focused, as noted in chapter 2, on shokugyô fujin -- which assumed a bias towards the new employment opportunities created with the demands of the changing economy. Yet, the cataloguing of new occupations necessarily required positioning of “older” occupations, such as factory and domestic work, in relation to these newer positions. For a list of fifty shokugyô for women listed by the Tokyo-shi Chûô Shokugyô Shôkaijo: see, Fujo shinbun 12 March 1922.

202 “Iede musume to iede otoko o kataru zadankai” le no hikari (April, 1937): 86-93.
It was also perhaps not a mere coincidence that most of the reformists came from the class to benefit from rural women placing themselves as domestic workers. From the early 1920s and into early 1930s, there were repeated reports of shortage of workers to meet the needs of urban dwellers for domestic workers. These reports indicated not the lack of women seeking employment, but rather the opposite. In, what seemed almost the direct inverse relation to the number of women seeking urban employment, only small number of women applied for domestic work. In 1921, Aikoku Fujin-kai, which had opened an employment agency in Tokyo (for women living within Tokyo and its surrounding neighborhoods), reported that within a month of opening the agency they received over one hundred inquires. The most sought after positions were clerical jobs, teaching, or private tutoring. As such, it indicated that many women with relatively high educational background were joining the ranks of urban workingwomen. In addition, katei fujin (housewives) of certain means also made inquires about work that they might do at home (naishoku), so as not to waste their time or talent. The report continued, however, that there were hardly any women who were looking for positions as domestic worker though this was clearly the job category with the largest demand. Even when there were few applicants looking for domestic positions, many requested specific agreements about working hours or wanted to be allowed to take classes during their non-working hours.\footnote{This demand to take classes, for instance, meant a much more clearly established contractual relationship where working hours, or rather hours they could be}
order to meet the demand of the Tokyo families who were looking to hire someone, Aikoku fujin-kai planned to negotiate with employment agencies in the Ueno area that attracted relatively higher number of women who were seeking domestic positions.\textsuperscript{204} Ueno was the gateway to Tokyo for those arriving from the provinces on trains. One of the \textit{hômeniin} 方面委員 (welfare worker) who worked out of Ueno reported that even women from chihô were not looking for domestic work.\textsuperscript{205} Many of the women seeking employment hoped to acquire new skills -- like working a sewing machine -- and obtain a factory position.\textsuperscript{206} With the variety of work that one might apply for which required neither high level of education nor skills the long (and often indeterminate) work hours, \\

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\textsuperscript{204} "Aikoku fujin-kai no fujin shokugyô sôdan-jo " 22 May 1921 Fujo shinbun.

\textsuperscript{205} Established first in Osaka in 1918 for work with the urban poverty, these relief workers were not licensed social workers. In 1936, it became, under new legislation an honorary position with a term of four years. In 1946, \textit{minsei-iin}, the current system of welfare workers, replaced \textit{hômen-iin}.

\textsuperscript{206} \textit{Hômeniin} 系统 was newly established in Tokyo in 1921 to assist with people having problems with the care of infants, children, and the elderly, people unable to make ends meet, those who were burdened with the care of injured and the ill, those who needed assistance in meeting bureaucratic obligations, and those who were looking for work. These men (and later women) were not professionals in the sense that they did not have particular training nor did they consider being \textit{hômeniin} as their primary obligations. However, some made it their full time work. In 1921, the \textit{hômeniin} in Tokyo were situated in Shitaya and Fukagawa area, both laboring class and older neighborhoods: by the end of the decade the system had spread nationally.

"Hômeniin o otozureru hitobito" 17 July 1921 Fujo shinbun.
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low pay, and intimate scrutiny of one's conduct made domestic work one of the least attractive positions for women looking for gainful employment. Indeed, the Chûô shokugyô shôkaijo located near the Kanda station could only fill four of the over one hundred positions for domestic work during the first few months after it opened the office in 1921. 207

While there were no job related biases against urbanites to fill such domestic positions -- in fact, if anything else, they would have been much better suited to fulfill the requirements of the employers' urban sensibilities -- many shared the assumption that such positions would be filled by women from the countryside. When discussing the desirability of urban employment for chihô fujin invariably jochû in a katai katei 堅い家庭 (a domestic position in prudent family) was promoted as the best the occupation for these women from the countryside, even by those men and women who bemoaned the flippant desires of young women who were attracted to the brightness of city life. Some commentators were quite blatant as to why women from the countryside could not find employment outside of domestic work based on their akusento (accent) or inakakusasa (uncouthness). "At first, the girls from the countryside plan to find a position as an office clerk. After not being able to find any jobs and when they are quite desperate, they apply for a position as jokyû at a café where they have a 'hiring' sign up all year round. Yet they are rejected since one of the requirements is

207 "Sukecchi: jidaisô no ichi bubun --Chûô shokugyô shôkai-jo no uketsuke nite” 31 July 1921 Fujo shinbun.
Furthermore, tension between the expectations of employers and employees as articulated by the employers never seemed to abate. The source of this tension was a contradictory desire on the part of the employers to have *junboku na inaka musume* (simple and homely girls from the countryside) who were malleable enough to be trained to meet the specific needs of the domestic situation of the employer on the one hand but women who had the strength of character to withstand the long hours and hard labor. Additionally, though they wanted plain, strong young women, the urban employers wanted someone with enough grace so as not to embarrass the family. Since in addition to various household chores, these women were also expected to serve food and refreshments to guests. Derisive references such as "*chiho-de no kigakikazu*" (clumsy bumpkins) slipped easily off the tongues of the reformers in their published conversations about the problem. In their mind, *jochū mondai* (problems with domestic workers) were twofold. On the one hand, it was the lack of women looking for positions, ostensibly because these rural

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208 “*Iede musume to iede otoko o kataru zadankai*” Ie no hikari (April 1937). In addition, article after article stressed the difficulty of finding jobs, except for position as domestic worker. "Even at times like this, of serious unemployment hell, there are always positions for *jochū-san*. Just at Iidabashi office, we have about one thousand positions available but there are very few women looking for jobs as domestic worker. After hearing about their circumstances, and they seem quite desperate, I offer them a *jochū* position, but they become indignant and walk away..." "*Shūshoku nittō: wakai josei no jōkyō*” 28 January 1934 Fukuoka *nichi nichī*. 

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women were attracted to flashier jobs in which they could earn more money or wear bright kimonos and wear make up.\textsuperscript{209} Moreover, on the other, it was the lack of refinement, whether in manners, speaking style, or in assumptions about appropriate behavior in everyday practice that made using them such work \textit{(hone ga oreru)} for the city folks.\textsuperscript{210}

Still for others, however, \textit{jochû mondai} meant something quite different. While all agreed upon the lack of applicants per job offerings, the reason why there were few applicants, some argued, was not simply the shallow desires of these uneducated women but

\textsuperscript{209} That the question of clothing and make up, in other words self adornment and pleasure of self-transformation figures in this debate, as it did in Fumi-san’s story and in a much more sinister manner in Genet’s \textit{Maids}. speaks to the categories through which one may gain proper subjectivity in feminist discourse. On Jean Genet’s \textit{Maids}, see Kristin Ross “Schoolteachers, Maids, and Other Paranoid Histories” Yale French Studies, 29(1997): 7-27.

\textsuperscript{210} One of the earliest article, in which \textit{jochû mondai} is used, refers to the term as \textit{iwayuru jochû mondai} (the so called domestic servant problem), signaling the already established notion of a \textit{problem}. Kuroda Sei ”\textit{Jochû mondai}” \textit{Fujo shinbun} no. 464, 1909. Organized efforts to educate domestic workers begin to be reported around 1919. However, the problem of the general “ignorance” of these women is abated, according to the reports from the 1920s. See, ”\textit{Jochû mondai ni tsuki}” \textit{Fujo shinbun} 1\textsuperscript{st} Sunday of June, 1923. And in an article decrying the shortage of \textit{jochû}, the writer insist that rural people need to be educated -- so that they would send their daughters to become \textit{jochû for city dwellers}. ”\textit{Bonbon jageshi jochû-nan no koe}” Chûgai shôgyô 21 August 1935. The idea of the young women of the countryside being so naive (or too ignorant, to be more blunt) was well accepted to the point that in one essay in May of 1935, it was assumed that the girls of Tôhoku were ignorant even of what a \textit{shôgi} did as work for her living. \textit{Kakusei} vol 25. no 5. (May 1935).
rather the unregulated working conditions that left the workers at the mercy of the idiosyncrasies of her employer. The critic and social activist, Yamakawa Kikue, writing for Fujin kôron reported that a report by the women members of the International Labor Organization resulted in a resolution to improve the condition under which domestic workers worked in and around Tokyo. Her recommendation included, guaranteeing at least eight hours of sleep each night and one day of rest per month. Moreover, they should be allowed two hours of free period each day during, Yamakawa suggested, they ought to be encouraged to pursue educational activities. As for basic needs, a domestic worker should be provided with a room at least the size of one and a half tatami with adequate ventilation and hygienic beddings. Yamakawa strongly recommends giving meals that were equivalent in quality to what the family ate. Yamakawa pointed out that due to the isolated nature of the work place, within the confines of private homes with little possibility of outside intervention, there were "more than few extreme cases of abuse." Finally, Yamakawa reflected on the tremendous difference in wealth between the worker and her employer. Many of the employers thought of themselves as supervising domestic workers in their home and giving them new skills using appliances or learning to use the telephone. For the young women, these skills that they learned, required in running a wealthy urban home, were of no practical value when they returned to their lives. Yamakawa concluded that
it was no wonder that educated but unemployed women refused to take on domestic work.\textsuperscript{211}

Whether any of the women who were present one evening at Seishô-ji temple in the Shiba area of Tokyo were aware of such recommendations, they all agreed that staying up late for the return of the husband and getting up at five in the morning made it impossible to rest sufficiently. The changes they hoped for were such things as not having to eat leftovers out of dishes that had been picked over, being referred to by their name instead of \textit{uchi no gejo}, the workers and the social reformers actively recommending domestic work for job seekers.\textsuperscript{212}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{211} The number of women employed in domestic positions, according to Yamakawa was over one million, equivalent to those women in factory jobs. In her estimation, what had to change was the recognition on the part of the employers that these were wage earners. Yamakawa Kikue "Naigai jihyô" \textit{Fujin kôron} (March 1931): 179-181. See also, Iwasaki Eiko "Jochû seido no kaizen ni tsuite" \textit{Sahaki jigyô kenkyû} (March 1932): 46-49.
\item \textsuperscript{212} "Shujin to issho no shokuji wa arigata meiwaku" \textit{Miyako shinbun} 7 March 1934. Nagadai Yoshi of Shokugyô shôkai-jo for the city of Osaka called it "modan jochûsan ideorogi" and listed salary, food, and sleeping hours as the three most important things that needed to be established for the workers. "Jochû-san wa kô tsukau" \textit{Osaka mainichi} 28 March 1933.
\end{itemize}
To at least one observer, the reformists appeared self-righteous and hypocritical in both assuming a position not only of social superiority -- refinement and protection form underclass dangers -- but also of maintaining a level of exploitation of workers unacceptable in industrial settings. In Fujimori Seikichi's popular play, *Naniga kanojo o sô sasetaka* 何か彼女をそうさせたのか (What made her do what she did?), Sumiko who was sold to a theatrical group, then into domestic work, in the end burns down a rescue home run by Christian missionary women. She had narrowly escaped being raped by the music teacher in whose house she worked as a servant. Later, in the rescue home where she found refuge after a suicide attempt, the matron demands that Sumiko make a confession of her sordid experiences with men in front of the assembly at the Sunday service. It was, in the matron's eyes, enough that Sumiko had been exposed to sexual aggression, whether she invited it or not. Employing the belief that it was always women's "purity" that was compromised in such a situation, the matron tormented Sumiko by declaring that even though she looked innocent and pure, Sumiko was, in fact a deeply sinful person. As the matron pressed upon Sumiko to make a confession, Sumiko cries out "this can't be God's love." Fujimori's play marks not only the abusive relationships that domestic workers often found themselves in, with no place to turn to but to run away, but also the reformers' assumptions about the personal qualities of

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213 Fujimori Seikichi *Naniga kanojo o sô sasetaka* (Kaizô-sha, 1927). Made into a film in 1930, it was voted the best movie by *Kinema junpô*. Tazaki, *ibid.*, 174.
young women. The play dramatically exposed the abuse that many young women experienced. Similarly, the author of the article *Jochû no jisatsu to hanzai kenkyû* (Study of suicide and crime committed by domestic workers), concluded that workers had little protection from their employers in matters of maintaining decorum and protecting one's job. The poet Imai Kuniko commented that she was shocked by the number of letters to the advice column in which women wrote of being harassed sexually.\(^{214}\)

**THE DANGEROUS CITY**

Rural leaders and ideologues had written extensively of the evil influence of urban culture. The disapproval of urban influence was a repudiation of *moga* and city life as organically incompatible rural life and nature. It was, however, also the need to maintain the rural villages and the farms populated with the female labor. Thus, what rural leaders and ideologues sought were the right kinds of women. In this framework of competing reasons for why women should remain in the countryside, there were two related models of

\(^{214}\) Kido Reiken, "*Jochû no jisatsu to hanzai kenkyû*" *Kakusei* 23.12 (December 1933), 24.1 (January 1934), 24.2 (February 1934), 24.3 (March 1934), 24.5 (May 1934). See also *Jiji shinpô* 16 April 1934. Contemporary international division of reproductive work has produced accounts of foreign domestic workers. Though, these women were employed within Japan, the critical examination compelled by the current situation is suggestive. See for instance: Rachel Salazar Parreñas, *Servants of Globalization: Women, Migration and Domestic Work* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2001) and Christine B. N. Chin, *In Service and Servitude: Foreign Female Domestic Workers and the Malaysian “Modernity” Project* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998).
articles: one enumerated the miseries of those failed victims of the city and the other, though similar, accentuated the undesirable and incompatible nature of city life due to differences in *culture* 文化.\textsuperscript{215}

Stories of the dangers lurking around the corner in big cities appeared in newspapers and magazines like *Fujo shinbun*, *Kakusei*, and *Ie no hikari*. However, surprisingly little space was accorded for publishing such articles in *Yamagata-ken nôkai-hô*. Though it was published continuously from 1906, it was not until the April 1929 issue (No 91), long after the first articles about *tokai-byô* 都会病 (city fever) first appeared in other magazines that an explicit essay on the detriments of leaving the villages appeared. Even this article was a reprint of one that first appeared in *Gifu-ken nôkai-hô*.

The article, addressed to both young men and women, nonetheless reminded the readers that according to an American observer, it was "first the girls who left the rural area and then the boys that followed their childhood friends to the city." Citing Emerson as a source, the anonymous writer points that women represented virtue and without her, village life could not sustain the benefits of virtuous life. Though here, the lesson was not lost, as the author quickly underscored the important rejoinder, that to be more or less that woman of virtue, she had to stay on the farm.\textsuperscript{216}

\textsuperscript{215} There was a "third" model, that of exultations of pastoral life. See, for instance, Itagaki Kuniko, *Shôwa senzen, senchûki no nóson seikatsu: zasshi Ie no hikari ni miru* (Tokyo: Mitsumine shôbô, 1992).

\textsuperscript{216} "Rison bôshi to danjo seinen no kyôyô" *Yamagata-ken nôkai-hô* no 91 (April 1929): 38-39.
In an issue of the same magazine, several months later, the same article was reprinted in part, but was followed with references to ancient Greek text (Girisha no furuki sho). According to the text referenced, the first condition of managing a farm was to acquire a virtuous wife (zenryō naru tsuma). Yet, Togô Minoru, a scholar of agronomy, wrote:

When we look at how these young women who have left the native places to work in factories in the city (we see that) have almost all been polluted, not only in their bodies but also in their spirit....

Exhorting the readers that the danger these women posed were not only in endangering their well being but also the impact they will have on the countryside when they return to take refuge in the countryside, demoralized from their experience. He concludes that:

The urgent business of the time is to prevent the migration of young men and women from the villages. In order to do this, we must industrialize agriculture and agriculturalize industries (kōgyō no nōson-ka).217

In addition, in the same issue Yamazaki Nobukichi whose successful agrarian management in Aichi-ken accorded it the nickname "Nihon no denmâku" (Denmark of Japan) deploys Napoleon as the source of the following wisdom:

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217 Togô Minoru "Keiai seru nōson no danjo seinen e" Yamagata-ken nōkai-hō no. 94 (July 1929): 3-6.
A place will not only be strong and stable but will flourish if the women are reliable, but the country will weaken and the homes deteriorate if she is not to be. This has been so from time in memorial.  

These essays employed for the most part the appeal to readers' sense of immanent rural demise by deploying an American scholar, Napoleon, a classical Greek text, and Emerson to authenticate the universal danger that absence of women (as well as the presence of certain women), or the absence of female presence could impose on a farming community. They are similar in tone to those found in the early issues of _le no hikari_. By the time these articles were appearing the Agricultural Cooperative magazines, _le no hikari_ had shifted its tone considerably in order to employ jitsuwa (case studies), and to focus on keeping the women from making a fateful trip to the metropolis. That is to say, a shift from essays that focused on the demise of the rural area in absence of women to those that scared women away from the cities.

The danger of the city started with women leaving the villages. The articles placed significant emphasis on the phenomenon of runaways. They depicted young men and women, but particularly women, to have silly and careless attitude when leaving their native places. They left their home village seduced by

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what they assumed to be an easily accessible and luxuriant way of life. Sensational stories of those who were lost in the sea of crime and poverty filled the pages of *Ie no hikari*. There were stories about young men who were unable to make enough money to eat properly so that they might endure physical labor; there were stories about women who were led astray by seemingly friendly men who rob them of their most precious possession.\(^{219}\)

The 1933 Tokyo Metropolitan Juvenile Court published result of an analysis of the 1,123 youth taken into custody. The summary of the findings was published in Yamagata-ken nôkai-hô in December of that year. Though in almost all the narrative articles it is the women who are blamed for luring men away from the villages, the numbers in custody show that there were 1,017 men and 106 women. Reminiscent of other surveys of similar nature, it indicated the "impulse" that led them to come to Tokyo. Amongst young men, "looking for work" far outweighed any category at 468 followed by 295 who arrived with job prospects. For young women, the breakdown was 32 with prospects for a job and 43 who came looking for work. Only 84 men and 4 women came to study in Tokyo, two women, and two men each came for sightseeing. 36 males and 22 females reported to have arrived without any real reason. One data that is interesting is that for 1933 figures more

than half of the young women who came to Tokyo succeeded in were finding employment in Tokyo.\textsuperscript{220}

It was not, however, enough to scare less resourceful young women away from the city. The work of the reformers included making cities unattractive even for the educated women. Like the story of Fumi-san, the two stories that follow were published as \textit{jitsuwa} (true, or factual story). Titles, "\textit{Chihiro musume to Tokyo-mono no kekkon, umaku ittaka shippai shitaka? Saikin atta futatsu no jitsurei}" (地方娘と東京者の結婚、うまくいったか、失敗したか.) (Marriage between country girls and Tokyoite. Did it succeed or did it fail? Two recent real cases.)\textsuperscript{221}

\textbf{THE DREAM DESTROYED IN AN EVENING}

\begin{quote}
Hayashi Fumiko was born into a middling farming family in the city of Fukuoka and had graduated from a women’s higher school. Upon graduation, she thought to herself:

\begin{quote}
I cannot stand to live a plain life so far away from the capital. If it is all the same, I want to go to Tokyo where it is beautiful and fun.
\end{quote}

While there were many marriage proposals, she refused all of them, unable to give up her dream of living in Tokyo. As her youth began to decline, she became irritated and anxious. It was when she was twenty-seven that assistance of a go-between service was sought out by the family. They had no relations in Tokyo that they
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{220} "Tokai no mushu" Yamagata-ken nōkai-hō (December 1933): 46-47.
\textsuperscript{221} \textit{Ie no hikari} (October 1929): 39-42.
might rely on for an introduction. The photograph of Fumiko dressed in fine kimono went to Tamura, a thirty-five year old banker, a “true Tokyoite” (kissui no evoke). Soon after, a photograph of Tamura, chic in that particularly urban way arrived at Fumiko’s house.

Both Fumiko and Tamura waited with anticipation as the express train from Shimonoseki carrying Fumiko arrived in Tokyo. Tamura wondered to himself: What will she be like? What will her first words be? Fumiko was overwhelmed by the elegance of Tamura, much more so than she had imagined she could have been from having only looked at the photograph. With excitement and embarrassment, she felt like a “maiden of eighteen years of age,” rather than the twenty-seven year old woman that she was.

What did Tamura see?

"Was this the Fumiko that he had seen in the photograph?" Her hair, oiled and coifed, had lost shape from the long trip. The face powder she had so carefully applied at the beginning of her trip now accentuated the dark skin that shone with oil. Her kimono was disheveled. Her obi was unfashionably square and large. She was a mismatch of primary colors. Finally, Tamura saw her black hands, her long black fingernails. All his dreams were shattered at that moment. He took to bed during the wedding ceremony. Fumi returned to Kyushu after few days rejected and humiliated. As she rode the train back, however, she realized that the beckoning call
she heard on her way to Tokyo "Tokyo, Tokyo" now sounded more like "kokyô, kokyô (home, home)."

"NANTOSHITEMO CHIGAУ SEIKATSU KIBUN" なんとしても違う生活気分

Sumiko was born into a particularly respected family in the village, and possessed beauty and elegance that brought much admiration from all around her. She had that superior "urban" appearance. All those around her approved of her marriage to young Nishikawa, an eldest son of a shinise family in Shitamachi area of Tokyo. It appeared that the couple was happiness itself. However, Nishikawa’s mother could not get over the feeling that Sumiko’s movement and her speech lacked sprightliness. There were young women all around the Nishikawa’s whose edokkoben and stylish fashion reminded Nishikawa’s mother of what she needed to accomplish in making Sumiko an appropriate wife for her son.

It was soon after Sumiko’s wedding that mother-in-law and the new bride went to the bathhouse. Sumiko recoiled from the embarrassment of having to bathe at a communal bath. To expose one’s naked body, that of a new bride symbolized by her newly coiffed hair was nearly more than she could have imagined. But as she found a spot in the far corner of the room, her mother-in-law discovered, for the first time, Sumiko’s well proportioned body, her skin as white as snow, and was filled with pride. She wanted to tell all:

Look at how splendid a woman my son’s wife is...
Brought to the center of the room, her body reflected by light from numerous mirrors, Sumiko was placed in center stage. Even as she tried to contain her anger and her shame, her mother-in-law proceeded to wash her. Sumiko returned home with make-up newly applied by the hands of her now proud mother-in-law. It was then that Sumiko decided to leave the Nishikawa’s that night.

Even after numerous attempts through letters and personal appeals by the Nishikawa’s, Sumiko stuck steadfast to her promise to live in the village. As she regained her life in the countryside, her beauty blended with that of the hues of nature: rather than her previous buoyant charm, she was filled with a sober, simple beauty.

These stories, published in 1929 make clear that in some ways it did not matter how you went to the city, who you were, and who rejected the rural body in the city. The unnaturalness of city life was such that a rejection by an urbanite, as in the case of Fumiko only enlightened her to the goodness of the countryside. If one possessed something useful to a city dweller, ever greedy and unscrupulous, one would be cannibalized, as Sumiko feared she would be by her mother-in-law. Only in returning to her natural setting, was she able to not only regain her sense of self but also to transform herself into one with the land. These stories had the function of leaving any possibility, at least on the question of rural women in urban setting, for finding a rightful place in the city. The only place for rural women in the city was a temporary one, such as in domestic service where the myth was the expectation that the
young woman would go from her birth home to the house where she worked few years and return home, polished, and refined. Yet in many ways, it did little to persuade the rural residents who needed to make decisions whether or not to go to the city, whether or not to send their children to a factory or to place them in someone’s home.

**Local Logic**

The promise that working in the home of a middle class family would teach the unsophisticated rural women manners and skills needed for fulfilling their role as *ryôsai kenbo* (good wives and wise mothers) did little to dissipate the rural ideologues and leaders’ scorn for all work requiring the removal of women from their home community. They were too aware of the expectation that would be placed on these women, if and when they returned to the farm communities. Instead of gas burners and running water, instead of polite speech and formal etiquette, what awaited them were long hours of work in the fields and subjection to in-laws who had little appreciation for "Tokyo dialect." People in the countryside were well aware of the possibilities of abuse of power by the employers. They had been, often enough, witness to the sight of a woman returning to the village heavy with child. Their justification for hiring out young men and women was economic necessity. The determining factor for an occupational choice was often dictated by the amount of cash one could borrow as advanced payment, and the skill and tactics of the job brokers.
Farmers who sold their daughters and daughters who choose to leave rural communities expressed their perspectives as a situation that posed both exploitation and opportunities. While aware of the dangers in unknown towns and cities, they recognized the simple truth: women as well as men were expected to contribute to the family economy. Men left the farmlands to work as day laborers, as construction workers, and to labor in mines and in factories often at great risk to their health and life from unprotected working environment, dangerous work, and less than optimal living conditions. Women too were expected to bring in much needed cash in ways they were able. Furthermore, even as the reformers derided parents who sold daughters into prostitution, prostitution was legal. While the rural authorities chided them for sending their sons and daughters in to urban areas, the household head had the legal right to contract out the labor of family members. Finally, the urban dwellers and rural residents concurred on an important point. To the urban dwellers, the hinterlands of Japan were the source of cheap labor. To the rural residents, cities and towns promised wages much needed.

Crisis Rhetoric

It was not until 1931 that the attention of the reformers shifted significantly to the source of prostitutes. This change in shift coincided with the crop failure of 1931 that weakened an already fragile farm economy. First on 30 October, Asahi shinbun published an article entitled "Purchase of government land with daughter's
ransom." This article lays out the long-term economic stress of the farming communities in the Northeast. In Mogami-gun of Yamagata Prefecture over eighty-five percent of the land belonged to the government. The land consisted mostly of forested areas where for generations residents availed themselves of lumber and twigs. Many had cleared wooded areas for cultivation. When in recent years the Ministry of Finance re-established the government ownership of the area, residents were offered a "chance" to purchase the land. Unless they paid the asking price, as high as three hundred yen in some instances for about a quarter of an acre of rice field, they lost the right to cultivate the land they had worked on for years. Many borrowed money and others sold their daughters to embrace the land, their lifeline. With the drop in the price of the land to about a third of what they had paid the government and with the high interest rate on the loans they had taken out to finance the purchase, many were forced to send their second and third daughters away. In the village of Nishi Oguni, thirty-nine girls were sold to licensed quarters, twenty as domestic servants, fifteen as waitresses, and eleven as geisha. "It had become rare, indeed, to see a young women in this village" concluded a reporter.\textsuperscript{222} The following month, Kakusei-kai and the Women's Reform Society conducted an investigation on the background of the women who left their native village of Nishi Oguni. The investigators Mitsumiya Kazunari of Meiji Gakuin and Hashimoto

\textsuperscript{222} Asahi shinbun 30 October 1931.
Masayuki of the Agricultural School of Tokyo Imperial University conducted over seven days a survey of more than four hundred women between the ages of fifteen and twenty-five who considered Nishi Oguni as their permanent home. They concluded that much could be blamed on the social and economic conditions of the region. Published originally in six parts, starting in December of 1931 in The Purity, the survey gained a wider public attention when reprinted as a volume in 1932. Overnight, Nishi Oguni had gained recognition as an emblem of the poverty of the Northeast, the backwardness of the people, and the exposure to danger that threatened young women. Nishi Oguni came to be known as *musume jigoku* (maidens' hell).

Other reports followed in journals like Chûô kôron and *Fujin kôron.* An elderly woman quoted by Shimamura Senju in an account of the disastrous famine of the Northeast, "Touring the Famine Region," spoke of the reliance on cash particularly in bad years to procure food, and to pay for wood to make charcoal, an important source of income in the mountains. She went on to say:

> It was not only in the past that people ate the flesh of others. We too are eating each other's flesh. To let the children live, we give them the flesh of their parents. If

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223 Matsumiya Kazunari and Hashimoto Masayuki "Nôson no hihei to jinshin baibai mondai: Yamagata-ken Nishi Oguni-mura ni okeru shôgi dekasegi no jôtai chôsa hôkoku" Kakusei 21.12, 22.1, 22.3, 22.4, 22.6 (1932).

you try to save the parents, they have to eat the flesh of
the child. Now, I am trying to survive by eating my
daughter.\footnote{Chûô kôron July 1932.}

By the summer of 1934 the numerous articles and reports
makes visible that this was an expansive public event. Many of the
articles published the concerns and activities of reformists and local
leaders alike. The Patriotic Women’s Association had earmarked
money for interest free loans to parents of young women.\footnote{NFMSS 10:157.} Many
communities held workshops to discuss the problems of selling
daughters. For instance in Shinjô area, the Youth Organization
joined the Imperial Military Reservists Association in the campaign.
On 24 July, educators, law enforcement officers, and others joined
some fifty residents of Nishi Oguni to discuss preventative
measures.\footnote{Yamagata shinbun, 12 July 1934, 26 July 1934.}

The particular conditions of 1934, leading it to become the
touchstone for rural crisis of twentieth century was none other than
bad weather. The growing season had started well enough in the
spring. Nevertheless, early in July heavy rain and flood deluged
the fields. Temperatures in July and August were unseasonably
cool and crops failed to grow. By mid-August, there was serious
concern over crop damage due to the unusual weather. The great

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{225} Chûô kôron July 1932.
\bibitem{226} NFMSS 10:157.
\bibitem{227} Yamagata shinbun, 12 July 1934, 26 July 1934.
\end{thebibliography}
crop failure of 1934 is often compared to those of the late eighteenth century Temmei Famines (1781-1788).

From late August the prospect of a serious crop shortage appeared imminent. On 12 September, Kita Murayama-gun Agricultural Society sponsored a meeting to work out countermeasures.\textsuperscript{228} On 22 September local officials in Shinjō area met to draw up a petition for disaster relief from the government. The following day, leaders representing nine communities near Obanazawa met with prefectural bureaucrats and staff members of the agricultural experiment station.\textsuperscript{229} In the worst region, Mogami, there was a reduction of seventy five percent in rice yield from the previous year’s bumper crop. Other regions followed with large losses: seventy percent (Nishi Okitama), and sixty-three percent (Kita Murayama). Even when compared to the average yield over the five years preceding to offset the unusually high yield of the previous year, the figures remained seventy-two, sixty-six, and fifty-nine percent. This was indeed a significant reduction, particularly remembering that 1931 and 1932 were also years of loss. In Akita Prefecture, the hardest area hit was Kita Akita-gun with some villages reporting no yield. The damages were costly; in Yamagata alone, twenty-three million yen worth of crops were lost. For the six Tōhoku prefectures, the amount was one hundred twenty four million yen.\textsuperscript{230}

\textsuperscript{228} Yamagata shinbun 14 September 1934.
\textsuperscript{229} Yamagata-ken Yamagata-ken shi vol. 5 (Yamagata-ken, 1986): 583-4.
\textsuperscript{230} ibid., 567.
Some of the most widely publicized outcomes were the increase in undernourished children, default on teachers’ salary (a local obligation), and migration of workers. Article after article depicted the enormity of hardships for both individuals and community. A reporter estimated that by the end of the year fifty thousand children would be undernourished. Everyday, wrote another reporter, young woman board the train from Yuzawa station in Akita for work in Osaka, Gifu, Aichi, Shizuoka, and Chiba. On 8 October, for instance, an article reported that ten women left Yuzawa to work in a textile factory in Gifu, accompanied by an "agent with piercing eyes." Salaries for teachers were withheld in some places for six months to a year. One hundred twenty towns and villages defaulted on teacher's pay in Fukushima.

From one county in Miyagi Prefecture, two hundred thirteen women went out to work as geishas, prostitutes, and waitresses between August of 1933 and the end of September 1934. In the same county, two hundred twenty five boys and girls ages fifteen and sixteen were contracted out for three to five years of work. The advance in most of these cases was only twenty or thirty yen. Elsewhere, in Iwate Prefecture, one hundred ninety seven women

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231 Fujo shinbun 1794.5
232 Akita sakigake shinpô 10 October 1934.
233 Fujo shinbun 1796.6.
234 Tokyo nichi nichi shinbun 4 November 1934.
235 Kahoku shinpô 17 October 1934.
were “lost” to prostitution, domestic work, and other employment.\footnote{\textit{Tokyo asahishinbun} 13 October 1934.} A farmer in discussing the increase in miscarriages and stillbirths speculated that perhaps this was better than to grow up only to be sold.\footnote{\textit{Hōchi shinbun} 8 November 1934.}

\textit{To the Rescue?: Sites of Conflicting Desires}

The records indicate that increase in publicity encouraged organizations, business, and individuals to respond generously, some rather with imagination. Large number of articles report on these responses, which for the most part was mean to be read by urban dwellers. Women and students stood on sidewalks collecting donations in Tokyo.\footnote{\textit{Fujo shinbun} 1799.3.} Mitsui and Mitsubishi contributed four million yen.\footnote{\textit{Osaka asahi shinbun} 30 October 1934.} School children saved their allowances to contribute. Saitō Yusaku, a fourth grade student from Tokyo sent in the money earned by selling \textit{nattō}.\footnote{\textit{Tokyo asahi shinbun} 24 November 1934.} Factories contacted local governments offering positions as operatives.\footnote{\textit{Yamagata shinbun} 10 November 1934, 13 November 1934.} The city of Nagoya invited six hundred women to relocate with the assistance of its job referral service.\footnote{\textit{Fujo shinbun} 1802.2.} In addition, from the police department in Dairen came
the offer to hire young women as domestic servants in the homes of Japanese families.\textsuperscript{243}

A Tokyo high school teacher visited the Shinjô police department for assistance in finding a suitable young woman for domestic work. The worker would be paid about six yen per month and perhaps be allowed to go to a sewing school.\textsuperscript{244} Other request by mail came from Tochigi, Yamanashi, and Tokyo.\textsuperscript{245} One of the more unusual offers came from a father in Niigata Prefecture. He was looking for a woman of about sixteen or seventeen years of age for his eighteen-year-old son.\textsuperscript{246}

Those organizations with experience before 1934, were clearly the best organized and efficient, both in the number of women they "rescued" and in the programs they were able to offer. The Salvation Army reported the ability to house two hundred women in their House of Light, rescue homes. In addition, the women would receive instruction in making phone calls and manners suitable for working in urban households. Once hired, their salary of about ten yen per month would be sent directly to their parents.\textsuperscript{247} Kubushiro Ochimi of the Christian Women's Reform Society toured the Northeast after preparing the women’s home to house women from Tohoku. The Patriotic Women’s Association announced their

\textsuperscript{243} ibid., 1799.3
\textsuperscript{244} Yamagata shinbun 7 November 1934.
\textsuperscript{245} ibid., 8 November 1934, 14 November 1934.
\textsuperscript{246} ibid., 17 November 1934.
\textsuperscript{247} Kahoku shinpô 10 November 1934.
plan to relocate each month, forty or fifty from Miyagi and a hundred plus women from Yamagata Prefecture.\footnote{Tokyo asahi shinbun 23 November 1934.}

Indeed, as the proletarian poet Nakano Shigeharu observed, "the pages of newspapers and magazines were filled with stories of the Tohoku famine and the names of those who gave money and goods."\footnote{Ibid., 30 November 1934.} Yet, there were also stories that raised doubts in the minds of some reformers. One article reported of several women who left the town of Tajima in the Aizu area of Fukushima to work in Ichinomiya city only to run away due to conditions worse than what they had left behind. Noda Hisako and four others were hired in January at the same factory. They were promised sixty yen per month. Once there, they found conditions to be deplorable and pay nearly nonexistent. They wrote to their families asking for return trip fare. The owner of the factory would not allow them to leave, saying that they had not worked off the debt incurred for the initial travel.\footnote{Nagoya shinbun 15 February 1935.}

In another case, the generous assistance disguised exploitation of cheap labor. The writer of a letter to the village office, for instance, said that he "could not sympathize enough with the victims of famine.

It so happens that I need a sales clerk at my store. In the beginning, I will not be able to pay any wages, but
after three month I will pay three yen, and increase it to five yen after six month....

As disturbing as the clearly exploitative manner in which potential employers sought cheap (or free) labor is exemplified above, it was not a simple situation. There were reports, for instances, such as when the villagers of Nishi Oguni sought an extension of contracts as several young women from the village had completed their years of service under the original terms. They parents with community leaders argued that not only did these young women send money while working away from home but they also contributed in an indirect manner by not consuming the limited supply of food.

While praising the work of volunteers, Nakano cautioned the suitability of some aids particularly as most efforts looked for short-term gains. He advised that the organizations involved in various programs needed to examine their weaknesses and strengths.

This will not be the last crop failure or famine and it could happen to other areas as well. The more one makes public the mistakes made in such efforts, the more efficiently we would be able to organize next time around. I hope that we not only pay attention to whether help is organized, but also to the process of how it is done.

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251 Höchi shinbun 3 November 1934.
252 Yamagata shinbun 16 October 1934; Tokyo nichi nichi shinbun 26 October 1934.
253 Tokyo asahi shinbun 30 November 1934.
The socialist Yamakawa Hitoshi, writing for *Yomiuri shinbun* also praised the donations of clothes and money as well as the act of saving women by finding alternative employment. "Even if it is one person in a thousand, or one in a hundred that is saved, it is a good thing." However, like Nakano, he too warned against only looking at the immediate problem.

It would not seem that the practice of selling daughters is going to be abolished because of these efforts. The families who sell their daughters are not necessary the ones at the very bottom of the economic scale. Even in good years, daughters are sold... and it always seems the case that in areas where the practices prevail, both parents and daughters considered it advancement. It may be caused by low moral standard due to mean life; it may also be a problem of job referral systems... However, what is of most importance is to improve conditions under normal circumstances.\(^{254}\)

Takamure Itsue addressed her concerns by pointing out that it was not only selling daughters to the licensed quarters and geisha houses that was deplorable but also the general practice of multi-year labor contract. There is no difference, she said, in that money is given as a ransom to the family for which the workers freedom is curtailed:

\(^{254}\) *Yomiuri shinbun* 11 January 1935.
...many young women are being routed to work in factories and private residences but they too incur debt to be paid over several years. It is not always appreciated. For even though it might be better in some ways than the degraded life that awaits some, the money they receive is considerably less. A life of a factory worker and domestic servant is a life of physical labor without the joys of pretty kimonos and cosmetics. It is another form of musume jigoku.  

She was not alone in her thinking. While not as explicit in their criticism, reporters exhibited the complexity of the problem in their coverage. "Kanashimi o noseta miuri ressha" (Train of sorrow carrying girls in bondage), appeared on 16 December in Akita sakigake shinpô.  

Last year there were trains carrying women leaving villages once every three or four days. Lately groups of women board the train daily. Most will work as factory operatives, but about ten percent will end up in licensed quarters.  

If the multitude of responses, whether representing various forms assistance or rescue, or the articles that criticized the backwards "cultural" habits of people of the Northeast or the pervasive fragility of agricultural economy, the question of who was

255 Fujo shinbun 1798.5.  
256 Akita sakigake shinpô 16 December 1934.
saved and who was a victim remained. The cover of *The Poverty of Northeast and Prevention of Traffic in Women* published by the Aomori Employment Referral Service Office in December of 1935 shows, in the background, not as one might expect, the licensed quarters but factory buildings. Was it supposed to suggest that women were *saved* into working in a factory? Alternatively, was it supposed to show that they were *saved* from work in a factory? Was it clearer whether working in a private home would guarantee a safer environment for a young woman then, say a factory or a commercial establishment? Indeed the aggregated reports of the six prefectures repeated the pattern of showing women who left the area for work as commercial establishments, factories, private homes, “others”. Of the more than 79,000 women who left their home villages to seek employment over half (43,155) found initial employment within their home prefecture. About the same number of women, that is about 58% were employed as factory operatives or as domestic workers. Another 8,800 or so women found work in the “other” category. That about 35% of the women found work, either within or without their home prefectures in various commercial establishments, including licensed brothels and cafes, indicate the lack of employment opportunity for women with the particular skills in farming and sericulture. Were all of these women assumed to have been “lost” to the risks of what *miuri* symbolized? Indeed, in the text that precedes the statistical data for the workers and their occupation, it is suggested:
What we cannot forget is that for people of Tôhoku, even those women who were taken away in the name of work like domestic servants, factory operatives, or others, there are many who are coerced into degrading labor. Even when they are sent to work in legitimate factory, as we saw with the examples of negotiations over male laborers, there are many women who are exploited in factories that exceeds brothels and such (in abusive conditions), and for small advance payments... It is quite natural that if and when mothers has to send their daughters away, they would consider it advantageous to have become prostitutes with a higher advance pay.²⁵⁷

For all of the press generated during the winter of 1934-35, by the spring of 1935, few publications appeared mentioning either selling or rescuing daughters. The three principal organizations continued their efforts. The Christian Women's Reform Society housed ninety-eight women in 1935, about one tenth of the women housed in 1934. Instead of rescuing hundreds of women each month, Patriotic Women's Association reported at the end of 1936, a cumulative figure of five hundred eighty five girls saved.

At the level of press coverage, whether the crisis was thought to be contained or not, one finds few articles about girl-less villages. Yet, women still migrated from their home communities in search of work. Instead of descriptions of parasitic job brokers, the warnings by law enforcement officers

²⁵⁷ Ibid., 48-50.
received coverage. Many communities had elaborate system of job referrals in close corporation with social welfare agencies and the police. Follower up reports suggested the ruined health of many young women who went to cities and factories during the crisis of 1934. By mid 1937, the attention of the public had been drawn to the war in China. In place of the poverty of farmers, mobilization for increased food production took over the pages of newspaper. This was particularly true in the women’s periodicals.258

The contentious record it produced in terms of questions of what counted as legitimate work, decent conditions, terms of employment that constituted acceptable level of safe guards, and so on, remained. This was not the first time maleability of meanings are recorded. However, it did have a particularly broad range of voices contributing to this negotiation. Even then, there were some things that were made ever more clearer; The differences between the city and the countryside, and in particular, the difference between urban and rural women.

From 1952 through 1953, the newly created Women and Children’s Bureau of conducted a survey to investigate the parental backgrounds of prostitutes.259 The report covers background information such as the occupation of the parents, monthly income and the conditions of cultivatable land available to them, the number of siblings in the household, as well as whether or not the

258 See for instance Fujo shinbun, Fujin kōron, and others.
area experienced air raids during the war. The report does not indicate why Yamagata and Kagoshima were singled out for the survey. If the reason for the choice of these two prefectures as the survey target was the overwhelmingly large number of women from these two prefectures who were working as prostitutes it is not established. The survey included only thirty households from Yamagata and eleven from Kagoshima. While, in 1945, newspapers in Yamagata carried advertisement for jobs for women as "special entertainers," this was not an isolated situation. These women, promised housing, clothing, and a good salary, were to be hostesses and prostitutes for the occupying military.

The case of Tôhoku is not an isolated situation. Rather it is a graphic example of the tension that existed between cities and countryside, between reformists and victims. It illustrates the power dynamics of access to the language of legitimacy and authority. Though the meaning of "selling daughters" remained ambiguous, for rural residents seeking gainful employment was no longer a private family matter. Finding work had become a public process as police, social agencies, and bureaucrats increasingly tried to control and define its terms.

Yet rather than as one of many moments, no doubt, that these questions and related ones were shaped, the crisis of 1935 is the point of entry for representing the lives of rural women in both labor and women’s history. Other than the discourse of "general

\[260\] See, Fujime, *Sei the rekishigaku*, 326-342
misery of life in the pre-war period," in which this figuration of rural women is located, the public attention and reformist campaign remains one of the few occasions historians mention farm women. Just as the imagination of the whole country was captured by the crisis of 1934, recent publications continue to single out the selling of girls to indicate the depth of the economic crisis in agrarian communities. 261 This is one act of "writing women into history" amongst many to be sure. However, if this functions as the story that makes rural "women" visible in "women's history" might it not be a point of entry to illustrates both the "variety of positions one finds in feminist writing" and also "the different ways in which the social and individual identity of 'woman' was conceived"262 rather than a "crisis" that is easily recuperated into a "narrative of orderly and continuous historical tradition?"263

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261 In the recently published text Shiryō ni miru Nihon josei no ayumi rural women are introduced through the representation and thus identification, yet again, through the photograph of girls saved by the Salvation Army in 1934. Sōgō josei-shi kenkyū kai hen Shiryō ni miru Nihon josei no ayumi (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kobunkan, 2000): 168.
262 Joan Scott Only Paradoxes to Offer, 13.
263 Ibid., 1.
 CHAPTER 6

**AS FOR THE FUTURE**

What if, therefore, (but we are moving very fast here), the thought of the political were not necessarily mediated by the concept of productive culture? and what if thereby what might be called thinking were acknowledged to be always also something other than conceptualization, always also something more than the manipulation of concepts; what if, indeed, thinking were always also the surplus or supplement of conceptuality -- an erotics, for example?

-William Haver-

What would have Fumi-san said, if she had been able to respond. Would she have confirmed the "findings" made about "maid-servants" in the 1920s and 1930s? Would she say that it was intolerable working condition that made her leave Mochizuki's home? Would it perhaps be that she might

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264 "As for the future" was the last words spoken by Macabéa, before she died in the *Hour of the Star*. Lispector, 84.
implicate someone that she was trying to get away from the "unwanted attention?" Would she simply laugh at us for asking the question and walk away? Was her fate similar to Sumiko? Would she end up in a reform institution? Would she do better than Sumiko? Alternatively, would she be like one of Gotô Mitsuyos traveling companion, who left her employers house after working there only three months never to contact her family? Would it matter for me, for us to know? To whom would it matter? Are these the questions that we should be asking?

To know the answer to those questions, to seek the answer, is in part to only see Fumi-san as Mochizuki's figuration intended us to see. This would require us to think of Fumi-san in terms of the story that Mochizuki wrote, in the first instance. That is, this would be to ask of Fumi-san to “remain” in the representation of Mochizuki and speak back to us: to tell us more, to “flesh out” the Fumi-san of the story. Would it matter if we “read” and came to know Fumi-san’s story by placing her in the contrasting visual field of the urban-rural differences? What if we reminded ourselves that there were others like her who also had shown less than satisfaction in their domestic employment? What if we kept in mind the debates around 1934-35 that brought to surface so many contradictory positions, would this make it possible for us to understand Fumi-san or to know her? Is the problem that Mochizuki’s story was too short, that Fumi-san was not fully developed as a character?

In Mochizuki’s story, Fumi-san ceases to exist when not in her presence – thus we only see her through Mochizuki’s gaze as in when she is humiliated.
by Mochizuki as she experimented with make-up or Mochizuki sees her in the street wearing a gaudy outfit. Even if we were to gather all of the research and flesh out what experiences we can of, say, someone working as a domestic worker, what we would have is a reading strategy of Fumi-san based on what we might call the “genealogies of domestic workers” and substituting collective subjectivity based on aggregation of resemblances. That is, we would bring as if to layer clothes to cover the “scant” sketch of Fumi-san with what we know are records that we have already identified as similar or equivalent. The television serial Oshin is an exemplary figure of such aggregation.

**Oshin: Recuperated Figures**

In the aftermath of the phenomenal popularity of the NHK morning dram, Oshin broadcasted from 1983-84 the name “Oshin” came into stand in for many things to different women. Yet, a mere mention of “Oshin” to anyone old enough at the time to remember, would elicit some kind of recognition. As is the usual format for the morning broadcast, the drama was televised over a yearlong period in fifteen-minute segments in the morning and repeated at noon. With three successive actresses playing, the role of Oshin (Kobayashi Ayako, who rose to immediate stardom, Tanaka Yūko, and Otowa Nobuko) the series enjoyed a level of popularity quite unknown to date (even for the sometimes unforeseen popularity of these NHK dramas).

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265 I am stretching, as it were, the discussion of translation by Sakai on the mechanism of how we determine, or come to determine something as being different. Sakai, “Introduction,” op. cit.
The story of Oshin starts on a “memory trip” with a young nephew. The series, then, begins with the central character, comfortable and content in old age. Oshin is the story of a young girl growing up in a poor rural village in Tōhoku who experiences single-handedly many of the major events of modern women’s history. In fact, for those who are even remotely familiar with the outlines of “history,” they will recognize many of the significant events and the significance of her experience. Oshin is sent out at a young age to work, like so many other rural poor to lighten the family burden. While working for a lumber merchant, she is accused of theft and is sent home. As she walks through snow covered mountain trail towards home, she succumbs to fatigue and cold, only to be rescued by a young man. This young man is a soldier who runs away from his regiment during Russo-Japanese war. He teaches her how to read and write and gives Oshin a copy of Myôjô with Yosano Akiko’s well-publicized anti-war poem that is celebrated in some women’s history texts as one of the earliest feminist/anti-war text.

Oshin’s next work environment is a wealthy rice merchant in the port city of Sakata. In one episode, representing the day City of Sakata gets its first electric lamp, Oshin and the daughter of the merchant Kayo stand outside watching the electric poles being put up. An accident occurs in the process and one of the poles being falls endangering both Oshin and Kayo. Oshin rescues Kayo by risking her own life. In gratitude, her employer rewards Oshin with education to further her reading and writing ability. In addition, she is given lessons in soroban (abacus), cha-no-yu (tea ceremony), and ikebana (flower arrangement) among other things. She leaves Sakata when she marries a third son of a Saga area landlord and moves to Tokyo. Not only is this move important in terms of the plot narrative, it is an important move
because nothing can replace Tokyo as trope in the discourse of modernity. In Tokyo, she uses a sewing machine to help with her husband's textile business. At the same time, she has the gumption and the foresight to transform her skills from a *kamiyui* (a woman who specializes in arranging hair) to a hairdresser (who would cut, trim, as well as curl hair in the process of styling hair). Her clients, then, change from the housewives with cumbersome hairstyle to café waitresses and others who sports western hairstyles.

Written by Hashida Sugako, who in the process of researching for the story interviewed many "Oshin" models in Yamagata, Tokyo, and Saga as well as consulted large number of historical works written by women, particularly of those born during Meiji. This claim (and recognition) of the series projecting an "authentic" representation, based on historical documents, is part of the appeal of the television drama. That is, women audience -- most audience were assumed to be women -- identified with the hardship of Oshin's life as their own or the experience of their foremothers. Oshin's story is, then, "everywomen's story." This also explains why the show engendered much more favorable review -- quite separately from the issue of popularity -- in the first few months when the story was centered on the young Oshin. "Women who knew the coldness of doing laundry in snowy river knew the coldness and pain that Oshin experienced." "The audience were watching their own experience when Izumi Pinko (the actress)-- as Oshin's mother -- in an attempt to induce abortion kept on striking her large belly with a rock." Calling Tōhoku "the world of that mabiki (infanticide)," a commentator notes that there are over three million women in Japan who have experienced birth control means (*jinkō chōsetsu*, literally adjustments, suggesting, perhaps, abortion).
These women were "watching their own experiences," writes the commentator, as Oshin's pleas with her mother.266

It is not clear whether this kind of identification actually occurred amongst the viewers or is only the projection of the unnamed commentator in a published conversation. The work of this story, then, was not to only to produce “an authentic representation” of what might have been an individual’s experience growing up and living during the twentieth century. It is rather an attempt to offer "universalized experiences" of women, as Japanese woman. The particulars of the story are purposefully anchored in those things that are vividly identifiable as Japanese – such as the identification of Tôhoku as the place of outsourcing of labor, the signifiers of incremental changes towards liberation for women, as in clothing and hairstyle. However, when it was shown with dubbing in local language, the show had strong following in some markets. What made it possible for the show that self-consciously located itself in specifically “Japanese locale” and anchored as it was in the particular events of Japanese history is precisely the translatability of these experiences.267

In Japan, the popularity of the program prompted NHK to rebroadcast the first 36 episodes from 25 July through 17 August, during the 6:00 p.m. time slot. These NHK series are always set to broadcast once in the morning, and repeat itself at lunchtime. This, then, effectively determines in a large measure who are the intended audience for the series. The logic of this alternative scheduling was not only to indulge the large numbers of Oshin-fans who

266 “Suikyô mondô,” 362.
already existed but also to make it possible for a new audience group. The new audience imagined were school children who could not have watched the broadcast when it was aired the first time in the morning and at lunchtime. They would be, however, free to watch the show while on holiday from school during the summer. It was considered by those making the scheduling decision and the decision to re-broadcast the segments (that was an unprecedented move on the part of NHK, as these morning series are extremely institutionalized) that school aged children would benefit from watching the show with their parents. At the 6:00 p.m. slot, this meant, for the most part mothers.\(^\text{268}\)

What was it about *Oshin* the story and the Oshin the character that made the program so popular? In the first instance, Oshin is equated with a lost quality of characteristics, *gaman* (perseverance). Few months after the series first went on air, some, including the Minister of Education spoke of the possibility (and the desirability) of using Oshin in *dōtoku kyōiku* (moral education).\(^\text{269}\) The chief producer of the show, Okada Yukiko, points out, "because it was a period when 'selfishness' did not exist, I made Oshin a person who must endure." （*Wagamama no nai jidai dakara "gaman shiro" no Oshin wo tsukuri mashita.* わがままのない時代だから 「我慢しろ」のおしんをつくりました。）Popular magazines reported of *Oshin komori uta* (Oshin lullaby) on tapes and records from the early shows when Oshin worked.

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\(^\text{268}\) In March of 2000, NHK again aired the most popular segment of the drama for four consecutive evenings. It cornered a large share of the viewing audience with an average of 17% share. "Sai hōsō 'Oshin' ni taiga dorama ga 'makesō'"* Shûkan bun shû 4.6 (2000): 182-184.

\(^\text{269}\) “Suikyô mondoô: Oshin dorômu kô” Ushio 10 (1983) 360-364. This piece reads as if it is a transcription of two participants. They are only revealed as X and Y.
minding babies. Perhaps more than anything else, daikon meshi (daikon radish "rice") came to symbolize the life of Oshin as a child. "They were so poor they had to mix daikon greens with their rice and barley." Daikon meshi symbolizes, the taste of simple food of the earth, which cannot be imagined by children of Japan today since they take for granted everything (i.e. material wealth, security, civil rights, and peace).

It is, then, not surprising that children developed a game called "Oshin gokko" at schools. In an article, it is reported that the game was popular amongst grade school children. It was a simple game. In the game, if one wanted to use the bathroom or get a drink of water, one would not use facilities nearby but would go to the farthest place within the building. So that a child on the fourth floor would go to the first floor even, though there were bathrooms on each floor. In other words, the point of the game was to create “hardship” and experience it in course of their everyday life.270

By mid summer of 1983 Oshin boom had changed to Oshin genshô (phenomenon) and Oshin-dorômu (as in Oshindrome). By late summer, there were reports of drastic reduction in water consumption during the period when the program was aired, indicating that housewives stopped their housework to sit in front of the television to watch the program, during what would be ordinarily peak consumption period.271

Amongst the scores of articles written about Oshin at the height of popularity, one article stands out for its eye-catching title. The article titled

270 "Watashi wa 'Oshin' girai desu" Fujin kôron 12 (1983): 167. See also, Kôsaka Masataka "'Oshin tachi no Nihon" Chûô kôron 10 (1983)

"Watashi wa 'Oshin' girai desu" (I am dislikes "Oshin") is a compilation of letters written by women complaining of the exemplary ways of "Oshin" and her "too perfect" ways. In fact, in one article Oshin dorômu is described as the process in which housewives between the age of forty and sixty settle themselves in front of the television identifying with the hardship and the perseverance of Oshin while, as housewives, they neglect their duties by not providing breakfast, until the show is over.\(^{272}\)

Then, Oshin dorômu had many effects, so it would seem. However, I want to consider the ways in which the various “points” of history which we might call in this instance, as “genealogy of poor farm girls and women” is used in the series. On the one hand, the particularities of Oshin’s experiences allow the drama plot to move forward. On the other hand, these particularities that make up Oshin’s life as being “unique” are, at the same time, what makes her life they recognizable, so that her experience that the audience does not share in the narrow sense are, in fact, exchangeable as similar with the audience’s individual experiences (or their mother’s or grandmother’s), which allows for the audience identification with Oshin’s life. This “genealogy” is a productive field such that it has the elasticity to engulf many, within the “membrane of the story.”

In 1986, an article titled "Firipin kara kita shiawasena 'Oshin' Tachi" (Lucky "Oshin’s" who came from Philippines.) The article was subtitled "Yamagata-ken no kanson ni Firipin kara yome ni yattekita yonin no josei" (Four women who came from the Philippines to be brides in a desolate village in

\(^{272}\) “Suikyô mondô,” 360.
Yamagata Prefecture.) The article closes with the observation: *uchi no yome wa watashi ni sokkuri da* (our bride is exactly like me.) Attributed to the voice of one mother-in-law, the statement is, we are told, the highest compliment that a "bride" could have received. What makes it possible to first identify these women as contemporary day "Oshin" and then to praise them by stating that they were just like "me?" This claim to "sameness" is, again, the placement of the differences within the "genealogy" shared by Oshin. The same of differences allows for, then, the grass-root internationalization where boundaries of citizenship, ethnicity are transcended as resemblances are identified in humanistic relationship between mother-in-law and *yome*, father-in-law and *yome*, and husband and *yome*.

In the 1980s at the height of the re-institution of the countryside in nostalgic terms relying heavily to corporeal appeal -- especially around food -- in small communities in the backwoods of the northeast, Filipinas were brought in as "nôson no yome" (brides of farm village). Much like the 1920s and 30s, when dominant discourse on the alleged mass exodus of young women from the countryside led women's organizations to mobilize in cooperation with agricultural cooperatives to keep the "women" home, the daughters of these prewar activists were organizing to bring foreign women into their localities with the cooperation of village and county officials. If the language of the 20s and the 30s were excessively punitive and prescriptive, the new language of favor was quite the opposite. Much of the rationalization for this "bringing of brides" from elsewhere was made in the language of *kokusaika* (internationalization), a favorite catchall. Fed by their "mothers' anxiety" for

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their sons who faced the prospect of perhaps never marrying, and for their daughters who needed to be swiftly sent away into marriage so that she would be liberated from possibility of farm life, these women mobilized as "mothers" to secure the future mothers of their communities. That foreign women are the means by which stability of native places might be guaranteed -- safeguarding local tradition and knowledge -- points to the importance of reading this effort in its national and international contexts.  

A reading of Oshin without a reminder of the ever-vociferous furusato zukuri of the 1980s but also to the kokusaika rhetoric would be utterly foolhardy. On the other hand, to contain these “brides” as contemporary Oshin would be to reify them by valorizing them “when they fitted a norm(s)” of hardship that is marked in this conceptualization. That is to say, to read women or gender history requires recognizing the active work of writing history.

To return to Fumi-san’s story, it would not be, then, enough to reinterpret her story within contemporary debates. What might be the relationship between these debates and Fumi-san’s? What might be a way of undertaking this history, that is a history open to multiple unfoldings? Fumi-

274 There is a substantial body of published material on this issue from magazine articles to sociological case studies. See for instance: Kitaoka Kôji Nihon nōson no kekkon mondai (Tokyo: Jichôsha, 1989); Niigata Nippôsha Gakugei-bu, edited Mura no kokusai kekkon (Akita: Mumeisha shuppan, 1989); Shyakuya Kyôko Ajia kara kita hanayome (Tokyo: Akashi shobô, 1989); and Satô Yoshitada Yomesan yâi (Tokyo: Ikuhôsha, 1992).

san’s story can be important in our contemporary readings by its ability to remind us of the indeterminacy of Fumi-san’s subjectivity, a figuration. This is, then, to read Fumi-san’s story not as an example of a woman at risk: a “framework in which” Fumi-san “can only become” Fumi-san “through being recognized by another as” woman at risk.276 Rather it would be to read her story as one of the many fragments that can not be ordered and arranged into a schema of subjects proper to feminist research. It is to consider these fragments of history into contingent assemblage that avoids the tidy temptation of “presenting an overly straight story about the past” the present, and the future.277

What can happen, by chance, is the moment of encounter between oneself, a space capable of thought and something else. It produces a vibration. If one has been receptive, that is where one can begin to work, at the very point of impact. And it opens up an inexhaustible font an interminable labyringht.278


278 Cixous, Reading with Clarice Lispector, op. cit. 163.
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