THE ROOM OF SWEET HONEY:
THE ADULT SHÔJO FICTION OF JAPANESE NOVELIST
MORI MARÌ (1903-1987)

A Thesis

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ABSTRACT

Mori Mari (1903-1987), a writer who pioneered in providing what this thesis calls shōjo fiction for adult women, was “re-discovered” in 2003 on the occasion of the one-hundredth anniversary of her birth. Until then, she was recognized chiefly as the daughter of the prominent Meiji writer, Mori Ōgai 森鶴外 (1862-1922). She remained a minor figure in literary and academic encircles as a writer in Japan and is hardly known overseas. None of her works has been translated into any foreign language. It is ironic that she has not gained recognition despite her success in writing which was highly praised by one of Japan’s most prominent modernist writers, Mishima Yukio. Mishima praises the quality of Mari’s “sensuality,” a characteristic of his own lush prose. Mishima began his debut with Confessions of a Mask (1949; trans. 1958), a work that has won an honored place in not only modern Japanese literature but also in world literature for addressing traditional taboos surrounding the issue of same-sex sexuality. Surely part of what Mishima admired about Mori Mari was the uninhibited freedom in her writings.

Mari presents an alternative scenario from mainstream culture. She ventures to break with precedent in several ways that are strikingly free and expansive in their descriptions. She explores the world of same-sex love, introduces overt sexual elements into the father-daughter relationship, creates a new kind of female figure, and treats hāfu -
--persons of both Japanese and foreign blood---as major characters in her novels.

Looking in retrospect at Japan in the 1960s and 70s, we see that both Mishima and Mori Mari anticipated the affluence and internationalism that was to reach its peak during the pre-Bubble, Economic Miracle years of the late 1980s. Mishima had marked "champagne tastes," and he was the first of his generation of writers to recognize that Japan was emerging from the gray, impoverished years of post-WWII into an age when conspicuous consumption, and even more importantly, the rule of taste would become social priorities. While Mori Mari produced nothing that approaches the size of Mishima's book royalties or film fees, and she lived in near poverty, she evoked for her readers a elegant world that rivals Mishima's prose and lifestyle. She too appeared to have sensed the times were moving in a more affluent and international direction. We might even venture to say that her progressiveness harks back the very cosmopolitanism of her father Mori Ōgai who exposed Mari to European culture and took her to France, where she gained the opportunity to receive training as a translator of French literature and to establish the foundation for her unique literary style, thematic choice, and creations of character.

Mari problematized the boundary between father-daughter relationships, gender roles, and male-female hierarchies and also nationalities. In doing so, she gives expression to the zeitgeist of the early 1960s, which witnessed an interest in challenging rigid social norms and questioning patriarchal authority.
In this thesis, I shall discuss the following: In Chapter One, I introduce Mari’s life as the daughter of Ôgai, and examine how this legacy worked both to bolster and fetter her and her personal life and her career as a writer. In Chapter Two, I shall discuss how the father-daughter relationship is treated in Amai mitsu no heyâ 甘い蜜の部屋 (The Room of Sweet Honey, 1975). By presenting and discussing the novel’s femme fatale protagonist, Moira, I examine how this character reflects women’s roles in Japanese society and Japan’s cosmopolitan culture in the 60s. Finally, in Chapter Three, I examine Mari’s three novellas that treat the topic of same-sex love. In addition, I shall discuss the role of male homosexual stories in women’s literature as well as the relationship between literature and graphic novels dealing with this theme.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

When Mishima Yukio read the first chapter of Mori Mari’s *Amai mitsu no heya* 甘い蜜の部屋 (*The Sweet Honey Room* ; 1975), he started his review with words of exclamation that is a paean addressed directly to the author.

What a sensual masterpiece! It is what I would call a work by a Japanese Colette! Or perhaps I ought to be more precise and say it is a work by Colette during the period when her writing was deeply colored by Fauvism” ‘Sensual masterpiece.’ Oh, how I have longed to use this word. If my memory serves me correctly, Gide says in ‘Pretext’ that the innate talent that is most valuable for an artist is his sensuality. Your works stand alone my lady, --- with the one possible exception of Kawabata Yasunari’s *Nemureru bijo* 眠れる美女 (*House of Sleeping Beauties* ; 1961, trans. 1969). Aside from yours, there was no other work so pregnant with the potential for truly frightening sensuality.”

Despite the high praise from one of Japan’s most eminent modern writers in 1965, it was not until the late 1970s that Mari gained recognition as a writer. Even then she remained a minor figure. Moreover, none of her works has been translated into English. Only in 2003, on the occasion of the one hundredth anniversary of her birth,

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1 Mishima Yukio, “*Anata no rakuen, anata no gin no saji*—Mori Mari sama,” (“Your paradise, Your silver spoon --- to the eminent Mori Mari”) In *Mori Mari zenshū*, vol.4, Geppō 2,” p.10

It is interesting that Mishima compares Mari with Sidonie-Gabrielle Colette (1873-1954) and Kawabata Yasunari (1899-1972), the first Japanese novelist to win the Nobel Prize for Literature. Colette explored the raw sensibility of an adolescent in *Le Blé en herbe* (1923), while Kawabata in *Nemureru bijo* depicted the sorrow of life and sexuality through the elderly protagonist, Eguchi, who goes to a brothel for elderly men where young virgins are put into deep sleep and rendered unconscious.
were her works “re-discovered” and discussed in a new and receptive light in literary and academic encircles.

Mori Mari was born in Sendagi, Tokyo, on January 7, 1903 as the second child and first daughter of the prominent Meiji writer, Mori Ōgai 森鵲外 (1862-1922) and his wife, Shigeko,² (1880-1936). In 1906, when Mori Mari was three, she and her younger brother, Furitsu,³ suffered from a serious case of whooping cough. Furitsu died, and Mari’s chances for survival were seen as hopeless. In order to have a joint funeral, her brother was laid out in the room adjacent to where Mari struggled with her severe coughing. Unable to endure the sight of their daughter suffering any longer, both parents agreed to the family physician’s suggestion of euthanasia. Just then, Mari’s maternal grandfather, Araki,⁴ arrived and dissuaded Ōgai and Shigeko from giving up on their child’s recovery. Three days later, Mari miraculously recovered. The incident became the material upon which Ōgai drew in writing “Konpira”/金比羅 (Kumbhira; 1909, trans. “Konpira,” 1994), although the story does not deal with the issue of the suggested euthanasia. But Mari, takes up the story of her recovery in The Room of Sweet Honey

² There are several variations in the Chinese characters given for Shigeko’s name; 志計, 志計, しげ. Shigeko 茂子 was the first daughter of Araki Hiroshi, a judicial officer. It was the second marriage both for Ōgai and Shigeko. Ōgai’s first marriage was with Toshiko, a daughter of Akamatsu Noriyoshi, a middle officer of the navy. Mari’s elder brother, Oto 見 (1890-1967) was the product of Ōgai’s marriage with Toshiko.

³ Ōgai gave his children unusual names. Chinese characters are used arbitrarily as phonetic symbols rather than for their meaning. For example, a literal interpretation of the kanji used for Furitsu 不律 (1907-1908) is “not standard,” but the sound is close to the Western name Fritz.

⁴ It is interesting that Mari’s euthanasia was prevented by Araki who, as a judge, was in the position of delivering judgment on the death sentence.
and includes the issue of her brush with euthanasia in essays such as "Futari no tenshi"/二人の天使("Two Angels:"1949), "Chûsha"/注射("The Injection," 1949).

In addition to Furitsu, who died of whooping cough, Mari had two other brothers, Oto, by Ôgai's first marriage and, Rui. There was also a sister, Annu. Mari seemed to have a richer relationship with Ôgai than any of her other siblings. Ôgai loved this fragile child, and father and daughter shared a close relationship throughout Mari's childhood. Ôgai's favorite saying was, "Mari is top-class." When Mari was caught stealing cakes that her mother had put away, Ôgai remarked, "even stealing, if done by Mari, is excellent!" Mari addressed Ôgai as "Pappa," which sounded rather casual and Westernized at the time because it was still common to treat a father as an authoritarian figure and call him chichiu ("Father above [Me]," the most polite form of father), otôsama (the polite form of father), or otôsan (father with respect). In many of her essays and interviews Mari confesses that her "Pappa" was the first and last lover, who doted onMari with unconditional love. Ôgai is often taken as a self-composed and almost cold figure, but to Mari his image was the exact opposite. When she was small, he often put

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5 Both of these essays appear in the appendix to the Ôgai zenshû/野間全集(The Complete Works of Ôgai, 1949)
6 Oto 野洲. The kanji 藤 in Oto's name is the appellation of a creeping plant that blooms white flowers in summer. The sound is similar to the Western (German) name "Otto." Rui 類, means "a variety, a sort, or kind," and sounds like "Louis." In the case of Annu 畜女, the combination of the kanji literally means "the slave of an apricot," but it approximates the Western name Anne.
7 お茉莉は上等よ(o-Mari wa jûdô yo.)
8 See "Chichi to Wanasu"(父と私("My father and I", 1956) and "'Pappa' to"「パパ」と (With My "Pappa", 1962) in Mari Mari zenshû, vol. 1.
her on his lap and told her Märchen (fairy tales) such as Snow White, Cinderella, Hänsel and Gretel, and Little Red Riding Hood. She recalls in her essay, "Doitsu no yōfuku" ("German Clothes;" 1953) that he sometimes ordered catalogues from Germany and bought her tailor-made clothes. When her box of clothing was delivered, he called out to Mari’s mother in the kitchen telling her to leave whatever she was doing. Together they opened the box for Mari. As Mari says, it was very rare to wear western style clothes to school, let alone custom-made clothes from Germany. A little girl in western dress was quite the spectacle, and people often stared at her in amazement. At school a group of boys followed Mari and made fun of her by shouting, "Foreigner! Foreigner!" (Ijin! Ijin!) These episodes suggest Mari’s early and high exposure to Western culture introduced by Ōgai.

Their close relationship changed when she married, and the acute change is depicted in her essay, "Toge" ("Thorn;" 1933). Once she married, Mari felt an invisible wall emerge between her father and herself. She had never experienced anything like it before, and she could not overcome it. Still their relationship was close, and every other day her father came to the newlyweds’ house to deliver lunch. She often invited him in, but he always refused with an ambiguous smile. She was saddened by the distance between them, and she could not comprehend its significance. Long after her father died, she learned from her mother that Ōgai had said, “Mari should get close to her

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husband. I am trying to let her do so."¹⁰ It was Ōgai’s intention to erect a distance between himself and his daughter so that Mari could forge a relationship with her husband independent of her father.

The man that she married after graduating from Futsu-ei-wa¹¹ Girls’ Middle School (now Shirayuri Gakuen) in 1919, was Yamada Tamaki, a scholar of French literature. In 1920, Mari gave birth to her first son, whom Ōgai named Jakku.¹² In 1921, her husband went to Paris in connection with his research on French literature. Mari wished to go to Paris to be with him. But she also wished to experience European culture for herself. It was, however, her husband’s family that sponsored Yamada’s study abroad. While the in-laws saw Yamada’s study as worthy of financial support, they were unwilling to pay for his wife to accompany him. Mari’s husband was a liberal thinker, and he wrote Ōgai that, if a couple could not share the same experiences when young, it would be hard for them to have an equal relationship later on. He asked for Ōgai’s support. Ōgai agreed and made every effort to persuade the Yamada family. A year later, the wishes of Mari, her husband, and Ōgai were fulfilled, and Mari joined her husband in Paris. While Ōgai was busy dealing with the Yamada family in 1922, his sickness --- the atrophy of his kidneys and pulmonary tuberculosis --- was gnawing away at him. In 1923, while Mari was in London, she learned her father had died. The experience of

¹⁰ "Toge" ("A Thorn," 1933) in Mori Mari p.73
¹¹ The school name literally means French-English-Japanese. It was a school with a strong emphasis on girls’ education with language skills.
¹² Mari actually spells his name in her essays, in French, "Jacques."
losing her father was felt a second time. The first time was an account on Ōgai’s intentional efforts to keep her at a distance after her marriage. The second time was due to his death.

The experience not only reinforced Mori Mari’s individuality but also laid the seed for her identity as a writer. She recognized herself as a “child” who refused to grow up, living in the world her father created around her. She was always affirmed by the notion that “Mari is excellent.” People around her often dismissed her or excused her because of her child-like quality. One episode pointedly illustrates this aspect. After she married Tamaki, and all of the women in the family were busily engaged in household chores to welcome in the New Year, Mari, continued to play shuttlecock with her small cousins even though as a new bride she was supposed to be working the hardest. It appears she could not function according to societal rules or morals. Indeed, it is believed that this inability was the cause of her failure in marriage and the reason why she was not allowed to see her children after her divorce. In her novellas, especially in “The Sweet Honey Room,” her protagonists are presented as “forever-infants” (eien no yōji).

In Paris, Mari and her husband rented three rooms in a cheap hotel in the Latin Quartier, a favorite haunt of university students since the Middle Ages. The Sorbonne, where Tamaki studied, was around the corner, and Luxembourg Park and The Louvre were close by. When not at the Sorbonne, Tamaki was out on the town enjoying opera
and theatre. Mari shed her Japanese clothes and clad herself in the latest French styles, spending her days at a café enjoying herself and watching people, walking in the forest, and visiting The Louvre. Living in a cheap hotel in the Latin Quartier and avoiding the typical course followed by Japanese tourists was a great source of pride for Mari, Tamaki, and his circle of friends.\textsuperscript{13} Mari appears to have adjusted well to French culture. She felt that Paris was her true native land, or just the place she should be. Although her education ended in middle school, she took French class and piano lessons in Paris. Her stay was a mere year and half, but it gave her the opportunity to become well grounded in the French language. This training helped to establish her career, which she began as a translator of French literature.

In 1927, she and Yamada divorced. Two years after that, in 1929, she made her debut as a translator with her rendition of the play, \textit{On ne badine pas avec l’amour} (1834, trans. \textit{Koi o moterasobu nakare} 恋をあそぶ勿れ1931) by Alfred de Musset (1810-57). The translation appeared serially in the woman’s magazine, \textit{Fujin no tomot} 婦人の友. She translated French works one after another: “\textit{Qui sait?}” (1890; trans. \textit{Sore ga dare ni wakaru no da} それが誰に分るのだ, 1931), “\textit{Le Horla}” (1887, trans. \textit{ル・オルラ}, 1933) by Guy de Maupassant (1850-93), “\textit{Mademoiselle Loulou}” (1888)

\textsuperscript{13} One of Tamaki’s friends in Paris was the psychologist, Yatabe Tatsuro (1893-1958). He studied psychology in the Department of Philosophy at Tokyo University. Like Tamaki, he regularly visited Ōgai, and Ōgai liked him. He was studying in Paris at the same time Tamaki and Mari were there. In Mari’s essay, “\textit{Haha ga musuko ni hikareru toki}” 母が息子に惹かれるとき (“When a Mother Is Attracted To Her Son”; 1964), she writes that as a Japanese, he was an exceptionally attractive man.
trans. マドゥモァゼル・ルルルウ, 1933) by Gyp [the nom de plume of Sibylle-Gabrielle Marie-Antoinette de Riquetti de Mirabeau, 1849-1932], “Journal Intime” (1925, trans. “Pieru Rochi to haha” ピエル・ロチと母, 1932) by Pierre Loti (1850-1923), “La Douleur” (? trans. “Kunō”苦悩, 1932) by Alphonses Daudet (1840-1897), and Cyrano de Bergerac (1897 trans. 東天紅Tōtenkō, 1938) by Edmond Rostand (1868-1918). The translations appeared chiefly in the magazine, Tsubaki /冬柏 (“Camellia”), which was founded by Yosano Akiko and Hiroshi and formerly known as Myōjō Magazine 明星. Despite Mari’s productivity, it can hardly be said the quality of her translations, especially the early ones, is outstanding. Her translations of French pronouns into Japanese are excessive, and her choice of diction too often sounds like a direct translation. But, as this thesis argues, it was through reading and translating these works of French Romanticism, Naturalism and Exoticism, that she established the foundation for her unique literary style, thematic choice, and creations of character.

In 1930, she married Satō Akira, a medical professor at Tōhoku Imperial University, and moved to Sendai. This marriage also ended in divorce a year later. Through the war years, Mari lived alone in Tokyo. Around this time she started sending her writings to one of the most talented lyric poets of the Taishō period, Murō Saisei 室生犀星, to receive feedback although she did not see him in person until more than twenty years later. When Mari began to establish herself as a writer, her father's
reputation worked both to bolster and fetter her. She was continually associated with her father, being recognized as “Ôgai’s daughter” rather than as a writer in her own right. Still, it is also true she could not have had access to prominent writers like Murō Saisei without her family association. Moreover, had she not met Saisei, she most likely could not have published her first prize-winning work Chichi no bōshi (My Father’s Hat, 1957). Her first meeting with Saisei rose out of financial desperation. At the time her meager savings were almost exhausted, and her sole possession was a tract of land. As for the house on it, she could neither afford it nor turn it to profit. Looking at her near empty bankbook, she decided to sell her short story, “Kioku no shomotsu” (A Book of Memories,” year of first publication unknown) in which she wrote about her married life with Tamaki. She visited Saisei to ask his advice. The first question she threw at him was, “Can I write anything in literature?” He replied, “That’s what literature is for.” Mari explained about her short story, “A Book of Memories,” but Saisei remained noncommittal. Instead he asked for her impressions of her father’s writings and suggested she take her collection of essays Chichi no bōshi to the major Japanese publishing company Shinchō-sha. During the meeting, Saisei turned to his wife and said cryptically, “Somehow around May and June I became very poor.” Mari felt he had understood why she came to visit him and interpreted his words as a “happy code” (shiaiwase na angō in which he was conveying his sympathy for her. By reading “My Father’s Hat,” Saisei recognized Mari’s literary talent and began supporting
her writing. Mari refers to her teacher-student relationship with Saisei as that of "...an extraordinary novelist who met with a woman called Mari, who was trying somehow to become an extraordinary novelist. Both discovered things of wonder in each other’s writing in which they both recognized superb beauty." (Mari, 1: 490) In 1957, when "My Father’s Hat" was published, it won the Fifth Japan Essayist Club Prize and established Mari as an essayist. The following year, she published Kutsu no oto / 靴の音 (The Sound of Shoes, 1958), which was also a memoir of her parents.

Throughout her life, she produced a number of essays in which she examines and critiques the people and things in her daily life. In them, she presents her European tastes and conveys her observations crisply and humorously.

With the publication of her first short story, “Koi haiiro no sakana”/濃灰色の魚 (“A Dark-gray Fish,” 1959), she was acclaimed as a writer of fiction. The title derives from a giant salmon, which the narrator was served at the house of “a certain wife.” The salmon is already salted and ready to be cooked. The wife remarks that only this salmon managed to go upriver in the cold waters of November. The spectacle of the dark, gray salmon reminds the narrator of the wife, who is attired in a deep blue kimono. The middle-aged wife has a face resembling a noh mask. Ostensibly she seems to embody the perfect wife and mother, yet beneath this veneer she hides elements of Madam Bovary’s passion. By portraying oppressed sexuality in an
upper middle-class woman, Mari uses the techniques of the genre of fantasy literature (gensō bungaku) to explore the protagonist’s personal world of dark dreams.

I have already argued in this thesis that Mari’s experience of France, and her unique writing style acquired through her translation of French literature had a profound effect on works that she produced as a novelist. This is evident, for example, in the novella Koibito-tachi no mori /恋人たちの森 (Lover's Forest, 1961), which won the Tamura Toshiko Prize. The story unfolds around the aesthetically sumptuous world of love created by a beautiful young Japanese named Paolo, who is the object of the professor’s affection. The professor of literature is a person of mixed Japanese and French blood. This theme of homosexuality and a description of a highly aesthetic world are further developed in Kareha no nedoko /枯葉の寝床 (Bed of Withered Leaves, 1962).

Success came later in Mari’s career because of the difficulties in her early married years, and as well as the onset of the Fifteen Year War. She had to struggle most of her life. In 1959, she received her first request from a publishing company, Shinchôsha, but the funds were slow in coming. She sold the kimonos her mother had bought for her and eked out a meager day-by-day subsistence. In her essay-fiction, “Zeitaku binbô” /贅沢貧乏 (“Luxurious Poverty,” 1963), which won the Izumi Kyôka Prize, she revels in what is genuinely rich in her own impoverished life. In her room with six worn-out tatami mats and yellow stained walls, she creates “phantom of luxury recognizable only to Mari” (Mari, 2: 256). For example, in her cupboard, she arranges jars of strawberry
jam, mayonnaise, garlic, lard and pepper according to carefully chosen colors. In the same manner, she enjoys the colors of towels hung on the headboard of her bed. She finds delight in watching the colors of jars and towels she coordinated in sunshine in the morning and Seventy watt light bulb at night. She despises pseudo qualities. She does not need “an expensive bed purchased at some department store” unless “a curved walnut bed you can find somewhere in a house by a lake in France.” (Mañi, 2: 263) If she cannot afford the genuine article, she is not satisfied with a cheap substitute. Instead she buys a bed disposed of by GIs. She introduces her wealthy upbringing in her childhood when she did nothing on her own except for “holding a rice bowl in my left hand, chopsticks in the right or washing myself in the bath, and dressing myself. My hair was done by my maid while I recited French. Because my maid washed my hair, the only thing I had to do was to stick out my head.” (Mañi, 2: 269) Even in her poor life, with only ten thousand yen to cover rent and utilities, she cannot live without raspberry jam made in the U.K., or good British tea and food in season, which she is accustomed to. In order to make accounts balance, she sells her kimono or tea sets. She admits and is even proud of the fact that she is incapable of household chores because of her upbringing as a naïve woman (ajōsan sodachi) but she manages her “luxurious life” in her own terms. The fact that she is a daughter of Mori Ôgai and that she lived an affluent life as a child must have convinced readers that she speaks also with the voice of a person who knows “true luxury” (honmono no zeitaku wo shiru hito 本物の贅沢を知る人). In “Luxurious
Poverty,” she defines the meaning of “true luxury,” which defies standard concept of “luxury” at a time when Japan was witness by the beginning of its economic miracle.

When she was seventy two, her magnum opus, Amai mitsu no heya /甘い蜜の部屋(The Room of Sweet Honey, 1975) appeared. It consists of three parts, and it took her ten years to complete. This is the work that Mishima praised lavishly. The story depicts the relationship between a femme fatale protagonist, Moira, and her father, Rinsaku. Moira has a strange glass room inside herself. The room seems to be made of thick, translucent frosted glass upon which all emotions, either directed from someone else to her or those which emerge from her become blurred and diminish in a matter of moments. Because her emotions never last longer than a mere moment, it is impossible for her to share them with other people. This ultimately readers her unfeeling.

Growing up within the unconditional love of her father, Moira becomes a beautiful girl. Although she is powerfully narcissistic, she possesses the keen ability to infatuate any man. I will argue in this thesis that it is in this work Mori Mari attains her greatest profundity as an artist. In illustrating Moira and the men around her, she explores an untrodden world that is liberated from and transcends socially regimented, gender-based roles, morals, religions, and nationalities. It was for this novella that Mari won her third Izumi Kyôka Prize.

In 1987, Mari’s eighty-four years came to an end in her apartment, where she died from a heart failure. Her body was found two days later.
CHAPTER 2

It took Mori Mari ten years to complete her magnum opus, Amai mitsu no heya /甘い蜜の部屋 (The Room of Sweet Honey, 1975) which extends to more than five hundred pages in its paperback edition. It consists of three parts that following the growth of the protagonist Mure Moira /呉礼藻羅. The first part, Amai mitsu no heya /甘い蜜の部屋 ("The Room of Sweet Honey") portrays Moira in her infancy; the second, Amai mitsu no yorokobi /甘い蜜の歓び ("The Pleasure of Sweet Honey") depicts Moira’s puberty; and the third, Futatabi amai mitsu no heya e /再び甘い蜜の部屋へ ("To the Room of Sweet Honey, Once Again") treats Moira’s married life and homecoming to her father following her husband’s suicide. The three parts were published consecutively as each was completed from 1965 to 1975.

The protagonist, Moira14, was born at 5:30PM on December 1912 as the only child of her mother, Shigeyo, who dies immediately after giving birth to Moira, and of her father, Mure Rinsaku, a trader who has a firm in Yokohama. The Room of Sweet Honey is remarkably autobiographical. It is worth noting that all three members of the

14 In the story, Moira’s father, Rinsaku, explains that the name, Moira藻羅, is named after an Irish dancer. The kanji representation appears only once at the very beginning of Moira’s introduction, after which the katakana representation, モイラ, is used. Moira is an Irish name, but considering that fact that the character is a femme fatale who manipulates the destinies of the men around her, it is interesting to note that Moirai in Greek myth is another name for "The Fates." Each man’s destiny is ordained and controlled by the Moirai. The Moirai are three, white-robed goddesses who determine the length and course of every human life. Clotho spins out each thread of destiny; Laches is measures it to the right length; and Atropos snipes it with her shears.
Mure family — Moira, Rinsaku, and Shigeyo are similar to actual names of members of the Mori family: Moira to Mari, Rinsaku to Rintarô, Mori Ōgai’s given name, and Shigeyo to Shige. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Mari uses the experience of her own miraculous survival from a serious case of whooping cough at the opening of this story. It is used to explain Rinsaku’s heightened love for Moira, and it leads readers into a world of “A kind of ‘love story’ between father and daughter,” as Mari has stated in her several essays. It is obvious that Mari portrays Rinsaku based on her father’s image. Like Ōgai, Rinsaku lived for a time in Berlin. Rinsaku goes to Germany with his father, Taisaku, and he graduates with a degree in Law in German. He is presented as “a man who is a mixture of a Western warrior and the elegant simplicity of a Japanese man” (44). This passage is similar to Mari’s description of her father as “looking like Caesar wearing a yukata” (Mari 3:5). Just as Ōgai constantly said to Mari, “O-Mari wa jōtō yo,” Rinsaku uses the same words to Moira, telling her “she is excellent” (モイラは上等よ). In fact, when Moira is caught stealing sweets, Rinsaku remarks, “Even stealing, when done by Moira, is excellent!” (15). These are the same words that Ōgai said to Mari when she stole sweets.

Although The Room of Sweet Honey is highly autobiographical, it is a mistake to regard it as an I-novel, or shishōsetsu. To do so does not jibe with the author’s reported intentions in writing the novel, and the I-novel view does not serve well in interpreting the work. Mari detests the idea that her writings might be considered as
belonging to the *shishōsetsu* genre. In her essay, *Watashi no rikon to sono go no hibi* /私の離婚とその後の日々* (*My Divorce and Life Thereafter,* 1959), she clearly states that, “Even an essay, which is another form of literature, is not a record. There would never be a case in which facts are depicted exactly as they were” (Mari 3:348). In addition, Mari observes that “Readers of novels are usually divided into two categories: Those, who read for the sake of novels and those who read because they are curious about the writer’s life. While there is truth to the saying ‘Literature is literature whatever you write,’ it is true only for those who genuinely understand literature” (Mari, 3:47).

She condemns Ōgai’s short story, *Han-nichi* /半日* (*A Half Day,* 1909) for his failure to realize this fact about the reader’s nature and for drawing a distinction between “public” and “private” in writing. She says that “A Half Day” was the product of a “momentum of excitement.” As a result, it is inferior in quality to Ōgai’s other writings (Mari, 3:51). To put her condemnation of Ōgai another way, she is criticizing readers who conflate the protagonist with the writer, especially when the story seems to be autobiographical. This is the error that her critics often fall into. In this thesis, I wish to move beyond the facile and superficial assessment of the autobiographical nature of Mari’s work that has been typical of commentary in the past.

Mari ventures to break with precedent in several ways. The main theme in *The Room of Sweet Honey,* namely the father-daughter relationship, is one example of her attempt to do so. This is because the father-daughter relationship is unique in two
respects. First, the thematic choice of the father-daughter relationship is relatively rare in Japanese literature. As Tomoko Aoyama argues in citing the Jungian psychologist Kawai Hayao, there has been a strong emphasis on father-son or mother-son relationships in standard Japanese literature, but father-daughter and mother-daughter relationships have been marginalized (Aoyama, 168). Second, in Mari's treatment of the relationship, the sexual element in the case of both father and daughter is highly explicit. To introduce such an overt sexual element into the father-daughter relationship is culturally and psychosocially unconventional in Japanese literature. Consequently, the presence of the two unique elements leads to an interpretational dichotomy: the work is treated either as "sensual masterpiece," as Mishima called it. Or it is a "story of incest" that is regarded in the same light as works such as "Usagi" ("Rabbits," 1972) by Kanai Mieko or Sei shōjo (Divine Maiden, 1965; partial trans. 1989) by Kurahashi Yumiko.\(^{15}\) The reason why the theme of The Room of Sweet Honey is interpreted as a "story of incest" has to do with the representation of the sexual elements in the father-daughter relationship. Although the work does not fit easily into any category in Japanese literature, to label it as incest constitutes a simplistic reading of the work. As mentioned above, some critiques may conflate the protagonist with the writer, and this leads to ungrounded speculation that The

\(^{15}\) For more discussion of Kanai on the theme of incest, see chapter eleven by Atsuko Sakaki in The Father-Daughter Plot, edited by Rebecca L. Copeland (Honolulu: 2001)178-185.
Room of Sweet Honey is “a product of abnormal love between Mori Mari and Mori Ōgai.” Mibuya Takashi’s article is, for example, representative of this point of view.¹⁶

Let us begin then by discussing how sexuality and Rinsaku’s relationship with Moira are actually depicted. Educated in Berlin, Rinsaku has the characteristics of a scholar, but he is also a pleasure-seeker. After his wife dies, he does not lack for outlets for his appetite for women. When he visits his brother’s house in Kyoto for a few days, he never fails to go to the licensed pleasure quarter, Gion. He also has a German lover, Annette Kaufman, who works for him in his firm as an “office lady.” Although he is busy with his life, and he lives happily in the world he has created around him, Moira is its center. He declares to himself, “I have only Moira. Without Moira, there is no reason to live. When I think of the world without Moira, I cannot think of any reason to live”(24). Rinsaku realizes that he is “completely Moira’s lover despite the huge age gap”(24). He sees her at breakfast every morning. Or they are together a few of times a week in the afternoon when he finishes his work early. Sundays are also a time to be together. He takes her to restaurants and to dinner with his close friend. He teaches her French and helps her to bathe. Even when Moira reaches the age of six, he continues to feed her with a “sterilized spoon.” “The foreboding as sweet as honey, haunted him that Moira would never escape the gentle bondage of love to him forever”(23). He treasures

¹⁶See “Rakka sita koto sae wasurerareta kafunjō no inseki: Amai mitsu no heya wo megatte”落下したことさえ忘れた花粉上の隕石：甘い蜜の部屋をめぐって“A Meteorite That, Reduced To a Powder, Has Even Forgotten That It Once Fell From the Heavens” in “Sél tokushū: Mori Mari” (2003)119
the feeling. It is “like a precious thing, since Moira has grown out of her baby face, she looks at him with sweet eyes and sucks the spoon with her rose-colored lips and entwines her deep rose-colored tongue around the spoon when he feeds her vegetable soup”(23). When Moira turns eight, he finds her a piano teacher, Alexander, a Frenchman who is fifty-two years old. Thereafter her life from eight to eleven is told only in the context of her piano lessons. From the first time Alexander sets eyes on Moira, he is strongly attracted to her unconscious coquettishness. He himself was raised strictly as a “Puritan.” He is married to a motherly woman named Madeleine, and he lives a stoic life devoted to suppressing his desires. The more Alexander feels desire for Moira, the more sadistic he becomes in overseeing her piano lessons. Moira unconsciously senses his turmoil. Alexander’s obsession proves suffocating to her, and she never grows fond of him. Although Rinsaku and Alexander have great respect for each other, from the beginning each secretly knows they are rivals over Moira. As a matter of fact, Rinsaku is able to see through every instance of other men’s emotions for Moira. In this, he is like a “cormorant fisherman, a professional among professionals”(217). Rinsaku recognizes Alexander’s dark desires as well as the teacher’s struggle to overcome them. He also knows that Alexander is better looking than himself, but the fact that Alexander’s good looks do not win Moira’s favor gives him great satisfaction. In fact, Part One of “The Room of Sweet Honey” ends with Rinsaku’s satisfied smile. Starting from this first experience of Moira infatuating a man, we find that each chapter thereafter ends with a 19
satisfied look on Rinsaku’s face because other men have fallen victim to Moira’s charms. In the three parts of the novella, there are nine chapters that end with Rinsaku’s smile. As Yagawa Sumiko remarks his smile is “the *basso continuo* of the novel.”  

It reflects Rinsaku’s confidence that Moira is forever his, and it brings the father-daughter relationship into sharp relief.

As an atypical father figure, Rinsaku does not fit the traditional Japanese stereotype of the autocratic father. In order to understand further how unorthodox and modern he is, it is useful to gain an overview of the historical background of the gender perceptions Rinsaku must have observed and grown up with. During the 1870s, Japan witnessed the fight for freedom and equal rights, including those for women. After two hundred years of isolation from the world, “Civilization and Enlightenment,” or *Bunmei kaika*, swept the country shortly after Japan’s opening to the West. Advocates of “Civilization and Enlightenment” emphasized women’s education, and they established private institutions such as Meiji Jogakkô, or allowed missionaries to run schools for women. Women’s education as advocated by such educators challenged traditional Confucian notions that obedience was an essential virtue. The “Civilization and Enlightenment” movement was short lived, however. In the aftermath of wars against

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17 Yagawa, *Chichi no musume-tachi,* pp. 47-48
18 The threees obedience for women: *Ozanaki wa chichi ni shitagai, yome shite wa otto ni shitagai, oite wa to ni sitagai.* 幼きは父に従い、嫁しては夫に従い、老いては子に従え (“Obey your father when young, obey your husband when married, obey your son when you become old”) appeared in *Onna daigaku (The Great Learning for Women)* by Kaibara Ekken (1630-1714). It is often referred to as the rule of essential virtue for women.
China (1894-1895) and Russia (1904-1905), Japan grew increasingly nationalistic, and the ideology centered around the patriarchal *ie*-system caused the pendulum of the times to swing back toward tradition and inequality. When Rinsaku was twenty years old in 1886, the Minister of Education, Mori Arinori, who was once an advocate of “Enlightenment” and “the improvement of women,” enunciated that, “the primary purpose of young women’s education is to prepare them to become good wives and wise mothers,”¹⁹ and women, “should cultivate good personalities” and learn to “manage household work and educate children.”²⁰ In 1890, when Rinsaku was twenty-four, the Meiji Civil Code was issued. The Code gave absolute authority to the patriarchal ideology of the *ie*, leaving women with almost no rights. According to the Meiji Civil Code, “cripples and disabled persons and wives cannot undertake any legal action.”²¹ Women had no property rights, nor the right to retain their family names after marriage, nor the right to marry without the consent of their fathers until they were twenty-five. Adultery was subject to punishment and grounds for divorce, but only when committed by a wife. Marriage was considered a transaction between two families, and it was accepted that the groom’s family would not register a marriage until a test period for the

new bride had passed during which her capability and worthiness as a wife and mother could be ascertained. Since young girls were treated as commodities in the marriage transaction, their chastity was essential. If a young woman had knowledge of sex prior to marriage, she was labeled, a *kizumono*, “a flawed article,” and her parents could not hope to arrange a good marriage for her. Parents were careful in supervising their daughters.

Moira was born in 1912, the first year of the Taishō period, when Japan witnessed a liberal atmosphere referred to as *Taishō demokurashi* ("Taishō Democracy"). In this movement, some Japanese women began to voice the need for women’s rights. For men of the previous generation this was not an easy shift. Even today in Japan, when people talk of men who grew up in the Meiji period, they often refer to them as *Meiji no oyaji* ("The Old Men from the Meiji period"), alluding to their strictness and inflexibility in changing their values. By definition, Rinsaku is a *Meiji no oyaji*. Unlike the autocratic fathers of the Meiji era, however, he “doesn’t display morality like other fathers” (222), and he is strikingly liberal and progressive. He “was displeased with the current of society which placed such importance on the virginity of a bride on her wedding night” (413). Supported by his complete confidence that his father-daughter relationship runs deeper than any other relationship Moira might have, he is not possessive of his daughter. When, just as Rinsaku foresaw, Moira experiences her first sexual encounter with Peter at age of fifteen, he tells himself it happened just as he expected.
I shall analyze Mori Mari’s treatment of foreigners in her works in greater detail, but it is worth noting here that Rinsaku not only lets his teenage daughter become a *kizunomo*, but he also lets it happen with Peter. Peter is the son of a Russian army officer who has taken refuge in Japan. Rinsaku observes that “Because [Peter’s family] are Russians, the neighbors in the area didn’t seem to like them” (194). Peter himself knows, “[the neighbors] harbored discrimination and disgust against his family” (245). When one neighbor sees Moira leaving Peter’s house, rumors spread immediately. If Rinsaku had been a typical Meiji father, these rumors would have been fatal for his daughter’s future, and doubtless, he would have punished her. On the contrary, he accepts Moira’s behavior because “Moira will never be happy unless she is free” (221). He places importance on the freedom of his daughter. At the same time, he does not adopt a totally *laissez-faire* policy towards her. When Moira becomes a teenager, he buys a medical book, and it is he who gives her training in sex education. Rinsaku “believed he was the best person to talk to Moira about sex in a natural tone, teaching her neither too much nor too little” (380). He acknowledges his daughter’s sexuality. He even admires Moira for it. When he pats her back, he “feels a subtle eroticism filtered through something” (226). Simultaneously, he thinks, “it is a natural instinct that human beings have” (222). Giving his daughter an education in sexual matters in a scientific way by using a medical textbook illustrates Rinsaku’s values and perceptions regarding sexuality. He thinks sex is “natural,” or a concept different from what he was expected to cultivate
under the morality of Meiji society. It is also one that he probably developed as a result of his experience of living in Germany.

In an interview in 1975 Mori Mari also makes it clear that she intended the father-daughter relationship in her novel to be treated as perfectly natural. "I never even thought of such disgusting idea as 'incest'." In her novel, Moira "sees the deep value that [her father] places on her in the smile that crosses his lips. She sees it as a form of admiration which is something set apart, and which has nothing to do with the madness that greedily devours the flesh"(372). Moira's husband, Amagami, feels frustrated and jealous that he can never win Moira’s heart from Rinsaku. Still he "could not help but find a pure picture in the pair of them. An atmosphere surrounded Rinsaku which might cause someone to confuse him and Mari as lovers, but father and daughter shared a pure, joyful familiarity (清潔な 父と娘との楽し気な馴れ合い) which made Amagami feel ashamed of his jealousy"(356) Both the father and the daughter see sexuality as something "natural," and it is made clear that their affection for each other is rooted in love and not carnal desire.

That Rinsaku is atypical of oyaji in the Meiji reflects not only his liberal values but also Mori Mari’s superimposition upon his portrayal of the bourgeois consumerism of the late 1950s and early 1960s, when Mari was writing and Japanese experienced its first period of postwar economic growth. Rinsaku exercises great care concerning two

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22 Mori Mari, interview with Yagawa Sumiko, in Namiji (The Wave, 1975:8)
matters in raising Moira. He raises her in an affluent environment, and he does not want her to become involved with a man who is without financial means. He believes that his daughter cannot survive even an hour without wealth. In his opinion, Moira’s husband has to possess either the same or more wealth than he has. Peter is out of the question because his career aspirations lie in writing. Writing will make little money, if any. Rinsaku’s biggest fear is not Moira’s physical relationship with Peter, because he knows money can solve the problem even if Moira gets pregnant. What worries him is the possibility that her virginal beauty will be lost.

In Part Three, when we are told the story of Moira’s marriage and its disastrous conclusion, Rinsaka’s two rules are intricately intertwined with the plot. By referring to these two rules, Mari is commenting on the shift in social and popular values that she observed take place between the 1920s, when the story is set, to the 1950s, when she was writing the novel. The events of these forty years are germane to Mori Mari’s thinking because Japanese society underwent major changes. The first change was the explosion of economic growth. The second pertained to perceptions toward women, especially the appearance of the modan gaaru ("modern girls"), or moga. Mari foresaw the upcoming changes in culture and people’s values, and she depicts them vividly in this story. After World War II, the policy of “The Reverse Course,” the Dodge Commission was established under the Allied occupation, in 1947 in order to rebuild Japan’s capitalist economy. The government re-conceptualized its economic strategy, and Japan’s
industrial base was reconstructed during the 1950's. Between 1960 and 1975, Japan witnessed an astonishing explosion of economic growth. Along with this economic explosion, a new bourgeoisie modeled after Rinsaku began to appear. The affluent life, as well as the values of Rinsaku and Moira, was very much a product of this period.

Moira embodies the strong class-consciousness of the new bourgeoisie. From her childhood Moira does not make friends at school because she keenly feels a huge gap between her life-style and that of her classmates. Unlike her classmates, she lives in a big, Western-style house, and possesses abundant foreign clothes and shoes. She goes to school in a carefully coordinated brown-colored fur hat and a fashionable manteau. Rinsaku thinks it may not be a good idea to send her to school by car given the austere atmosphere of the private school Moira attends, and he hires a man from a nearby rikisha station to pick her up at school everyday while her classmates walk to school. Moira realizes that her father looks grander than other parents. Her superiority complex grows, and to her classmates she “says, ‘Who are you?’ in her mind”(40). The only friend she makes at school is Nobara Noemi. Noemi’s mother left her daughter for a lover, and Noemi lives with her grandmother. Noemi does not lead as affluent life as Moira, but thus only causes Moira’s sense of superiority to grow stronger. Rinsaku realizes the unhealthy dynamics between the small girls and tries to have Moira show more respect for her friend, but his intervention does not work. Moira is despotic not only to her classmates but also to her nanny, Shibata, and her tutor, Mikurumi. She treats them with
an appallingly degree of haughtiness and condescending language. She does not speak to
them other than to give orders or complain. If she does not like what Shibata does, she
says “Stupid Shibata”(57) straight to Shibata’s face. When she orders her nanny to help
her dress, she barks, “Hurry up and dress me”(61). Moira is also sensitive to hierarchies
in the adult world. When Shibata tells Moira to take medicine because the family doctor
prescribed it, Moira refuses. She retorts, “My dad is superior to Dr. Inamoto. My
grandfather gave Inamoto favors”(30). In Japan, when children have servants, they
typically used the direct form of verbs to give orders. It is not unusual for Moira to adopt
this style. But, Moira’s use of direct-style language as well as her behavior contrasts with
that prescribed for children in the old days before the emergence of the new bourgeois.
Children were strictly taught how to talk to their servants using polite style language in
order to earn their respect. The condescending way in which Moira talks to her servants
would have been considered unacceptable. Nonetheless, Rinsaku never corrects her or
tries to put her in her place. Instead, he is actually amused by Moira’s behavior because
he thinks she can see through the unpleasant and real natures of others: Shibata Tomie is
a divorced woman who appears to have been “steeped in the home, tedium, and bad food
before she was born”(38). Moira’s tutor, Mikurumi Chika, forty-five years old, and a
former teacher “is like a monster of a nun who hides her suppressed sexuality” (20).
Because Mikurumi and Shibata command high salaries, in front of Rinsaku they pretend
to sincerely care for Moira. As matter of fact, however, they are both jealous of what
Moira has. Jealous and envious of their infant master, they direct their frustration and venom toward Dmitri, the horse keeper, and Yayo, the kitchen servant. They draw clear a distinction between themselves and Dmitri and Yayo because both are working class, and Dmitri is a *hafu*, or persons of mixed racial background.

Another element that suggests Moira’s strong class-consciousness is her rationale for marriage. Moira marries Amagami Mariusu\(^2\) because he has money, servants and brains. He falls madly in love with her at first sight, when he went for a horse-riding lesson in Yoyogi Park.\(^4\) Mariusu is nearly thirty, handsome, British-looking, and very rich. He is the president of a trading company in Yokohama, and he lives in a big house in Denen chōfu\(^5\) with maids and servants. After breaking off his engagement with another woman, he asks Rinsaku’s for permission to marry Moira. Rinsaku consults his trusted servants, Dmitri and Yayo and Moira’s maternal grandfather, Gōda Shigeo. They all agree that he should accept the proposal since Amagami satisfies the necessary conditions for Moira, and she marries him knowing not much more than that he has money and servants. This lack of preparation results in an unhappy married life. In the

\(^2\) Amagami Mariusu (天上守安). His first name is unusual as a Japanese name. While one is tempted to read his personal name as “Moriyasu,” this is another example of a name derived from a Western name, Marius. It is suggestive of the wealth, grandeur, and decadence of ancient Rome and its patrician class.

\(^4\) Western style horse riding was a new sport and members of the royal family and high society enjoyed it. This is an example of the affluent life and the influence of Western culture observed by Mori Mari.

\(^5\) Denen chōfu is a town in Tokyo planned by Shibusawa Eiichi, the most powerful tycoon in the Meiji period. He was influenced by British architecture, particularly Ebenezer Howard’s Garden City Movement suggested in Howard’s book *Garden cities of To-Morrow*, and he launched a plan to build a garden city in Tokyo in 1918. Since its founding, bourgeois, military officers, scholars and doctors have lived there, supported by their high consciousness, the town has been maintained as an ideal “green city” town. With the emergence of the new bourgeois, living in Denen chōfu became a status symbol among the wealthy.
misery of his marriage, Amagami soliloquizes, “I had money, servants and intelligence, all conditions necessary to be Moira’s husband. That is why Rinsaku accepted my proposal. Perhaps this is what marriages are about, but there must have been something more in Rinsaku’s mind. I was softhearted and immature about relationships between men and women. I was the best ‘cocus’” [French for “cuckolded”] (466).

Not only is Moira the embodiment of new bourgeoisie consciousness, she is also the fruit of the new women’s movement that produced the moga (“modern girl”) in the late 1920s -- young women who, appearing in urban life, shattered existing perceptions of women. Moga wore Western clothes, smoked, drank, and engaged in ginbura (“Ginza-cruising”) with mobo (“modern boys”). They extolled freedom from social affiliations, such as filial obligations to either father or mother, and they enjoyed jiyū ren-ai, “free love relationships”. The idea of romantic involvement outside family arrangements or intervention, as well as the perception of women as equal partners in the serious pursuit of love, were new concepts. The development of the mass media, especially, the impact of women’s magazines such as “Fujin kōron,” “Josei,” and “Nyonin geijutsu” had a tremendous effect on the formulation of new ideas among women. These magazines included translations from a wide range of topics by such writers, Katherine Mansfield,26 Bronislaw Malinowsky,27 Langston Hughes28 and

26 Katherine Mansfield (1888-1923), a short-story writer from New Zealand who became a major force in the construction of modernist short fiction with her use of stream of consciousness. She is closely associated with D.H. Lawrence and referred to as a rival of Virginia Woolf. She depicted marital and family relationships of middle-class people, and she raised questions about identity, belonging and desire.
Alexandra Kollontai,\(^{29}\) whose works were said to have introduced the concept of “free love.” Moga were perceived as a counterpart to the old ideology of “Good Wife and Wise Mother” (ryōsaikenbo). The death of Moira’s mother at her childbirth is symbolic of the death of the ideal Meiji woman, and of the ideology of the “Good Wife and Wise Mother.”

Ever since the first documented reference of “the Modern Girl” appeared in August 1924 in the title of an article in the woman’s magazine Josei, the definition of moga became a heated topic in women’s magazines. There were many kinds of moga as Oya Sōichi, the leading critic of popular culture of the 1920’s, has stated. Miriam Silverberg has analyzed Oya’s study and offers three versions of his definition of the moga:

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29 Alexandra Kollontai (1872-1952), Russian Social-Democrat from 1890s, active in international Socialist Women’s movement, and a member of the Mensheviks before 1914. With Bukharin in the “Left Communist” faction, she opposed signing of the Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty. She was sent to diplomatic posts in Mexico and Scandanavia. Although she sympathized with the Left Opposition, subsequently she conformed. Kollontai’s works were translated into Japanese between 1927 and 1936 as follows: Red Love, trans. Murao Jirō (Sekaisha, 1927); A Grand Love, trans. Nakajima Hideko (Sekaisha, 1930); Great Love, trans. Uchiyama Kenji (Sekaisha, 1930); Working Women’s Revolution, trans. Ōtake Hakukichi (Naigaisha, 1930); Motherhood and Society, trans. Ozawa Keishi (Logosu Shoin, 1931); and Women and the Family System, trans. Yamakawa Kikue (Seibunkaku, 1936)
The first was crafty, manipulative, and intellectualizing. She was free to go out, even to sleep out, and maintained no boundaries between friends and lovers. She was a consumer, not a producer: she was like a mannequin. The second type was group-oriented, productive, and possessed of a self-consciousness. But the only the third girl was 'one hundred percent moga.' She was identified as the daughter of heroic leftist activists who had been imprisoned countless times. (Silverberg, 249)

Similar observations can be found in the January 1928 issue of Shinchô in which critics identified elements characteristic of moga. Although there are differences in various types, moga share many aspects in common. In short, moga are (1) not bound by preconceived gender roles and openly enjoy their sexuality, (2) they are self-assertive and (3) they are realistic. Moira shares many of these characteristics, as she was a teenager when the moga boom was at its peak.

Like a typical moga, Moira has a keen awareness of her sexuality and enjoys sex openly. Women's fashion was for example, often discussed in relation to the moga's sexual self-awareness. Kiyosawa Kiyoshi makes an interesting observation on the moga's way of wearing kimono. The traditional function of the obi served to hide the buttocks, but moga started wearing obi higher to show off their buttocks and express their sexual vitality. Moira's clothes are often depicted as made of thin material through which her color-coordinated lingerie is visible. On summer days when it is hot, and she goes swimming in the afternoon, she wears only a bathing suit inside the house from the morning. Her clothes do not function to hide her body, but rather emphasize or frame it
to make her physical beauty explicit. In fact, Moira’s realization of her sexuality as a *moga* goes beyond fashion. She enjoys “free love” in the form of a renewed sexual encounter with Peter even after her marriage to Amagami, and she does so without any feelings of guilt or remorse. This leads to a tragic conclusion for Amagami and a happy ending for Rinsaku who finally wins his daughter back. Amagami senses that there may have been something between Moira and Peter. By then, he knows Moira will never love him as he loves her. His sadness and suffering are reflected in his eyes, which all his servants and Rinsaku recognize. He does not accuse his wife, but he suffers in silence like a martyr, a fact that annoys Moira and makes her dislike him all the more. Day by day, Amagami looses his appetite, and his depression grows more serious. He sees “cruelty, more than mere cruelty” in Moira’s eyes (484). She adopts a “so-what” attitude, and it grows worse as his depression deepens. Rinsaku recognizes Amagami’s struggle and Moira’s cruelty, but says to himself “Amagami should go as far as he can take it. It was wrong to have Moira follow the social convention called marriage” (401). One day, when the young couple is having dinner, and Moira is feeling bored by their life together, she suddenly asks her husband “Do you know Peter? You know him, don’t you?” and leaves the table. That night, her husband takes an overdose of sleeping pills and kills himself.

Moira is self-assertive. Surrounded by Rinsaku’s love, Moira cultivates the confidence of what the novel calls an “*enfant gâtée*” or a “spoiled brat” (16). She was
“like a plant which gradually grows more and more powerful” (38). She has the confidence that she “can never be defeated” (34), and she gazes at boys with total self-assurance that her eyes work “like a hunting-net for boys.” Since she was a child, she had the realization, albeit vaguely, she possesses an air of female sexuality that is attractive to the opposite sex. Although this precocious self-realization and narcissism derive in part from her father and his doting on her, they are also in part the product of her moga-ness.

Moira is a realist and materialistic like other moga. She marries Amagami Marius because she knows only a husband who has money, servants, and the maturity to let her act willfully will serve her needs. Although she enjoys a physical relationship with Peter and wishes to have another rendezvous with him, she clearly recognizes that love and marriage may not come together as a single package. She chooses the man who can guarantee her an affluent life.

By having Moira embodies the moga who emerged in the 1920s and the values of the new bourgeoisie from the late 1950s, Mari creates a new kind of female figure with dimensions hitherto not observed in Japanese literature. Before the new concept of woman’s sexuality was introduced, woman in novels were often depicted as victims or passive receivers of male desire. Once new concepts of female sexuality were introduced, women writers started exploring this theme in their writings. Tamura Toshiko (1884-1945) was one such writer who attempted to pursue this issue. Although Tamura’s
efforts went further than any other female writer at the time, her female protagonists, while ostensibly free from older concepts of her sexuality, cannot overcome strong feelings of self-disgust and self-reproach about their behavior. In The Room of Sweet Honey, Mari not only liberates Moira from the old “Good Wife and Wise Mother” style of female sexuality, but she also attempts to create a female protagonist who does not have a guilty conscience about her newly won freedom. Mari even reverses the hierarchical power roles in gender relationships. She controls and victimizes male characters instead of having her female characters be controlled or victimized. She challenges the accepted idea of what it means to be feminine and masculine. Although very feminine, Moira is often portrayed like a man, or even as a carnivore or devil. She possesses a “naturally brazen nature which makes one think perhaps an arrogant man of undaunting nerve lived within a body of woman” (334). When Moira discovers her husband’s suicide in the company of her friend Ethel, Ethel identifies the look on Moira’s face as “the expression of surprise worn by a tough man who has killed a woman whom he did not care much about” (530). Moira’s body is soft and flexible, and she is never able to position herself in the firm, straight manner men find so irresistible, yet she also evokes the image of “a man slacking off after having a lot to drink” (352). Rinsaku observes, “Moira is a mixture of a child and a devil” (201). She possesses the “skin of a devil” (202), and Peter murmurs “she is half-devil and half-infant” (204). She has the strong “desire of a carnivore” (164). She devours love and enjoys seeing how much men, especially her father, will indulge
her. In the novel, there are as many as thirteen descriptions of Moira as a carnivore, twelve as a devilish figure, and two as a monster. Six can be found in which men are her victims.

Sharlyn Orbaugh offers the following observation on such attempts by Japanese woman writers:

Women writers might choose to maintain the current binary configurations of power, but to reverse the gender coding of the hierarchical power roles. Instead of being silent, women can speak; instead of being the object of others’ gaze, they can use their eyes; instead of being killed, they can kill; instead of being dominated, they can dominate. Women who choose this strategy in writing realist fiction must show their protagonists overturning the power hierarchies in a world still configured by those hierarchies. Such reversals are always temporary and end in tragedy. A more systematic use of this strategy would place the story outside the bounds of the “real world,” in a complete, fully articulated world of fantasy, or in a space contiguous to, but dislocated from, the world as we know it. In such a space it is possible to explore freely the implications of overturning the dominant hierarchies of power.30 (Orbaugh 123; Orbaugh’s italics)

Orbaugh distinguishes strategies that writers employ in “realist fiction” and in “the story [conceived] outside the bounds of the ‘real world.’” The definitions of these two different literary worlds are not clearly stated, and in Mari’s case they are not at all clear-cut. Moira indeed “can kill instead of being killed,” and she can also “dominate instead of being dominated.” Yet, she remains silent, is the object of the male gaze and never

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reverses the paradigm in these two respects. Moreover, as the title of the novel suggests, the world in which Moira lives, The Sweet Room of Honey, is filled with her father's love and she need not confront any “realistic” problems such as the Great Kantô Earthquake or the economic depression that followed it. It can be said she lives in a world of fantasy. Still, her world ends in tragedy, and it is not free of being “configured by those hierarchies” as argued above. In the end, when Mari returns home after her husband’s suicide, it is only Rinsaka who smiles, out of a feeling that he has finally won her back. We cannot see Moira’s winning smile, however. Although she is fluent in French, and could use it to get a job as a new workingwoman, she has no world outside her father’s house, or the one she had with her husband. She lacks interest in anything but sensual pleasures. Although she ought to be a moga vocally extolling her freedom, she is suffused with a palpable sense of ennui and has nor real voice or opinions. We are told she “hardly ever speaks” (293), and even when she does, it rarely constitutes more than a handful of words. Her utterances are more, “like fragments of words which can be understood only by her father and Dmitri” as Amagami observes (249). Not only she is deprived of her voice, but she is also portrayed as “an infant” who never grows up.

One example of Moira’s immaturity occurs when Amagami has a guest over to the house and Moira briefly states her name but she is unable to give a proper greeting. She stares at the guest with the “face of baby beast” (328). In front of Moira, Amagami apologizes to the guest ingratiatingly: “Moira was spoiled by her father and doesn’t know
how to greet people properly. Please excuse her rudeness” (330). Her social immaturity
is further illustrated when the guest gives her a present, and she accepts it without a
single word. Ultimately, her husband prompts her as a parent might prompt a child.
“What do you say?” She finally says “Thank you” (340). She had married Amagami at
the age of sixteen. When this scene takes place, she is eighteen. Granted she is a
teenager, and she should show a greater level of sophistication, but her incapability to
communicate and her infant-like attitude make one suspect she is retarded. Her husband
murmurs, “Moira is a strange girl. She is infantile to an inane degree. She is not foolish
but ... infantile. She is like a child” (292). In sharp contrast to her social inability,
however, she is intelligent enough to master French and graduate with excellent grades in
schools. Yet it is not her intelligence, but “her mentality” that “is semi-infantile”(274).
Moira never does grow into an adult. She lives forever in a liminal state that lies between
childhood and womanhood.

Moira displays unbalanced maturity. She exhibits a precocious sexual
consciousness yet refuses the idea of sex as a means of reproduction. She can manipulate
men and enjoy her sexuality without guilt or inhibition. Yet, she is dependent on
patriarchal figures. Her position in society is realized only through her father or her
husband. Her self-realization or self-confidence is also dependent on the men around
her. Without male patriarchal figures, Moira cannot exist in society. In order to maintain
her existence, she ceases to grow into a mature woman but remains a shōjo 少女, or “non-

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quite-female female."31 Amagami, who appreciates Moira’s shôjo quality, “loves Moira in a fatherly manner”(348), and he encourages her to remain innocent and naïve. Because of her immaturity Moira never becomes fully capable of using servants. People who work for her husband at his trade company whisper, “The woman at the boss’s place isn’t the wife type. She is more like a spoiled princess”(478). Unlike most men in the Taishô period, her husband “never thought about his heir because he was so deeply drawn to Moira’s body and the things inside her”(486), and Moira has no interest in having children. She “[had] no interest in babies. Rinsaku found out that she was not only indifferent to them, but she even had a sort of allergy to them. Babies were totally irrelevant creatures for Moira” (380). Completely detached from the social convention of marriage even after she married, Moira continues to indulge herself in the role of the shôjo.

This image of shôjo became hugely popular during the 1960s. Horikiri Naoto dates the concept of a “special shôjo world” to the Taishô period.32 This was the period when rapid economic change produced a new bourgeoisie and made it possible for middle- and upper class young females to prolong adolescence. Prior to this period, young women were urged to grow up quickly. They usually married at the age of twelve or thirteen, in breathtaking contradiction to the current average age of 28, for example. Once married, they were expected to manage all of the domestic responsibilities as well

32 Horikiri Naoto, Mezamashi gusa,(Tokyo;1991)108-90
as their servants. Producing heirs for the *ie* was the primary purpose of marriage, and these young women became mothers soon after getting married. It was as though one day they were children, then suddenly the next day they were compelled to mature into adults. Marriage at such an early age forced them to become wives and mothers without having had time to enjoy “adolescence.” Married at the age of sixteen, Moira had a prolonged period of adolescence in comparison with women of prior generations.

In order to account for the emergence of *shôjo*, one must take into account the considerable social changes experienced by women from the 1920s to the 1950s. During this period, from the time in the 1920s when *moga* appeared in Japanese society to 1965, when *The Sweet Room of Honey* was published, there was a significant shift in women’s consciousness of their roles in society and their possibilities and limitations. *Moga* as symbolized by their short-cut hair and rapid stride dared to cross gender boundaries. They were no longer satisfied being confined to the household, but started pursuing their own lives as free agents outside the world they were accustomed to. In order to create a level playing field, *moga* imitated male habits instead of attempting to create lives as women. Examples of this in literature can be found in the series of short stories published by Sata Ineko, in 1931, or in *A Fool’s Love* by Tanizaki Junichirô.33 In both author’s stories, the heroines adopt male language. In Sata’s works, young women refer to themselves as *ore*, the male direct word for “I.” Not only do they imitate male

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language, but also they act like males. They threaten to smash dishes and they wrestle like men when they cannot come to agreement over issues of ideology. In Tanizaki’s *A Fool’s Love*, Naomi becomes a mistress and forces her husband to play her slave by co-opting male language, cross-dressing, and challenging him. These females tried to reverse male-female hierarchy through the promotion of androgyny, an “otherness” that is purposefully ill defined. Their androgyny was an expression of protest—a rejection of traditional stifling and stereotypical female gender roles.

The realization of gender playfulness occasioned by the brief period Taishō liberalism was not to last, however. With the outbreak of war in Manchuria in 1931, men were drafted. Under the slogan “Be Fruitful and Multiply for the Prosperity of the Nation,” the Imperial government needed women to produce more future soldiers and to join the labor force to support the home front in the absence of men. In the 1930s and 1940s, women were recognized in society by two conflicting ideologies. On the one hand, the government acknowledged women as mothers and promoted women’s fertility, on the other, it required them to participate in the labor force, a notion that contradicted its own prewar stance. Ironically, feminists collaborated with the state ideology, and they took up significant roles in mobilizing women. Even Ichikawa Fusae, one of Japan’s renown feminists and former leader of the Women Suffragist’s League (*Fusen Kakutoku Dômei* 婦選獲得同盟), was one of its strongest advocates. Ichikawa and other feminists collaborated with the state ideology because regardless of ideology, they saw
mobilization of women as recognizing the first occasion when the Japanese government recognized women's role in society. In 1945, the same government that desperately needed women in the work force during the war fired about three million women in order to open their jobs for returning soldiers. Although wartime had allowed women to join the labor force, which had previously been a male dominated milieu, the immediate postwar year forced them to not only realize their insubstantial position in society, but also to confront the harsh reality that they were mere disposable substitutes. Even long after the legal reforms of the family system under SCAP, which established under law the equality of men and women, women confront barriers in the society today.34

Moira, as a shôjo plagued with a sense of ennui, deprived of a personal voice, and who acts like an infant, is a product of the changes women underwent from the 1920s to the 1950s. Taishô liberalism freed women from their rigid stereotypical gender role as "good wife and wise mother," and women gained a new consciousness of their sexuality. But their position in society did not change fundamentally. While retaining vestiges of the moga of yesterday, Moira lacks the glittering vitality that moga possessed. Instead she is affected with "ennui" or being "depressed." She never laughs although she would seem to have everything --- beauty, money, social status, intelligence and male

34 In U.N. report of GEM (Gender Empowerment) in 2001, which indexes women participation in society, Japan ranked 31 out of 64 countries, astonishingly low as a developed country. Women's ratio in manager class is only 9.7%. Salaries between women and men display a huge inequality. Among employers who worked throughout a year, 63.8% of those who made less than ¥3,000,000 is dominated by women, in a stark contrast with men, 17.8%. On the contrary of those who made more than ¥7,000,000, women's ratio is 3.1% to the contrast to men 22.5%.
companions to enjoy her sexuality---because she cannot live outside the patriarchal world of *The Room of Sweet Honey*. Indeed, it is a sweet world, but the cloying, gluey honey will not let go of Moira, nor does she take to flight because the outside world is not as sweet as her father’s or husband’s confined world. Mari’s *shōjo* creation is not a symbol of resistance. Instead is a portrait of the decadence of a woman battle-weary after thirty years of struggle. Rinsaku’s two rules that Moira has to marry an affluent man and that she should maintain her virginal beauty serve to create and preserve her status as a *shōjo* forever. His smiles not only reflect his confidence that Moira is forever his, but also his confidence in the victory of the patriarch.

Young females in the 1960s found in the image of the *shōjo* an avenue of escape where they need not imitate men as the *moga* had done in the 1920s in order to win equality, nor grow into independent women who could confront the harsh reality of patriarchal society. The *shōjo* is a chimera split out of fixed gender roles. She is neither man, nor woman, nor adult, nor child. The *shōjo* boom among young women can be explained by the fact they found *shōjo* a happy medium that resolved the dilemma they faced in being forced to choose between narrowly defined gender roles.

Another of Moira’s important characteristics is her cultural identity. Being bereaved of a mother who embodied traditional Japanese values and raised by a father educated in Europe, Moira does not fit into Japanese society correctly. Japanese see her as an outsider, and so does Moira, ---as represented by the inner world she makes for
herself from the semi-transparent, thick, frosted glass through which she sees people. The only people she becomes remotely intimate with are so called hâfu ハーフ, or persons of mixed racial background, or Westerners. As a matter of fact, among the elements that make Mori Mari unique writer is her treatment of hâfu, and Westerners. I believe she is the first writer to treat either hâfu or Westerners as major characters in a novel, and to treat them as individuals with innate, authentic human qualities. Although Isshiki Keiko in Ishikawa Jun's novel Hakubyô (Writing in White 1939) may be the exception if one considers Keiko, who is half Japanese/half Jewish, to be a principal character in Ishikawa's novel. Just as Mari blurred the line between father-daughter relationships, gender roles, and male-female hierarchies, she also problematized the boundary between nationalities.

After Japan opened its gates to the West in the Meiji period, writers started to treat Westerners in their writings. In “The Images of Westerners in Modern Japanese Fiction: Adoration and Castration,” Kinya Tsuruta finds that “Westerners in modern Japanese fiction are portrayed in terms of two general, and extreme, categories: they are either beautiful goddesses or ugly monsters, virtually lacking in any realistic ‘human’ qualities” (ii). A typical example of Westerners can be found in Sanshirô (1908. trans. 1977) by Natsume Sôseki (1867-1916). Sanshirô, the protagonist, notices several Westerners on the platform when he travels from Kumamoto to Tokyo. When the train stops at Hamamatsu there was
One couple were probably husband and wife; they were holding hands in spite of the hot weather. The woman was dressed entirely in white, and she was very beautiful. Sanshirō had never seen more than a half-dozen foreigners in the course of his lifetime. Two of them had been his teachers in college, and unfortunately one of those had been a hunchback. He knew one woman, a missionary. She had a pointed face and looked a lot like a pike. Foreigners as colorful and attractive as these were not only something quite new for Sanshirō, they seemed to be of a higher class. He stared at them, entranced. Arrogance from people like this was understandable. He went so far as to imagine himself traveling to the West and feeling very insignificant among them.\textsuperscript{35}

In Mari’s novels, the most vividly portrayed characters are those who were previously marginalized as minor figures, or described in the extreme figures as “beautiful goddesses” or “ugly monsters.” Moira’s closest friend, Dmitri, a horse-keeper who is half Russian and half Japanese, is one such character. He was given the Japanese name Tsunekichi because there was a strong antipathy for Russians at the time. His father, Ivanov, was a horse keeper for a Russian general, who was a Romanov. During the Russo-Japanese War, Rinsaku’s father, Taisaku, was in Russia as a military doctor. After the war, he became acquainted with General Romanov, who was a prisoner of war. A friendship grew between them. When Romanov died as a prisoner Ivanov came to see Taisaku. Taisaku took him under his wing. Later Ivanov married in Kobe and had a son, Dmitri. Despite their differences in age, nationality, and social class, Dmitri is Rinsaku’s best friend. Rinsaku knows that Dmitri loves Moira. For his part, Dmitri makes efforts to control his feelings toward Moira because of his loyalty to his master. This deepens

\textsuperscript{35} Natsume Sōseki, Sanshirō (1908; trans. 1977) 14.
Rinsaku’s trust in him, whom he, “loved more than any man” (404). They often drink together and talk about Moira. Moira is fond of Dmitri because she knows her father trusts him, and she finds him “full of goodness and love” (55). Dmitri also shares her scorn toward Shibata and Mikurumi for their two-faced obsequiousness.

After Noemi is married against her will at her grandmother’s command, Moira and Noemi grow distant. Moira becomes friends with a foreign woman about the same age as her, namely, Ethel Kahnet, whose father works for Amagami. Ethel has “the ability to understand and accept people like Moira” (345). Dmitri, Ethel, Alexander, Peter, and the servant Yayo all have close relationships with Moira and are all either “hâfu” or non-Japanese. They are portrayed as genuinely humane and tolerant, and having the requisite open-mindedness to understand, accept, and love Moira. At the same time, they are depicted vividly as true human beings who can be hurt, saddened, and who must struggle.

This raises the question of why does Mari present Moira as a person who is more like a “hâfu” and why must she live among bicultural people? Of those who are close to Moira, the only Japanese are Moira’s father and her husband. What implication does this have? As Mari and women readers found an avenue of escape in the image of the shôjo, so too do the hâfu populate the discursive space Mari has created devoid of patriarchy. While I shall discuss this issue in further detail in Chapter Three when I discuss the feminization of the West in Mari’s writings, it is worth noting here the
dichotomy between the patriarchy represented by Japan and a world free from the patriarchy as represented by the West. Because these hāfu or Westerners are able to act as free agents within the rigid social morals and standards of Japanese society, they can understand, accept, and love the bicultural Moira, who is strikingly unconventional in Japanese society. Moira’s love affairs involve only hāfu and Westerners. As I have discussed before, renai or romantic love was a relatively new concept when it was first introduced in women’s magazines. Since it was introduced from the West, love relationships outside social conventions were perceived as “Western.” In other words, romantic love (renai) becomes another manifestation of “Otherness.” In Amai mitsu no heyay, and in Mari’s other novels, Westerners or hāfu are depicted as capable of renai while Japanese people are presented as incapable of it. Moira’s husband is depicted as “considerate and intelligent, but concerning the matter of women, he is just good-natured”(501). In other words, he is incapable of romantic love. Because Westerners or bicultural types are not Japanese, neither the author, nor the readers associate the actions of these liminal characters with Japanese morals or rules. For example, when Rinsaku learns that Moira is going to have an affair with Peter, Rinsaku muse; “I haven’t taught her that what she is about to do is called ‘adultery.’ Even if she knows what it is called or, even if I tell her that its gravity as a violation of law, she wouldn’t listen (424). Likewise for Peter. “For him, the legal denotation of ‘adultery’ didn’t mean anything.” And we are told that “If Amagami prosecutes him, Peter is ready to stand at the
bar" (412). "From the moment he took Moira to his room two summers ago, he did it unabashedly as an individual" (412). Both Moira and Peter show no guilt, shame, or fear of violating the law. Instead, their conception of the affair, as well as the morals that they apply to it, are based on their individuality that is set apart from society. Were Moira’s affair not with the Russian Peter, however, and it were with a Japanese man, the first word that would come to a reader’s mind would be “furin.” “Affair,” “adultery,” or “immorality.” Mari succeeds in avoiding the connotations of “immorality” in creating a world of renai by employing a Russian character who is associated with “individualism” and “Otherness.” Although it is true that Mari does not treat hâfu or Westerners as extreme figures like “beautiful goddesses” or “ugly monsters,” it cannot be denied that they are presented as “other” than Japanese.

As one would expect for conventional relationships like marriage, Mari employs Japanese characters. Although it seems that marriage to Japanese man is an affirmation and acquiescence to the Japanese patriarchy where a wife is placed firmly below and subordinate to her husband, this does not apply in Moira’s case. She has the same power in marriage as she did in renai. She swaggers about the house like a “king” (300). She remembers a French poem her father read to her. It was about a young man who is madly in love and devoted to his girlfriend. She does not love him much, and she demands that he cut out his mother’s heart and bring it to her so that she can feed it to her dog. The man kills his mother but her hearts falls out of his hands on the way. While
the heart goes rolling down the hill, it asks him, “Are you hurt, my son?” Hearing the poem, Moira thinks that “I can get as many men’s hearts as I want, like the man who cut out his mother’s heart” (377). Her husband is one of victims of this “carnivore of love”. As Orbaugh points out, in most joryū bungaku or women’s literature, when a protagonist overturns the power hierarchies, the reversals are always temporary. In the Room of Sweet Honey, however, Moira is the winner and victimizer of the relationship in marriage from the beginning to the end when her husband commits suicide. As Rinsaku says “It was wrong to have Moira follow the social convention called marriage” (401). By permanent reversing of the power hierarchy in conventional relationships, Mari creates a female discursive space to nurture a new feminist consciousness. At the same time, she introduces hâfu who serve to create a world of renaî which provides comfort to women readers and allows them to enter a fantasy world devoid of ubiquitous patriarchal constraint. Women readers find an outlet for their frustrated hopes in the pages of Mori Mari’s novels --- and in the pages of shôjo manga, which I shall discuss in the next chapter.

The significance of Mari’s treatment of bicultural characters is that it echoes the growing fascination toward the “hâfu” in Japan in the 1960s. In 1966, Shiseidō, one of the biggest cosmetic companies in Japan, launched a big summer campaign using a tall and striking hâfu model, Maeda Bibari a.k.a. Beverly Maeda. Bibari is shown lying on a sandy beach in a white bathing suit. Her well-defined facial features and well-
proportioned body, so characteristic of hâfu, caused a public shock and the poster itself was even said to be a "social phenomena." 36 One critic described Maeda Bibari’s poster as, “the first advertisement in which physical beauty was presented with wild eroticism. It is also said that the traditional image of ‘purity,’ which Shiseidô had cultivated for many years was broken down. In its place ‘healthy sexual expression’ was realized in advertising for the first time.” 37 Note also that the model as a name---Bibari/ Beverly---that like the names of Ōgai’s children possessed a cross-cultural or trans-national quality. After the appearance of the poster, hâfu models were used one after another with great success by the advertisement industry. Not only models but also, so called “hâfu tarento,” or entertainers with mixed racial background such as Kei Tomoko and Koyama Rumi, appeared and took active parts in Japanese pop culture. The hâfu overcame the old stigma attached to konketsuji, 混血児, mixed raced children or half-breeds, 38 especially after the World War II, when many bicultural children were born to Japanese women and GI fathers during the U.S. occupation of Japan.

It is also worth noticing that the “healthy sexual expression” presented by hâfu overlap with Rinsaku’s perceptions regarding sexuality. He thinks that sex is “natural.” His feelings and Moira’s sexuality is that “she wouldn’t show the graceless shyness

38 Although the English translation for both konketsuji (混血児) and hâfu (ハーフ) both mean “persons of mixed racial background,” Konketsuji has contemptuous connotation. While hâfu is often used with admiration toward their Western qualities such as their physical/facial features or their bilingual skills.
common in Japanese women. There are many Japanese girls who lack feminine
sensuality even when they are naked, and yet they are not men either. ...Moira doesn’t
have such a body. Even out of her clothes, I can see that” (202). Rinsaku’s
characterization of Moira’s carnal beauty evokes the image of “physical beauty presented
with wild eroticism” associated with the “hāfu” models.

![BEAUTY CAKE](http://www.manabow.com/pioneer/shiseido/shiryo.html)

Figure 1. A 1966 Shiseidō summer campaign poster with
Maeda Beverly.

As evidenced in *Amai mitsu no heya*, Mori Mari problematizes the arbitrary
social distinctions between Japanese and Westerners, as well as prescribed male-female
roles. In doing so, she gives expression to the Zeitgeist of the early 60s, which witnessed
an interest in challenging rigid social norms and questioning patriarchal authority.
CHAPTER 3

Although the treatment of male homosexuality in modern literature by female writers is relatively new, male homosexuality has long been a topic of Japanese literature. In medieval times, tales of chigo/稚児, or page-boys serving to various temples, shrines, court nobles, and samurai family, often appeared in Buddhist context. Although the term ostensibly meant “page boys” or “children,” the youth often served as male homosexual consorts. In the Edo period, Ihara Saikaku created a genre called kōshoku monogatari/好色物語 or fiction dealing with amorous adventures, in which he vividly depicted human desire for sex and profit. Tales of shudō/楽道 or the way of male homosexuality, was one of the themes he treated. In modern Japanese literature, Mori Ōgai wrote a semi-autobiographical Vita Sexualis (1909; trans. 1972), which touched on the subject. Mishima Yukio’s Confessions of a Mask (1949; trans. 1958) and Forbidden Colors (1951; trans. 1968) are perhaps the two novels most widely known for their treatment of the subject. Female writers had written romantic fiction incorporating the subject of lesbianism in the 1920s and 30s, but Mori Mari was the first to treat male homosexuality in Japanese literature.

Between August 1961 to June 1962, Mari published three novellas in succession in which she took up male homosexuality as her main theme: “Koibito tachi no mori” /恋人たちの森 (Lover’s Forest, 1961), “Nichiyōbi niwa boku wa ikanai”

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/日曜日には僕は行かない (No Sundays For Me, He Said,"1961), and "Kareha no nedoko"/枯葉の寝床 (The Bed of Fallen Leaves, 1962). Although "Lover’s Forest" won the second Tamura Toshiko Prize, the majority of writers in the bundan expressed confusion at the appearance of Mari’s novellas.39 Mishima was one of the few exceptions. Doubtless treatment of male homosexuality by a female writer was ahead of its time. It was not until a decade later that male homosexual love became a popular theme in the field of shôjo manga, or comics for girls --- an indication that Mari was ahead of the times. In fact, there are striking similarities between Mari’s work and shôjo manga in the creation of plot, context, characters, and atmosphere. To investigate the correlations between the two, first, I shall discuss the vicissitudes that shôjo manga underwent before discovering that homosexual theme were popular and highly marketable. Second, I shall analyze Mari’s three novellas in relation to shôjo manga.

The origin of comics for girls can be traced to shôjo zasshi, or magazines for girls. Shôjokai/少女界 ("Girl’s World"), was the first of these, and it was published in 1902. Magazines for girls became immensely popular, and reached their peak in the Taishô period when as many as ten magazines for girls were being published. The boom produced such representative artists such as Takehisa Yumeji(1884-1934) and Nakahara Junichi(1913-1983). But it was only early in the Shôwa period that manga or comics started appearing in magazines. In the Taishô period manga had yet to acquire a

dominant position in the mass media. While infrequent, when manga did appear in *shōjo zasshi*, a single story generally extended across several pages and was exclusively comedy. Graphic artists such as Takehisa Yumeji and Nakahara Junichi, who drew lyrical illustrations for *shōjo shōsetsu*, or melodramatic stories for girls, did not draw manga. But their illustrations did build the stylistic and graphic foundation for *shōjo mangal/少女マンガ*. The typical *shōjo shōsetsu* story centers around a beautiful innocent girl who suffers misfortune but ultimately overcomes her difficulties and achieves happiness in the end. *Hana monogatari/花物語* ("Flower Stories; 1916) by Yoshiya Nobuko is typically claimed to be the progenitor of the genre of stories for girls.

At the time of the Fifteen-Year War, *shōjo zasshi* became a powerful means for the media to promote the ideology of “good wives and wise mothers” (*ryōsai kenbo*) among young women. The Meiji Constitution of 1889 established that Japanese people were subjects of the emperor; the Imperial Rescript on Education of 1880 taught children filial piety and loyalty to the state; and The Meiji Civil Code of 1889 strengthened patriarchal authority as the basic, and exclusive legal basis behind the unit ruling order of the state. But starting with Japan’s military invasion in Manchuria in 1931, and a rising tide of nationalism, the emphasis behind these principles shifted from a focus on the *ie*, or family to the *kokka*, or national state. The state was treated as a larger family unit, or an extension of the family, and people were asked to serve the state as children in this national family. Under the influence of such ideas, the Meiji ideology of *ryōsai kenbo* re-
conceptualized women’s role in society. This re-phrased view of women was *kokateki bosei* or motherhood-on-behalf-of-the-state. A woman’s role in life was to be realized as a mother of the family-state who supported soldiers fighting a “sacred war” on behalf of the nation. *Shôjo zasshi* served to promote this ideology among young women. Female close friendship was one of the common topics in *shôjo shôsetsu* but it was considered to have homosexual overtones that contradicts the idea of *kokateki bosei*. As a result *shôjo shôsetsu* such as *Hanamonogatari* were shunned by publishers and with the exception of *Shôjo kurabu* 少女倶楽部, most *shôjo zasshi* suspended the publications of whole magazines.

After the war was over, *shôjo zasshi* began to appear again and *shôjo shôsetsu* yielded its previous position of privilege to *shôjo manga*. By 1955, the appearance of manga in *shôjo zasshi* had gradually increased to the point that more than half of the pages in the magazines were dominated by manga. Still *shôjo manga* stories followed the standard set by *shôjo shôsetsu* even as they took the place of the genre. In 1953, Tezuka Osamu published *Ribon no kishi* リボンの騎士 (*The Knight of Ribbon*, 1953), the first *shôjo manga* comic that was exclusively targeted for girls. In stark contrast to previous forms of manga, *Ribon no kishi* had a long story, and for the first time in manga history, the focus of the pictures were on the “kawaii” or cute to appeal to the taste of

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young girls. Tezuka’s work established a solid foundation of development of the genre in the postwar Japan.

Takahashi Makoto, who published his first comic in 1958, carried out a stylistic revolution in shōjo manga. His graphic novels were full of the objects of affection for "shōjo shumi"/少女趣味 or “girlish taste”: ribbons, frills, flowers, and starry eyes. Real life situations were downplayed and beauty and fantasy emphasized.

![Image](http://www5a.biglobe.ne.jp/~belne/63568110/index.html)

*Figure 2. Takahashi Makoto “Fairy”*
Exhibited in 2002 at a one-man exhibition of Takahashi Makoto’s works.
http://www5a.biglobe.ne.jp/~belne/63568110/index.html

Shōjo manga moved into full-scale development with the beginning of the baby boom of 1958. This was also a period in which female writers emerged in the field. Until 1958, male writers had dominated the shōjo manga milieu. Women writers looked
deeper into the inner psyche of shōjo, basing their creations on their intimate experiences as women. Female writers helped shōjo manga to gain gradual popularity because stories written by women struck a deeper and more sympathetic chord with young female readers.

In 1974, Berusaiyu no bara (The Roses of Versailles), a Takarazuka theatre play based on the comic, Berusaiyu no bara!ベルサイユのバラ(The Roses of Versailles, 1972) became a runaway success. The play became so famous, and like the Storehouse of the Forty-Seven Masterless Samurai of Kabuki fame, it was repeated so often on the stage at Takarazuka, that it became known as the “Chūshingura of Takarazuka.” Meanwhile, the comic book sold over fifteen million copies.

The creation of a manga style by Takahashi Makoto, the appearance of female manga writers, and the popularity of the Takarazuka play led to an expansion of manga readership that extended beyond gender or generation. By the mid-1970s, shōjo manga were no longer the exclusive possession of young girls. Males and adults were also reading them.

Most significant in the shōjo manga world in relation to Mori Mari was the use of Western affectations. Fashions, accessories, and furniture were in the art nouveau style. French words were scattered here and there in the text to heighten its European atmosphere. As one critic called it, Takahashi Makoto’s style was “Chanoma no
ydroppa"/茶の間のヨーロッパ or "Europe in a Japanese living room".41 Takahashi introduced European things into Japanese daily life and consciousness. Young women were especially fascinated by the style of his graphic novels. It was said that Shôjo manga "colored with flowery decoration came to work as a ‘dream machine,’" and they "allow[ed] girls to live in a dream world for at least a moment."42

Just as shôjo manga writers used their graphic arts to create a quasi-foreign and exotic mood, Mori Mari created a luxurious Western atmosphere through her use of words and her eloquently detailed descriptions. Her most obvious technique was the employment of Western names. Although the young boys who appear in her three novellas have Japanese names, they are called instead by Europeanized names: Paulo, Leo and Hans. Shôjo manga follows this rule as well. In particular, most stories with homosexual plots or overtones have characters with European names. Not only do they have European names, but they sometimes converse in French. For example, Guydeau de Guich in "The Lover’s Forest" orders Paulo to sit by his side, and he delivers his command in French.

The dynamic of naming is of special note. As I shall discuss in detail later, the male homosexual relationships in Mari’s novellas all happen between an elder paternal figure and a beautiful young boy. The authority to name the boys with European names

42 Ibid.139
lies in the hands of these elder paternal figures. The father figures name their young partners in private, and they revert to using their Japanese names only in public. For example, when Guydeau introduces Paulo to the literary circle which he is active in, he uses Paulo’s Japanese name, Kamiya Keiri. Moreover the young boys themselves use their Japanese names in public. It appears that the European names function as a code for identifying homosexuality and otherness. The use of two names suggest a dual identity, or one in which there is a “façade” or tatemae name co-existing with a privately shared nickname that reflects the “true feelings,” or honne, of the two secret lovers. The Western name is the true name while the Japanese functions as heterosexuality. The act of switching back and forth between public and private personae, and of establishing a name known only to the lovers, may also seem as a gesture of homosexual empowerment --- even as it nods in the direction of heterosexual norms. It appears that the use of foreign language encodes the characters as homosexual and “other.” On the other, it grants them their own authority and power in naming and communicating. It may also function as a way of circumventing repressive norms Japanese society. Finally it functions as an affectation of internationalization, thereby giving a certain cachet to same-sex relations in contrast to the mundane, practical and provincial nature of Japanese language and the patriarchy it represents.

Elements suggestive of Japanese daily life are carefully eliminated, be it the magazines that the characters read or the drinks they imbibe. All are Western. Paulo
“who has been reading *Life* magazine stood up unexpectedly, took out a cup of olive
colored Venetian glass hemmed with gold,” and “he sipped his Martini”(105). At the
time the martini was not a common drink in Japan, and other accoutrements given to
Paulo were rare. When the two men go grocery shopping, they do not frequent shops
used by ordinary Japanese. Instead they patronize the Meiji-ya in Hirô, a supermarket
stocked primarily with Western goods where most of the customers are Westerners and
foreign embassy personnel.

Mari uses another interesting technique to affect a European atmosphere. She
uses Chinese characters but glosses them with small *katakana* phonetic symbols giving
the French pronunciation of the word. For example, she describes Guylan as a man of
fortitude by using a *kanji* and *katakana* combination: 剛毅 or gôki, glossed as “arudan”.
The *kanji* means “fortitude” while the phonetic *katakana* signifies the French word
“ardent” a word with which most Japanese readers would not be familiar. Here, the
phonetic sounds represented by *katakana* merely serve to evoke a European accent or
mood. She writes “cigarette,” “divan,” and “mahogany,” in the same manner.43

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43 桃花心木 (“mahogany”), 長椅子 (“divan”), 紙巻 (“cigarette”). Even when Mari could have just used
*katakana* to represent loan words familiar to Japanese people, she displays her adherence to *kanji*
representation. She admits a strong influence from her father’s translations of foreign literature in which he
mixed European words and Japanese/Chinese characters. (Mari 1:591) Her erudite use of *kanji* for loan
words contributes to the maintenance of her exalted her style of literary composition and her stance as a
sophisticated writer.
In order to better appreciate this fascination for a world in which Japanese elements are eliminated and the European accent becomes almighty, especially for young women, it is necessary to turn our attention to the late 1950s.

In the 1950s, after a decade of recovery from the devastation of World War II, Japanese were able for the first time to devote themselves to issues other than making a living to survive. They directed their attention to Western-style affluence, as represented by such luxury goods as the washing machine, the refrigerator, and the television set. As a result of the postwar economic growth, incomes doubled from 1950 to 1958, and Japanese yearned for the Western luxurious lifestyles they saw on the screen in Hollywood movies. Having their own mai kaa or “my car” as personal passenger automobile became an aspiration for many. By 1960, total production of cars in Japan reached 460,000 units. By 1965, the number had swelled to 2,180,000, and by 1970 to 8,780,000. Thus, Japan embarked on the age of mass consumer culture. The impact was tremendous and immediate, especially for women. A Western lifestyle meant freedom from the fetters of endless rounds of chores. A cynical description of the job of housewife emerged in the phrase, sanshoku hirune tsuki, a job with three meals and a nap. The West became a synonym for female luxury and liberation.

It is noteworthy that Mari published many of her essays in women’s magazines. The second half of the 1950s through the late 1960s witnessed the peak of women’s magazines such as Katei Gahō (“Home Gazette Illustrated”), Misesu (“Mrs”) and
Madamu ("Madame"), which nourished dreams of a richer life. It was about this time that foreign words gained popularity in women's magazines. In the 1970s the tendency grew stronger and a wider range of European languages were used. The Westernized world that Mari evoked in her essays and novellas played to a women’s audience whose curiosity and interests who were aroused by the newfound taste for mass consumerism or stimulated by female-friendly media.

In the late 1960s or after a decade since Mari published her homosexual novellas, shōjo manga braved the waters of including male protagonists, who had traditionally been excluded. In the 1970s, a genre called bishōnen dōsēai mono/美少年同性愛物 or stories of the love between beautiful boys, or yaoi shōsetsu/やおい小説, homosexual love stories designed for women began to appeared. Kaze to ki no monogatari/風と木の物語り by Takemiya Keiko, Zankoku na kami ga shiai suru/残酷な神が支配する by Hagio Makoto are representatives of the genre. In the 1980s new magazines such as June, which treated the topic of homosexual love exclusively were published.

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45 The origin of the word "yaoi" is unclear. The most cogent explanation is that it is an abbreviation of yama nashi, ochi nashi, imi nashi/ヤマ無し、オチ無し、意味無し ("no climax, no conclusion, no meaning") suggesting the lack of plot or organization. It is said that the first time the word yaoi was used in a dōjin zasshi or, coterie magazine ("Rappori yaoi tokushūgo/")らっぱり やおい特集号, one of the editors, and a manga writer, Sakaguchi Yasuko, used this word in a self-deprecating way to describe the trifling nature of the genre. http://www.wdic.org/?word=%e4%e4%e4%aa%e4%a4+%3AMOE
Although there is no absolute and direct proof that the genre emerged under the influence of Mori Mari’s novella, Nakajima Azusa, a writer who is often referred to as the inventor of the genre of the male same-sex love stories for women, described her shock upon first encountering Mori Mari’s novella. “I was captivated [by Mari’s world] from the first line --- such a simple statement cannot fully express the shock I felt.” She further writes:

I believe Mori Mari dislikes being called the progenitor of so-called ‘June novels,’ and she would insist that her rigorous aesthetic world has nothing to do with them...However, it was she who bore “us.” Had I not encountered her work, I would have been unable to write novels, or create the genre, which dominates my work.46

Nakajima makes it clear that she read Mori Mari’s novella and was influenced by them. In order to better appreciate the influence of Mari’s novels on the shōjo manga, let me address some common traits in the two.

Fantasy overpowers reality in both. The thematic choice of male homosexuality and descriptions of male-male relationships where young beautiful boys and wealthy intelligent men live in luxurious but ersatz-European atmosphere serve to create a fantasy world. The topic of male homosexuality was, first and foremost, as Aoyama Tomoko made clear,

46 Mori Mari zenshû 2 Geppô, 1993
a sign of the urge for new subject matter in the genre [shōjo manga] on the part of both writers and readers. They were no longer satisfied with the persistent variations on the Cinderella theme. The new interest in boys was, therefore, due to the desire to explore masculinity or androgyny as opposed to the worn-out image of femininity.  

Aoyama's observation that readers were tired of stories conceived along the hackneyed lines of the Cinderella theme, and that they found stories centered on male protagonists novel, is incontrovertible, especially in the case of shōjo manga. Still such her explanation does not solely account for the numerous responses from young women. A typical letter from a young girl who read male homosexual love stories in manga expresses her fascination with a "fantasy world that sends pleasant shivers up my spine."  

What exactly do young girls find pleasant, even shivering about male homosexual love stories? Japanologist Ian Buruma argues that they "find an outlet in homosexual fantasies" because same-sex desire is "too remote from their own lives to be threatening." Remoteness from reality is a key essential for fantasy. Manga writers are fully aware of this factor as the manga artist Hagio Makoto reveals in an interview with Yoshimoto Takaaki for Eureka magazine.

....before writing November gymnasium ["Jūichigatsu no gimunajimu"], I made two plans – one was about a boys' school and the other about a girls’

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49 Ibid. 127
school. But I found the plot about the girls to be gloomy and disgusting...Take the kissing scene, for instance...it was as sticky as fermented soybeans.\textsuperscript{50}

The choice of male rather than female homosexuality is to avoid the "sticky" nature for girls. It "is merely one more way of keeping reality at bay" because "a fantasy is the shōjo manga's stock in trade; the more fantastic the better."\textsuperscript{51} Male homosexual love stories served to create "remoteness," and idealized and luxurious European atmosphere also worked as a convention to keep "reality at bay." In countering Mishima Yukio's criticism of her excessive use of French for example, Mari replies "Since I am not French, I know that I should write in Japanese world and use Japanese in using Japanese names. As a matter of fact, I know the magic for concealing stingy Japanese reality without using French" (Mari, 1:544). What this passage aptly reveals is Mari's intention of using French words to hide "stingy Japanese reality." When Mari was writing three series of novellas, Japan was in the middle of the largest mass movement in modern Japanese history. Approximately forty thousands people surrounded the National Diet everyday protesting against the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty. This is, perhaps, the "stingy Japanese reality," to which she refers. By contrast, ugliness, grotesqueness, or incidents or objects that remind readers of daily life, do not appear in her novellas. Even if "The Bed of Fallen Leaves" depicts the violent and destructive aspect of a relationship

\textsuperscript{51} Ibid.189
driven by heroin and sadomasochism, such scene takes place behind "the tightly closed thick mahogany door, upon which the face of the Devil is carved"(182). Readers merely overhear Leo's small sharp shouts and the sound of whip on the other side of the door. It is worth noticing that Mari wrote homosexual novellas at a time of instability but the peak of bishōnen dōsei mono or yaoi shōsetsu came after the 1970s, or a period called "yasashisa no jidai"やさしさの時代: (period of gentleness) when people's preferences became more neutral and gentler.

Second, the relationships depicted in Mari's novellas and shōjo manga typically unfold between a paternal and a boy figure. In shōjo manga, the fatherly figure is intellectually superior and has considerable wealth. The boy is invariably pretty or beautiful, but is inferior to the older partner both intellectually and financially. These boys are typically from unfortunate backgrounds, but they possess extraordinary childlike innocence and beauty.

Mari's "Lover's Forest" tells the love story between Guydeau de Guich and Kamiya Keiri. Guydeau is thirty-seven, a beautiful hāfu born to a French father and Japanese mother, Julia, the daughter of a Japanese diplomat. Reared in an affluent environment, he "is a man who exudes luxury and extravagance in his every action."(86) Although "his French characteristics are apparent," he "speaks Japanese like a Japanese" (86). He works as an assistant professor of French literature at prestigious Tokyo University. Kamiya Keiri, who is called "Paulo" by Guydeau, is eighteen. He graduated
from Gyôsei, Catholic boys’ school in Tokyô founded by French missionaries, and has studied French literature at the university level. However, he quit school after only a year. His eyes “---are terribly beautiful and dreamy, yet there is cold light in them. They sit behind his small but turned-up nose on his young, polished and beautiful face, like jewels of an artistic mask crafted with a sharp expression” (79). In “Kareha no nedoko”/枯葉の寝床 (“The Bed of Fallen Leaves,” 1962), a relationship develops between thirty-eight-year-old Guylan de Rochefoucauld and an seventeen-year old, Yamakawa Kyôji, who is called “Leo” by Guylan. Guylan’s father is a nobleman from Provence and his mother is Japanese. Both have died, but the father has left his son a sizable inheritance, which Guylan has a person in France manage, and funds are sent to him in Japan. He too is an assistant professor of French literature and although enrolled at Seijô Gakuen, Leo does not go to school regularly. Leo’s time is “spent mostly in bed, driving, or accompanying Guylan to cabarets, or even hunting” (156). Although Mari succeeds in inviting readers to indulge themselves in a Western atmosphere most of time, “hunting” is excessive because the story is situated in Tokyo where hunting is impossible. Even Mishima Yukio, the strongest supporter of her work, criticized this excessiveness. It is, in fact, her weakness, and it attracts most of the criticism that her work receives. Leo has “fair, thin skin,” “black twinkling eyes in which there is a hint of gray,” “moist cheeks like a freshly peeled fruit” and his slightly full lips are “fruit ripened by kisses”(155). Finally in “No Sundays For Me, He Said,” the paternal figure is the thirty-
seven year old Sugimura Tatsukichi, a handsome, professional photographer whose face has characteristics peculiar to the French. He adores his young apprentice, Itō Hansu, who "has a beautiful, innocent face like cherub a Raphael painting" (285).

As can be seen from the above, the recurring pattern in the three novellas is the age difference in the relationships. Without exception, the paternal figure is wealthy and intelligent, and the boy plays the role of protégé. The former are willing to share their wealth and intelligence to polish and groom the boys. In "Lover's Forest," when Guydeau first sees Paulo, Paulo is fourteen, and he is gang member and liaison for a dope-pusher. Guydeau meets the group leader and arranges to have Paulo let go. Afterwards, Guydeau has Paulo live in his apartment. He buys him everything including premium toiletries, tailor-made suits, and shoes. After Paulo started using "'soap from Roget et Gallet, Brilliantine made in Paris,' and 'L'eau de cologne #4711'"52 brought by Guydeau, "his natural beauty became all the more polished and distinctive" (81). Guydeau's intervention goes beyond saving the boy from street life or giving him sophistication in appearance. He even promotes Paulo's spirituality by having him baptized. In "No Sundays For Me, He Said," Tatsukichi emphasizes his role a mentor to Hans. He orders Hans to organize his notebooks from high school and college, even though Hans quit college after only two years. Tatsukichi plans to hire a math tutor for Hans after Hans reviews these notebooks by himself.

52 There is no such eau de cologne. In one essay, Mari reveals she got the idea from an old German magazine and fabricated the name.
As for the boys, in addition to being pretty, misfortunate, and intellectually and financially inferior to their older partners, they are also described as “infants” and “women.” This is especially true in the case of Hans. We are told he is “frivolous like a woman,” (257) “gets excited like women” (256) or is “hysterical like women” (263). But the boys’ feminine qualities are recognized and appreciated by their older partners. In fact, Tatsukichi addresses Hans as “my wife” (288). In praise of Paulo’s beauty, Guydeau often says “you have the face of a beautiful geisha” or “you have the looks of a Parsian courtesan” (96). The boys often use the feminine style of Japanese speech in front of their partners, and the male style when they communicate with women.

It is important to draw attention here to the representation of boys and Western culture. Just as French Modernism is said to have feminized Asian males in order to see “the idealized Orient not on its own terms but as a tool which will allow Westerners to tap into their unconscious, uncork their repressions and glimpse that ‘other reality,’”53 the young boys appearing in Mari’s novella are feminized in a similar way. To depict of young male figures as extremely beautiful, innocent, but never superior intellectually nor financially is, one, to create a male homosexuality for women’s sake and, two, an unreality, or fantasy world designed to satisfy female needs. The feminized powerless boys tickle young women’s maternal instincts. Moreover, by assigning European culture to engender the male figures as less male and less threatening, women are made to feel

empowered. One reason for the introduction of male homosexual relations into Mari’s work and shōjo manga was to eliminate the realities of normal society and thereby create a fantasy world where female readers free themselves from the male gaze that they usually find fixed upon themselves. In reading Mari’s work, or bishōnen dōsēai mono in girl’s comics, readers reverse the gaze paradigm. Prior to the appearance of this genre, female readers did not have the opportunity in reading to indulge themselves completely in the role of appreciating the physical beauty of the opposite sex. In works such as Mari’s, it is intended that female readers assume the male gaze. Female readers appreciate young boys extraordinary beauty or innocence just as their male partners do, and they are empowered by shifting their gaze to the opposite sex. No longer the object of gaze, they could initiate the gaze on their own. As Yamada Eimi states, “To operate the gaze is, regardless of gender, to be in the masculine position.”

Homosexual love stories are a perfect vehicle for allowing women to gaze like men.

Moreover, to fix gaze without guilt, male homosexuality is an ideal tool. Japan has a long history of viewing homosexuality as an ideal form of love. Homosexual love was considered as totally detached from marriage and family life, or a form of relationship in which only soul and passion mattered. Not bound by social conventions it was deemed pure. In order to maintain the “pure” atmosphere, the homosexuality was usually depicted in spiritual terms, and physical contact described in highly aesthetic

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54 Yamada Eimi, Hāremu wārudolハーレムワールド(Harlem World, Tokyo: 1990) 30
terms and at a fairly good distance from reality. Plots usually followed the traditional
pattern of Chikamatsu’s shinjū mononoke or, love suicide stories, in which
unconventional love relationship end in death. Interestingly enough, Mari’s novels
usually end in the death of either or both of the lovers, or of a woman who intervenes in
the homosexual relationship. “The Bed of Fallen Leaves” follows the pattern. Guylan de
Rocheffoucauld’s young lover, Leo, has an affair with Tota Olivio, an Italian heroin and
sadomasochism addict. Although Leo feels guilty and is frightened by his masochist
feelings, he secretly enjoys them. Guylan realizes that someday Leo will no longer be
satisfied with him because he, Guylan, does not possess a sadistic nature. Driven by
jealousy and frustration, he shoots Leo with a hunting gun and kills him. For a several
days, Guylan goes to the forest to lie beside the deceased Leo, and finally, without
completing the novel he is writing, he decides to join Leo in the bed of fallen leaves
forever. He thinks “what had valuable for me was to be with Leo. Once I made Leo my
lover, I wouldn’t let him go. I would die for what I have valued”(237) and kills himself.
The ending emphasizes the purity of same-sex love with sacrifice.

If the young boys in Mari’s novels are feminized, West is also treated as
feminine. With the growth of its economy, and its eagerness to join the United Nations,
in the late 1950s, Japan embarked on the path that later came to be known as
kokusaika 国際 化, or internationalization. After the World War II, Japan needed to
abandon the xenophobia represented by such wartime expressions as “kichiku

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beiei”/曳畑光英(American and British brutes). Although Western goods became familiar to ordinary Japanese, the fear of the West remained firmly planted in the Japanese subconscious.

By feminizing the West with frills, laces, ribbons, beautiful furniture and gays who use feminine language, West became less threatening and so objectified that Japan could comfortably embrace it as the previously mentioned “Chanoma no yōroppa.” A Feminized West was easy to accept in daily life. It allowed Japanese to tap into their unconscious, uncork their repressions and glimpse that “other reality.” It also appealed to females as a contrast to patriarchal male dominated Japan.

In stark contrast to her representations of male figures, females in Mari’s novellas are described as threats to an ideal world. They intervene in, or bring an end to the ideal world of male homosexuality. Forty-eight-year-old Ueda Ikuko once had a body like Paulo and had a relationship with Guydeau. Now “in the twilight of her womanhood,” she “started to show signs of ugly obesity” “in spite of her constant effort to maintain her youth.”(123). She desperately clings to Guydeau, who is tired of the relationship and waits for a chance to end it. In spite of the fact that Guydeau is careful to hide his true feelings, Ikuko uncovers his secret relationship with Paulo, her intuitive powers as a woman having grown stronger as she becomes more desperate. Driven by suspicion and jealous she shoots Guydeau with a hunting gun. Meanwhile in “No Sundays For Me, He Said,” Hans becomes engaged with a young girl, Yoshiko. Since
Hans has a relationship with Tatsukichi, his true feelings lie with Tatsukichi, not Yoshiko. Hans breaks the engagement with the help of Tatsukichi, who intercedes with Yoshiko's family in order to reach peaceful break. (Although the mother senses the nature of the relationship between Hans and Tatsukichi, Tatsukichi tactically pretends he is merely Hans's guardian.) Yoshiko, broken hearted, jumps into train and kills herself in front of Hans and Tatsukichi, thereby leaving a irreconcilable bitterness between them.

Although female figures are marginalized and do not play leading roles, they exert a strong influence over the destinies of the men. But they do not allow to be a mere receiver or a victim of the men's relationship. Neither do they retreat themselves silently. When they realize that the world of men excludes them, and it is not a winning-game, they aggressively try to change course and usually succeed. By killing Guydeau, Ueda Ikuko chooses to destroy the world she cannot participate in, and Yoshiko could have killed herself without a spectacle. But she chooses to show her jealousy and her destructive desire in order to torment Hans. Japanese literature scholar Sharalyn Orbaugh states "it is possible to 'perform' passively. Rather than gazing, women can perform blindness; rather than speaking, women can perform silence; rather than judging, women can perform non-discrimination; rather than killing, women can commit suicide."

Yoshiko indeed, is a representation of a "passive performer." After Hans breaks his engagement with her, and her parents recognize the love relationship between Hans and

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Tatsukichi, she does not confront Hans. She does not appear again after she entrusts the negotiations to her parents. Her choice of performing “blindness” and silence haunts Hans. He can no longer be without Tatsukichi because of his fears. He gradually loses his appetite and suffers depression. Mari presents women in order to break the victimizer/victim, performer/receiver, subject/object power paradigm between male and female. In Mari’s novellas a part or the whole of the relationship dies between the male lovers via the act of killing. The relationship between the men dies, either in part or completely, in Mari’s novellas when the men are involved in the act of killing. In the “Bed of Fallen Leaves,” Guylan is driven by jealousy and desperation to kill Leo, and then he kills himself to be with Leo in death. When women are involved in killing, the stories do not necessarily end in death. Rather they end with in a note of optimistic hope for one or both of the male partners. In both “No Sundays For me, He Said” and “The Lover’s Forest,” the ending involves the destruction of the homosexual relationship by female figures and ends with Tatsukichi’s smile and Paulo’s whistle, both of which suggest their optimism for a new relationship or a new dimension of the relationship.
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