

Japanese Language and Literature

Journal of the American Association of Teachers of Japanese

jll.pitt.edu | Vol. 56 | Number 2 | October 2022 | DOI: 10.5195/jll.2022.194

ISSN 1536-7827 (print) 2326-4586 (online)

Ambivalent Modernity and Exoticism: Japanese Doll-Like Women in Pierre Loti's *Madame Chrysanthème* and Tanizaki Jun'ichirō's *Tade kū mushi*

Sadahisa Watanabe

Introduction

Pierre Loti (1850–1923) and Tanizaki Jun'ichirō 谷崎潤一郎 (1886–1965) may not initially seem to have much in common. One was a French naval officer and novelist who traveled the world, the other a Japanese author who preferred the romance of his own country. Yet, both delight in creating doll-like female characters who docilely respond to the demands of domineering male characters. This essay examines how Loti in *Madame Chrysanthème* (1887) and Tanizaki in *Tade kū mushi* 蓼喰ふ虫 (1929, translated as *Some Prefer Nettles*, 1955) both create male protagonists who commodify Japanese women to docile doll-like images. In both novels, the main male protagonists (the narrator in *Madame Chrysanthème* and Kaname in *Tade kū mushi*) cannot satiate their sexual desires within the traditional familial systems in France and Japan. Instead, they objectify Japanese women as “dolls” or “puppets”—not simply to relegate them to an inferior category, but to allow each protagonist to bolster his own superiority over Japanese women. Despite the hedonistic propensities of both characters (the narrator in *Madame Chrysanthème* and Kaname in *Tade kū mushi*) and their radical experiences crossing the borders between the West and the “Orient,” these protagonists maintain their national male identities as French or Japanese, respectively. Notwithstanding their vast cultural differences, their masculine consciousness creates similar images of doll-like Japanese women, thereby betraying the contradictory power balance of gender in French Orientalism and Japanese modernity.

While there has been much scholarship on these works and these authors, most previous studies on these two novels focused on the apparent Eurocentric views and resultative sexism in the stories.¹ For example, Irene Szyliowicz analyzes the description of “Oriental” women in Loti's works, including *Madame Chrysanthème*, and demonstrates that French



New articles in this journal are licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 United States License.



This journal is published by the [University Library System, University of Pittsburgh](#) as part of its [D-Scribe Digital Publishing Program](#) and is cosponsored by the [University of Pittsburgh Press](#).

male narrators employ other ethnocultural women as “a means of self-aggrandisement.”² By analyzing the narrative structure of *Madame Chrysanthème*, Tzvetan Todorov also points out the “egocentric” aspect of the narration.³ Similarly, the doll-like depiction of a Japanese woman in Tanizaki’s *Tade kū mushi* also derives from the Japanese protagonist Kaname’s Eurocentric sexual fantasy. Chiba Shunji argues that Kaname’s quest for Western female beauty ironically leads him to create the eternal “type” of the traditional doll-like woman.⁴ Despite the notable affinities between these two texts, no one has as yet extensively compared the female-as-doll characterizations in Loti’s *Madame Chrysanthème* and Tanizaki’s *Tade kū mushi* nor the way these characterizations derive from the male characters’ ambivalence toward Japanese modernity.

Departing somewhat from these earlier studies, I plan to consider these works through a discussion of what I term “ambivalent modernity” and the exoticization of Japanese women by the main male protagonists in Loti’s and Tanizaki’s novels. My usage here of “ambivalent modernity” refers to the male protagonists’ contradictory mixture of fascination with and repulsion toward Japanese modernity. This ambivalence is related to the untenable gender hierarchy in Japanese modernity and the effort these men make to maintain their gendered superiority. Through a close reading of these two novels by Loti and Tanizaki, I will show how the objectification of Japanese women as exotic occurs by an ambivalent male consciousness, which results from the confluence of the West and a Westernized Japan. I will argue that such an ambivalent male consciousness that exoticizes Japanese women is not the result of an uncritical embrace of the modernity/Westernization formula that occurred in Japan. I will consider the reflection of Eurocentrism in Japanese modernity by means of comparative literature analysis. Before turning to my analysis of *Madame Chrysanthème* and *Tade kū mushi*, I would like to provide an overview of the contexts by which these authors engaged with ambivalent modernity.

Western Orientalism and Ambivalent Modernity: From Loti to Kafū and Tanizaki

In *Orientalism* (1978), Edward Said delves into Oriental representations by European literati and delineates a hidden association between “the Orient and the freedom of licentious sex.”⁵ In the European literature of escapism, sexual impulses repressed in Occidental social systems surge irresistibly, while maintaining Eurocentric views and justifying hedonistic inclinations under the form of adventurous touristic tales. Pierre Loti is a

case in point. During his lifetime, Loti was known to European readers as a popular travel writer who reached the Far East. Loti's *Madame Chrysanthème* recounts the story of a French naval officer, an author surrogate, who marries a Japanese woman in Nagasaki, Japan, with no intention of ever living with her permanently. The narrator demonstrates his racial and masculine consciousness through his characterization of Japanese women as mere "dolls" and his assertion that the "yellowish race" is utterly unlike his own. "How far we are from this Japanese people! how [*sic*] totally dissimilar are our races!"⁶

Loti's enormous popularity during his lifetime, bolstered by European readers' interests in exotic surroundings in what they saw as the "Orient," would decline in the following age when readers turned to more sophisticated authors, such as André Gide (1869–1951) and Jean-Paul Sartre (1905–1980).⁷ Indeed, Said labels Loti as a "minor" writer.⁸ Loti's works, embedded with typical longing for the past and simplistic characterizations, are not as consecrated as other established French authors. Even so, prominent modern Japanese writers such as Akutagawa Ryūnosuke 芥川龍之介 (1892–1927) and Mishima Yukio 三島由紀夫 (1925–1970) expressed an affinity for Loti's works. For instance, Loti's "Un Bal à Yeddo" ("A ball in Edo") in *Japoneries d'Automne* (1889) influenced Akutagawa's short story *Butōkai* 舞踏会 (1920, translated as "The Ball," 1999) and Mishima was inspired by both Loti's and Akutagawa's works in his construction of the play *Rokumeikan* 鹿鳴館 (1956, translated as "The Rokumeikan," 2002).⁹

The most intriguing instance of Loti's influence on Japanese literature can be found in the works of Nagai Kafū 永井荷風 (1879–1951). Kafū is a novelist who was strongly influenced by French authors such as Charles Baudelaire (1821–1867) and Guy de Maupassant (1850–1893). He wrote *Amerika monogatari* あめりか物語 (1906, translated as *American Stories*, 2000) and *Furansu monogatari* ふらんす物語 (French stories, 1907) based on his time as a banker in the U. S. and France. When Kafū visited Turkey and described it in *Furansu monogatari*, he referenced Loti's *Aziyadé* (1879, translated as *Constantinople (Aziyadé)*, 1927), which takes place in the same country.¹⁰ Thus, Loti's travel writing and his Oriental image affected Kafū's perspective.¹¹ Furthermore, Kafū's negative view of Japan, caused by his veneration of the West, echoed Loti's pejorative descriptions of Japanese women. In *Furansu monogatari*, Kafū likewise describes Japanese women as unattractive, based not only on their physical appearance, but more so due to the fact that as women they were divested

of personality, independence, and the freedom to enjoy love.¹² A number of scholars argue that the discourse of Orientalism in Western literature influenced Kafū's view of Japanese women. Stephen Snyder notes that "Loti's chauvinism and racism (not to mention sexism) cause him [Kafū] to draw a highly unfavorable portrait of Japan."¹³ Komori Yōichi analyzes the association between the description of indigenous people in Singapore and that of Japanese women in Kafū's *Furansu monogatari*, and asserts that Kafū borrows the sexist view of Western Orientalism to describe Japanese women of his own community, thereby unconsciously highlighting the discrimination against women in the Empire of Japan.¹⁴ The resonance between Loti and Kafū illustrates that the artistic esthetics in the colonial age is formed by what Karen Thornber terms the process of "transculturation," whereby cultural imagination serves to examine its own identity through transnational interactions.¹⁵

Kafū's sympathy with Loti revolves around the anti-modernity (*han kindai*) harbored by modern writers in Japan. In his essay "Femmes Japonaises" ("Japanese women," initially published in *Le Figaro Illustré* in 1891), Loti discloses his contempt for the Europeanized Japanese women who attend a ball at an embassy in Tokyo, likening them to dolls. By doing so, the author shows the satire of national debasement. "All this servile imitation, certainly amusing for foreigners who pass by, indicates in fact, among these people, a lack of taste and even an absolute lack of national dignity."¹⁶ Kafū, who initially nourished himself with Western literature, also reveals apprehensive regard for Japanese modernization. "If the beauty of Japanese landscape is destroyed relentlessly for the sake of 'progress' of civilization, [...] what will be left in the Japanese landscape?"¹⁷ Japanese modernity is tantamount to irreversible Westernization, which eradicates its nostalgic glimmers of Edo culture and landscape. Nonetheless, Kafū's anti-modern attitude does not contradict his admiration for the Occident and Western modernity.

The ambivalent attitude toward modernity by literary authors is not unique to Kafū or modern Japanese literature. In fact, in French literature, one can observe many modern authors who express anti-modern views in their works, including François-René de Chateaubriand (1768–1848), Honoré de Balzac (1799–1850), and Baudelaire, the last of whom influenced both Kafū and Tanizaki.¹⁸ Antoine Compagnon terms "the anti-modern" to refer to conspicuous or covert cultural themes described by these Western authors who are engaged with modernity and have common features such as counter-revolution, anti-Enlightenment, and pessimism.¹⁹

As Compagnon makes plain, the authentic anti-moderns, who rebuke the values of the French Revolution (1789–1799) and the Enlightenment, are simultaneously modern in a way that they create their works under the influence of modernity.²⁰ While anti-modern sentiments harbored by a number of Japanese authors are not related to some of the religious and theological issues in Western anti-modernity (such as original sin), Japanese anti-modernity connotes an ambivalence similar to the ambivalence of Western anti-moderns—some Japanese authors express both fascination with and pessimistic views toward Japanese modernity.²¹ As literary scholar Miyoshi Yukio argues, Kafū’s anti-modern sentiment derives from his admiration for Western modernity and his antipathy for modern Japan, which cannot fully incorporate the essence of the West.²²

One can observe this ambivalent attitude toward modernity, which is linked with the description of Japanese women as dolls, in Tanizaki’s novel—in fact, Loti was not alone in depicting Japanese women as puppets. We see a similar but different resonant expression in Tanizaki’s *Tade kū mushi* in a way that rather coincides with the protagonist’s anti-modern sentiment. In *Tade kū mushi*, male protagonist Kaname watches a puppet theater, comparing a woman to a doll as follows. “Wasn’t the real Koharu perhaps a ‘doll-like’ woman? [...] Perhaps this doll was the ‘eternal woman’ as Japanese tradition had her.”²³

Tanizaki Jun’ichirō is known for his style of juxtaposing Western and Japanese erotic beauty. He was fascinated by Western culture and deeply influenced by English and French decadents as well as his contemporary Kafū’s eclectic style. Kafū himself lauds Tanizaki’s sadomasochistic descriptions influenced by fin-de-siècle literature. In praising Tanizaki’s early short stories such as *Shisei* 刺青 (1910, translated as “The tattooer,” 1970), *Kirin* 麒麟 (Giraffe, 1910), and *Shōnen* 少年 (A boy, 1911), Kafū goes so far as to associate traditional elements in Tanizaki’s writing (a Shinto festival and Kabuki theater) with Western models such as Baudelaire and Poe in *Tanizaki Jun’ichirō shi no sakuhin* 谷崎潤一郎氏の作品 (The works of Tanizaki Jun’ichirō, 1911).²⁴ Tanizaki’s fetishization of the West reaches a climax with his publication of *Chijin no ai* 痴人の愛 (1924, translated as *Naomi*, 1985) featuring a *modan gāru* (modern girl) and the masochistic pleasure of being subsumed by Western culture.²⁵ Tanizaki’s subsequent literary quest for exoticism, most critics argue, shifts from the Occident to the Kansai region in Japan.²⁶ Idealization of a traditional Japanese woman in *Tade kū mushi*, written after the author’s settlement in the Kansai region in the aftermath of the Great Kantō

earthquake in 1923, implies that the author's stance is no longer one of excessive adulation of the West, but rather seeks to exoticize traditional Japanese culture and women.

Drawing upon the relationship between Western Orientalism and ambivalent modernity discussed above, I will analyze the female commodification as dolls in Pierre Loti's *Madame Chrysanthème* and Tanizaki Jun'ichirō's *Tade kū mushi* chronologically, to ultimately show that literary themes of gender and race are not distinguished in separate geographic and cultural categories of the West and non-West but share certain features.

Pierre Loti's *Madame Chrysanthème*

A European visits a non-European country and then has a sexual relationship with a non-European woman. This cookie-cutter plot is repeated in Pierre Loti's *Aziyadé* (1879), *Le Mariage de Loti* (1880), and *Madame Chrysanthème* (1887). In these novels, a European man thoroughly conceives an "Oriental" ethos from a first-person point of view. Even so, as Tzvetan Todorov points out, Loti also reveals an interest in trying to integrate the foreign cultures he experiences. For example, Loti acquired a smattering of local languages when he traveled, in contrast to French writers such as François-René de Chateaubriand (1768–1848), who utterly rejected the notion of integration and the adoption of foreign customs and sought instead a global conformity to French culture.²⁷ As Said discusses, other French authors who visited what they viewed as the "Orient," such as Alphonse de Lamartine (1790–1869), Gérard de Nerval (1808–1855), and Gustave Flaubert (1821–1880), formed their images of the "Orient" based on the "classics, modern literature, and academic Orientalism" they had read, and did not necessarily describe the cultural integration of European travelers in this part of the world.²⁸

Loti's novel *Madame Chrysanthème* recounts the adventure of a French naval officer whose ship, *Triomphante*, moors in Nagasaki over the summer of 1885. While there, he begins a temporary liaison with a Japanese woman referred to in the story as Madame Chrysanthème (or *Kiku*). In fact, at that time, the "marriage" between a foreigner and a young Japanese woman, arranged by a broker and officially registered at the local police, were common in the Empire of Japan.²⁹ Despite his initial expectation before reaching Japan, the first-person narrator's views of Japan are negative, and he often points out the artificiality of Japanese culture. Moreover, he considers Japanese women "doll"-like. The motives

for why Madame Chrysanthème marries the narrator are not made clear in the novel from the point of view of the narrator, other than she agreed to temporarily marry him as arranged by the broker.³⁰ It seems, at least through the lens of the narrator, that she married him purely for money. At the end of this novel, upon the narrator's departure, as their married life comes to an end, Madame Chrysanthème examines the authenticity of the silver dollars she received for fulfilling their marriage. "On the floor are spread out all the fine silver dollars which, according to our agreement, I had given her [Madame Chrysanthème] the evening before. With the competent dexterity of an old money-changer she fingers them, turns them over, throws them on the floor, and armed with a little mallet ad hoc, rings them vigorously against her ear, singing the while I know not what little pensive bird-like song which I daresay she improvises as she goes along."³¹

Whereas one should not conflate the narrator with the author, prior scholars have pointed to the way the novel contains autobiographical elements.³² For instance, the ship's name, *Triomphante*, is identical to the one Loti boarded to visit Japan. After participating in war maneuvers in China and Tonkin, *Triomphante* arrived in Nagasaki on July 8, 1885 and left for Kobe on August 12 of the same year.³³ Loti's experience in Nagasaki, including his relationship with a Japanese concubine, provided the materials for his novel *Madame Chrysanthème* published in 1887.

The first-person narrator in Loti's *Madame Chrysanthème* frequently uses the word "mousmé," the phonetic rendering in French of the Japanese "musume" or 娘, referring to young women. The narrator explains "mousmé" as follows:

Mousmé is a word that means a young girl or very young woman. It is one of the prettiest in the Nipponese language; there seems to be, in this word, a *moue* [pout] (the gentle and funny little pout as they put on) and especially a *frimousse* [face] (a crumpled face like theirs). I shall use it often, not knowing any French word that conveys a similar meaning.³⁴

In French, the sound of "mousmé" evokes two words, "moue" and "frimousse," the former signifying a pout and the latter a child's or young person's visage. Throughout the story, Japanese women as well as the entire Asian people are described by the narrator contemptuously, to the point of even being attributed the animal barbarity of "monkeyishness."³⁵ By declaring that Japanese women "look like ouistitis [monkeys], like little china ornaments, like I don't know what," the narrator interrupts to

scrutinize their characteristics.³⁶ Thus, racism and sexism in these descriptions tend to overlook the peculiarity in the exotic surrounding and justify the observer's irrational view. The narrator's obvious lack of affection toward Madame Chrysanthème, despite his "marriage" contract with her, rests on his latent indifference to a Japanese woman's personality (while the narrator uses the term "marriage," the arrangement is much more mercenary and Madame Chrysanthème is exploited in this commercial transaction). As the narrator imagines that Madame Chrysanthème will "become an old monkey" like other Japanese women, he maintains his racial prejudice toward her throughout the story.³⁷ The inferiority imposed on Japanese women by the narrator serves to aggrandize the ego of the European settler. Utilizing sexual and racial hierarchization, the narrator strives to describe himself as sexually vigorous and reinforce his European male identity. Before examining the metaphors of "dolls," I would like to note the novel's title "Chrysanthème" (Chrysanthemum or *kiku* in Japanese) connects the Japanese woman in the story to a lovely flower.³⁸ As Said argues that "women are usually the creatures of male power-fantasy" in representations of Orientalism, the first-person narrator in *Madame Chrysanthème* compares the heroine to a flower for observation, thereby creating what Said describes as the image of a female figure that satisfies the Orientalist's domineering desire.³⁹

The rhetorical style of the narrator's language in the novel *Madame Chrysanthème* reveals the narrator's failure in observing the peculiarity of Japanese culture due to his own prejudice. In his analysis of *Madame Chrysanthème*, French author Michel Butor (1926–2016) remarks on the frequent use of the adjective "saugrenu" ("bizarre" or "ludicrous") in Loti's novel.⁴⁰ This terminology, connoting the mental shift from the mystification of the object to the judgment that the object is worthless to understand or examine, is applied to the description of Japanese women.⁴¹ Hence, the narrator, seemingly outspoken in expressing his antipathy to the "yellowish race," is not insightful enough to negatively judge the social status of Japanese women exploited for an economic or political purpose (in contrast to Nagai Kafū, who laments the lack of liberty of Japanese women, as I noted in the introduction to this article). Despite the Occidental veneer at the end of the nineteenth century in Japan due to various reforms during the Meiji era (1868–1912), women were relegated to an inferior social role and the feudalistic traditions left by the Tokugawa Era (1600–1868) kept marriage a purely political relationship.⁴² In *Madame Chrysanthème*, author Loti depicts the Nagasaki marriage

brokers. They present Japanese bride candidates to Europeans such as the narrator and his French friend Yves in stereotypical ways. This shows that they know the stereotypes that Europeans would have of Japanese women as people of a degraded status both by race and gender. The marriage broker presents them as characterless objects that meet a European racist expectation of the “Oriental” woman. Moreover, the “characterlessness” of Japanese women is related to the monotonous description of their chignon hairstyles with silver pompons in Loti’s novel.⁴³ While men were officially sanctioned to cut their hair (*danpatsu*) in 1872 under the name of the “civilization and enlightenment” (*bunmei kaika*) reforms, the Japanese government prohibited women from cutting their hair because, as historian Barbara Sato explains, it was believed that “the essence of a woman’s beauty would be destroyed.”⁴⁴ Whereas the descriptions by the narrator (a foreigner) of Japanese female hairstyles that he observes in *Madame Chrysanthème* reflect the male-centered Japanese system which imposes a stereotypical gender role on Japanese women, the narrator is not aware of the gender inequality latent in their hairstyles.

From the outset of this novel, the author Pierre Loti claims that his image of Japan is not equal to actual Japan. In the dedication of this book, Loti writes “the three principal characters are *myself*, *Japan* and the *effect* produced on me by that country.”⁴⁵ Whereas one cannot identify the author of this dedication as the narrator of the novel, this statement in the dedication suggests the relationship between Japan and the perception of the novel’s narrator. The gulf between “Japan” and the “effect” is enlarged according to the extent to which the narrator’s male-centered perspective assumes the primacy of its Eurocentric view on Japan and subsequently on Japanese women. What is at stake here is the relation between his pre-perception and post-perception of Japan. Is the “effect” of Japan conceived before the narrator’s visit, or only afterward in retrospect? What the narrator sees in Japan resembles what he contemplated about Japan before arriving, mainly through the Japanese paintings or merchandise circulating in Europe at that time. “Heavens! why [*sic*], I know her already! Long before setting foot in Japan, I had met her, on every fan, on every tea-cup — with her silly air, her puffy little face, her tiny eyes, mere gimlet-holes above those expanses of impossible pink and white cheeks.”⁴⁶ And later, when they begin to live together in “marriage,” he notes: “In our home, all has the appearance of a Japanese picture.”⁴⁷ Thus, in Nagasaki, the narrator sees and examines authentic Japan in light of his preconceived image of commodities reproduced by artists of Japonisme.

In Paris, Pierre Loti had close relationships with artists of Japonisme, such as Théophile Gautier (1811–1872) and Edmond de Goncourt (1822–1896), whose *Albums Japonais* (1875) aroused the interest of French intellectuals.⁴⁸ As Japanese scholar Inaga Shigemi explains, Japanese arts were represented as a revolutionizing principle that could reverse the classical esthetics at the end of the nineteenth century in Europe.⁴⁹ However, it is not certain if Loti followed the development of Japonisme as closely as he did the art of Islamic cultures. He did not presumably stay abreast of contemporary publications, such as Lord Leighton’s study of Japanese art published in 1869.⁵⁰ Still, in *Madame Chrysanthème*, the erotic depiction of Japanese prostitutes in Japonisme artwork was covertly transmitted in the author’s view on Japanese art. In the novel, Japanese painter M. Sucre paints “some storks in a variety of attitudes,” insinuating the obscene copulation of Japanese people.⁵¹

The sense of *déjà-vu* experienced by the narrator in Japan shows the reflection of a doll in a model. Even Japanese women, whom the narrator lasciviously craved before landing in Japan, look like miniature dolls. Before approaching Japan, the narrator forecasts and imagines: “I shall choose a little yellow-skinned woman with black hair and cat’s eyes. She must be pretty. Not much bigger than a doll.”⁵² This presentiment of doll-like Japanese women corresponds to the real image of them whom he encounters in Nagasaki: “They are so laughing [*sic*], so merry, all these little Nipponese dolls!”⁵³ These Japanese dolls/women, categorized by the lack of originality and piquant attractiveness, only serve as pawns to buttress the male conception of the Orient and concretize hierarchization between the West and Japan, synonymous in itself with the verticalized relationship between the European narrator and the Japanese concubine. The Otherness of Japanese women, distinguished from Europeans primarily by the color of their skin, condones white male narcissism.

Yet, the narrator’s male-centered/Eurocentric views may prove to be untenable if the schematic hierarchy of the West and the Other collapses through the modernization of the Empire of Japan. In a later publication, *La Troisième Jeunesse de Mme Prune* (1905), Loti indicates the “Yellow Peril” of a belligerent Japan that would menace the Western hegemony, reflecting Japan’s victory in the Russo-Japanese War.⁵⁴ In *Madame Chrysanthème*, the question of Japanese modernity can be seen in the narrator’s animosity toward the Westernization of Japan: “I feel more fully its antediluvian antiquity, its centuries of mummification, which will soon degenerate into hopeless and grotesque buffoonery, as it comes into

contact with Western novelties.”⁵⁵ This anti-modern sensibility is inextricably linked with the narrator’s attachment to the *status quo* vis-à-vis gendered hegemonies that exist both in Japanese society and in European views of Asians. Thus, Loti’s European male traveler pointedly observes the irrepressible influence of traditional Japanese culture under the trappings of westernization. While acknowledging the Orientalized daintiness and sophistication of Japanese women, Loti depicts them as mere imitators of Western culture. In Loti’s later works, male narrators encounter Europeanized Japanese women and harshly ridicule these servile copies. In a chapter entitled “Un Bal à Yeddo” (“A ball in Edo”) in *Japoneries d’Automne* (1889), the narrator visits a “Europeanized ball” at the Rokumeikan and makes patronizing remarks about the superficial Westernization of Japanese women:

Their little hands are adorable under their long, white gloves. They are not disguising savagery; on the contrary, these women belong to a civilization much older than ours and of excessive sophistication. Their feet, for example, are less successful. On their own, their feet turn inward due to the elegant old fashion of Japan; they retain a sort of heaviness, from the hereditary habit of dragging high wooden shoes.⁵⁶

The expressions such as “excessive sophistication” and “dragging high wooden shoes” in this quotation reveal the narrator’s mocking tone toward the superficial Westernization of Japanese women. In short, the narrator seems to believe that these Japanese women cannot dissimulate the influence of their traditional culture, nor disguise their diminutive physical features. In spite of their Europeanized appearance, these Japanese women cannot extricate themselves from the dehumanizing European gaze that likens them to characterless dolls deprived of freedom. In this way, the narrator takes the cultural and physical attributes of Japanese women as evidence of their failure to modernize. Moreover, by emphasizing Japanese women’s ties to the traditional patriarchic culture, the French narrator can justify his colonial prejudice against them and reify his cultural hegemony of Europe over modernized Japan. Therefore, the depiction of Japanese women as dolls in Loti’s *Madame Chrysanthème* is a dehumanization of women that attributes to them a perennial motionlessness and lack of originality. This depiction can be interpreted as a self-fulfilling justification of the male narrator’s superiority to the Japanese woman he is viewing. Throughout the story of *Madame Chrysanthème*, the narrator couches his colonial stance and anti-Japanese

animosity within the widely ingrained Orientalism that captured the imaginations of Western literature and art in the nineteenth century. Loti's male narrator in *Madame Chrysanthème* thus attempts to quell European fears regarding the premonition of Japanese modernization by portraying Japanese women as antique and traditional “dolls.”

Tanizaki Jun'ichirō's *Tade kū mushi*

During the Meiji and Taishō (1912–1926) eras, the cultural paradigm of Japan—one can even call it an obsession with foreign culture—radically shifted from China to the West, especially following the victory over China in the First Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895).⁵⁷ Western culture brought with it a new focus on a lifestyle bolstered by a newly emerging mass culture. Commodities, such as clothing, food, and other urban pleasures, were easily accessible in the Japanese metropolis, especially in the years bracketed by the tumultuous events of the Great Kanto Earthquake of 1923 and the bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941. In his study of this period, historian Minami Hiroshi terms this epoch as *modanizumu* (modernism) and observes the relation between the first endorsement of Occidentalism in the Meiji era and the Americanization of Japan under the Allied occupation of Japan after WWII.⁵⁸ Although it is not easy to simplify this highly complex period of history that is also tied to capitalism and urbanization, one can point out two main aspects of this interwar modernism (or *modanizumu*) in Japan: the technocratic side of state-sponsored modernism and the cultural side of modernism characterized by the revolution of a moral ethos triggered by Western culture (such as American movies) imported into Japan during the interwar years. The latter is symbolized by the emergence of a so-called *modan gāru*, which I discussed earlier in this paper. The *modan gāru* is exemplified by the heroine of Tanizaki's *Chijin no ai*, who taunts tradition and trumpets promiscuity moving from man to man.⁵⁹

The Japanese Europeanized *modan gāru* made a sudden appearance as a glittering signifier of the Westernized Japan in the 1920s.⁶⁰ Even though she appeared as a free agent extricating herself from family ties or patriarchal ideology and crossing gender boundaries, the *modan gāru* was not a political force that paved the way for gender equality. Rather, the *modan gāru* was seen as “*ero* [eros] personified.”⁶¹ Tanizaki's Naomi, who has European-like white skin and therefore resembles Mary Pickford (Canadian-born American actress), is nothing but an incarnation of male desire for a Western fantasy. However, *Chijin no ai* ends in the male's

absolute submission to a Europeanized modern girl. Miriam Silverberg points out “their [modern girls’] lack of interest in anything but sensual pleasures signifies a ruling class in decline.”⁶² The male masochism in *Chijin no ai* draws a covert parallel between the man’s subjugation to women and also to the West.⁶³

Western films and literature imported to Japan in the era of *modanizumu* played a crucial role in revolutionizing the Japanese gender consciousness. Kaeriyama Norimasa, a film theorist and contemporary of Tanizaki, argues that sexual attraction in Western movies gave birth to new sexual pleasure based on the “pleasure of eyes” (*me no kyōraku*).⁶⁴ Tanizaki also venerates Western culture from the sexual perspective. In his essay *Ren’ai oyobi shikijō* 恋愛及び色情 (Love and lust, 1931), he clarifies that Western literature has brought about the liberation of sexual desire in Japan, and equates the physical beauty of Western women with the Occidental superiority over Japan and the Orient.⁶⁵ This admiration for European eroticism permeates most of his works.

Tanizaki sometimes juxtaposes Western culture with Japanese culture as a way to understand the essence of traditional Japanese beauty. Tanizaki’s novel *Tade kū mushi*, published four years after *Chijin no ai*, is one such example. The plot centers on a married couple, Kaname and Misako, who lose their passion for each other and thus have extramarital relationships. The male protagonist Kaname’s initial veneration of the West is characterized by his lascivious admiration for Occidental women and antipathy to Japanese tradition. As opposed to his traditionalist father-in-law, who invites Kaname and his wife to the Bunraku theater at the outset of this novel, Kaname has a profound affection for Western culture and its view on women.

He [Kaname] found in foreign novels, music, movies something that satisfied it [his longing] a little, probably because of the Occidental view of women. The tradition of woman-worship in the West is a long one, and the Occidental sees in the woman he loves the figure of a Greek goddess, the image of the Virgin Mother. The attitude so pervades the customs and traditions of the West that it automatically finds expression in art and literature. Kaname had an intense feeling of loneliness and deprivation when he thought of the emotional life of the Japanese, so lacking in this particular feeling of worshipfulness. [...] Kaname therefore preferred a Hollywood movie to a seventeenth-century Kabuki play. For all its vulgarity, Hollywood was forever dancing attendance on women and seeking out new ways to display their beauty. And he felt that Japanese

drama and music were far too much under the Edo-period influences that were so distasteful to him.⁶⁶

The passage cited above illustrates one of the main themes in this novel regarding the dichotomy between the West and Japan. Kaname suffers from sexual dissatisfaction, mainly due to the matrimonial discord with his wife Misako, who has taken a lover named Aso with no opposition from her husband. Kaname frequents a half-Korean and half-Russian prostitute Louise, who satiates his carnal desire with exotic pleasure. Despite the “dark glow” of Louise’s skin, stemming from her mother’s “Turkish blood,” Louise is an ersatz Western woman.⁶⁷ Louise partially represents the Occident with her French clothes and aptitude for European languages. In addition, she decorates the boudoir’s wall with photographs of Hollywood stars. In the way Tanizaki describes Louise, the West is conceived as a free sex haven where one can satiate one’s carnal desire with Western sex, just as European Orientalists imagine the Orient as a space where there is, as Said discusses, “freedom of licentious sex.”⁶⁸ This idealization of the West as a free sex world is intensified by the protagonist’s discontent with the stern morality of Japanese people regarding marriage. When allowing Aso’s extra-marital relation with his wife, Kaname tells him: “There are probably countries in the West where no one would raise an eyebrow at this sort of thing. But Japan hasn’t yet come that far, and if we are to carry it off I’m afraid we’re going to have to be extremely careful.”⁶⁹ In short, a Western dream harbored by the protagonist Kaname resides in escapism and exoticism caused by oppressed sexual desire due to the Japanese social system of the time.

In discussing women and culture, Kaname in *Tade kū mushi* tends to oversimplify the dichotomy between the West and Japan. This simplification risks excluding the un-representable otherness and hybridity of both the West and Japan. As Naoki Sakai discusses, this schema serves to dissimulate “the complicity of the West and Japan,” thereby concealing “the obsession with the West” that “warrants self-referentiality for the Japanese.”⁷⁰ In other words, by acquiring various aspects of Western culture (i. e. clothes, food taste, literature, etc.), the Japanese tend to take a superior attitude toward other cultures that belong to neither Japan nor the West (for instance, former Japanese colonies). In Tanizaki’s works, the Japanese protagonists venerating the West acquire prurient gazes to the Orient (though Japan is excluded) by wielding a Western cultural hegemony.⁷¹ To enjoy exotic, pornographic images, Kaname in *Tade kū mushi* searches obscene passages and illustrations of

Oriental harems in Richard Burton's English translation of *The Arabian Nights* (published with the title *The Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night*, 1888). Burton based his translation on the original scattered Arabic texts called Calcutta II, but also used different versions such as the Breslau edition of Maximilian Habicht (1825–43) and French author Antoine Galland's 1717 French translation of *Arabian Nights* that was based on a Syrian text.⁷² *The Arabian Nights* that Kaname reads was brought to him by his cousin from England via Shanghai as a souvenir.⁷³ In this way, European Orientalism imported to Japan through European and British translations expands the sphere of exoticism. It transpires here that the hidden ideological alliance between the West and Japan engenders a narcissistic attitude to sexualize the Orient or Otherness. However, in the culmination of masochistic pleasure, this Westernized Japanese narcissistic masculinity is destined to be subjugated by an exotic woman. Kaname's desire for the biracial prostitute Louise, who represents both the West and the exoticism of the Other given by the hybridity of her Russian, Turkish, and Korean blood, can be interpreted as a convoluted mixture of multi-layered exoticism.

The brothel where Kaname meets Louise is situated near the international port in Kobe. Tanizaki describes white prostitutes and a brothel in his previous work, *Tomoda to Matsunaga no hanashi* 友田と松永の話 (The story of Tomoda and Matsunaga, 1926), published before *Tade kū mushi*. In this story, the male protagonist Tomoda, whose name is a pseudonym contrived as a result of Jekyll-Hyde-like metamorphosis after his hedonistic days in Europe, owns a brothel of "white slaves" in Kobe. Tomoda tells the narrator, "Such white girls, so-called white slaves live everywhere in Oriental ports, and the employers who buy and sell them communicate with and help other employers. The hired girls change their residence from this port to that port, and move around Yokohama, Kobe, Tianjin, Shanghai, and Hong Kong."⁷⁴

Transnational trade ports in East Asia in the 1920s such as the one in the above quotation and also in Tanizaki's *Tade kū mushi* are characterized by the statelessness in which Western civilization and regional Asian civilization encounter each other. In these two novels, Tanizaki pays heed to the trade of white slaves in East Asia, who can satisfy Asian male carnal appetite for European beauty without going to the West. Yet, in *Tomoda to Matsunaga no hanashi*, Tomoda's indulgence in white prostitutes conjures his disgust toward non-white races, and by extension, toward himself.⁷⁵ The excessive veneration for the West can lead to a pitfall of

self-loathing due to the color of his own skin. In *Tade kū mushi*, Kaname's adulation for the West emerges from his antipathy to the Japanese past or Edo culture.

However, scholar Noguchi Takehiko considers *Tade kū mushi* as a milestone inscribing Tanizaki's esthetic shift from modern Tokyo culture to traditional Kansai culture.⁷⁶ One can observe this esthetic shift in two mental transformations Kaname undergoes. Both concern the adulation of a "doll" representing a traditional Japanese woman: Kaname's absorbed mind seeing Bunraku (Japanese puppet theater) in chapter two, and the change of the object of his aspiration from exotic prostitute Louise to Japanese doll-like O-hisa, who is his father-in-law's (the old man) mistress, depicted in chapter fourteen of the novel.

In chapter two, Kaname, who saw Bunraku puppet theater ten years prior and was unimpressed at the time, finds himself astonishingly enthralled by the play *Shinjū ten no Amijima* ("The Love Suicides at Amijima").⁷⁷ Sitting in the darkened theater with his wife Misako, her father, and her father's mistress Ohisa, Kaname finds himself captivated by the Koharu puppet, in the role of the heroic prostitute. Koharu, who represents the ideal "eternal woman" (*eien josei*) in Japanese tradition, is deprived of any individualism since she must fulfill traditional Japanese esthetics about beauty.⁷⁸ "The classical beauty was withdrawn, restrained, careful not to show too much individuality, and the puppet here quite fitted the requirement."⁷⁹ The category defined as "Japanese" or "traditional" is concocted by the schematic opposition to "Western" and "modern." Through this dichotomy, a Japanese woman symbolized by the puppet Koharu becomes *a posteriori* the independent entity procuring the quality which never exists in the West. Furthermore, as Tanizaki meticulously describes the way the puppets perform in *Tade kū mushi*, the traditional attribute of Bunraku is related to its own unique performative form.⁸⁰ Unlike Western movies that were popular in the 1920s and can be infinitely reproduced by technology, Bunraku is always performed by human hands, thereby preserving, to borrow Walter Benjamin's term, the "aura" of the Japanese tradition of which photos and film are deprived.⁸¹ This unique aura of the Bunraku puppet play enthuses Kaname as follows: "The Bunraku puppet was therefore unique, inimitable, a medium so skillfully exploited that one would be hard put to find parallels for it anywhere."⁸²

The peculiarity of the Bunraku puppets' performance is also explained by the comparison to Occidental puppets in a way that insinuates another

opposition of dress or body between Japanese and Western European people. Contrary to the Occidental string puppets suspended and controlled from above, the Bunraku puppets are manipulated from inside, so that the motion of the human controller's muscle surge vividly inside the dress.⁸³ As the old man in *Tade kū mushi* discusses, this unique and inimitable effect “derive[s] from the good use made in them of the Japanese kimono.”⁸⁴ Tanizaki's essay *In'ei raisan* 陰翳礼讃 (1933–34, translated as *In Praise of Shadows*, 1977) sketches out Japanese puppets from the perspective of the contrast between a Japanese female body and a European one. A Japanese female Bunraku puppet only shows its face and tip of its hand. The rest of the body is concealed in a dress. Tanizaki, who in his essay advocates for the creation of beauty out of shadows, points out that a Japanese female body, by far less glamorous than a Western female's in general, is intentionally enveloped and hidden by a kimono, as if it were submerged in shadow, except for several appealing parts such as her neck and hands.⁸⁵ This shadow effect forms the underlying esthetic in the description of Bunraku puppets in *Tade kū mushi*. Koharu, the female puppet in the play, is elevated to what Kaname describes as the “eternal woman” by virtue of her kimono and its shadow, in contrast to the *modan gāru* character, Naomi, in Tanizaki's novel *Chijin no ai*, the latter of whom is fond of Europeanized clothes and ostentatiously exposes parts of her body.⁸⁶

However, in addition to the comparison to the West, one can observe more ramifications of traditional Japanese puppets in *Tade kū mushi*. Whereas Kaname agrees with the old man's schematic view of the West and non-West regarding puppet plays in chapter two, Kaname also observes the unique property of the Bunraku puppets when the old man invites him to go to watch the Awaji puppet theater with O-hisa in chapter ten and eleven. Unlike the puppets of the Awaji puppet theater, which “can move their eyes up and down and to the right and left” according to the third-person narrator, the Bunraku puppets in Osaka are deprived of lively expressions.⁸⁷

In Tanizaki's *Tade kū mushi*, the Japanese woman is relegated to the passive role of being observed mainly by men's lascivious gazes. The inequality between an observer and a doll, deriving from the audience's prerogative to watch the doll without being looked back at, generates scopophilic pleasure. This voyeuristic thrill, only limited to the sense of sight and prevented from touching the core of the woman's body under the shadow or kimono, makes a sharp contrast with Occidental or exotic sex,

in which a Japanese male is physically conquered by the nudity of a voluptuous European female beauty. The masochistic aspect of Occidental or exotic sex is concretized by Kaname's unfettered indulgence in the exotic prostitute Louise in *Tade kū mushi*. As opposed to this pay-for-play relationship, there is no space for physical contact between Kaname and O-hisa, who is owned by the old man, Kaname's father-in-law. In chapter fourteen, readers encounter Kaname's furtive affection for the doll-like O-hisa.

That may have been because O-hisa was to him less a specific person than a "type O-hisa." It would probably suit him as well if he had not this particular O-hisa, ministering to the old man here, but another who belonged to "type O-hisa." The O-hisa for whom his secret dream searched might not be O-hisa at all, but another, a more O-hisa-like O-hisa. And it might even be that this latter O-hisa was no more than a doll, perhaps even now quiet in the dusk of an inner chamber behind an arched stage doorway. A doll might do well enough, indeed.⁸⁸

Kaname's characterization of O-hisa as a "doll" separates her from her individuality and her status serving the old man. He assigns her to a "type" whereby she becomes an exchangeable entity as a "doll" of Bunraku. Literary scholar Noguchi Takehiko points out the Bunraku doll's supernatural aspect to symbolize the endurance of all human fate, and then explains the coincidence between a fetish for dolls and eroticism unique to Japanese traditional literature.⁸⁹ Insofar as the fetishization of dolls is concerned, it is possible to interpret this as a male viewers' shift from the sexual desire for the core of the body to that for the neck or face, provided that the Bunraku doll only shows those parts of the body as Tanizaki recapitulates in his *In'ei raisan*. This superposition of fetish and eroticism, however, can be fulfilled only by the male imagination in Tanizaki's novel *Tade kū mushi*. The disparity between O-hisa's humanity and doll-like materiality is disguised by the costume she wears in order to satisfy the old man's taste. "It suited the old man's tastes to search the old clothes shops at Gojo and the morning bazaars at Kitano for materials no longer in style, for crepes and brocades tightly woven in small, subdued patterns, heavy and stiff as strands of chain. O-hisa was forced into them, protesting helplessly at 'the musty old tatters.'" ⁹⁰ In short, O-hisa, with her anachronistic attire, is a creature subjugated by male fantasy. Yet here, the escapism consisting of the male fantasy idealizes not what is beyond its own culture but its past and tradition. O-hisa's attraction mirrors the old

man's anti-modern sense. The old man's view on Bunraku or Japanese society is linked with his antipathy to Japanese modernity and Westernization: "The old man's arguments were full of references to 'young people today.' Any taste for things Occidental was found to have the same shallowness and lack of body as Occidental string puppets."⁹¹ The anti-modern sense as expressed by the old man in the above passage is a reprimand to young Japanese. Kaname idealizes the Bunraku dolls which intrinsically exist in Japanese tradition predestined to be excluded from the modern world. O-hisa/the doll of Koharu serves as a repository of the past, but this past is transfigured by the old man's anti-modern sense and opposition to the West.

Does Kaname's shift in affection from Louise to O-hisa imply the transmission of the old man's anti-modern sense? Only when Ohisa, the object of the old man's anti-modern taste, becomes the sheer abstraction of "type" or "eternal woman," is his quest for the exotic in Occidentalism and Orientalism fulfilled. Thus, Kaname's discovery of doll-like Japanese beauty means liberation from the obsession with exoticism rather than the antagonism to modernity. All the same, the mysterious closing passage denies that she is a doll: "The door slid open, and this time, a dozen old-style Japanese books in arm, it was no puppet that sat faintly white in the shadows beyond the netting."⁹² This last passage describing the liveliness of O-hisa shows the re-reversal of a "doll" and a human. The vagueness of the shadow in this closing scene illustrates that the whiteness of Japanese beauty, independent of Western esthetics, is expressed by O-hisa's living body. This is the moment when the male conception of Japanese dolls, representing and imposing the fossilization of traditional Japanese femininity, is extricated from the arbitrary desire for domination over women. In contrast to Loti's *Madame Chrysanthème* in which the first-person narrator relegates Japanese women to commodified objects throughout the story, the closing passage of *Tade kû mushi* suggests that Kaname discovers the real entity of O-hisa, extricated from her doll-like quality. However, Tanizaki in *Tade kû mushi* depicts Kaname's possible realization of the existence of O-hisa's non-doll entity as a mere short-lived, ambiguous observation at the very end of this story. As O-hisa sits in the mysterious "shadows" in the last sentence of this story, Kaname only senses an aspect of O-hisa that is not ascribed to doll-like femininity but cannot fully understand it. The last scene characterizes O-hisa with the whiteness of her face and her surrounding shadow in a traditional Japanese-style room. This is how the story shifts the perception of O-hisa

from the universe of traditional Japanese puppet dolls to the esthetic realm of whiteness and shadows, whereby she remains characterless and impersonal. In both characterizations of a “doll” and her white face in the “shadows,” the male viewers’ gaze stops investigating her unique and original personality.

Conclusion

The two works I have analyzed, *Madame Chrysanthème* and *Tade kū mushi* by the authors Loti and Tanizaki respectively, both describe Japanese women as dolls, and demonstrate that the illusion of male domination, derived from Eurocentric Orientalism and its reflection in Japanese modernity, arbitrarily commodifies Japanese women into characterless and exchangeable objects. In *Madame Chrysanthème*, the narrator, who exploits and sexualizes Japanese women to justify his superiority as a European man, refers to several preconceived views on the Japanese, which betray his Eurocentric narcissism. His anti-modern sense, that is, profound antipathy to the imitation of the West by the Japanese, resides in the fear of losing Europeans’ superiority over Japanese women. In *Tade kū mushi*, the author of the novel depicts the dilemma of convoluted exoticism faced by the protagonist Kaname in the era of modernism (the 1920s) as the Empire of Japan imports Western culture such as American movies or translations of foreign literature, including *The Arabian Nights*. The description of a traditional Bunraku puppet and a doll-like Japanese woman exposes the unique esthetic of a Japanese woman’s body and costume in light of the dichotomy between the West and Japan. The obvious cultural discrepancies notwithstanding, the authors of both works ultimately describe an exoticism that is tied to escapism and attempt to maintain through the depiction of the characters they create (the first-person narrator in *Madame Chrysanthème* and Kaname in *Tade kū mushi*) a male-centered imagination by fossilizing the Japanese women who are the object of their desire to an eternal fantasy. It is the ambivalence between the quest for exoticism and anti-modern nostalgia for the Japanese culture of the past by the narrator in Loti’s *Madame Chrysanthème* and Kaname in Tanizaki’s *Tade kū mushi*, which emerges in the interactions with the West from the late nineteenth century to the era of modernism in Japan.

NOTES

- ¹ The following are some examples of English-language scholars who have studied Loti and his works from the perspective of colonialism, imperialism, and Orientalism: Clive Wake, *The Novels of Pierre Loti* (The Hague: Mouton, 1974) and Irene L. Szyliowicz, *Pierre Loti and the Oriental Woman* (London: Macmillan, 1988). For more information about Loti's life, including his experience as a colonialist, see Lesley Blanch, *Pierre Loti: The Legendary Romantic* (San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1983). For more information about Tanizaki's Orientalism, an important source in Japanese is Nishihara Daisuke's *Tanizaki Jun'ichirō to orientarizumu: Taishō Nihon no chūgoku gensō* (Tokyo: Chūkō-sōsho, 2003). However, Nishihara's work does not focus on *Tade kū mushi*.
- ² Szyliowicz, *Pierre Loti and the Oriental Woman*, 55. Although I am aware of the racist nature of today's term "Oriental," I use this term because it reflects the worldview of the characters in the novels I am analyzing. Later on, I also use the term "Occidental" to show how the characters in the novels transpose the West with the other part of the world, including the Orient and Japan.
- ³ Tzvetan Todorov, *Nous et les Autres: la Réflexion Française sur la Diversité Humaine* (Paris: Seuil, 1989), 343.
- ⁴ Chiba Shunji, *Tanizaki Jun'ichirō: Kitsune to mazohizumu* (Tokyo: Ozawa shoten, 1994), 100.
- ⁵ Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin Books, 2003), 190.
- ⁶ Pierre Loti, *Japan (Madame Chrysanthème)*, trans. Laura Ensor (New York: F. A. Stokes, 1920) 252. Hereafter *MC*.
- ⁷ See Szyliowicz, *Pierre Loti and the Oriental Woman*, 1–2.
- ⁸ Said, *Orientalism*, 252.
- ⁹ Pierre Loti's *Japoneries d'Automne*, published by Calmann-Lévy in 1889, is the collection of Loti's essays on his experience in Japan from July to December in 1885. To my knowledge, there is no published English translation of this to date. Akutagawa's short story "Butōkai" was first published in the January 1920 issue of *Shinchō*. Its translation, "The ball," is compiled in Akutagawa Ryūnosuke, *The Essential Akutagawa: Rashomon, Hell Screen, Cogwheels, A Fool's Life and Other Short Fiction*, ed. Seiji M. Lippit, (New York: Marsilio, 1999), 71–78. Mishima's play *Rokumeikan* was first published in the December 1956 issue of *Bungakukai*. Its translation "The Rokumeikan" is available in Mishima Yukio, *My Friend Hitler and Other Plays of Yukio Mishima*, trans. Hiroaki Sato (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 1–54.
- ¹⁰ *Aziyadé*, first anonymously published by Calmann-Lévy in 1879, is Loti's first semi-autobiographical novel that recounts a young English naval officer's visit to Turkey and his romantic affair with a beautiful Circassian slave named

Aziyadé. Loti, as a French naval officer, visited Turkey from February 1876 to May 1877 and wrote this novel right after his return to France. There exists a translation of this novel as follows: Pierre Loti, *Constantinople (Aziyadé)*, trans. Marjorie Laurie and James Edward Gordon (New York, F. A. Stokes Co., 1927). For the information on this novel and Loti's biographical background, see Wake, *The Novels of Pierre Loti*, 49–66.

- ¹¹“In the past, when I was in Japan, even though I was reading Loti's beautiful romanticization of Turkey, I was not able to conjure any particular impression of either Egypt or Turkey. In short, Loti's story was nothing but beautiful fiction [...]” (Unless otherwise indicated, all translations from Japanese to English and from French to English are mine.) “日本に居た昔も、自分は已にロツチが美しいトルコの恋物語を読みながら、猶ほエジプトやトルコに対しては、此と云ふ特別な感想を持つ事が出来なかつた——物語は要するに美しい架空の物語に過ぎなかつた [...]。” Nagai Sōkichi, *Kafū zenshū* 5 (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 2009), 288. Here, “Loti's beautiful romanticization of Turkey” alludes to Loti's novel *Aziyadé*.
- ¹² “The wife's face—her dirty teeth, pale skin, and thin hair—convincingly suggests to me that Japan is a country that holds contemptuous views toward the usage of make-up, prohibits the critique of a woman's outward appearance, and denies the pleasure of love. Her face thus shows that in Japan, women are just reproductive machines, producing future soldiers in the effort to conquer Russia.”
- 「髪の毛の薄い、歯の汚い血の気の失せた細君の顔は、日本と云ふ国では化粧の技術を卑しめ、容貌の評論を許さず、総る恋愛の歡樂を否定し、女は全く、ロシヤを征伐すべき未来の兵卒を産むべき、繁殖の機械に過ぎないと云ふ事をば、自分に向つて暗示する如く、合点せしめる如く映する。」 Ibid., 305.
- ¹³ Stephen Snyder, *Fictions of Desire: Narrative Form in the Novels of Nagai Kafū* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2000), 64.
- ¹⁴ Komori Yōichi, *Reishizumu* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 2006), 96–99.
- ¹⁵ Karen Laura Thornber, *Empire of Texts in Motion: Chinese, Korean, and Taiwanese Transculturations of Japanese Literature* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 2009).
- ¹⁶ “Toute cette servile imitation, amusante certainement pour les étrangers qui passent, indique dans le fond, chez ce peuple, un manque de goût et même un manque absolu de dignité nationale.” Pierre Loti, *Madame Chrysanthème: Suivi de Femmes Japonaises* (Puisseaux, France: Pardès, 1988), 227.
- ¹⁷ 将来に於て日本の風景美が文明の「進化」の爲めに惜し気もなく破壊されてしまつたなら、 [...] 日本の国土に何が残るであろう “Pierre Loti to nihon no fūkei” in Nagai Sōkichi. *Kafū zenshū* 9 (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1992), 133.

- ¹⁸ Tanizaki published his essay on Baudelaire's poems, *Bodoreeru no shi* ボオドレエルの詩 (The poems of Baudelaire, 1916), which first appeared in *Shakai oyobi kokka* 社会及国家. Tanizaki also published his translation of eight prose poems from Baudelaire's *Le Spleen de Paris* (1869) in *Bodoreeru sanbun shishū* ボオドレール散文詩集 (The collection of Baudelaire's prose poems, 1919–20), which first appeared in the October 1919 issue and the January 1920 issue of *Kaihō* 解放. This was a retranslation from an English translation by Frank Pearce Sturm. As Japanese scholar Takashi Kitamura argues that the choice of these eight prose poems reflects Tanizaki's fascination with male masochism in Baudelaire's poems. See Takashi Kitamura, "Baudelaire dans le monde littéraire japonais." in *L'Année Baudelaire 21* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2017), 199–206. Tanizaki's essay and translation mentioned above are available in the following collected editions. Tanizaki Jun'ichirō, *Tanizaki Jun'ichirō zenshū 4* (Tokyo: Chūōkōron-shinsha, 2015), 491–501 and Tanizaki Jun'ichirō, *Tanizaki Jun'ichirō zenshū 7* (Tokyo: Chūōkōron-shinsha, 2016), 463–474.
- ¹⁹ Antoine Compagnon, *Les Antimodernes de Joseph de Maistre à Roland Barthes* (Paris: Gallimard, 2016), 23–24.
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*, 10.
- ²¹ The notion of original sin, one of the central issues in Western anti-modernity, cannot be widely found in anti-modern writing by Japanese authors, even among those influenced by Western authors. And this notion is what most Japanese authors fail to understand through their reading of modern Western literature. For instance, in his posthumously published fragmented essay "Mon Cœur Mis à Nu" (1887, translated as "My Heart Laid Bare," 1951), Baudelaire advocates Dandyism, writing that "[w]oman is the opposite of the Dandy" and "[w]oman is 'natural'—that is to say, abominable." Charles Baudelaire, *My Heart Laid Bare, and Other Prose Writings*, ed. Peter Quennell, trans. Norman Cameron (New York: Vanguard Press, 1951), 176. Baudelaire argues that as opposed to men who can undertake artistic activities, women with the ability to give birth to children who are close to nature. Therefore, Baudelaire thinks that women represent the original sin. See the following article on Baudelaire's concept of the original sin: Bertrand Marchal, "Baudelaire, la Nature et le Péché." in *Études Baudelairiennes 12* (1987). 7–22. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/45074121>. For the general argument on the issues of the original sin in Western anti-modernity, see also Compagnon, *Les Antimodernes de Joseph de Maistre à Roland Barthes*, 108–136. Despite Baudelaire's misogynous view, Tanizaki argues that "Baudelaire loved women" (「ボオドレエルは女性を愛した」 Tanizaki Jun'ichirō, *Tanizaki Jun'ichirō zenshū 4*, 499) in *Bōdorēru no shi*, his essay on Baudelaire (see note 18). Whereas Tanizaki observes the women in Baudelaire's poems symbolize female "jealousy, sin, and beauty" (

「怨念、罪悪、凄艶」, Tanizaki Jun'ichirō, *Tanizaki Jun'ichirō zenshū 4*, 499), Tanizaki fails to notice the theme of the original sin that women symbolize in Baudelaire's poems.

- ²² Miyoshi Yukio, *Nihon bungaku no kindai to hankindai* (Tokyo: Tokyo daigaku shuppankai, 1972), 140–144. Regarding Kafū's ambivalent attitude toward Japanese modernity, Fukuda Tsuneari 福田恒存 (1912–1994) also argues that Kafū hated modernized Japan but did not denigrate modern civilization itself because of his admiration for modern France. See Fukuda Tsuneari, et al., ed. *Han kindai no shisō* (Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 1965), 26.
- ²³ Tanizaki Jun'ichirō, *Some Prefer Nettles*, trans. Edward G. Seidensticker (Tokyo: Tuttle, 1955) [hereafter *SPN*], 25. Koharu is a prostitute heroine who commits suicide with a male character who has a wife, in the puppet play *Shinjū ten no Amijima* (“The love suicides at Amijima”), written by Chikamatsu Monzaemon 近松門左衛門 (1653–1725).
- ²⁴ Ken K. Ito, *Visions of Desire, Tanizaki's Fictional Worlds* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1991), 51–55.
- ²⁵ Modern girls (*modan gāru*, also shortened to *moga*) were Japanese women who enjoyed urban, Westernized lifestyles in the modern era after World War I. They also deviated from the social gender norm imposed by the Japanese nation and trumpeted promiscuity just like the heroine described in Tanizaki's *Naomi*. For further information on modern girls, see Miriam Silverberg, *Erotic Grotesque Nonsense: The Mass Culture of Japanese Modern Times* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 2006). The modern girl (or *moga*) was not limited to Japan, it was an international phenomenon. See Alys Eve Weinbaum, et al., ed. *The Modern Girl around the World: Consumption, Modernity, and Globalization*. (Durham, N. C.: Duke University Press, 2008).
- ²⁶ Nishihara, *Tanizaki Jun'ichirō to orientarizumu: Taishō nihon no chūgoku gensō*, 256–263.
- ²⁷ Todorov, *Nous et les Autres: la Réflexion Française sur la Diversité Humaine*, 341–342.
- ²⁸ Said, *Orientalism*, 179–180.
- ²⁹ Alain Quella-Villéger, preface to *Madame Chrysanthème: Suivi de Femmes Japonaises* (Puisseaux, France: Pardès, 1988), 11.
- ³⁰ The first-person narration of *Madame Chrysanthème* does not delve into Madame Chrysanthème's inner voice. Thus, the story does not clarify her motive for the marriage—she is just exploited in the transactional relationship between the French narrator and the broker or her family. In chapter 4, the broker arranges the “marriage” with Madame Chrysanthème as requested by the first-person narrator as follows:

“It can be arranged, sir!” repeats Kangourou again, who at this moment appears to me a go-between of the lowest type, a rascal of the meanest kind.

Only, he adds, we, Yves and I, are in the way during the negotiations. And, while Mdlle. Chrysanthème remains with her eyelids lowered, as befits the occasion, while the various families, on whose countenances may be read every degree of astonishment, every phase of expectation, remain seated in a circle on my white mats, he sends us two into the verandah, and we gaze down into the depths below us, upon a misty and vague Nagasaki, a Nagasaki melting into a blue haze of darkness. (*MC*, 61.)

³¹ *Ibid.* 319.

³² Clive Wake, *The Novels of Pierre Loti* (The Hague: Mouton, 1974), 143–146. See also Michael G. Lerner, *Pierre Loti* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1974), 69–72.

³³ Nicolas Serban, *Pierre Loti, Sa Vie et Son Œuvre* (Paris: Les presses françaises, 1924), 95–98.

³⁴ “Mousmé est un mot qui signifie jeune fille ou très jeune femme. C’est un des plus jolis de la langue nipponne ; il semble qu’il y ait, dans ce mot, de la *moue* (de la petite moue gentille et drôle comme elles en font) et surtout de la *frimousse* (de la frimousse chiffonnée comme est la leur). Je l’emploierai souvent, n’en connaissant aucun en français qui le vaille.” Pierre Loti, *Madame Chrysanthème: Suivi de Femmes Japonaises* (Puisseaux, France: Pardès, 1988), 66. While I usually cite texts from *Madame Chrysanthème* translated by Laura Ensor (see note 6) in this paper, I have translated this part myself because Ensor’s translation of this part seems inaccurate (see *MC*, 88).

³⁵ *MC*, 328.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 37.

³⁷ “Later on, when Chrysanthème will have become an old monkey like Madame Prune, with her black teeth and long orisons, she, in her turn, will retail that comb to some fine lady of a fresh generation.” *Ibid.*, 247.

³⁸ The real name of the heroine’s model is Okane. Through the research on the comparison between Loti’s journal during his sojourn in Nagasaki and *Madame Chrysanthème*, a Japanese scholar has demonstrated that this novel is a loosely biographical retelling of Loti’s marriage with Okane. See Funaoka Suetoshi, *Pierre Loti et l’Extrême-Orient: Du Journal à l’Œuvre* (Tokyo: Furansu tosho, 1988), 7–40.

³⁹ Said, *Orientalism*, 207.

⁴⁰ Michel Butor, *Le Japon depuis la France, Un Rêve à l’Ancre* (Paris: Hatier, 1995), 42. In terms of Loti’s rhetoric, see also Endō Fumihiko, *Pierre Loti: Chinmyōsa no bigaku* (Tokyo: Hōsei daigaku shuppanyoku), 2001.

- ⁴¹ “le mystère de leur expression qui semble indiquer des pensées intérieures d’une saugrenuité vague et froide, un monde d’idées absolument fermé pour nous.” Pierre Loti, *Madame Chrysanthème: Suivi de Femmes Japonaises*, 168.
- ⁴² Joy Paulson, “Evolution of the Feminine Ideal,” in Joyce Lebra, Joy Paulson and Elizabeth Powers, eds., *Women in Changing Japan* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1976), 124.
- ⁴³ There are a number of monotonous descriptions of female chignon hairstyle with silver pompons in *Madame Chrysanthème* as follows (in the original French text, the word translated as “silver top-knots” by Laura Ensor is “pompons d’argent” [silver pompons] in the following quotations): “Quickly the mousmés must deck themselves out. Chrysanthème is ready; Oyouki hurries, changes her dress, and, putting on a mouse-colored gray robe, begs me to arrange the bows of her fine sash—black satin lined with yellow—sticking at the same time in her hair a silver top-knot.” (*MC*, 180–181); “There are groups of women of every age, decked out in their smartest clothes, crowds of mousmés with aigrettes of flowers in their hair, or little silver top-knots like Oyouki” (*Ibid.*, 182); “While the other mousmés walked along hand in hand, adorned with new silver top-knots which they had succeeded in having presented to them, and amusing themselves with playthings, she, pleading fatigue, followed, half reclining, in a djin carriage.” (*Ibid.*, 235). According to the French dictionary *Trésor de la langue française*, “djinn” means a supernatural being between a man and an angel created from fire in Muslim legends. Loti intentionally implies a double meaning between this “djinn” and a Japanese rickshaw runner (*djin-richisans*).
- ⁴⁴ Barbara Sato, *The New Japanese Woman: Modernity, Media, and Women in Interwar Japan* (Durham, N. C.: Duke University Press, 2003), 52–53.
- ⁴⁵ *MC*, 5.
- ⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 56.
- ⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 71.
- ⁴⁸ Funaoka, *Pierre Loti et l’Extrême-Orient: Du Journal à l’Œuvre*, 53.
- ⁴⁹ Inaga Shigemi, *Kaiga no tōhō: Orientarizumu kara japonizumu e* (Nagoya: Nagoya daigaku shuppankai, 2000), 148–149.
- ⁵⁰ Lesley Blanch, *Pierre Loti: Travels with the Legendary Romantic* (London: Tauris Parke Paperbacks, 2004), 179.
- ⁵¹ *MC*, 176.
- ⁵² *Ibid.*, 8.
- ⁵³ *Ibid.*, 74.

- ⁵⁴ “l’immense Péril jaune.” Pierre Loti, *La Troisième Jeunesse de Madame Prune* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1905), 70.
- ⁵⁵ *MC*, 328.
- ⁵⁶ Leurs petites mains sont adorables sous les longs gants clairs. C’est que ce ne sont point des sauvagesses qu’on a déguisées là; Bien au contraire, ces femmes appartiennent à une civilisation beaucoup plus ancienne que la nôtre et d’un raffinement excessif. / Leurs pieds, par exemple, sont moins réussis. D’eux-mêmes ils se retournent en dedans, à la vieille mode élégante du Japon; ils gardent je ne sais quelle lourdeur, de l’habitude héréditaire de traîner les hautes chaussures de bois.
- Pierre Loti, *Japoneries d’Automne* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1889), 94–95.
- ⁵⁷ For more discussion on how the Japanese empire showed disdain toward China through the sexist and racist language it used to describe China, see Marius Jansen, “Japanese Views of China During the Meiji Period,” in *Approaches to Modern Chinese History*, ed. Albert Feuerwerker, Rhoads Murphey, and Mary Clabaugh Wright (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1967), 163–189. See also, Donald Keene, “The Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95 and its Cultural Effects in Japan,” in *Tradition and Modernization in Japanese Culture*, ed. Donald H. Shively (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1971), 121–75.
- ⁵⁸ *Nihon modanizumu no kenkyū: Shisō, seikatsu, bunka*, ed. Minami Hiroshi (Tokyo: Bulen, 1982), vii–xiv.
- ⁵⁹ See note 25.
- ⁶⁰ With regard to the Modern Girl, see “The Modern Girl as Militant (Movement on the Streets)” in Silverberg, *Erotic Grotesque Nonsense: The Mass Culture of Japanese Modern Times*, 51–72, and Alys Eve Weinbaum, et al., *The Modern Girl Around the World: Consumption, Modernity, and Globalization*.
- ⁶¹ See Sato, *The New Japanese Woman: Modernity, Media, and Women in Interwar Japan*, 51, and Silverberg, *Erotic Grotesque Nonsense: The Mass Culture of Japanese Modern Times*, 54.
- ⁶² Silverberg, *Erotic Grotesque Nonsense: The Mass Culture of Japanese Modern Times*, 59.
- ⁶³ The masochistic motifs in *Chijin no ai*, including scatology and foot fetishism, are influenced by recurrent motifs of fin de siècle European Decadence. See Tomi Suzuki, *Narrating the Self: Fictions of Japanese Modernity* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1996), 160–165.
- ⁶⁴ Kaeriyama Norimasa, *Eiga no seiteki miwaku* (Tokyo: Yumani shobō, 2006), 173–180.

- ⁶⁵ Tanizaki Jun'ichirō, *Tanizaki Jun'ichirō zenshū 16* (Tokyo: Chūōkōron-shinsha, 2016), 189–191.
- ⁶⁶ *SPN*, 37–38.
- ⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 161.
- ⁶⁸ Said, *Orientalism*, 190.
- ⁶⁹ *SPN*, 106.
- ⁷⁰ Naoki Sakai, *Translation & Subjectivity: On “Japan” and Cultural Nationalism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 70–71.
- ⁷¹ Tanizaki's reflection of European Orientalism is also found in the description of foreign countries. He frequently uses metaphors of the *Arabian Nights* when describing China and India. See Nishihara, *Tanizaki Jun'ichirō to orientarizumu: Taishō nihon no chūgoku gensō*, 132–134.
- ⁷² For his translation, Richard Burton (1821–1890) also extensively used John Payne's *The Book of the Thousand Nights and One Night* (1882–84). See Thomas Wright, *The Life of Sir Richard Burton* (London: Everett, 1906). For general information on the past translations of *The Arabian Nights*, see Bruce Fudge “More Translators of The Thousand and One Nights,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 136.1 (2016): 135–46. <https://doi.org/10.7817/jameroriesoci.136.1.135> and *The Arabian Nights*, ed. Muhsin Mahdi, trans. Husain Haddawy (New York: W. W. Norton, 2008), xix–xxx.
- ⁷³ *The Arabian Nights* translated by Richard Burton in 1888 (published with the title *The Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night*) was considered pornographic at the time of its publication and was read by the intellectual and political elites in the West. See David Ghanim, *The Sexual World of the Arabian Nights* (Cambridge, U. K. and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 23. Burton's translation of *The Arabian Nights* has copious footnotes. See *Tales from the Arabian Nights: Selected from the Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night*, trans. Richard F. Burton, ed. David Shumaker (New York: Avenel Books, 1978). Kaname in *Tade kū mushi* also read these “careful notes” by Burton (*SPN*, 93). This shows the way Kaname perceives Oriental sexual images in *The Arabian Nights* and is affected by the Western view latent in Burton's translation.
- ⁷⁴ 「白人のさう云ふ娘ども、所謂ホワイト・スレーヴと云ふものは、東洋の港には何処にもあつて、その抱へ主はお互に連絡を取り、融通をつけ合つてゐる。抱へられている女どもは、ときどき此方の港から彼方の港へ住み替へて、横浜、神戸、天津、上海、シンガポール、香港と、始終グルグル動いている。」

Tanizaki Jun'ichirō, *Tanizaki Jun'ichirō zenshū 12* (Tokyo: Chūōkōron shinsha, 2017), 170–171.

⁷⁵ “I despised the Orientalism by thinking so. I felt disgusted by Oriental yellowish faces. My only sorrow is the fact that I also have the yellowish face.” 「僕はさう思つて東洋趣味を軽蔑した。東洋人の黄色い顔に不快を感じた。僕の唯一の悲しみは自分もその顔の持主であると云ふことだった。」 Tanizaki, *Tanizaki Jun'ichirō zenshū 12*, 156.

⁷⁶ Noguchi Takehiko, *Tanizaki Jun'ichirō ron* (Tokyo: Chūōkōronsha, 1973), 161–162.

⁷⁷ *SPN*, 25–26.

⁷⁸ “Perhaps this doll was the ‘eternal woman’ as Japanese tradition had her...” (Ibid., 25). This is a quotation from the third person narrator who describes Kaname’s feeling in *Tade kū mushi*.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 25.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 23.

⁸¹ By the term “Western movies,” I mainly refer to American films that were popular in the 1920s in Japan. Kaname in *Tade kū mushi* compares Hollywood films to Kabuki plays as follows:

While the dramatists and novelists of the Edo period were able to create soft, lovely women, women who were likely to dissolve in tears on a man's knee, they were quite unable to create the sort of woman a man would feel compelled to kneel before. Kaname therefore preferred a Hollywood movie to a seventeenth-century Kabuki play. For all its vulgarity, Hollywood was forever dancing attendance on women and seeking out new ways to display their beauty. (Ibid., 37.)

⁸² Ibid., 23.

⁸³ The old man in *Tade kū mushi* compares Japanese Bunraku puppets with Occidental string puppets as follows:

“The old man, when he discoursed on the puppet theater, liked to compare Japanese Bunraku puppets with Occidental string puppets. The latter could indeed be very active with their hands and feet, but the fact that they were suspended and worked from above made it impossible to suggest the line of the hips and the movement of the torso. There was in them none of the force and urgency of living flesh, one could find nothing that told of a live, warm human being. The Bunraku puppets, on the other hand, were worked from inside, so that the surge of life was actually present, sensible, under the clothes.” (Ibid., 23).

⁸⁴ Ibid., 23. This is a quotation from the third person narration in *Tade kū mushi*.

⁸⁵ But we Orientals, as I have suggested before, create a kind of beauty of the shadows we have made in out-of-the-way places. [...] Our ancestors made of woman an object inseparable from darkness, like lacquerware decorated in gold or mother-of-

pearl. They hid as much of her as they could in shadows, concealing her arms and legs in the folds of long sleeves and skirts, so that one part and one only stood out—her face. The curveless body may, by comparison with Western women, be ugly. But our thoughts do not travel to what we cannot see. The unseen for us does not exist. The person who insists upon seeing her ugliness, like the person who would shine a hundred-candlepower light upon the picture alcove, drives away whatever beauty may reside there.”

Tanizaki Jun'ichirō, *In Praise of Shadows*, trans. Thomas J. Harper and Edward F. Seidensticker (London: Vintage, 2001), 46–47.

⁸⁶ *SPN*, 25.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 147.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 196.

⁸⁹ Noguchi, *Tanizaki Jun'ichirō ron*, 161.

⁹⁰ *SPN*, 125.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 35.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 202.