

# Gender-Bending in Paradise: Doing "Female" and "Male" in Japan

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*Curiosity builds bridges between women and between the present and the past; judgment builds the power of some over others.<sup>1</sup>*

## **Making It, Theoretically Speaking**

**A**t the crux of social organization are situation and strategic interactions. Gender and the relationship between sex, gender, and sexuality are sociohistorical constructions: they are products of multiple, competing discourses conducted over the course of both a culture's history and an individual's lifetime.<sup>2</sup> De Lauretis summarizes succinctly the process whereby discourses on sex, gender, and sexuality can both reinforce conventional configurations and subvert them.

The construction of gender goes on today through the various technologies of gender (e.g., cinema) and institutional discourses (e.g., theory) with power to control the field of social meaning and thus produce, promote, and "implant" representations of gender. But the terms of a different construction of gender also exist, in the margins of hegemonic discourses. Posed from outside the heterosexual social contract, and inscribed in micropolitical practices, these terms can also have a part in the construction of gender, and the effects are rather at the "local" level of resistances, in subjectivity and self-representation.<sup>3</sup>

I will explore the production, reproduction, and refraction of representations of gender in twentieth-century Japan, using as my focal context the Takarazuka Revue, an all-female theater founded in 1914. My strategy is to pay particular attention to the strategic interactions among the Revue's directors, performers, their fans, the mass media, and the state over the nature of the relationship between sex, gender, and sexuality on and off the Takarazuka stage. In this way I can help to make more complex our understanding of, on the one hand, Japanese female sexuality in particular and, on the other, the nature of the gender ideology informing and informed by Japanese social organization.

First, a review of the meanings of several key terms. Regardless of their popular conflation, there is a major difference between *sex roles* and *gender roles*. The former term refers to the various capabilities of female and male genitalia, such as menstruation and seminal ejaculation. The latter terms pertain to sociocultural and historical conventions of deportment and costume attributed to females and males.<sup>4</sup> Sexuality may overlap with sex and gender but remains a separate domain of desire and erotic pleasure.<sup>5</sup> Sex, gender, and sexuality may be related

but they are not the same thing. The degree of their relationship, or the lack thereof, is negotiable and negotiated constantly. In Japan, as among Anglo-Americans,<sup>6</sup> a person's gender initially is assigned, and (hetero)sexuality assumed, at birth on the basis of genital type, but this is neither an immutable assignment nor an unproblematic assumption. Although the Japanese apparently recognize two sexes and two genders, "female" gender (femininity) and "male" gender (masculinity) are not ultimately regarded as the exclusive province of anatomical females and males. Sex, gender, and sexuality may be popularly perceived as irreducibly joined, but this remains a situational, and not a permanently fixed, condition.<sup>7</sup>

Linguistic distinctions in Japanese between sex and gender are created through suffixes. Generally speaking, *sei* is used to denote sex, as in *josei* for female and *dansei* for male. Since the *dan* in *dansei* (*dan* may also be read as *otoko*) can refer both to male sex and "male" gender, the suffix *sei*, with its allusions to fundamental parts (e.g., genitalia), is necessary in order to specifically denote sex. Gender is denoted by the suffix *rashii*, with its allusion to appearance or likeness.<sup>8</sup> A femalelike or "female" gendered person is *onnarashii*, a malelike person, *otokorashii*. The emphasis here is on the person's proximity to a gender stereotype. When attention is drawn to an individual's resemblance to a particular female or male, the term often used is *joseiteki* (like a/that female) or *danseiteki* (like a/that male). That an individual resembles a particular female or male is precisely because both parties approximate a more generic gender stereotype. The difference between *onnarashii/otokorashii* and *joseiteki/danseiteki* is significant, although the two terms sometimes are used interchangeably in popular discourse. Further complicating matters is the use of the terms *onna* and *otoko* to refer to both sex and gender, the difference evident only in the context used.

The Takarasienne, as the Revue's actors are called (after Parisienne), include *otokoyaku*, who specialize in signifying "male" gender, and *musumeyaku*, who specialize in signifying "female" gender. Upon their acceptance to the Takarazuka Music Academy, they are *assigned* their "secondary" genders, for, as in real life, there are no gender-role auditions. The assignment is based on height, voice, facial shape, personality, and, to a certain extent, personal preference. Secondary gender roles are premised on contrastive gender stereotypes themselves; for example, "males" ideally should be taller than "females," have a lower voice than "females," and exude *kosei* (charisma), which is disparaged in "females." The Takarazuka theater demonstrates that gender ideology, like most ideologies, functions to contain differences or antinomies by *setting up differences*, for the dominant sex/gender (male/"male") "needs constructions of difference in order to signify itself at all."<sup>9</sup>

### **Gender and Hierarchy: Now and Then**

Since its founding in 1918, four years after the Revue itself was established, the Academy has solicited applications from females between fifteen and twenty-four

years of age. Today, most of the applicants are nineteen years old, and, as required, are either junior high or high school graduates or are enrolled in a high school. Graduation from the two-year Academy marks a Takarasienne's public debut as a gender specialist and enables her to perform on stage as a bona fide member of one of the four troupes comprising the Revue.

The four troupes are Flower, Moon, Snow, and Star. The Flower and Moon Troupes, established in 1921, are the oldest. The Snow Troupe was formed in 1924, and the Star Troupe in 1933. Dividing the actors into troupes facilitated organizing the growing number of applicants (from twenty at the outset to seventy-seven in 1933). Each troupe is overseen by a (male) member of the Revue administration appointed to that post. The internal hierarchy consists of a troupe manager (*kumichō*) and a vice-manager (*fukukumichō*), drawn from the ranks of the senior actors, and several chairpersons (*zachō*), who include the leading romantic "male" (*nimaimé*), the leading "female" (*musumeyaku*), the leading comic "male" (*sanmairé*), and the leading "male" and "female" supporting actors (*kyōyaku*).

Since each troupe has a leading *otokoyaku* and *musumeyaku*, more fans and their diverse tastes are more likely to be satisfied than if only one leading couple represented the Revue as a whole. Each troupe possesses a distinctive character: the Flower Troupe is known for its florid but elegant style; the Moon Troupe for its exquisite charm; the Snow Troupe for its restrained grace; and the Star Troupe for its showiness.<sup>10</sup>

The Takarazuka Music Academy presently provides a two-year curriculum of Japanese and Western performing arts training. Of the 734 applicants in 1985, 42 (or one in 17.5) were accepted. The annual tuition averages about 260,000 yen, and the students must purchase from their own funds the school's gray, military-style uniform. (The switch from Japanese- to Western-style outfits was made in 1929.) Most of the students live with one or two roommates in the Sumire (Violet) Dormitories (the violet is the Revue flower), where they are socialized into a life of discipline and vertical (i.e., age- and gender-based) relationships. All of the residents are required to clean the dorms, but the first-year, or junior (*kōhai*), students are also responsible for cleaning the classrooms under the watchful eyes of the second-year, or senior (*senpai*), students. A strict curfew (10:00 P.M.) is maintained, and first-year students are not allowed to venture outside the campus itself. Males are strictly forbidden from the premises with the exception of fathers and brothers, who, like all guests, are limited to the lobbies.<sup>11</sup>

Why an all-female theater? What are the various tactical levels on which discourses on sex, gender, and sexuality are deployed? My focus in the next several sections is narrowed to the early history of the Takarazuka Revue, roughly between 1920 and 1940, when the relationship between sex, gender, and sexuality was first explicitly addressed by the directors, performers, fans, journalists, social critics, state censors, and other interlocutors; that is, when the rationale for an all-female Revue and its social ramifications became part of the popular cultural discourse. I alternate between past and present tense, because much of what I emphasize also pertains to the present-day Revue, which I deal with more directly in later sections.

A historical perspective highlights the dialectical nature of the strategic interaction of ideas, practices, and experiences revolving around sex, gender, and sexuality, which, whether individually or collectively, are not premises on a single determinant—biology, for example. A key issue that concerns me is how the connection with the past constrains and shapes the dynamics of these discourses in the present.<sup>12</sup>

The Takarazuka Revue (Takarazuka Kagekidan) was founded by Kobayashi Ichizō (1873–1957), the Hankyū railroad and department store tycoon. In his autobiography, *Takarazuka manpitsu* (Takarazuka jottings, 1960), Kobayashi notes that he was partly motivated to create an all-female revue as a novel solution to his financial woes. Two years earlier he had opened and then quickly closed a luxury indoor swimming pool in the village of Takarazuka, west of Osaka. The spa, a Victorian-Moorish complex, failed to attract guests for two ostensible reasons. Not only had Kobayashi overlooked the proscription of mixed bathing, but he had neglected to install devices to heat the water. Converting the pool complex into a theater “made good business sense,” and the Revue was promoted as “wholesome family entertainment.”

Kobayashi also conceived of the all-female Revue as a commercially viable complement to the all-male Kabuki theater. Complementary, perhaps, but not equally privileged or prestigious for reasons related to Japanese paternalism in general and to Kobayashi's choice of nomenclature in particular.

Kabuki *onnagata*, as the name implies, are regarded as exemplary models (*kata*) of “female” (*onna*) gender for females offstage to approximate. Neither *otokoyaku* nor *musumeyaku* are terms used in the Kabuki theater. *Yaku*, unlike *kata*, connotes serviceability and dutifulness. An *otokoyaku* thus showcases the potentiality rather than modeling the supposed actuality of “male” gender. Novelist Nōzaka Akiyuki sums up this nomenclatural disparity: “The Takarazuka *otokoyaku* affects a ‘male’ guise, while the [Kabuki] *onnagata* acts on his feelings and is completely transformed into a ‘female.’ Contrarily, as the term *otokoyaku* attests, the female who plays a ‘male’ role is but performing a duty.”<sup>13</sup>

The *otokoyaku*'s rather paradoxical task, then, is to eliminate what is different yet to display as much difference as possible, both as a female performing “male” gender and as the antithesis of *musumeyaku*. She must, through technologies of gender such as clothing, speech, gestures, and ambience, signify “male” gender in such a way as to make it, and her very person, appear uncoded or “natural.”<sup>14</sup> However, unlike the *onnagata*, she must not, at the same time, be “completely transformed” into her secondary gender. The parameters of the “naturalization” of “male” gender, as I discuss subsequently, riveted early twentieth-century discourses on the social ramifications of the Takarazuka Revue.

Kobayashi resorted to the terminology of kinship in naming the Takarazuka “female” gender-specialist *musumeyaku*, or “daughter role,” instead of *onnayaku*, or “‘female’ role.” The conflation of gender-and-kinship attribution in the vocabulary of the Takarazuka Revue alludes to the principle that gender and kinship are mutually constructed: “Neither can be treated as analytically prior to the other, because they are realized together in particular cultural, economic, and political systems.”<sup>15</sup>

Kobayashi's choice of nomenclature was informed by the "good wife, wise mother" (*ryōsai kenbo*) model of female subjectivity and "female" gender codified in the Meiji Civil Code (1898–1947), together with the primacy of the patriarchal, conjugal household. Females acting on their own behalf outside the household were regarded by the state as socially disruptive and dangerously anomalous.<sup>16</sup> The public vocation of the actor, however, reversed the usual association of females with the private domain and, consequently, distinctions between "private" and "public" were neither incumbent upon nor possible for Takarasienne: "One result of this is that although [the actor] is aware of the dominant rules governing the society of which her small dramatic world is a part, her experience permits her to fuse the value-systems, and to bring the naturally secluded private interpersonal sphere of women in the home into the light of public scrutiny."<sup>17</sup>

The fusion was manipulated in a number of ways. Whereas Kobayashi sought to use the actor as a vehicle for introducing the artistry (*geijutsu*) of the theater into the home,<sup>18</sup> some Takarasienne and their fans used the theater as a starting point for an opposing strategy, including the rejection of gender roles associated with the patriarchal household and, as I discuss subsequently, the construction of a style or mode of sexuality.

Kobayashi tempered the revolutionary potential of the actor by relegating the "female" gender specialists to the status of "daughter," with its attendant connotations of filial piety, youthfulness, pedigree, virginity, and unmarried status. These were precisely the characteristics that Kobayashi sought in the young recruits and which marked the makings of a "good wife, wise mother." To clinch the filial and paternal symbolism, he encouraged all Takarasienne to call him "father" (*otōsan*). Gender assignment notwithstanding, all the actors thereby were "daughters." Many Takarasienne and their fans eventually appropriated kinship terminology effectively to subvert the "father's" filial symbolism and assert their own.

The deployment of kinship terminology in the Takarazuka Revue recalls the parent (father)-child (*oyabun-kobun*) type of group formation, whereby a patriarch controls a tightly knit, hierarchical following of "children"; in this case, daughters. The relationship between individual Takarasienne denoted by kinship terminology is based both on age or seniority, as "elder sister" (*onēsan*) and "younger sister" (*imōto*), and on gender, as "older brother" (*aniki*) and "younger sister," without regard, necessarily, to age or seniority. Both sets of kinship terms were applied by Takarasienne and their fans to identify both homosocial and homosexual relations between females.

The representational inequality between the Kabuki *onnagata* and the Takarazuka *otokoyaku* is paralleled by the inequality between the *otokoyaku* and the *musumeyaku*. The naive and compliant daughter represents not only femininity but also the female subject in a patriarchal society who is excluded from participating in discourses on "female" gender and sexuality. Kobayashi, on the other hand, as the privileged father invested much energy in advocating arranged marriages for retired Takarasienne, in keeping with the state-sanctioned "good wife, wise mother" model of "female" gender.<sup>19</sup> The *otokoyaku*, Kobayashi ar-

gued, participates not in the construction of alternative "female" gender roles but in the glorification of "male" gender. He proclaimed that "the *otokoyaku* is not male [sex] but is more suave, more affectionate, more courageous, more charming, more handsome, and more fascinating than a real male."<sup>20</sup> One of the subtexts to his statement is that "real" (that is, anatomically correct) males *need not* be suave, charming, etc., in the real world, where patriarchal privilege compensates for aesthetic deficiencies. Another subtext is that "male" and "female" gender account for processes of representation and not for the historical realities of males and females.

A third subtext is that females are the main vehicles for the representation of masculinity, even as they are excluded from discourses on femininity. The task of *otokoyaku* females, however, is to participate actively in discourses on "male" gender by observing, concatenating, and synthesizing the masculinity trademarks of popular Japanese and Euro-American male celebrities, such as, in recent times, the swagger of the late Ishihara Yûjirô and the cigarette-smoking technique of Clark Gable.<sup>21</sup> Perhaps it was Kobayashi's implicit understanding that "women's assumption of men's symbolic constructs involve[s] women in a fundamental act of alienation."<sup>22</sup> Takarasienne, however, as I show, assumed "male"-gendered constructs in ways which subverted Kobayashi's designs and consolidated their claim on representation and subjectivity.

The *otokoyaku*, according to Kobayashi, was neither a model of alternative "female" gender roles nor a model of "male" gender for males offstage to emulate. Rather, *otokoyaku* ultimately enhanced the "good wife, wise mother" role. Kobayashi theorized that by performing as "males," females learned to understand and appreciate the male/"male" psyche. Consequently, when they eventually retired from the state and married (which he urged them to do), they would be better able to perform as "good wives, wise mothers," knowing exactly what their husbands expected of them.<sup>23</sup> Significantly, even after graduating from the Academy and joining the Revue proper, a Takarasienne is still called "student" (*seitô*), for, as Kobayashi believed, the wedding ceremony marks the start of her real career, whereupon a woman becomes a full-fledged actor and the conjugal household her stage. His theory about *otokoyaku* seems to exploit the "double consciousness" of females (and people in any subordinate position), which "arises from the fact that to survive, one must understand how those who dominate define the world and oneself. One must be able to know what they think and what they expect and what the limits of freedom are."<sup>24</sup>

### Enter the *Shôjo*

A number of Takarasienne nevertheless interpreted and appropriated their secondary genders in such a way as to resist and subvert Kobayashi's designs. In order to show how they did this, it is necessary to review from another angle the origins of the Revue and its popular reception.

Originally called the Takarazuka Choir (Takarazuka Shôkantai), Kobayashi changed the name within five months to the Takarazuka Girl's Opera Training

Association (Takarazuka Shôjo Kageki Yôseikai). This name change, specifically with the addition of the term *shôjo*, set the enduring public image of the Takarazuka theater, even though *shôjo* was removed in a final name change in 1940.

Literally speaking, *shôjo* means a "not-quite-female" female. To become a fully female adult in Japan involves marriage and motherhood. *Shôjo*, then, denotes both (ostensibly virgin) females between puberty and marriage and that period of time itself (*shôjoki*).<sup>25</sup> *Shôjo* also implies heterosexual *inexperience* and homosexual *experience*, and, significantly, both male chauvinists and some lesbian feminists have appropriated the term. The former use it to disparage lesbians, convinced that "lesbian" names not a mode of sexuality but a "virgin" ("unadult") female.<sup>26</sup> The latter use the term *chôshôjo*, or "ultra *shôjo*," in reference to adult females who eschew heterosexism and believe in the power of sisterhood.<sup>27</sup>

The state's emphasis on universal—if segregated and sexist—education, together with the notion that a brief stint in the burgeoning industrial and commercial workforce was a desirable thing for females, effectively increased the number of years between puberty and marriage.<sup>28</sup> Tenure in the Takarazuka Revue further lengthened the *shôjo* period, a point made in a newspaper article on a leading Takarasienne which bore the headline: "Still a *shôjo* at 36!"<sup>29</sup> This was not intended as a compliment. Takarasienne by definition were unmarried, but the reporter here was drawing attention to the disturbing lack of correspondence between chronological age and *shôjo* existence.

Occupants of the *shôjo* category of "female" gender included the "new working woman" (*shinshokugyôfujin*) and her jaunty counterpart, the "modern girl" (*modan gâru*, or *moga*), herself the antithesis of the "good wife, wise mother." Whereas the flapperlike *moga* fancied herself an actor whose stage was the street she cruised, the "new working woman" aspired to the revue stage. An article on department store clerks in a series on the "soul of the working woman" published in the *Osaka Mainichi* (May 29, 1923) noted that instead of marriage, clerks expressed a desire to join the Takarazuka Revue, which, moreover, proved to be the most popular form of entertainment for "working women." The large number of teenagers who flocked to Takarazuka soon after its founding attested to the popularity of the Revue and prompted a ban on all junior high school students from attending Takarazuka performances.<sup>30</sup> Throughout the pre- and interwar periods, the Revue continued to attract "rebellious" teens, female and male, who ran away from home to be closer to their idols or who selected Takarazuka as an appropriately romantic setting for their "love suicides" (*shinjû*).<sup>31</sup>

Kobayashi envisioned Takarazuka as a world of "dreams and romance" and named the early theater complex "Paradise" to emphasize symbolically its idealism. He was inspired by a new genre of literature, *shôjo* fiction (*shosetsu*), most tenaciously associated with Yoshiya Nobuko (1896–1973), an influential, prolific author and a lesbian. Her widely read stories framed female couples in a dreamy, sweetly erotic light. Unlike her fiction, Yoshiya's own life-style was patently political, even subversive, in that she openly rejected marriage, motherhood, and the compulsory heterosexuality of the Civil Code.<sup>32</sup>

Kobayashi shared Yoshiya's romantic vision but colored it heterosexual: his dream world was one in which gallant males were sustained by adoring females.

The irony remains that this idealized vision of heterosexuality was enacted by an all-female cast. (Of course, it is not ironic in the sense that females were regarded as the main vehicles for the representation of masculinity.) It was an irony that, initially at least, was lost on Kobayashi but not on either the performers and their fans or on the critics. Contrary to Kobayashi's original intentions, Takarasienne inverted the image of the *shôjo* and in the process inspired an enduring style for a Japanese lesbian subculture; namely, "butch/femme."

### Refracted Gender Roles

My evaluation of the ways in which the Takarazuka Revue served as the medium of resistance to the "good wife, wise mother" role and, for some Takarasienne and their fans, as the style of a lesbian subculture is informed by Adrienne Rich's idea of a lesbian continuum. Rich's continuum spans the wide range of female-identified experience, from resisting the bride-price to choosing a female lover or life partner, and provides a sense of continuity between past and present discourses on sex, gender, and sexuality.<sup>33</sup>

The following expressions were used in reference to female couples in early twentieth-century Japan: the generic *dôseiai*, or "same-sex love," and, more popularly, "Class S" (*kurasu esu*). The "S" stands for sex, sister, or *shôjo*, or all three combined. "Class S" continues to conjure up the image of two schoolgirls, often a junior-senior pair, with a crush on each other, an altogether typical and accepted feature of the *shôjo* period of the female life cycle.<sup>34</sup> Parents and society at large continue to censure casual and premarital heterosexual relations, the prevention of which is the reason for the persistence of Takarazuka's strict females only policy. One Revue director has further proposed that the "presence of males would pollute the very essence of Takarazuka," which he regards as a "sacred site."<sup>35</sup> This unprecedented reversal of the tenacious myth that females are ritually polluted due to their sex roles, primarily menstruation and parturition, alludes to the paradisiacal "otherness" attributed to Takarazuka.

Among Takarasienne, one slang expression used since the 1920s in reference to female couples has been *deben*, from *demae bentô*, or "take-out lunch box." The basic idea is that intimacy between two cloistered females is analogous to a lunch of "rice" (*gohan*) and "dishes eaten along with the rice" (*okazu*).<sup>36</sup> Apparently, the "male" partner is identified with rice, a crop saturated with gendered meaning.<sup>37</sup> Takarasienne and their fans have used the kinship terms "older brother" (*aniki*) and "younger sister" (*imôto*) to denote either a female couple or lesbian sexuality.

The term "lesbian" (*rezubian*) itself was not used to name a politicized female identity (as opposed to sexual practices per se) until the 1970s.<sup>38</sup> As an important aside in this connection, it is important to note that an Anglo-American informed lesbian identity names a subjectivity significantly different from that denoted by the various Japanese terms. The difference is in the configuration of sexual practices conceived and enacted in terms of roles which correspond both to the kinship terms "older brother" and "younger sister" and to the asymmetrical but interdependent relationship between *otokoyaku* and *musumeyaku*. Regarding the



latter, the leading *otokoyaku* and *musumeyaku* of each troupe are paired as a “golden combination” (*goruden konbi*) for the duration of their careers. This dyadic structure alludes to the monogamy and fidelity underlying the idealized heterosexual relations promoted by the state since the Meiji period. In addition, the “male” lesbian is referred to in popular parlance as *tachi*, written in the *katakana* syllabary, with the likely meaning of “one who wields the ‘sword.’” The corresponding term for the “female” lesbian is *neko*, literally “cat” but also a historical nickname for unlicensed geisha, which “could be written with characters implying the possibility of pussy from these cats.” The division of sexual labor here recalls American butch/femme bar culture in the 1950s.<sup>39</sup>

Top *otokoyaku* Ashihara Kuniko was reprimanded severely in 1933 by Kobayashi for not discouraging her fans from calling her “older brother.” Ashihara was revered by her fans as “being as refreshing and gallant, and as assertive and resolute as an older brother.” Although these were the very qualities Kobayashi attributed to the *otokoyaku*, it was not the kind of filial symbolism he had in mind. He argued that the nickname ultimately compromised her offstage femininity (*onnarashisa*), not to mention the Revue’s reputation.<sup>40</sup>

Whereas the focus of the terms “same-sex love” and “Class S” is on the same sex of the couple, the Takarazuka expressions, “older brother” and “younger sister,” highlight the pair’s differential gender roles; namely, “butch” brothers and “femme” sisters. I submit that in the sex-segregated, homosocial climate of Japan, sexual relations between *homogender shōjo* sisters were far less problematic—innocuous even—than a female eroticism and sexuality premised on *heterogender*, or an older brother/younger sister coupling, which was perceived as a heretical refraction of both the *heterosexual* norm and the incest taboo. The Takarazuka Revue was the medium through which gender-undifferentiated *shōjo* elder and younger sisters were refracted and bifurcated as masculine older brothers and feminine younger sisters. Desire too was affected, as the headline of a 1930 newspaper article on Takarazuka proclaimed: “From Class S to feverish yearning for *otokoyaku*.” The male author went on to assert that the evolution of lesbian (*dōseiai*) and specifically “butch” sexuality was the “direct result of females playing ‘male’ roles.”<sup>41</sup> Needless to say, he limited the historical and conceptual sweep of the lesbian continuum to the Takarazuka *otokoyaku* and limited lesbian sexuality to the masculine “older brother.”

The erotic potential of the Takarazuka *otokoyaku* was recognized within a decade of the Revue’s founding. In his 1921 book on the life-style of the Takarazukenne, Kawahara Yomogi included a chapter on love letters from female fans which he regarded as examples of “abnormal psychology” (*hentai seiri*). Eight years later, in 1929, the mass media began to sensationalize the link between the Takarazuka Revue and lesbian practices. The *Shin Nippō*, a leading daily newspaper, ran a series on Takarazuka called “Abnormal Sensations” (*hentaiteki kankaku*). The male author was alarmed that *otokoyaku* would begin to feel natural doing “male” gender. Their private lives, he fretted, would soon “become an extension of the stage.”<sup>42</sup>

His worst fears came true when, less than a year later, the leading dailies exposed the same-sex love affair between Nara Miyako, a leading *otokoyaku*, and

Mizutani Yaeko, the leading woman of the *Shinpa* (New School) theater. (Several other same-sex affairs involving Takarasienne were also reported. The *Osaka Nichinichi* publicized on September 11, 1930 the makings of a love affair between the cinema actor Hara Komako and leading Takarasienne Amatsu Otome.) What this and other critics found most alarming was nothing short of a revolutionary change of context; namely, the transformation of the *otokoyaku* from the showcase of "male" gender to the stereotype of the "male" female. What had been presented and perceived as artifice on stage had revealed itself as natural off-stage. Inasmuch as many Takarasienne had applied to the Academy because they were avid fans and wanted to be closer to their idols,<sup>43</sup> or because they wanted to do "male" and in some cases "female" gender, the stage was an extension of their private lives and not the reverse. For Takarasienne and their fans, resistance to prescribed sex and gender roles and compulsory heterosexuality lay precisely in a change of context.<sup>44</sup>

The critics were particularly disturbed by the realization that the Takarazuka *otokoyaku*, like the "modern girl" (*moga*), could effectively undermine a gender role (the "good wife, wise mother") that was premised on the conflation of sex, gender, and sexuality and on women's dependence upon and subordination to men. Consequently Nara, the "male," was pushed into the limelight of damnation. For an anatomical female to assume "male" gender is for her to rise in the gender hierarchy, which is subversive, from a patriarchal point of view. Therefore, Kobayashi, along with media critics and the state, sought to limit the scope of the *otokoyaku*'s "male" behavior to the Takarazuka stage. Mizutani was treated more leniently for the likely reason that, as the "female," she did not appear different enough to be perceived as a heretic.<sup>45</sup>

The popular perception of the "older brother" as dangerously different (from the dominant construction of "female" gender) and the "younger sister" as not different enough to be dangerous needs further critical exploration. Suffice it to say for now that offstage a "male" female is dangerous to the social order not because she may be homosexual but because in appropriating "male" gender she, like the *moga* who eschewed conventional "female" gender, embodies the rejection of wifedom and, more importantly, motherhood.

Regarding the dynamics of the Nara-Mizutani affair, the press reported that "Nara has the charisma to attract women"; that "even married women tell their husbands they are more attracted to Nara"; and that "widows find Nara most attractive."<sup>46</sup> Female ("female") fans at that time explained their attraction to *otokoyaku* in the following way: "The *otokoyaku* is 'male' but does not discriminate against females. The *otokoyaku* embodies and performs [our] dreams."<sup>47</sup>

The veiled account of the Nara-Mizutani incident in *Kageki*, one of the three official Takarazuka "fanzines," assumed a stand diametrically opposed to that of the newspaper critics. Although she was not mentioned by name, Mizutani was likened to a vamp preying on naive and impressionable "students," who were cautioned to maintain a "respectable distance" (*resupekutaburu jisutansu*) from the likes of her.<sup>48</sup> Nara was portrayed in the mass media as the aggressive, "butch" seducer of ordinary women, while in the Takarazuka fanzine, Mizutani was portrayed as the aggressive, "femme" seducer of charming *otokoyaku*! The

difference in agency reflects the different constituencies represented by these media. Whereas *otokoyaku* were under fire in the mass media for their "abnormal psychology," the Takarazuka management, in seeking to protect the reputation of the Revue, depicted the *otokoyaku* as victims of unrestrained "female" desire, an ironic twist on the mythic theme of the insatiable sexual appetite of unattached (unmarried) females.

The brouhaha that erupted over the Nara-Mizutani affair was part of the larger sociocultural discourse on the problematic relationship between eros and modernism. The review *Parisette*, staged in 1930, ushered in Takarazuka's overtly modern and erotic phase.<sup>49</sup> From this production onward, Takarasienne ceased to apply the traditional stage makeup, *oshiroi* (whiteface). Modernism warranted a transition from denaturalized flesh to its naturalization. The whiteface had disguised the fact that the mask worn by Takarasienne was their gender specialty, which, as it turned out, did not so much hide as reveal their sex, gender, and sexuality.

The naturalization of "male" females continued with *otokoyaku* Kadota Ashiko's sudden decision to cut off her hair in the spring of 1932. As reported in the press, Kadota was irked by the unnaturality of having to stuff her regulation long hair under every type of headgear except wigs, for the all-male management had deemed that wigs would give *otokoyaku* an overly natural appearance. Takarazuka fans and *moga*, on the other hand, had sported short hair at least a decade ahead of their idols.<sup>50</sup>

Hair is redolent of symbolism throughout Japanese history. Prior to the *moga*, short hair announced a woman's withdrawal from secular and sexual affairs. The "modern girl" turned hair symbolism on its head, and short hair became the hallmark of the extroverted, maverick, and, in the eyes of the state, dangerous woman. *Otokoyaku* gave short hair yet another layer of symbolic meaning: "butch" sexuality. The Takarazuka management eventually sought to divest short hair of its radical symbolism by assuming authority over haircuts. Since at least the postwar period and probably before, a student assigned to "male" gender is required to cut her hair short by the end of her first semester at the Academy. Until ordered to do otherwise, all junior students are required to wear their hair in shoulder-length braids.

So many of Kadota's *otokoyaku* colleagues followed suit that a worried Kobayashi offered them money and "gifts from Tokyo" in exchange for growing out their hair.<sup>51</sup> Critics, meanwhile, had a field day with the new bobbed look. Newspaper articles referred disparagingly to the haircuts as "male heads" (*otoko no atama*) and noted that many *otokoyaku* were also using the term *boku*, a self-referent that signifies "male" gender.

The naturalization of "male" females gathered momentum with leading *otokoyaku* Tachibana Kaoru's proclamation in February 1932 that "I just don't feel 'female'" (*watashi wa onna to iu ki ga shinai*). She went on to dismiss marriage as "the vocation of boxed-in gals" (*hako-iri gâru no shigoto*). One male journalist likened Tachibana to Yoshiya Nobuko, the author of *shôjo* fiction, whom he claimed "lived like a *garçon* (*garuson*)." "Too many females," he concluded

angrily, "have forgotten that they are 'female.'" Bemoaned in general was women's loss of *onnarashisa*, or female-likeness, to an epidemic of "abnormal psychology."<sup>52</sup> Critics, using androcentric logic, did not equate a rejection of wifehood and motherhood with a rejection of female subordination but with the desire of women to become more like men.

That the male journalist referred to the lesbian as a "*garçon*," as opposed to an "older brother," is significant, for his remark alludes to the nativist cast of the popular discourses at the time which dwelled on the relationship between Japan and the Euro-American world. Insofar as he and other male critics linked the advent in Japan of lesbianism to Takarazuka, which was inspired by the French revue, they apparently regarded "butch" (*garçon*) sexuality in particular as an "un-Japanese" phenomenon. "Class S" relations apparently were unexceptional in their eyes, but a butch/femme pairing was perceived as alien and consequently unnatural. Although this is not the place for an extensive report on the history of the vicissitudes of lesbian sexuality (heterogender and homogender alike) in Japan, my preliminary research suggests that butch/femme-style relationships have a long history in need of reclamation. The above critics used the Takarazuka Revue both to censure females who rejected the "good wife, wise mother" role and to dismiss lesbian (*garçon*) sexuality as essentially un-Japanese.<sup>53</sup>

The heated discourse on eros, modernism, and the Takarazuka Revue substantiates Dick Hebdige's observations about the relationship between dominant discourses and subcultural style: "In most cases, it is the subculture's stylistic innovations which first attract the media's attention" and which, when that style is confused with deviance, "can provide the catalyst for a moral panic."<sup>54</sup>

### Setting Things Straight

All the adverse publicity motivated Kobayashi to remove the now problematic term *shōjo* in the final name change of 1940 for two ostensible reasons: to acknowledge the more eroticized ("adult") content of the modernizing theater and to prepare for the short-lived inclusion of a male chorus. Kobayashi's controversial plan to recruit male vocalists was a strategic move to denaturalize *otokoyaku* style and deflect allegations of lesbian relationships among Takarasienne and their fans. The invisible but audible presence of anatomically correct males would set things straight.

Political factors exacerbated the "moral panic" over "male" females. The late 1930s and early 1940s was a period of intensified militarization and of increasing state control over females' minds and bodies.<sup>55</sup> Pronatal policies and a cult of sanctified motherhood took precedence over the mobilization of female laborers, despite the steady depletion through conscription of the male workforce.<sup>56</sup> Not surprisingly, Takarazuka *otokoyaku* were desanctioned: they were singled out and denounced as the "acme of offensiveness" (*shūaku no kiwami*), and in August 1939, the Osaka Prefectural Government (Public Peace Section) outlawed *otokoyaku* from public performances in that prefecture. Not only were all Takarasienne chastised in the mass media for their "abnormal and ostentatious" life-style

but they were ordered by the state to conform to a strict, military-style dress code. The actors were not permitted to answer fan mail, much less socialize with their fans.<sup>57</sup>

The state, colluding with Kobayashi, sought to limit the symbolic cogency and allegorical potential of the Takarasienne to the image of the “good wife, wise mother,” an image further reified at that time as *Nippon fujin*, or “Japanese woman.” Typical of the musicals staged during this period of militarization and state censorship was *Illustrious Women of Japan* (*Nippon meifu den*, 1941), a nationalistic extravaganza dedicated to heroines, mothers of heroes, and “women of chastity,” hardly the stuff of *shōjo* fiction nor inspiration for lesbian style.<sup>58</sup>

From its establishment in 1914, the social organization of the Takarazuka Revue has reflected and refracted “female” and “male” gender roles and has been inspired by, and has inspired, modes of sexuality. The Revue continues both to idealize heterosexuality and inform a lesbian subcultural style, although during the interwar years the state’s domineering voice drowned out competing interlocutors in the debate over the relationship between sex, gender, and sexuality.

### **Concluding Remarks: Enter the *Onnayaku***

The immediate postwar influence of the United States ramified in manifold directions, including girls’ and women’s rights, however circumscribed and short-lived that particular ramification.<sup>59</sup> Takarazuka productions, which had been suspended in March 1945, reopened, with SCAP (Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers) permission, in February 1946.

The issue of female subjectivity and self-sufficiency informed revitalized discourses on sex, gender, and sexuality. Enright, writing in the early 1950s, makes note of the “considerable homosexuality” and “considerable lesbianism” in Japan at that time. “The latter,” he continues, “strikes the eye; one wonders whether this, and the great popularity of the Girls’ Opera, are not a kind of protest against the lingering assumption of male superiority.”<sup>60</sup>

Mochizuki, on the other hand, suggests that with the “adoption of coeducation” in postwar Japan, “the homosexual tendency” among schoolgirls and between Takarasienne and their fans “has been rapidly disappearing.” Neither Enright nor Mochizuki acknowledge lesbianism as a mode of female sexuality but rather rationalize it either as merely a protest against “lingering male superiority” or a temporary solution to the absence of males. Mochizuki even likens “homosexual tendencies” in young women—specifically Takarasienne and their fans—to “something like the measles, a childhood disorder, which will soon pass away.”<sup>61</sup> Usami Tadashi, a Revue historian, makes the similarly queer claim that Takarazuka offers “young women *who aren’t yet women* . . . a safe introduction to the opposite sex.”<sup>62</sup> Usami, of course, is referring to *shōjo*, those “not-quite-female” females. His claim alludes to the prevalence of lesbian practices in Japan and also underscores my earlier point that the construction of Japanese sexualities involves discursive practices quite different from the Anglo-American. The notion

that a same-sex relationship provides a "safe introduction to the opposite sex" is alien to the Anglo-American gender ideology, where the sociocultural premium on heterosexuality partly is informed by homophobia.

The history of gender discourses generated by the Takarazuka Revue alone indicates that a lesbian subculture has been not so much absent from Japanese society—although many indigenous forces have sought to eliminate it—as it has been ignored by most (published) Japanologists. Apart from those who fear being stigmatized or ostracized for undertaking serious research on Japanese sexualities, those who do pursue this line of study may encounter, depending on their own sex, gender, and sexuality, a sociohistorically motivated silence surrounding the issue of adult female sexualities in particular. The persistence of the ideology that, *shōjo* notwithstanding, females are objects of male desire and not the subjects of their own desire effectively inhibits both naming that desire and the possibility of open discussion on the topic of lesbian sexuality in Japan.<sup>63</sup>

In the prewar period, *otokoyaku* sought to naturalize and appropriate "male" gender; in the postwar period, *musumeyaku* have sought to make "female" gender more than just a foil for masculine privilege. Significantly, in a fanzine (*Takarazuka Fuan*) published independently and occasionally in those published by the Revue, Takarasienne and their female fans refer to the actor not as *musumeyaku* ("daughter role") but as *onnayaku* ("female role"), thereby claiming a nomenclatural parity with the *otokoyaku*. This act of (re)naming is a reminder that the "sex-gender system . . . is both a sociocultural construct and a semiotic apparatus, a system of representation which assigns meaning (identity, value, prestige, location in kinship, status in the social hierarchy, etc.) to individuals within the society."<sup>64</sup> The actors began to stress their female being over their status as daughters and, accordingly, demanded more definitive roles.

The all-male directorship responded to these demands by creating highly visible, dynamic, and often overtly sensuous "female" characters. However, in a move which undercut *musumeyaku* intentions, the directors assigned these new roles to *otokoyaku*. In this way, the construction and performance of "female" gender remained the privilege of both males and "males." *Musumeyaku*, contrarily, never have been reassigned to "male" roles: the transposition of gender is not a reciprocal operation. As several *musumeyaku* have remarked, "Japanese society is a male's world, and Takarazuka is an *otokoyaku's* world."<sup>65</sup>

Many *otokoyaku*, along with disfranchised *musumeyaku*, have protested the directors' gender-switching antics, and many *otokoyaku* claim to have experienced, as a result of playing "female" roles, a sense of conflict or resistance (*teikō*) and a loss of confidence. Gō Chigusa, an *otokoyaku* who retired in 1972, also remarked that on the rare occasion that she was assigned "female" gender, her fans complained bitterly of their resultant dis-ease (*kimochi warui*); that eerie feeling when the familiar suddenly is defamiliarized.<sup>66</sup> Blair's analysis of Euro-American actors is particularly cogent here: "For women whose roles have been directed by men, but who have power to convey new images of women through the media, the conflict between personal autonomy and political organization is experienced as a personal conflict."<sup>67</sup>

Some young women, such as Mina Kaze Mai, who had enrolled in the Academy specifically to do "male" gender were assigned instead to do "female" gender. Mina Kaze, or Maimai, as she is called by friends and fans,<sup>68</sup> was assigned to do "female" gender because of her short (160 cm) stature. In order to resolve the conflict between her offstage desires and her onstage role, she has "stopped wearing bluejeans" and is "always exerting [herself] to the fullest to be a *musumeyaku*, even in [her] private life" (*watakushi seikatsu de mo musumeyaku ni narikirō to kyōryoku shite iru*). Mina Kaze is not alone in originally believing that females encountered less resistance doing "female" gender. She now agrees with several of her colleagues that locating "the 'female' within the female poses a perplexing problem" (*onna no naka no onna'tte muzukashii no yo*). Similarly, after ten years of performing only "male" roles, *otokoyaku* Matsu Akira, who retired in 1982, was unable to perform a "female" role: "Even though I am a female, the thing called 'female' just won't emerge at all" (*Onna de arinagara, zenzen onna to iu mono ga denai*).<sup>69</sup> Whether in terms of resistance or emergence, the Takarasienne have drawn attention to the incompatibility between their experiences as females and the dominant construction of "female" gender.

Kobayashi's assertion that "Takarazuka involves studying the male" (*Takarazuka ga dansei no kyōiku shite-iru*) is only partially correct.<sup>70</sup> "Female" gender is also taught and studied; this, in fact, is the primary objective of the Academy. Takarasienne who are assigned "female" gender contrary to their personal preference represent all Japanese females who are socialized into gender roles not of their own making. Consequently, girls and women are suspended between the depiction and definition of "female" gender and the achievement or approximation of such—ironically, a limbo many young women have sought to avoid by enrolling in the Academy.<sup>71</sup>

Competing discourses on the construction and performance of gender have informed, shaped, and have been shaped by the Takarazuka Revue. However, whatever consciousness the actors have of their political (i.e., feminist) and also subversive (or revolutionary) potential has been compromised, at least publicly, by their need to survive within an organization, a vocation (show business), and a society where male/"male" privilege has been the rule.

The history of the Revue shows that Takarasienne have, and on occasion have exercised, the potential to challenge the sociocultural status quo maintained by compulsory heterosexuality and the "good wife, wise mother" model of "female" gender. 1932 marks their first "rebellion" in the name of self-representation: Kadota Ashiko cut off her hair, and Tachibana Kaoru declared publicly that "marriage was the vocation of boxed-in gals." In response to Kadota, the all-male management eventually assumed authority over haircuts. With respect to Tachibana's assertion, it remains that the majority of Japanese women are boxed into marriage, an institution premised—regardless of the quality of a particular couple's married life—on compulsory heterosexuality and the unequal distribution of power: "Women have married because it was necessary in order to survive economically, in order to have children who would not suffer economic deprivation or social ostracism, in order to remain respectable, in order to do what was

expected of women because coming out of 'abnormal' childhoods they wanted to feel 'normal,' and because heterosexual romance has been represented as the great female adventure, duty, and fulfillment."<sup>72</sup>

Social organization is both a process and product informed by and informing discourses on the relationship of sex, gender, and sexuality. These discourses negotiate and renegotiate the configuration and meaning of social relations within such contexts as kinship, marriage, and work. Theories and methodologies must focus on the differential relations between females and males, as well as among females as a group and males as a group. The consciousness of gender and its technologies generates a mode of apprehension of all social reality. "And from that apprehension, from that . . . knowledge of the pervasiveness of gender, there is no going back to the innocence of 'biology'" or to the specious notion of "gender neutrality." As de Lauretis reminds us, "what is becoming more and more clear . . . is that all the categories of our social science stand to be reformulated *starting from* the notion of gendered social subjects."<sup>73</sup> What is also clear is that technologies of gender construction utilized in the Takarazuka Revue draw from and inspire social organization(s) offstage: gender, after all, is theatrical, and society offers its actors a stage larger than the Revue's.

## NOTES

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1. J. Nestle, "The Fern Question," in *Pleasure and Danger: Exploring Female Sexuality*, ed. C. Vance (Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1985), p. 234.

2. T. de Lauretis, *Technologies of Gender: Essays on Theory, Film, and Fiction* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987); R. Firth, *Elements of Social Organization* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1963); M. Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, vol. 1: *An Introduction* (New York: Vintage Books, 1980); S. Kessler and W. McKenna, *Gender: An Ethnomethodological Approach* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985); K. Silverman, "Histoire d'O: The Construction of a Female Subject," in *Pleasure and Danger*, ed. Vance; and C. Vance, "Pleasure and Danger: Toward a Politics of Sexuality," in *Pleasure and Danger*, ed. Vance.

3. De Lauretis, *Technologies of Gender*, p. 18.

4. Kessler and McKenna, *Gender*, pp. 1–12.

5. Vance, "Pleasure and Danger," p. 9.

6. While this method of gender assignment is most typical of but not limited to Anglo-Americans, the lack of specific information on the assignment and assumption of "female" or "male" gender among non-Anglos makes me reluctant to generalize for all Americans. The unrepresentativeness of Anglo gender categories for non-Anglos is addressed cogently by A. M. Alonso and M. T. Koreck in the context of AIDS and the construction of "Hispanic" sexualities ("Silences: 'Hispanics,' AIDS, and Sexual Practices," *Differences* [forthcoming]). To generalize a "Japanese" notion of gender admittedly is problematic given the various ethnic groups comprising that superficially homogeneous society, although "Japanese" arguably is a more inclusive signifier than is "American."



7. There is an ever-expanding ethnographic literature on the situationality and fluidity of the relationship between sex, gender, and sexuality.
8. *Kōjien*, 2nd enlarged ed., 3d printing (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1978), p. 1214; M. Fukutomi, "Rashisa" no shinrigaku (The psychology of "gender"), Kodansha gendai shinsho 797 (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1985).
9. J. Williamson, "Woman Is an Island: Femininity and Colonization," in *Studies in Entertainment: Critical Approaches to Mass Culture*, ed. T. Modelski (Bloomington: Indiana University Press), pp. 100–101.
10. M. Hashimoto, *Takarazuka kageki no 70 nen* (70 years of the Takarazuka Revue) (Takarazuka: Takarazuka Kagekidan), p. 48; S. Takagi, *Takarazuka no wakaru hon* (Takarazuka guidebook) (Tokyo: Kosaido), pp. 65–67.
11. Y. Ueda, *Takarazuka ongaku gakkō* (The Takarazuka Music Academy) (Tokyo: Yomiuri Raifu), pp. 118–119.
12. J. F. Collier and S. Yanagisako, "Toward a Unified Analysis of Gender and Kinship," in *Gender and Kinship: Essays toward a Unified Analysis*, ed. J. F. Collier and S. Yanagisako (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987), p. 46.
13. K. Sasaki and S. Tanabe, *Yumei no kashi o tabete—waga itoshi no Takarazuka* (Eat the dream candy—our beloved Takarazuka) (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1984), p. 130.
14. Williamson, "Woman Is an Island," pp. 100–101, 268.
15. Collier and Yanagisako, "Toward a Unified Analysis," p. 7.
16. S. Nolte, "Women, the State, and Repression in Imperial Japan," Working Papers on Women in International Development, no. 33 (Michigan State University), p. 3.
17. J. Blair, "Private Parts in Public Places: The Case of Actresses," in *Women and Space: Ground Rules and Social Maps*, ed. S. Ardener (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981), p. 205.
18. I. Kobayashi, *Takarazuka manpitsu* (Takarazuka jottings) (Tokyo: Jitsugyo no Nihonsha), p. 106.
19. *Ibid.*, pp. 27, 29, 34, 91.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 38.
21. *Takarazuka gurafu* 12 (1969): 38, 5 (1968): 56.
22. C. Smith-Rosenberg, *Disorderly Conduct: Visions of Gender in Victorian America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), p. 266.
23. Kobayashi, *Takarazuka manpitsu*, pp. 38, 91; Y. Ueda, *Takarazuka sutā: sono engi to bigaku* (Takarazuka stars: Their acting and aesthetics) (Tokyo: Yomiuri Shinbunsha, 1974), p. 139.
24. K. P. Addelson, "Words and Lives" and A. Ferguson, J. Zita, and K. P. Addelson, "On 'Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence': Defining the Issues," in *Feminist Theory: A Critique of Ideology*, ed. N. Keohane, M. Rosaldo, and B. Gelpi (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), p. 181.
25. Y. Kawahara, *Takarazuka kageki shōjo no seikatsu* (The life-style of Takarasienne) (Osaka: Ikubunkan Shoten, 1921), p. 112.
26. H. Ōzawa, *Yoshiya Nobuko no genten to natta shōjo shosetsu* (Yoshiya Nobuko's first shōjo novel), *Shōjoza* 1 (1985): 25.
27. M. Takano, *Chōshōjo to fueminizumu no kyōhan kankei ni* (The conspiratorial partnership between ultra-shōjo and feminism), *Kuriteiiku* 6 (1987): 53–63.
28. N. Murakami, *Taishōki no shokugyōfujin* (Working women of the Taisho period) (Tokyo: Domesu Shuppan, 1983).
29. *Shin Nippō*, April 2, 1940.
30. *Kageki* 1 (1918): 5–6.

31. *Osaka Asahi*, July 17, 1923; *Osaka Mainichi*, July 12, 1932.
32. Y. Komazaka, "Yoshiya Nobuko: onnatachi e no manazashi" (Yoshiya Nobuko: On looking at women), *Shisō No Kagaku* 51, no. 9 (1975): 55–64; Ōzawa, "Yoshiya Nobuko no genten"; S. Tanabe, "Kaisetsu: taoyaka ni yasashiki sebone no hito" (Commentary: The person with soft and graceful mettle), in *Nyonin Yoshiya Nobuko* (The woman Yoshiya Nobuko), ed. T. Yoshitake (Tokyo: Bungei Shunjun, 1986); T. Wada, "Nihon no senpai rezubiantachi" (Japan's lesbian elders), *Bessatsu Takarajima* 64 (1987): 78–79; Yoshitake, "Nyonin Yoshiya Nobuko."
33. A. Rich, "Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence," in *Powers of Desire: The Politics of Sexuality*, ed. A. Snitow, C. Stansell, and S. Thompson (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1983); Zita, "Historical Amnesia"; Ferguson, Zita, and Addelson, "On 'Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence,'" pp. 166–167.
34. M. Mochizuki, "Cultural Aspects of Japanese Girl's Opera," in *Japanese Popular Culture*, ed. H. Kato (Tokyo: Tuttle, 1959); E. Norbeck and H. Befu, "Informal Fictive Kinship in Japan," *American Anthropologist* 60 (1958): 109.
35. S. Takagi, *Rebyū no ōsama: Shirai Tetsuzō to Takarazuka* (The king of revue: Shirai Tetsuzō and Takarazuka) (Tokyo: Kawade Shobo, 1983), p. 76.
36. M. Kasahara, *Takarazuka episodio 350* (350 Takarazuka episodes) (Tokyo: Rippu Shobo, 1981), p. 44.
37. *Kageki* 44 (1923): 14; see J. Robertson, "Sexy Rice: Plant Gender, Farm Manuals, and Grass-Roots Nativism," *Monumenta Nipponica* 39, no. 3 (1984): 233–260.
38. Y. Hirozawa, *Iseiai chōsei to iu fuashizumu* (The fascism of compulsory heterosexuality), *Shinchi-hei* 6, no. 150 (1987): 34–39 and "Yūasa Yoshiko hōmonki" (An interview with Yūasa Yoshiko), *Bessatsu Takarajima* 64 (1987): 67–73.
39. Y. Mizukawa, *Tachi: kono kōdoku na ikimono* (Butch: This lonely creature), *Bessatsu Takarajima* 64 (1987): 18–23; L. Dalby, *Geisha* (New York: Vintage Books, 1985), p. 57; Nestle, "The Fem Question."
40. K. Ashihara, *Waga seishun no Takarazuka* (Takarazuka, our youth) (Tokyo: Zenbonsha, 1979), p. 157.
41. *Ōsaka Nichinichi*, July 21, 1930.
42. *Shin Nippō*, March 16, 1929.
43. Kawahara, *Takarazuka kageki shōjo no seikatsu*, p. 16.
44. This change of context obviated the dilemma posed by C. Smith-Rosenberg—that "women's assumption of men's symbolic constructs involved women in a fundamental act of alienation" (*Disorderly Conduct*, p. 266), as Nestle explains with respect to American butch/femme culture ("The Fem Question"):

Both butches and fems [sic] have a history of ingenuity in the creation of personal style, but since the elements of this style—the clothing, the stance—come from the heterosexually defined culture, it is easy to confuse an innovative or resisting style with a mere replica of the prevailing custom. But a butch lesbian wearing men's clothes . . . was not a man wearing men's clothes; she was a woman who created an original style to signal to other women what she was capable of doing—taking erotic responsibility. (235)

. . . The butch has been labeled too simplistically the masculine partner and the fem her feminine counterpart. This labeling forgets two women who have developed their styles for specific erotic, emotional, and social reasons. Butch-fem relationships . . . were complex erotic and social state-

ments, not phony heterosexual replicas. They were filled with a deeply lesbian language of stance, dress, gesture, love, courage, and autonomy . . . Butches were known by their appearance, fems by their choices. (232, 233)

45. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 234.

46. *Taisho Nichinichi*, November 30, 1929; *Osaka Nichinichi*, July 21, 1930. The reference to widows is especially significant, as these women often faced humiliation and ostracism in their communities as victims of malicious gossip about their allegedly formidable sexual appetites. See K. Tsurumi, *Social Change and the Individual* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1979), p. 260. P.?

47. *Guriko Karuchâ Kurabu* 4, no. 15 (1987).

48. *Kageki* 124 (1930): 6–8.

49. *Kyoto Shinbun*, November 20, 1930.

50. *Osaka Asahi*, July 17, 1923.

51. *Nichinichi*, April 24, 1932.

52. *Osaka Mainichi*, February 10, 1932; *Nichinichi*, April 18, 24, 1932; *Hôchi*, July 26, 1932.

53. See also Dalby (*Geisha*, pp. 77–92) for analogous information concerning the debate on geisha in the context of modernization and Westernization. A similar series of articles is available on the Kabuki *onnagata* in *Engei Gahô* 10 (1920).

54. D. Hebdige, *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* (New York: Methuen, 1985), p. 93.

55. S. Nolte, "Women, the State, and Repression in Imperial Japan" and "The 'New Japanese Woman': The Home Ministry's Redefinition of Public and Private, 1890–1910," in *Recreating Japanese Women, 1600–1945*, ed. G. L. Bernstein (forthcoming).

56. T. Havens, "Women and War in Japan, 1937–45," *American Historical Review* 80, no. 4 (1975): 913–934.

57. *Osaka Asahi*, May 15, August 20, 1939; *Osaka Nichinichi*, August 20, 1939, August 19, 1940; *Kokumin*, September 6, 1940.

58. *Osaka Chôhô*, September 7, 1940; *English Mainichi*, February 22, 1941.

59. R. Atsumi, "Dilemmas and Accommodations of Married Japanese Women in White-Collar Employment," *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars* 20, no. 3 (1988): 54–62; S. Pharr, "Soldiers as Feminists: Debate within U.S. Occupations Ranks over Women's Rights Policy in Japan," in *Proceedings of the Tokyo Symposium on Women*, ed. International Group for the Study of Women (Tokyo: International Group for the Study of Women, 1978), pp. 25–35.

60. D. J. Enright, *The World of Dew: Aspects of Living Japan* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1955), p. 123.

61. Mochizuki, "Cultural Aspects," pp. 172, 170.

62. Usami in J. Bailey, "The Never-Never, Chocolate Mousse Land of Takarazuka," *Tokyo Weekender* 17, no. 22 (1986): 1, my italics.

63. See articles in *Bessatsu Takarajima* 64 (1987), *Onna Erosu* 16 (1981), and *Shinchihei* 6 (1987).

64. De Lauretis, *Technologies of Gender*, p. 5.

65. *Takarazuka Gurafu* 1 (1967): 54.

66. *Takarazuka Gurafu* 1 (1967): 71; 5 (1968): 70–71; 4 (1971): 49; 7 (1974): 68; 7 (1977): 38.

67. Blair, "Private Parts," p. 222.

68. Takarasienne have three names: their legal name, which very few people outside the Revue offices know; their self-selected stage name, which is how they are known publicly; and an endearing nickname coined by and known only to close friends and fans. One significant nomenclatural development since the 1930s has been the actors' virtual rejection of the "female" (i.e., diminutive) suffix *ko* from their stage names. 232 actors out of 394, or 59 percent, in 1937 had names with the *ko* suffix, as opposed to only 25 of 379, or 6.5 percent, in 1977 (Hashimoto, *Takarazuka kageki no 70 nen*, p. 62).

69. *Nihonkai*, April 18, 1987; *Hankyū* 6 (1987); *Takarazuka Gurafu* 7 (1974): 68.

70. I. Kobayashi in *Kageki* 272 (1948): 29.

71. The number of applicants in the postwar period ranges from 579 (57 admitted) in 1946 to 734 (42 admitted) in 1985, with a low of 175 (70 admitted) in 1959, to a high of 1,052 (49 admitted) in 1978 (Ueda, *Takarazuka ongaku gakkō*, p. 25). The 1978 peak reflects the tremendous popularity of the musical *The Rose of Versailles* (1974–1976), attended by more than 1.4 million persons (Hashimoto, *Takarazuka kageki no 70 nen*, p. 89). Written by leading cartoonist and *shōjo* fiction writer Ikeda Riyoko, *The Rose of Versailles* focuses on the life and death of Oscar, a female raised as a "male" in order to succeed her father in a patriline of generals, although she dies a "female" female. The popularity of the production, together with the unprecedented number of applicants to the Academy following its two-year run, suggests that aspiring Takarasienne were attracted to the Revue by the notion, exemplified by Oscar, of gender as a costume drama in which clothing as performance undercuts the ideological fixity and essentialism of conventional "female" and "male" gender (A. Kuhn, *The Power of the Image: Essays on Representation and Sexuality* [London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1985], p. 53).

72. Rich, "Compulsory Heterosexuality," pp. 196–197; T. S. Lebra, *Japanese Women: Constraint and Fulfillment* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1985), pp. 78–79.

73. De Lauretis, *Technologies of Gender*, pp. 20, 139.