

Master's Thesis Abstract

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Title

The image of bad women in the works of Junichiro Tanizaki: with a focus on *Manji*.

Manji is a long novel serialized in *kaizou* by Junichiro Tanizaki from March, 1938 to April 30. Through the figure of the *Manji*, it symbolises the complex intersecting relationships between the four men and women in the work. Furthermore, the use of the Kansai dialect and the subject of female homosexuality have been a feature of the work and have constantly attracted attention since it was first published.

A number of studies on Tanizaki's *Manji* have conventionally focused on the use of language in the work, the so-called Osaka-garb expressions. With regard to the serialisation of this work, criticism of the amount of paper space is often found in contemporary reviews. In addition, Tanizaki's female relationships in his works have been used as an entry point to clarify his perception of Tokyo women and Kansai women, and those examining his taste for Kansai have become mainstream. In recent years, a number of studies have discussed the multi-layered structure of Tanizaki's works from the perspective of the narrator, 'I', and the listener, 'teacher' and 'author'. However, from the angle of feminism, it can be said that there has not been enough research on the image of women and the view of marriage in *Manji*.

Therefore, in this paper, after analysing the characters of Sonoko and Mitsuko, two women in *Manji*, Tanizaki attempted to examine the transformation of love and marriage in the early Showa period by adding Tanizaki's own love career and marital life.

This paper will be divided into three parts.

The first part of the study unearthed the dissimilarities in the personalities of Mitsuko and Sonoko. It revealed aspects of the 'new women' who resist the traditional forms of marriage under the conventional patriarchal system. In the process, I organised each of the complex male-female relationships in *Manji* and examined the interaction between the four people symbolised by the title '卍' - Mitsuko, Sonoko, Watanuki and Sonoko's husband.

In the second part, we grasped the currents of the rise of women's consciousness in the late Taisho and early Showa periods, and based on this, we took Tanizaki's own relationship with women, and in particular his 'taste for women', as a clue to the meaning of *The Manji*.

In the third part of the study, a discussion of feminism was added and the nature of bad women in the work was examined in terms of the characterisation of Mitsuko and Sonoko in the first part of the study. It clarified that the definition of a 'bad women' is one that is subject to male power. Continuing with the feminist issues touched on in the second part, it was also pointed out that the changing view of marriage in the period can be seen by *Manji*.

From the above, it can be concluded that *Manji* produced an image of an 'ideal woman' based on the life of upper-class women in Osaka at the time when it was written, while incorporating Tanizaki's own understanding of marriage in the work. However, while this 'ideal woman' is progressive in its defiance of the patriarchal system represented by marriage, it can in fact be said to be a male Tanizaki's arbitrary fantasy about women.